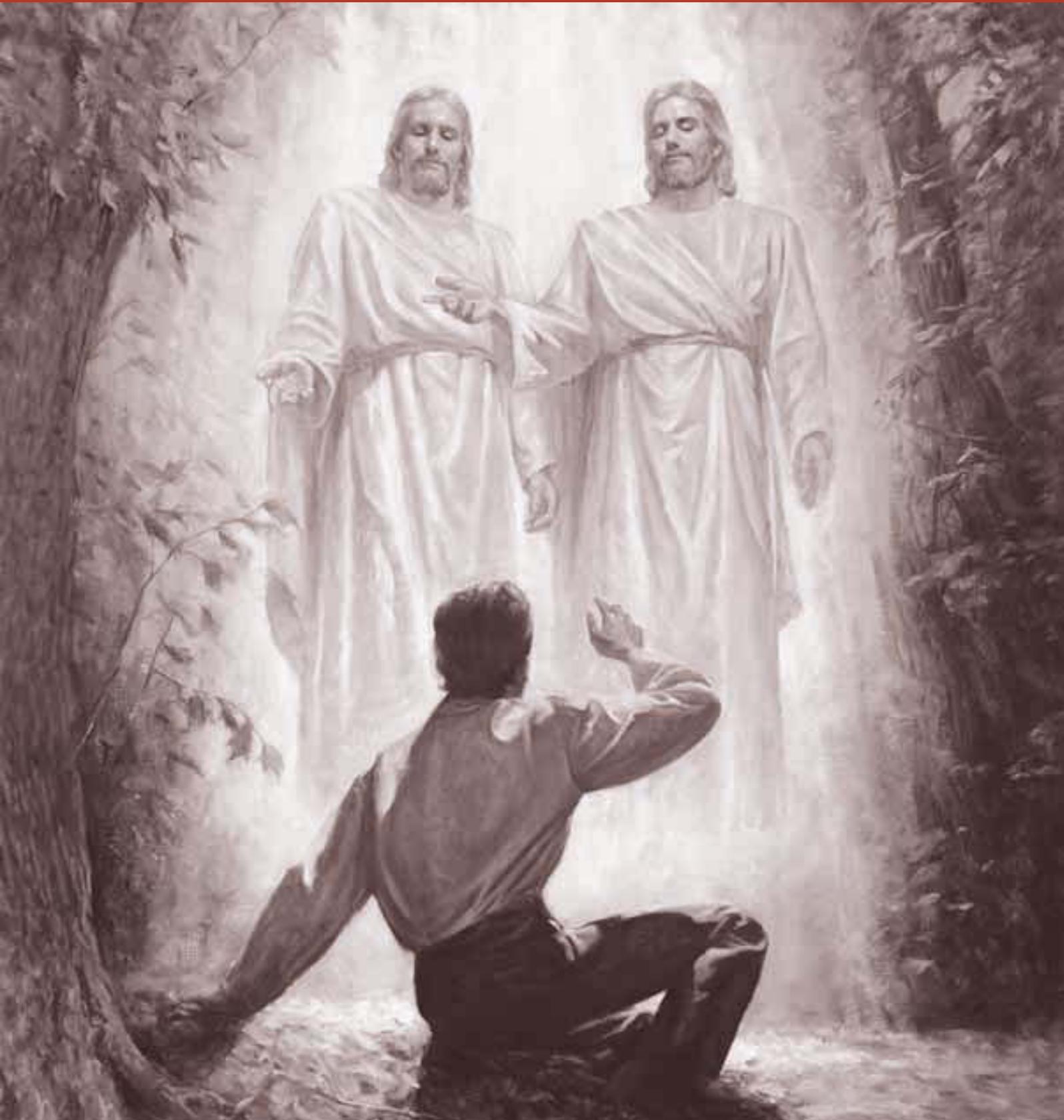


# Doctrine and Covenants and Church History

Gospel Doctrine Teacher's Manual



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Gospel Doctrine Teacher's Manual

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## Comments and Suggestions

Your comments and suggestions about this manual would be appreciated. Please submit them to:

Curriculum Planning  
50 East North Temple Street, Floor 24  
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3200  
USA  
E-mail: [cur-development@ldschurch.org](mailto:cur-development@ldschurch.org)

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# Helps for the Teacher

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This year's course of study is the Doctrine and Covenants and Church history. The Doctrine and Covenants is a compilation of prophecies, visions, commandments, and teachings given through the Prophet Joseph Smith and some of his successors in the Presidency of the Church. The Prophet referred to this book of scripture as "the foundation of the Church in these last days, and a benefit to the world, showing that the keys of the mysteries of the kingdom of the Savior are again entrusted to man" (heading to D&C 70). The revelations in this book are interwoven with the history of the Church, coming "in answer to prayer, in times of need, and . . . out of real-life situations involving real people" (Explanatory Introduction to the Doctrine and Covenants).

As you teach the gospel from the Doctrine and Covenants and the history of the Church, you can help class members gain appreciation for the past, strength for the present, and hope for the future. President Gordon B. Hinckley declared:

"How glorious is the past of this great cause. It is filled with heroism, courage, boldness, and faith. How wondrous is the present as we move forward to bless the lives of people wherever they will hearken to the message of the servants of the Lord. How magnificent will be the future as the Almighty rolls on His glorious work, touching for good all who will accept and live His gospel and even reaching to the eternal blessing of His sons and daughters of all generations through the selfless work of those whose hearts are filled with love for the Redeemer of the world" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1995, 95; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 72).

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## Purposes of This Course

Rather than taking a sequential or section-by-section approach, the lessons in this course focus on major themes taught in the Doctrine and Covenants and Church history. They are designed to help you:

1. Teach the doctrines, ordinances, and covenants of the restored gospel, which are necessary for individuals and families to come unto Christ and inherit eternal life.
2. Teach the ongoing history of the restored Church of Jesus Christ.
3. Invite the Spirit into the class.
4. Help class members understand and love the scriptures.
5. Help class members apply gospel truths in their lives.
6. Encourage class members to teach and edify one another.
7. Help class members understand the importance of their day in the history of the Church—that they have inherited a great legacy and that they can find joy in their responsibility to continue to move forward the work of the Lord.

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## Materials You Should Use

As you prepare and teach lessons in this course, you should use the following materials:

1. The scriptures (see “Teach from the Scriptures,” page ix).
2. This teacher’s manual (see “How to Use This Manual” below).
3. *Doctrine and Covenants and Church History Class Member Study Guide* (35686). This booklet contains the reading assignment for each lesson and some discussion questions. As you prepare each lesson, consider how to use the material in the *Study Guide*. Class members will be better able to participate in discussions if they have studied the reading assignment and if you ask questions that they are prepared to answer. Encourage class members to use the *Study Guide* in their personal study and in family discussions.

Each class member should have a copy of the *Study Guide*. You should receive copies from the Sunday School presidency, the ward clerk, or the assistant ward clerk assigned to materials.

4. *Our Heritage: A Brief History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (35448). This book presents an inspiring account of the history of the Church from the time of the Prophet Joseph Smith through the present day. Many accounts in this book are discussed in the lessons.

Every class member should have access to a copy of *Our Heritage* for personal study (at least one copy per home). Many members will already have copies. You should be able to obtain copies from the Sunday School presidency, the ward clerk, or the assistant ward clerk assigned to materials. The clerk can help order additional copies as needed.

5. The videocassettes *Doctrine and Covenants and Church History Video Presentations* (53912) and *Teachings from the Doctrine and Covenants and Church History* (53933). These videocassettes contain presentations that supplement the lessons. Suggestions for using them are found in the “Additional Teaching Ideas” section of many lessons in the manual. These video presentations can enhance class members’ understanding of gospel principles and Church history. However, be careful not to use them too often or as a substitute for scripture-based discussions.

For help with basic principles of gospel teaching, refer to the instructions in this introduction and to the following resources:

“Gospel Teaching and Leadership,” section 16 of the *Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 2: Priesthood and Auxiliary Leaders* (35209 or 35903)

*Teaching, No Greater Call*, 1999 edition (36123)

*Teaching Guidebook* (34595)

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## How to Use This Manual

This manual is a tool to help you teach the doctrines of the gospel from the scriptures and Church history. It has been written for youth and adult Gospel Doctrine classes and is to be used every four years. Additional references and commentaries should not be necessary to teach the lessons. Elder M. Russell Ballard said:

“Teachers would be well advised to study carefully the scriptures and their manuals before reaching out for supplemental materials. Far too many teachers seem to stray from the approved curriculum materials without fully reviewing them. If teachers feel a need to use some good supplemental resources beyond the scriptures and manuals in presenting a lesson, they should first consider the use of the Church magazines” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1983, 93; or *Ensign*, May 1983, 68).

Review each lesson at least a week in advance. When you study the reading assignment and the lesson material early, you will receive thoughts and impressions during the week that will help you teach the lesson. As you ponder the lesson during the week, pray for the Spirit to guide you. Have faith that the Lord will bless you.

Each lesson in this manual contains more information than you will probably be able to teach in one class period. Seek the Spirit of the Lord in selecting the scripture accounts, questions, and other lesson material that will best meet the needs of class members. Keep in mind the ages, interests, and backgrounds of class members.

This manual contains 46 lessons. Because there may be more than 46 Sundays in which you will teach, you may occasionally want to use two class periods to teach one lesson. This may be particularly helpful with some of the longer lessons, such as lessons 4, 7, and 27.

The lessons include the following sections:

1. *Purpose.* The purpose statement suggests a main idea to focus on as you prepare and teach the lesson. It usually includes an expectation of what class members should do as a result of the lesson.
2. *Preparation.* This section lists the scripture accounts and other materials in the lesson outline. It may also include other suggestions for preparation, such as materials to bring to class. Many of these materials are available in the meeting-house library. (A five-digit number following the name of a suggested item is the item number; if a picture is included in the Gospel Art Picture Kit [34730], that number is also given.)
3. *Attention activity.* This section consists of a simple learning activity to help class members prepare to learn, participate, and feel the influence of the Spirit. Whether you use the manual’s attention activity or one of your own, it is important to focus class members’ attention at the beginning of the lesson. The activity should be brief.
4. *Discussion and application.* This is the main part of the lesson. Prayerfully study the scriptures and historical accounts so you can teach and discuss them effectively. Use the suggestions in “Teach from the Scriptures” (page ix) and “Encourage Class Discussion” (pages ix–x) to vary the way you teach and to maintain class members’ interest. Select questions and methods that are appropriate for class members’ ages and experience.
5. *Conclusion.* This section helps you summarize the lesson and encourage class members to live the principles you have discussed. It also reminds you to bear testimony. Be sure to leave enough time to conclude each lesson.

6. *Additional teaching ideas.* This section is provided in most lessons in the manual. It may include additional truths from the scripture accounts, activities, or other suggestions that supplement the lesson outline.

The manual contains a chronology of Church history (pages 272–73) and three maps of significant Church history sites (pages 274–76). Many lessons refer to these resources, which are also included in the *Class Member Study Guide* (pages 27–31).

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## Teach by the Spirit

When preparing to teach the gospel, it is important that you seek inspiration and guidance from the Holy Ghost. “The Spirit shall be given unto you by the prayer of faith,” said the Lord, “and if ye receive not the Spirit ye shall not teach” (D&C 42:14). Remember that the Holy Ghost is to be the teacher in your class.

You can seek the Spirit by praying, fasting, studying the scriptures daily, and obeying the commandments. While preparing for class, pray for the Spirit to help you understand the scriptures and the needs of class members. The Spirit can also help you plan meaningful ways to discuss the scriptures and apply them to the present day.

Some suggestions for inviting the Spirit into your class are given below:

1. Invite class members to offer prayers before and after the lesson. During class, pray in your heart for the Spirit to guide you, to open the hearts of class members, and to testify and inspire.
2. Use the scriptures (see “Teach True Doctrine” on this page and “Teach from the Scriptures” on page ix). Have class members read selected passages aloud.
3. Bear testimony whenever the Spirit prompts you, not just at the end of the lesson. Testify of Jesus Christ. Frequently invite class members to bear their testimonies.
4. Use hymns, Primary songs, and other sacred music to prepare class members’ hearts to feel the Spirit.
5. Express your love for class members, for others, and for Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.
6. As appropriate, share insights, feelings, and experiences that relate to the lesson. Invite class members to do the same. Class members could also tell about how they have applied principles discussed in previous lessons.

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## Teach True Doctrine

Elder Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve taught, “True doctrine, understood, changes attitudes and behavior” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1986, 20; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 17).

In your preparation and during class, focus on the saving doctrines of the gospel as presented in the scriptures and the teachings of latter-day prophets. This requires that you study the scriptures diligently and prayerfully. The Lord commanded, “Seek not to declare my word, but first seek to obtain my word,

and then shall your tongue be loosed; then, if you desire, you shall have my Spirit and my word, yea, the power of God unto the convincing of men” (D&C 11:21).

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### Teach from the Scriptures

There is great power in using the scriptures to teach the doctrines of the gospel. Encourage class members to bring their scriptures to class every week so you can read selected scripture passages together.

Use the following suggestions to teach scripture accounts effectively and with variety:

1. Help class members understand what the scriptures teach about Jesus Christ. Ask them to consider how certain passages increase their faith in the Savior and help them feel His love.
2. Invite class members to personalize the scriptures by mentally substituting their names in selected passages.
3. Share inspiring stories in Church history to show how scripture passages apply in our lives.
4. Have class members look for words, phrases, or ideas that are repeated often in a scripture passage or that have special meaning for them.
5. Encourage class members to use the study aids included at the end of the Latter-day Saint editions of the scriptures, such as the Topical Guide and Bible Dictionary in the Bible and the index in the triple combination.
6. Write phrases, key words, or questions that relate to the scripture account on the chalkboard. Then read or summarize the account. As class members encounter phrases, key words, or answers to the questions, stop and discuss them.
7. Divide the class into two or more small groups. After reviewing a scripture account, have each group write down the principles and doctrines taught in the account. Then have the groups take turns discussing how these teachings apply in their lives.
8. Suggest that class members bring pencils to mark verses that are particularly meaningful to them.

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### Encourage Class Discussion

You normally should not give lectures. Instead, help class members participate meaningfully in discussing the scriptures. The Lord’s counsel regarding class discussion is found in D&C 88:122: “Appoint among yourselves a teacher, and let not all be spokesmen at once; but let one speak at a time and let all listen unto his sayings, that when all have spoken that all may be edified of all, and that every man may have an equal privilege.”

Use the following guidelines as you encourage class discussion:

1. Ask thought-provoking questions. Questions that begin with *why*, *how*, *who*, *what*, *when*, and *where* are usually most effective for encouraging discussion. Seek the Spirit’s guidance as you study the questions in this manual and decide which ones to ask.

2. Invite class members to briefly share experiences that relate to scriptural principles you are discussing. Also encourage them to share their feelings about what they are learning from the scriptures. Help them understand that spiritual experiences and feelings should be shared “with care, and by constraint of the Spirit” (D&C 63:64). Some experiences and feelings are not appropriate to share.
3. Be sensitive to the needs of each class member. Although all class members should be encouraged to participate in class discussions, some may hesitate to respond. You may wish to speak privately with them to find out how they feel about reading aloud or participating in class. Be careful not to call on class members if it might embarrass them.
4. Give scripture references to help class members find the answers to some questions.
5. If a few class members seem to be taking most of the time during a discussion, make an effort to include those who have not yet contributed. You may need to gently change the flow of the discussion by saying, “Let’s hear from someone else” or “Would someone else like to add to what has been said?”

It is more important to help class members understand and apply the scriptures than to cover all the lesson material you have prepared. If class members are learning from a good discussion, it is often helpful to let it continue rather than try to cover all the lesson material. However, if a discussion is not helpful or edifying, you should redirect it.

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### **Helping New Members**

You may have the opportunity to teach members who are relatively new in the Church. Your teaching can help these members become firm in the faith. The First Presidency has said: “Every member of the Church needs to be loved and nourished, especially during the first few months after baptism. When new members receive sincere friendship, opportunities to serve, and the spiritual nourishment that comes from studying the word of God, they experience enduring conversion and become ‘fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God’ (Ephesians 2:19)” (First Presidency letter, 15 May 1997).

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### **Teaching the Gospel to Youth**

If you are teaching youth, remember that they often need active participation and visual representations of the doctrines being discussed. Your use of the activities, video presentations, and pictures suggested in the manual can help youth stay interested in the lessons.

# Introduction to the Doctrine and Covenants and Church History

Lesson  
**1**

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**Purpose** To introduce class members to this year’s study of the Doctrine and Covenants and Church history and to help them understand their place in the dispensation of the fulness of times.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study the following scriptures and other materials:
  - a. Explanatory Introduction to the Doctrine and Covenants; Doctrine and Covenants 1.
  - b. Introduction to *Our Heritage*.
2. Obtain a copy of the *Doctrine and Covenants and Church History Class Member Study Guide* (35686) for each class member. You should receive these copies from the Sunday School presidency, the ward clerk, or the assistant ward clerk assigned to materials. Review the material for this lesson in the *Study Guide*, and plan ways to refer to it during the lesson.
3. Obtain enough copies of *Our Heritage: A Brief History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (35448) so every class member can have access to one for personal study (at least one copy per home). Many members will already have copies. You should be able to obtain copies from the Sunday School presidency, the ward clerk, or the assistant ward clerk assigned to materials. The clerk can help order additional copies as needed.
4. If you use the attention activity, bring a picture of the Salt Lake Temple to class (62433; Gospel Art Picture Kit 502).

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## Suggestions for Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Show a picture of the Salt Lake Temple. Point to the ball on top of the temple that the statue of angel Moroni stands upon. Explain that the upper half of that ball is the capstone of the Salt Lake Temple. On 6 April 1892, the Church held a general conference in the Tabernacle. Shortly before noon, President Wilford Woodruff dismissed the meeting. Forty thousand people gathered on Temple Square, with thousands more surrounding it. President Woodruff then pressed an electric button, and the capstone was lowered into place. Down below, the Tabernacle Choir, accompanied by a band, began singing the hymn “The Spirit of God,” and the Saints joined in. Then they gave the Hosanna Shout and waved white handkerchiefs, showing their joy that the Salt Lake Temple was near completion.

President Ezra Taft Benson, the 13th President of the Church, explained that the Doctrine and Covenants can be described as the capstone of our religion:

“The Doctrine and Covenants brings men to Christ’s kingdom, even The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, ‘the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth’ [D&C 1:30]. . . .

“The Book of Mormon is the ‘keystone’ of our religion, and the Doctrine and Covenants is the capstone, with continuing latter-day revelation. The Lord has placed His stamp of approval on both the keystone and the capstone” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1987, 105; or *Ensign*, May 1987, 83).

Testify that the keystone and the capstone teach us about the Savior, who is the cornerstone of our religion (Ephesians 2:20). These scriptures also testify of the Savior and of the truthfulness of His gospel.

## Discussion and Application

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This lesson contains more material than is possible to teach in one class period. Prayerfully select the lesson material that will best meet class members’ needs.

Explain that this course uses a thematic approach in studying the Doctrine and Covenants and Church history. The lessons are intended to help class members learn and apply what the Doctrine and Covenants and Church history teach about specific gospel themes. As a result of this year’s study, class members should have a greater desire to seek the blessings of the gospel.

Point out that because this year’s lessons are thematic, some sections of the Doctrine and Covenants are not included in the reading assignments. Nevertheless, class members should plan to read the entire Doctrine and Covenants during the year.

Distribute copies of the *Class Member Study Guide*. Explain that the study guide contains reading assignments and discussion questions for each lesson. Invite class members to make a commitment to read these assignments and prepare for class each week. Ask them to share ideas about how to make the assigned weekly reading a habit.

Display a copy of *Our Heritage*, and distribute copies as needed so there will be at least one copy in each home. Explain that this book presents an inspiring account of the history of the Church from the time of the Prophet Joseph Smith to the present day. Class members should read the book during the year. Much of this history will be discussed in the lessons.

Point out that class members share the responsibility to make this course successful. Encourage them to prepare to participate in the lessons and share experiences that have taught them how to apply gospel principles in their lives.

### **1. The revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants address the needs of our day.**

- Read the third paragraph in the Explanatory Introduction, found at the beginning of the Doctrine and Covenants (this paragraph begins with the phrase “The book of”). How is the Doctrine and Covenants different from other books of scripture? What passages in the Doctrine and Covenants have been especially helpful or meaningful to you?

- Read the sixth paragraph in the Explanatory Introduction (this paragraph begins with the phrase “These sacred revelations”). What does this paragraph teach about how the revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants were received? Why is it helpful to understand that most of the revelations came as answers to prayers?
- Read the eighth paragraph in the Explanatory Introduction (this paragraph begins with the phrase “In the revelations”). What are some of the doctrines of the gospel that are explained in the Doctrine and Covenants? (Select two or three of these doctrines and discuss how our lives would be different without the truths that are revealed about them in the Doctrine and Covenants.)

## 2. The Lord authored the preface to the Doctrine and Covenants.

Introduce section 1 of the Doctrine and Covenants by reviewing the following information:

On 1 November 1831, the Prophet Joseph Smith presided at a special conference of elders, held in Hiram, Ohio. Those in attendance decided to compile some of the revelations the Prophet had received and publish them in a book called the Book of Commandments. Following the first session of this conference, the Lord signified His approval for the publication by giving Joseph Smith a revelation that He called “my preface unto the book of my commandments” (D&C 1:6). This revelation is now section 1 of the Doctrine and Covenants.

President Ezra Taft Benson said: “The Doctrine and Covenants is the only book in the world that has a preface written by the Lord Himself. In that preface He declares to the world that His voice is unto all men (see v. 2), that the coming of the Lord is nigh (see v. 12), and that the truths found in the Doctrine and Covenants will all be fulfilled (see vs. 37–38)” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1986, 101; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 79).

- In D&C 1, the Lord raises a “voice of warning,” which He continues throughout the Doctrine and Covenants (D&C 1:4). What warnings does the Lord issue in this section? (See D&C 1:7–10, 12–16, 31–33. You may want to list these on the chalkboard.) How do these warnings apply to us?
- For whom are the messages of the Doctrine and Covenants intended? (See D&C 1:1–4, 11, 34–35.) How are these messages to go to all people? (See D&C 1:4.)
- In D&C 1, the Lord foretells the great destiny of His latter-day work (D&C 1:23, 30). Explain that when the Lord revealed this section, the Church had been organized for only one and one-half years and had only a few hundred members. How are the prophecies of the Church’s growth being fulfilled in our day?
- In D&C 1, the Lord explains some of the purposes for the revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants. Read D&C 1:17–28 with class members. As recorded in these verses, what are some of the purposes of the revelations? (Answers could include those listed below.)
  - a. “That every man might speak in the name of God the Lord, even the Savior of the world” (D&C 1:20).
  - b. “That faith also might increase” (D&C 1:21).
  - c. “That mine everlasting covenant might be established” (D&C 1:22).

- d. “That the fulness of my gospel might be proclaimed” (D&C 1:23).
  - e. To help the Lord’s servants “come to understanding” (D&C 1:24).
  - f. “And inasmuch as they erred it might be made known” (D&C 1:25).
  - g. “And inasmuch as they sought wisdom they might be instructed” (D&C 1:26).
  - h. “And inasmuch as they sinned they might be chastened, that they might repent” (D&C 1:27).
  - i. “And inasmuch as they were humble they might be made strong, and blessed from on high, and receive knowledge from time to time” (D&C 1:28).
- The Lord’s preface to the Doctrine and Covenants concludes with a commandment to search His words. Read D&C 1:37–38 and 18:34–36 with class members. What does the Lord teach us about His words and His voice in these verses? How is searching the scriptures different from merely reading them? How have you benefited from searching the Lord’s words in the Doctrine and Covenants?

**3. This course will discuss major events of the dispensation of the fulness of times.**

Have class members turn to page 657 in the Bible Dictionary. Read the first sentence in the entry for the word *dispensations*. Then explain that the lessons this year will cover many of the major events of our dispensation—the dispensation of the fulness of times (D&C 112:30–32). Share the following statement by the Prophet Joseph Smith:

“Prophets, priests and kings . . . have looked forward with joyful anticipation to the day in which we live; and fired with heavenly and joyful anticipations they have sung and written and prophesied of this our day; but they died without the sight; we are the favored people that God has made choice of to bring about the Latter-day glory; it is left for us to see, participate in and help to roll forward the Latter-day glory, ‘the dispensation of the fulness of times’” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 231).

- Why is our dispensation different from any of the previous ones? (Answers could include that this dispensation will not end in apostasy and that the Church will continue to grow until it fills the earth and the way is prepared for the Lord’s Second Coming.) What are some of the blessings and responsibilities of living in this dispensation?

Explain that this dispensation can be divided into six historical periods. You may want to write them on the chalkboard as follows:

New York Period	1820–1830
Ohio-Missouri Period	1831–1838
Nauvoo Period	1839–1846
Pioneering the West	1846–1898
Expansion of the Church	1899–1950
The Worldwide Church	1951–present

Point out that many of the important events in these six historical periods are summarized in “Church History Chronology” on pages 272–73 in this manual

and pages 27–28 in the *Class Member Study Guide*. Have class members briefly review these events.

- Which events in the history of the Church have particular significance to you?

#### 4. We can each help to move forward this great latter-day work.

Ask class members to look around the room at the people in the class. Explain that we are not here on earth at this time by accident. We have been sent by God to help build His kingdom in this last dispensation. President Ezra Taft Benson said, “There has never been more expected of the faithful in such a short period of time as there is of us” (quoted by Marvin J. Ashton, in Conference Report, Oct. 1989, 48; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1989, 36).

President Gordon B. Hinckley said, “The most serious challenge we face, and the most wonderful challenge, is the challenge that comes of growth” (quoted in “President Gordon B. Hinckley,” *Ensign*, Apr. 1995, 6).

- What are some challenges that are presented by the Church’s tremendous growth? What are some examples of the Church’s efforts to meet these challenges? (Answers could include the dramatic increase in temple building, efforts to build priesthood leadership, and the hastening of the translation of scriptures into many languages.)

Emphasize that we can see and feel the excitement of the Church’s growth. However, the Lord needs more than onlookers who cheer from the sidelines; we must ask ourselves if we are keeping pace and doing our part as families and as individuals. President Gordon B. Hinckley said: “This is a season of a thousand opportunities. It is ours to grasp and move forward. What a wonderful time it is for each of us to do his or her small part in moving the work of the Lord on to its magnificent destiny” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1997, 90–91; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 67).

- What can we each do individually and in our families to help move forward the Lord’s great latter-day work?

#### Conclusion

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Emphasize that we are privileged to live in the dispensation of the fulness of times. We can see the Church rolling forth as prophesied anciently (Daniel 2:44–45; see also D&C 65:2). We enjoy the blessings of the restored gospel. We hear the voice of the Lord as we read the Doctrine and Covenants. We are led by a living prophet. The course of study this year will help us understand more about the opportunities and blessings of living in this dispensation.

Lesson  
**2**

# “Behold, I Am Jesus Christ, the Savior of the World”

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**Purpose**

To help class members feel the powerful witness of the Savior that comes through the Doctrine and Covenants and to help them strengthen their testimonies of the Savior’s Atonement.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study the scriptures in this lesson. As you study the scripture passages on page 9, determine which ones will be most helpful for class members. Familiarize yourself with the passages you select, and prepare to use them in the lesson.
2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
3. If the following pictures are available, prepare to use them during the lesson: The Lord Jesus Christ (62572; Gospel Art Picture Kit 240); Jesus Praying in Gethsemane (62175; Gospel Art Picture Kit 227); and The Crucifixion (62505; Gospel Art Picture Kit 230). You may want to display the picture The Lord Jesus Christ throughout the lesson.
4. If you use the attention activity, bring to class a branch from a tree.

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**Suggestions for  
Lesson Development****Attention Activity**

As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Display a branch from a tree. Point out that it is no longer receiving the nourishment it needs to stay alive.

- Why is this branch unable to receive the nourishment it needs? (It is separated from its roots.)

Share the following statement by Elder Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve:

“[The Atonement of Jesus Christ] is the very root of Christian doctrine. You may know much about the gospel as it branches out from there, but if you only know the branches and those branches do not touch that root, if they have been cut free from that truth, there will be no life nor substance nor redemption in them” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1977, 80; or *Ensign*, May 1977, 56).

Contrast the dead branch with a strong, healthy tree. Emphasize that the Atonement of Jesus Christ brings us life and gives meaning to all other gospel doctrines. We should remember the Atonement as we study other principles throughout the rest of this course.

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Prayerfully select the lesson material that will best meet class members' needs.

### **1. The Doctrine and Covenants testifies of Jesus Christ.**

Emphasize that one purpose of all scripture is to testify of Jesus Christ and to persuade people to come to Him and partake of salvation. The Bible, the books of Moses and Abraham in the Pearl of Great Price, and the Book of Mormon are ancient testaments, or witnesses, of Jesus Christ. The Doctrine and Covenants is a testament of Jesus Christ given in this dispensation. This book of scripture bears witness that Jesus is the Christ, that He lives, and that He continues to speak to prophets and guide His people today.

Ask class members to turn to the Explanatory Introduction to the Doctrine and Covenants. Have them read the last sentence in the eighth paragraph (this sentence begins with the phrase "Finally, the testimony that is given").

Point out that the Doctrine and Covenants contains powerful testimonies of the Savior and His work. Most of these are from the Savior Himself. Have class members read the following passages as examples: D&C 50:41–44 and 76:22–24.

Explain that this lesson discusses teachings in the Doctrine and Covenants about the Savior.

### **2. Jesus Christ "suffered the pain of all men, that all men might repent and come unto him."**

Display the pictures of Jesus in Gethsemane and on the cross. Explain that the Doctrine and Covenants contains many revelations that can increase our understanding of the Atonement of Jesus Christ. These revelations give us a sense of the depth of the Savior's suffering and the magnitude of the love that He and Heavenly Father have for us.

*The Savior describes His atoning sacrifice*

- Read D&C 19:16–19 with class members. Explain that this is the only scripture passage in which the Savior describes His own suffering during His atoning sacrifice. What does this passage teach about the Savior's suffering for us? Why was Jesus willing to experience such great suffering for us? (See D&C 18:10–11; 19:19, 24; 34:3.)

*Through the Atonement, we will all be resurrected*

- Read the following passages with class members: D&C 88:14–18; 93:33; Alma 11:42–44. What can we learn about the Resurrection from these passages? (Answers could include those listed below.)
  - a. Resurrection is the redemption of the soul. The spirit and the body are reunited, inseparably connected in a perfect form (D&C 88:14–16; 93:33; Alma 11:42–43).
  - b. Resurrection prepares us for the celestial glory (D&C 88:18).
  - c. Resurrection is necessary for us to receive a fulness of joy (D&C 93:33).
  - d. All people will be resurrected (Alma 11:44).

*Through the Atonement, we can be forgiven of our sins and inherit celestial glory*

- Read the following passages with class members: D&C 18:11–12; 19:16–17, 20; 58:42; 76:62–70. What do these passages teach about the blessings we can receive through the Savior’s Atonement? (Answers could include those listed below.)
  - a. We can repent of our sins and come unto Him (D&C 18:11–12).
  - b. If we repent, Christ has taken upon Himself the suffering for our sins (D&C 19:16–17, 20).
  - c. If we repent, the Lord forgives us and remembers our sins no more (D&C 58:42).
  - d. We can come forth in the first resurrection, be made perfect through Christ, and inherit celestial glory (D&C 76:62–70).

*Through the Atonement, the Savior gained perfect empathy for us in all our sorrows, pains, and afflictions*

Explain that during His life and culminating in the Atonement, the Savior suffered in a way that gave Him a perfect understanding of all our pains and afflictions.

Have class members turn to D&C 122. This section is a revelation given to the Prophet Joseph Smith while he was a prisoner in the jail at Liberty, Missouri. Point out that in the first seven verses the Lord speaks of the Prophet Joseph’s trials. Then in verse 8 the Lord speaks of Himself.

- Read D&C 122:8 with class members. In what way has the Savior “descended below” all things? (See Alma 7:11–12; D&C 62:1; 133:53. Note that the word *succor* means to help. Because the Savior has experienced all our sorrows, pains, and afflictions, He understands how we feel. He knows how to help us.) How can this knowledge help us when we experience trials?

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve said: “When . . . difficult times come to us, we can remember that Jesus had to descend below all things before He could ascend above them, and that He suffered pains and afflictions and temptations of every kind that He might be filled with mercy and know how to succor His people in their infirmities (see D&C 88:6; Alma 7:11–12)” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1995, 91; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 69).

- When have you felt the power of the Atonement in your life? What can we do to feel this power more completely?
- How can we show the Savior our gratitude for His Atonement? How should our understanding of the Atonement affect us in our daily lives?

### **3. The Doctrine and Covenants helps us understand the Savior’s roles and attributes.**

Explain that to be able to exercise faith in God, we must have “a correct idea of his character, perfections, and attributes” (in Joseph Smith, comp., *Lectures on Faith* [1985], 38). The Doctrine and Covenants helps us gain this understanding.

- What attributes of the Savior do you see in the passages we have read today? (Write class members’ answers on the chalkboard. Answers could include charity, obedience, humility, and submissiveness.)

Select some of the following scripture passages to read with class members. Discuss what each passage teaches about the Savior's roles and attributes. Summarize the information on the chalkboard.

- a. D&C 6:20–21. (If we are faithful and diligent, the Savior will encircle us in the arms of His love. He is the light that shines in darkness.)
  - b. D&C 6:32–37. (He offers us protection and comfort and is ready to bless us when we remember Him and obey His commandments.)
  - c. D&C 19:1–3. (Having done the will of the Father, He has subdued all things and retained all power. He will destroy Satan and his works. He will judge all people according to their deeds.)
  - d. D&C 29:1–2. (His arm of mercy has atoned for our sins. If we hearken to His voice and humble ourselves, He will gather us as a hen gathers her chickens.)
  - e. D&C 38:1–3. (He is the Creator of the world, and He knows all things.)
  - f. D&C 43:34. (He is the Savior of the world.)
  - g. D&C 45:3–5. (He is our Advocate with the Father.)
  - h. D&C 50:44. (He is the Good Shepherd and the Stone of Israel, a sure foundation upon which we can build.)
  - i. D&C 76:5. (He is merciful and gracious to those who fear Him, and He delights to honor those who serve Him in righteousness and truth to the end.)
  - j. D&C 93:5–19. (He is the Only Begotten of the Father. He “continued from grace to grace” until He received a fulness of the glory and power of the Father.)
  - k. D&C 133:42–52. (When He comes in power at the time of His Second Coming, those whom He has redeemed will mention His loving-kindness and goodness.)
  - l. D&C 136:22. (His arm is stretched out to save His people.)
- Why is it important for you to know these roles and attributes of the Savior? How have the revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants enriched your testimony of the Savior?

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## Conclusion

- Read D&C 19:23 with class members. How can the truths that we have discussed today help you receive peace?

As prompted by the Spirit, testify of Jesus Christ. Emphasize that because of His Atonement, we all will be resurrected. Through His Atonement, He extends to us the invitation to repent and come unto Him, receiving “peace in this world, and eternal life in the world to come” (D&C 59:23). Encourage class members to partake of all the blessings of the Atonement by exercising faith in Jesus Christ, repenting, obeying the commandments, and enduring to the end.

Suggest that as class members study the Doctrine and Covenants this year, they continue to look for what it teaches about Jesus Christ. He is the central figure in the book. The powerful witnesses and truths that are given in these revelations can enrich each person's testimony of Him.

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## Additional Teaching Ideas

### 1. “I Stand All Amazed”

In advance, study the text of the hymn “I Stand All Amazed” (*Hymns*, no. 193). Find lines in the hymn that can be supported by passages in the Doctrine and Covenants. The following examples may help you.

Lines from the hymn	Supporting passages
"I stand all amazed at the love Jesus offers me"	D&C 34:3
"For me, a sinner, he suffered, he bled and died"	D&C 19:16–19
"I marvel that he would descend from his throne divine"	D&C 88:6; 122:8
"I think of his hands pierced and bleeding to pay the debt"	D&C 6:36–37
"Such mercy, such love and devotion can I forget?"	D&C 20:77

In class, read the hymn aloud, stopping to have class members read the supporting scripture passages after the appropriate lines from the hymn.

## 2. Our “advocate with the Father” (D&C 45:3)

Write *Advocate* on the chalkboard. Explain that several times in the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord says that He is our Advocate (D&C 29:5; 45:3; 62:1; 110:4).

- What is an advocate? (Someone who pleads the cause of another.)
- Read D&C 45:3–5 with class members. Why do we need an “advocate with the Father”? In verses 4 and 5, what evidence does the Savior present to the Father to show that we should receive everlasting life? (First He speaks of His Atonement—His sufferings, death, and blood. Then He refers to our belief in Him.)

## 3. Bearing witness of Jesus Christ through His titles

Explain that the Doctrine and Covenants contains more than 60 titles for Jesus Christ, each of which invokes special respect for Him. For example, the Lord refers to Himself as “Redeemer,” “Savior,” and “the light and the life of the world.”

Have class members scan pages 174–85 in the index to the triple combination to find other titles for Jesus Christ. List on the chalkboard the titles they find.

- What do Jesus’ titles teach about His attributes and His mission?

## 4. The Light of Christ

Explain that the Light of Christ is sometimes referred to as our conscience, but it is much more than that. To help class members gain a greater understanding of the Light of Christ, have them read the second and third paragraphs under “Light of Christ” on page 725 of the Bible Dictionary. Then have them read D&C 88:6–13; 93:2; Moroni 7:13, 16–19.

- What can we learn about the Light of Christ from the Bible Dictionary and these passages? (Answers could include those listed below.)
  - a. The Light of Christ “[fills] the immensity of space” and “giveth life to all things” (D&C 88:12–13).
  - b. It is an uplifting influence that is given to every person who is born into the world (D&C 93:2).
  - c. It helps us know good from evil and invites us to do good and believe in Christ (Moroni 7:13, 16–19).
- How can we allow the Light of Christ to be a greater influence in our lives?

# “I Had Seen a Vision”

## Lesson 3

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**Purpose** To strengthen class members’ testimonies of the First Vision and of Joseph Smith’s calling as the prophet through whom God restored the fulness of the gospel to the earth.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study the following scriptures and other materials:
  - a. Joseph Smith—History 1:1–26.
  - b. *Our Heritage*, pages 1–4.
2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
3. Ask a class member to prepare to summarize the account of young Joseph Smith’s leg operation (*Our Heritage*, pages 1–2).
4. If the following pictures are available, select some of them to use during the lesson: The Prophet Joseph Smith (62002; Gospel Art Picture Kit 401); Brother Joseph (62161); Joseph Smith Seeks Wisdom in the Bible (Gospel Art Picture Kit 402); and The First Vision (62470; Gospel Art Picture Kit 403).
5. If you use the attention activity, bring a clock, a world map or globe, and an article of men’s clothing. Prepare the following labels for these items: *The right time*, *The right place*, and *The right man*.

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### Suggestions for Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Show the clock, the map or globe, and their labels to class members (see “Preparation,” item 5). Explain that this lesson discusses how the Lord prepared the right time and the right place for the restoration of His gospel after the many centuries of the Apostasy.

Show the article of men’s clothing and its label to class members. Explain that this lesson also discusses how God chose and prepared the right man—Joseph Smith—to be the prophet through whom the gospel would be restored.

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**Discussion and Application** This lesson contains more material than is possible to teach in one class period. Prayerfully select the lesson material that will best meet class members’ needs.

#### **1. After the Apostasy, God prepared the way for the Restoration.**

Explain that after Jesus Christ was crucified, His Apostles presided over the Church. But soon persecution, divisions, and apostasy increased. Within a few decades, there was a falling away from the Church, as the Apostles had

prophesied (Acts 20:28–30; 2 Thessalonians 2:1–3; 2 Timothy 4:3–4). This falling away is known as the Great Apostasy.

- What were some of the consequences of the Great Apostasy? (See D&C 1:15–16; Joseph Smith—History 1:8–9, 19, 21; Mormon 1:13–14. Answers could include those listed below.)
  - a. There was no priesthood authority on the earth.
  - b. There were no apostles or prophets on the earth.
  - c. Essential knowledge about the nature of God was lost.
  - d. The doctrines of the gospel were corrupted.
  - e. Sacred ordinances, such as baptism, were changed.
  - f. The original Church became divided into discordant groups.

The darkness of the Apostasy lasted many centuries. However, God had foreseen this and planned for the restoration of the gospel in the latter days. Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve taught that preparation for restoring the gospel began centuries before the First Vision:

“Beginning in the 14th century, the Lord began to prepare those social, educational, religious, economic, and governmental conditions under which he could more easily restore the gospel for the last time” (*Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. [1966], 717).

- Before Joseph Smith was born, what events helped prepare the way for the restoration of the gospel? (You may want to list responses on the chalkboard. Answers could include those listed below.)
  - a. The Renaissance was a rebirth of learning, particularly in literature, art, and science. Inventions such as the printing press emerged.

Elder James E. Talmage of the Quorum of the Twelve said the Renaissance was not a chance occurrence but rather “a development predetermined in the Mind of God to illumine the benighted minds of men in preparation for the restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ, which was appointed to be accomplished some centuries later” (*Jesus the Christ*, 3rd ed. [1916], 749).
  - b. Reformers such as John Wycliffe, Martin Luther, and John Calvin began to challenge the practices and teachings of existing churches, recognizing that the churches had strayed from the teachings of Christ.

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve said that Martin Luther and other reformers “were inspired to create a religious climate in which God could restore lost truths and priesthood authority” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1994, 85; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 66).
  - c. The Americas were discovered. The United States was colonized by religious people and eventually became an independent nation (1 Nephi 13:12–19).
  - d. The Constitution of the United States was established, guaranteeing religious freedom in that nation (D&C 101:77–80).

Elder Ballard said, “God inspired the earlier explorers and colonizers of America and the framers of the Constitution of the United States to develop a land and governing principles to which the gospel could be restored” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1994, 85; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 66).

## 2. God prepared Joseph Smith to be the prophet of the Restoration.

Explain that in addition to providing the right conditions for the restoration of the gospel, God provided a man to be the prophet of the Restoration. This man was Joseph Smith, who was born on 23 December 1805 in Sharon, Vermont. Display a picture of Joseph Smith. Use the following material to discuss the preparation of Joseph Smith to be the prophet of the Restoration.

### *Joseph's family helped prepare him*

Joseph Smith came from a rich spiritual heritage. His parents and grandparents were religious, patriotic, educationally minded, and of strong moral convictions. His paternal grandfather, Asael Smith, stated years before Joseph was born, "It has been borne in upon my soul that one of my descendants will promulgate a work to revolutionize the world of religious faith" (in Joseph Fielding Smith, *Essentials in Church History*, 27th ed. [1974], 25).

Joseph Smith's parents, Joseph Sr. and Lucy Mack Smith, greatly influenced his life. Both were deeply devoted to God. They were also devoted parents, teaching their children the principles of faith and righteousness.

Both of Joseph's parents had profound religious experiences. Joseph Sr. had several dreams that gave him assurances that he would enjoy the blessings of the true gospel of Jesus Christ (see Lucy Mack Smith, *History of Joseph Smith*, ed. Preston Nibley [1958], 47–50, 64–66). Once while Lucy was critically ill as a young mother, she made a covenant with God that she would serve Him completely if He would let her live to care for her family. Soon afterward she heard a voice comfort her, and she made a remarkable recovery. (See *History of Joseph Smith*, 33–35.)

Joseph Sr. and Lucy searched actively for religious truth. Both of them felt that none of the existing churches was consistent with the Church that Jesus Christ had established. For this reason, Joseph Sr. did not join any church. Lucy felt it was her duty to be baptized, so she joined the Presbyterian Church. When the gospel was restored, they both recognized the truth and embraced it.

- Why was Joseph Smith's family heritage important in helping prepare him for his mission as the prophet of the Restoration?

### *Adversity helped prepare him*

While Joseph Smith was growing up, he and his family faced many challenges. When he was seven years old, he became gravely ill with an infection in his leg. Ask the assigned class member to summarize this account from *Our Heritage*, pages 1–2.

- What can we learn about the character of young Joseph from this experience? In what ways could the trials and afflictions of Joseph's youth have helped prepare him to become the prophet of the Restoration? How have trials and afflictions helped prepare you for the responsibilities you have been given?

### *The religious atmosphere in western New York helped prepare him*

When Joseph was about 10 years old, three years of crop failures in Vermont left the Smith family in serious financial difficulty. After much deliberation, the family moved to the area of Palmyra, New York, where there was a prospect of

better farming conditions. At the time, there was great religious excitement and confusion in western New York, with many churches contending for converts.

- Why was Joseph confused about which church he should join? (See Joseph Smith—History 1:5–10.) How was Joseph’s situation like that of people today who are searching to know the truth?
- How did scripture study help Joseph resolve his confusion? (See Joseph Smith—History 1:11–12. Display the picture of Joseph Smith reading the Bible.) What can we learn from Joseph’s example? (You may want to emphasize that Joseph not only read the scriptures but also searched and pondered them and applied them in his life.) How have the scriptures helped you in times of need or confusion?

### **3. The First Vision ushered in the restoration of the gospel.**

Explain that on a spring morning in 1820, Joseph Smith went to the woods near his home to pray for guidance.

- How was Joseph’s prayer on this morning different from other prayers he had offered? (See Joseph Smith—History 1:14.) Why is private vocal prayer often helpful when we are offering up the desires of our hearts to God?
- What happened as Joseph Smith began to pray? (See Joseph Smith—History 1:15.) How was he delivered from this powerful darkness? (See Joseph Smith—History 1:16–17. Display the picture of the First Vision.) What can we learn from this experience about overcoming the influence of Satan? Why is it important to keep praying in times of darkness or trial? (Invite class members to share experiences when prayer has helped them during such difficulties.)
- Why was Joseph Smith told that he should not join any of the churches? (See Joseph Smith—History 1:18–19.)

### **4. Many truths were revealed in the First Vision.**

Emphasize that the visit of the Father and the Son to Joseph Smith is rich in doctrinal significance. President Gordon B. Hinckley said, “I submit that in the few minutes that Joseph Smith was with the Father and the Son, he learned more of the nature of God the Eternal Father and the risen Lord than all the learned minds in all their discussions through all centuries of time” (*Church News*, 24 Oct. 1998, 6).

- What are some of the truths we can learn from the First Vision? (Summarize responses on the chalkboard. Answers could include those listed below.)
  - a. God the Father and Jesus Christ live.
  - b. The Father and the Son are real, separate beings with glorified bodies of flesh and bones.
  - c. We are created in the image of God.
  - d. Satan and his power are real, but God’s power is infinitely greater.
  - e. God hears and answers prayers and cares for us.
  - f. None of the churches on earth had the fulness of Christ’s gospel.
  - g. Revelation has not ceased.

President David O. McKay, the ninth President of the Church, testified that the First Vision “answers all the [questions] regarding God and his divine personality. . . . His relation to his children is clear. His interest in humanity through authority delegated to man is apparent. The future of the work is assured. These and other glorious truths are clarified by that glorious first vision” (*Gospel Ideals* [1954], 85).

- While serving in the Quorum of the Twelve, Elder Ezra Taft Benson said, “The appearance of God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ to the boy prophet is the greatest event that has occurred in this world since the resurrection of the Master” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1971, 20; or *Ensign*, June 1971, 34). Why is it important for each of us to have a testimony of the First Vision? How has a testimony of the First Vision blessed your life?

## Conclusion

Read Joseph Smith—History 1:25–26, beginning with the words “I had actually seen a light.” Then summarize how God prepared the right time, the right place, and the right man for the restoration of the gospel. Bear your testimony of the First Vision and its importance. You may also want to share the following testimony from President Gordon B. Hinckley:

“A most remarkable manifestation occurred on a spring morning in the year 1820 when the Father and the Son appeared to the boy Joseph Smith. . . . A testimony of [that vision] has touched the hearts of millions in many lands. I add my own witness, given me by the Spirit, that the Prophet’s description of that marvelous event is true, that God the Eternal Father and the risen Lord Jesus Christ spoke with him on that occasion in a conversation as real and personal and intimate as are our conversations today” (*Be Thou an Example* [1981], 10).

## Additional Teaching Ideas

You may want to use one or both of the following ideas to supplement the suggested lesson outline.

### 1. Video presentations

If the videocassette *Teachings from the Doctrine and Covenants and Church History* (53933) is available, consider showing “A Search for the Truth,” a 16-minute segment. This segment presents the story of the conversion of Wilford Woodruff, who became the fourth President of the Church. It explains the Apostasy and the subsequent need for the Restoration.

Before class members view this video presentation, ask them to watch for the four things that Wilford Woodruff listed as he searched for the true gospel (prophets and apostles, priesthood authority, correct doctrine, and saving ordinances).

If *Doctrine and Covenants and Church History Video Presentations* (53912) is available, consider showing “The First Vision,” a 10-minute segment.

### 2. Joseph Smith’s example as a youth

Teachers of youth may want to emphasize that Joseph Smith was only 14 years old when he received the First Vision.

- How can Joseph Smith’s behavior as a youth provide an example for young people today? How can Joseph’s example help you when you struggle to know the truth? when people turn against you or ridicule you? when you have to make difficult decisions in the face of ridicule?

# “Remember the New Covenant, Even the Book of Mormon”

## Purpose

To help class members recognize the Lord’s hand in the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and to encourage them to study the Book of Mormon, follow its teachings, and share it with others.

## Preparation

1. Prayerfully study the following scriptures and other materials:
  - a. Joseph Smith—History 1:27–65; Doctrine and Covenants 3; 5; 10; 17; 20:5–15; 84:54–62.
  - b. *Our Heritage*, pages 5–10.
2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
3. Ask a class member to prepare to summarize the account of Martin Harris losing the 116 pages of manuscript. Have that person refer to the section headings for D&C 3 and 10 and to the first three paragraphs under “The Work of Translation” in *Our Heritage*, pages 7–8.
4. If the following pictures are available, prepare to use them during the lesson: Moroni Appears to Joseph Smith in His Room (62492; Gospel Art Picture Kit 404) and Joseph Smith Receives the Gold Plates (62012; Gospel Art Picture Kit 406).

## Suggestions for Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. Write the following phrases on the chalkboard. Ask class members if they know what these phrases say.

モルモン書

КНИГА МОРМОНА

몰몬경

Explain that you have written the phrase “The Book of Mormon” in Japanese, Russian, and Korean. Since its humble beginnings in this dispensation, the Book of Mormon has been a blessing in the lives of millions of people all over the world. This lesson discusses the miracle of the Book of Mormon and our responsibility to “flood the earth and [our] lives with the Book of Mormon” (Ezra Taft Benson, in Conference Report, Apr. 1989, 3; or *Ensign*, May 1989, 4).

## Discussion and Application

Prayerfully select the lesson material that will best meet class members’ needs. You may want to use two class periods to teach this lesson.

### 1. Joseph Smith’s preparation to receive and translate the Book of Mormon

- In the three years after the First Vision, Joseph Smith suffered “severe persecution” but remained true to his testimony (Joseph Smith—History 1:27). How can we remain true to our testimonies even when we face persecution?
- When Joseph was 17 years old, he was visited by Moroni. (If necessary, explain that Moroni was the last prophet to write in the Book of Mormon and had buried the gold plates in about A.D. 421.) What was Joseph praying for on the night Moroni appeared to him? (See Joseph Smith—History 1:28–29.) What can we learn from Joseph’s example when we feel “condemned for [our] weakness and imperfections”? (As appropriate, invite class members to tell how prayer has helped them when they have felt that they have disappointed God.)

Summarize Joseph Smith—History 1:30–59. Have class members read selected verses aloud. At appropriate times, display the picture of Moroni appearing to Joseph Smith and the picture of Joseph receiving the plates. You may also want to refer to map 1 on page 274 in this manual and page 29 in the *Class Member Study Guide*.

- When Joseph Smith was first shown the gold plates, he was not prepared to receive and translate them. How did the Lord prepare Joseph to receive and translate the plates? (See Joseph Smith—History 1:33–35, 42, 44–46, 53–54.) How has the Lord prepared you (or how is He preparing you now) to fulfill your responsibilities? How can you prepare yourself to fulfill future responsibilities?
- How did Joseph’s father respond when Joseph told him of Moroni’s visit? (See Joseph Smith—History 1:50.) What does this suggest about Joseph’s integrity and trustworthiness? Why is it important to support our family members in their efforts to follow the Lord? How can we better support family members and others as they follow the Lord?

### 2. The miracle of the Book of Mormon’s preservation

Explain that Satan tried to stop the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. He tempted men to try to steal the gold plates, and people continued to persecute Joseph Smith and his family (Joseph Smith—History 1:60–61). However, the Lord thwarted all of Satan’s attempts to keep the Book of Mormon from coming forth.

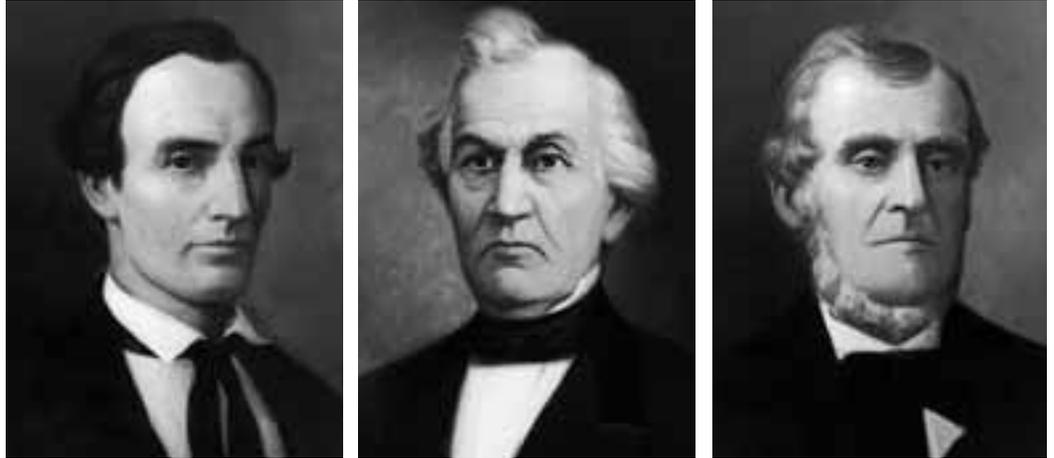
One example of the miraculous preservation of the Book of Mormon occurred when one of Joseph Smith’s scribes, Martin Harris, lost 116 pages of the trans-

lated manuscript. Ask the assigned class member to summarize this account (see “Preparation,” item 3). Then teach and discuss D&C 3 and 10, which the Lord revealed after the pages were lost.

- After the 116 pages of manuscript were lost, the Lord chastened Joseph for fearing man more than God (D&C 3:7). Joseph lost his gift of translation for a time (D&C 3:14; 10:1–2). In what way had Joseph feared man more than God? How might our actions sometimes show that we fear man more than God? (See D&C 30:1–2. One example is when we give in to peer pressure to do something wrong.) What can we do to overcome our fear of man? (For some answers to this question, see D&C 3:8; 10:5.)
- How was the Lord’s love for Joseph Smith evident after the 116 manuscript pages were lost? (See D&C 3:8–10; 10:1–3.) What experiences have shown you that if you are faithful, God will be “with you in every time of trouble”? (D&C 3:8). What experiences have shown you that “God is merciful”? (D&C 3:10).
- What was the plan of those who had stolen the 116 manuscript pages? (See D&C 10:10–19, 29–33. If Joseph had retranslated the lost material, they would have altered the words in the manuscript. They would have compared the altered original to the retranslation, trying to show that the two versions contradicted each other.)
- What had the Lord already done centuries earlier to defeat the plan of those who stole the manuscript pages? (See D&C 10:38–39; see also 1 Nephi 9:2–5; Words of Mormon 1:3–7. He had foreseen the loss of these pages. About 2,400 years earlier, He inspired Nephi, who was writing a secular history of the Nephites, to prepare a second set of records. The second set contained an account of the Nephites’ ministry during the same period of time and had greater doctrinal value than the first.)
- What did the Lord instruct the Prophet to do to spoil the plan of those who had taken the manuscript? (See D&C 10:40–45. Joseph had translated the 116 manuscript pages from Nephi’s secular history. The Lord commanded him not to retranslate that material but to translate Nephi’s second set of records.)
- What does the account of the lost manuscript pages teach about the Lord’s power? (As class members discuss this question, have them read D&C 3:1–3; 10:14, 43; and 1 Nephi 9:6.) How can this knowledge help us when we experience setbacks and disappointments?
- Have class members read D&C 3:16, 19–20 and 10:46–52, 60–66. What can we learn from these verses about the purposes of the Book of Mormon? How are these purposes being fulfilled today?

### **3. Witnesses of the Book of Mormon**

- As Joseph translated the Book of Mormon, he learned that the Lord would permit three witnesses and a few others to view the plates (see the references to these witnesses in 2 Nephi 27:12–14 and Ether 5:1–3). Who were the Three Witnesses? (See “The Testimony of Three Witnesses,” Book of Mormon.) What were they commanded to do? (See D&C 5:11–15, 24–25; 17:3, 5.) Why was their testimony important? (See Ether 5:4; D&C 5:16–18; 17:4.)



The Three Witnesses. Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris.

Explain that in addition to the Three Witnesses, eight others were shown the gold plates (“The Testimony of Eight Witnesses,” Book of Mormon). All of the Three Witnesses and three of the Eight Witnesses later left the Church. Only a few returned, but none ever denied his testimony of what he saw.

In the last year of his life, David Whitmer published this testimony in response to false accusations:

“It is recorded in the *American Encyclopaedia* and the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, that I, David Whitmer, have denied my testimony as one of the three witnesses to the divinity of the *Book of Mormon*, and that the other two witnesses, Oliver Cowdery and Martin Harris, denied their testimony to that book. I will say once more to all mankind, that I have never at any time denied that testimony or any part thereof. I also testify to the world, that neither Oliver Cowdery nor Martin Harris ever at any time denied their testimony. They both died reaffirming the truth of the divine authenticity of the *Book of Mormon*” (*Address to All Believers in Christ* [1887], 8; as quoted in B. H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of the Church*, 1:145).

Point out that the Savior is also a witness of the Book of Mormon. Read D&C 17:6 and 19:26 with class members.

- In what ways can we be witnesses of the Book of Mormon? (See Moroni 10:3–5. You may want to invite class members to share their testimonies of the Book of Mormon.)

Emphasize that the Three Witnesses and the Eight Witnesses testified of things that they saw and heard. Today millions of members of the Church testify of the Book of Mormon because they feel the witness of the Holy Ghost. While serving in the Quorum of the Twelve, Elder Gordon B. Hinckley said:

“The strength of the Church is not in . . . its thousands of houses of worship across the world, nor in its universities. . . . The strength of this church lies in the hearts of its people, in the individual testimony and conviction of the truth of this work” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1973, 73–74; or *Ensign*, July 1973, 49).

#### 4. Our duty to “remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon”

- In September 1832 the Prophet Joseph received a revelation in which the Lord said that “the whole church [was] under condemnation” (D&C 84:55). Why was the Church under condemnation? (See D&C 84:54–56.) What did Church members need to do for the condemnation to be lifted? (See D&C 84:57–58, 60–62.)

Read the following statements by President Ezra Taft Benson:

“If the early Saints were rebuked for treating the Book of Mormon lightly, are we under any less condemnation if we do the same?” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1986, 4; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 4–5).

“The Lord is not pleased with us in the manner of attention we’re giving the Book of Mormon, a new witness for Christ. We need it in our homes, we need it in our families. It was written for us today” (*Church News*, 9 Nov. 1986, 10).

- What can we do to give more attention to the Book of Mormon in our personal lives, in our families, and in our Church assignments? What blessings come to us when we give proper attention to the Book of Mormon? How have you been blessed through your study of the Book of Mormon? (In addition to asking for class members’ comments, have them read the following quotation and the sixth paragraph of the introduction to the Book of Mormon; see also the third additional teaching idea.)

President Ezra Taft Benson declared:

“There is a power in the book which will begin to flow into your lives the moment you begin a serious study of the book. You will find greater power to resist temptation. You will find the power to avoid deception. You will find the power to stay on the strait and narrow path. The scriptures are called ‘the words of life’ (D&C 84:85), and nowhere is that more true than it is of the Book of Mormon. When you begin to hunger and thirst after those words, you will find life in greater and greater abundance. . . . [You will also enjoy] increased love and harmony in the home, greater respect between parent and child, [and] increased spirituality and righteousness.”

“These promises,” President Benson assured, “are not idle promises, but exactly what the Prophet Joseph Smith meant when he said the Book of Mormon will help us draw nearer to God” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1986, 6; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 7).

- The Savior has commanded us to bear testimony of the Book of Mormon across the earth (D&C 84:62; see also the following quotation). What can each of us do to further this effort?

President Benson said: “The time is long overdue for a massive flooding of the earth with the Book of Mormon. . . . In this age of the electronic media and the mass distribution of the printed word, God will hold us accountable if we do not now move the Book of Mormon in a monumental way. We have the Book of Mormon, we have the members, we have the missionaries, we have the resources, and the world has the need. *The time is now!*” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1988, 4; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1988, 4–5).

Point out that the Book of Mormon, translated by a young prophet in humble circumstances, is now indeed flooding the earth. The Book of Mormon or selections from it have been published in more than 90 languages. More than 100 million copies have been printed.

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## Conclusion

Express appreciation for the Book of Mormon, and acknowledge the Lord's hand in the coming forth of the book. Encourage class members to give greater attention to the Book of Mormon in their lives.

Bear testimony of the impact the Book of Mormon has had in your life.

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## Additional Teaching Ideas

You may want to use one or more of the following ideas to supplement the suggested lesson outline.

### 1. Biblical prophecies that Moroni quoted to Joseph Smith

As recorded in Joseph Smith—History 1:36–49, Moroni quoted the following biblical prophecies to Joseph Smith four times. Read each prophecy with class members and discuss its meaning and fulfillment.

- a. Malachi 3 (note that Moroni quoted only part of this chapter)
- b. Malachi 4 (see also Joseph Smith—History 1:37–39)
- c. Isaiah 11 (see also D&C 113:1–6)
- d. Acts 3:22–23
- e. Joel 2:28–32

### 2. The Doctrine and Covenants: an external witness of the Book of Mormon

President Ezra Taft Benson taught, “Excluding the witnesses to the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants is by far the greatest external witness and evidence which we have from the Lord that the Book of Mormon is true” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1987, 105; or *Ensign*, May 1987, 83).

President Benson referred to 13 sections in the Doctrine and Covenants that testify of the Book of Mormon: D&C 1, 3, 5, 8, 10–11, 17–18, 20, 27, 42, 84, and 135. You may want to study these sections as you prepare to teach the lesson.

### 3. Drawing nearer to God through the Book of Mormon

The Prophet Joseph Smith said, “I told the brethren that the Book of Mormon was the most correct of any book on earth, and the keystone of our religion, and a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than by any other book” (*History of the Church*, 4:461).

President Ezra Taft Benson cited this quotation, then asked: “Is there not something deep in our hearts that longs to draw nearer to God, to be more like Him in our daily walk, to feel His presence with us constantly? If so, then the Book of Mormon will help us do so more than any other book” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1986, 6; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 7).

#### 4. “Translated by the gift and power of God” (D&C 135:3)

Joseph Smith completed the translation of the Book of Mormon in about 65 working days (“I Have a Question,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1988, 46–47). Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve commented on the speed of this process:

“One able LDS translator in Japan, surrounded by reference books, language dictionaries, and translator colleagues ready to help if needed, indicated that he considered an output of one careful, final page a day to be productive. And he is retranslating from earlier Japanese to modern Japanese! More than 50 able English scholars labored for seven years, using previous translations, to produce the King James Version of the Bible, averaging about one precious page per day. The Prophet Joseph Smith would sometimes produce 10 pages per day! (see the bulletin *Insights: An Ancient Window* [Provo, Utah: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (F.A.R.M.S.), Feb. 1986], 1).

“A second marvel of the Book of Mormon translation process is that from what we know, rarely would Joseph go back, review, or revise what had already been done. There was a steady flow in the translation. . . .

“Emma Smith said of the inspired process: ‘After meals, or after interruptions, [Joseph] would at once begin where he had left off, without either seeing the manuscript or having any portion of it read to him’ (“Last Testimony of Sister Emma,” *Saints’ Herald*, 1 Oct. 1879, 290). One who has dictated and been interrupted must usually resume by inquiring ‘Now, where were we?’ Not so with the Prophet!

“If one were manufacturing a text, he would constantly need to cross-check himself, to edit, and to revise for consistency. Had the Prophet dictated and revised extensively, there would be more evidence of it. But there was no need to revise divinely supplied text. Whatever the details of the translation process, we are discussing a process that was truly astonishing!” (“By the Gift and Power of God,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1997, 39–40).

As the Book of Mormon is translated into many languages today, miracles continue. Relate the following story shared by Priscilla Sampson-Davis, a member of the Church in Ghana:

“About two years after my baptism, I had a vision. . . . I saw that I was at a sacrament meeting, and somebody in white apparel came and stood in front of the stand and called me. I came forward and stood by him, and then he asked me to turn around and look at the faces of the people, to see if they were all enjoying the service. I looked, and I said I couldn’t see any difference in their faces. Then the man in white asked me to look carefully. I saw that some of those in the congregation had bent down their heads. The man asked me why those people were not joining in the singing. I told him that they couldn’t read English, and so they couldn’t sing, so they bent down their heads. He asked me if I wouldn’t like to help my sisters and brothers . . . so that they too could join in singing praises to our Heavenly Father. Though I could speak Fante [the dialect spoken by the people], I couldn’t write it well. But I didn’t say no; I said that I would try, that I would do my best. Then the vision passed away. Immediately I got up and took a paper and pencil and started translating the song ‘Redeemer of Israel’ into Fante.”

Sister Sampson-Davis translated the hymns, some missionary pamphlets, and the *Gospel Principles* manual. Then, under assignment, she assisted in the translation of the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price. She observed: “It says in the scriptures that in the last days people will hear the gospel in their [own] tongues. This is what the Lord wanted me to do, and it is by his grace that I do it” (“An Instrument in His Hands,” in *All Are Alike unto God*,” ed. E. Dale LeBaron [1990], 40–42).

#### 5. “Do not run faster or labor more than you have strength” (D&C 10:4)

- As Joseph faced the immense work of translating the Book of Mormon, what counsel did the Lord give him? (See D&C 10:4–5.) How can this counsel help us as we face difficult tasks or responsibilities?

#### 6. Video presentations

If the videocassette *Teachings from the Doctrine and Covenants and Church History* (53933) is available, consider showing “The Works and Designs of God.” This 13-minute segment is about the story of the lost 116 pages of manuscript. Use the presentation to emphasize that “the works, and the designs, and the purposes of God cannot be frustrated, neither can they come to naught” (D&C 3:1). To discuss this principle, use the questions in the second section of this lesson.

If *Doctrine and Covenants and Church History Video Presentations* (53912) is available, consider showing “Parley P. Pratt Finds the Book of Mormon,” an 11-minute segment. After showing the presentation, ask the following questions:

- Do you find as much joy from reading the Book of Mormon as Parley P. Pratt did when he first read it? What can you do to make the Book of Mormon a more central part of your life? (You may want to suggest that class members ponder these questions silently.)
- How have you seen President Benson’s promises fulfilled?

Lesson  
**5**

# “This Is the Spirit of Revelation”

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**Purpose** To help class members understand how to prepare to receive personal revelation and to encourage them to do so.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study Doctrine and Covenants 6, 8, 9, Joseph Smith—History 1:8–17, and the other scriptures in this lesson.
2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
3. If you use the attention activity, prepare to display a few pictures of prophets receiving revelation, such as Moses and the Burning Bush (62239; Gospel Art Picture Kit 107); Boy Samuel Called by the Lord (62498; Gospel Art Picture Kit 111); Daniel Interprets Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream (62531; Gospel Art Picture Kit 115); The Brother of Jared Sees the Finger of the Lord (62478; Gospel Art Picture Kit 318); and The First Vision (62470; Gospel Art Picture Kit 403). You may also want to obtain photographs of a few class members.

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**Suggestions for Lesson Development**

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson:

- Display the pictures of prophets (see “Preparation,” item 3). Explain that each of these pictures portrays something similar. What is it? (Each portrays a prophet receiving revelation.)

Share the following statement from the Prophet Joseph Smith: “God hath not revealed anything to Joseph, but what He will make known unto the Twelve, and even the least Saint may know all things as fast as he is able to bear them” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 149).

Emphasize that we do not have to be prophets to receive revelation from the Lord. Although we do not receive revelation to guide the Church, we can receive revelation to help us learn gospel truths and to guide us in our personal lives and in our responsibilities in the home and in the Church. If you obtained photographs of class members, display them next to the pictures of the prophets.

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**Discussion and Application** Prayerfully select the lesson material that will best meet class members’ needs. Discuss how the scriptures apply to daily life. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

Explain that lessons 5 and 6 are both about personal revelation. The Doctrine and Covenants greatly enlightens us on this important subject. This lesson focuses on why we need personal revelation and how we prepare to receive it. Lesson 6 focuses on how to recognize personal revelation from the Holy

Ghost. The reading assignment for both lessons includes D&C 6, 8, and 9, which Joseph Smith received while translating the Book of Mormon with Oliver Cowdery as his scribe. Although the context of D&C 9 has to do with Oliver Cowdery's attempt to translate the Book of Mormon, the principles also apply to other revelation.

### 1. Our need for personal revelation

Explain that one of our greatest blessings is that the heavens are open and the Lord communicates with His children through continuing revelation. "Divine revelation is one of the grandest concepts and principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ, for without it, man could not know of the things of God. . . . Continuous revelation from God to his saints . . . makes possible daily guidance along true paths and leads the faithful soul to complete and eternal salvation in the celestial kingdom. . . . Without revelation, all would be guesswork, darkness, and confusion" (Bible Dictionary, "Revelation," 762).

- Elder Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve said, "No one of us can survive in the world of today, much less in what it soon will become, without personal inspiration" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1991, 29; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1991, 23). Why do you think personal revelation is so important in our day? (Answers could include those listed below.)
  - a. Personal revelation is the way we receive our testimonies of Jesus Christ, His gospel, and the divine calling of Joseph Smith.
  - b. Personal revelation is the way we learn divine truths.
  - c. Personal revelation is the way we receive guidance beyond our own limited understanding in answering life's questions, meeting challenges, and making decisions.
- What are some decisions or situations in which personal revelation can help us? (Invite class members to tell how personal revelation has helped in their family responsibilities, their Church responsibilities, and other areas of their lives.)

### 2. Understanding what we should do to receive revelation

Explain that it is important for us to understand how we prepare to receive personal revelation. Have class members read the following italicized scripture references. Then have them identify what those scriptures teach about how we can prepare to receive personal revelation (suggested answers are in parentheses). Summarize responses on the chalkboard. Then discuss the responses.

A. *Doctrine and Covenants 9:8; Joseph Smith—History 1:8–10. (Study the matter in your mind.)*

- What can we do to study out a question in our own minds?

You may want to have class members study Joseph Smith—History 1:8 to find statements that show how Joseph Smith studied out his question in his mind. A few key statements are listed below:

- a. "My mind was called up to serious reflection."
- b. "My feelings were deep and often poignant."
- c. "I attended their several meetings as often as occasion would permit."

Point out that Joseph Smith gave deep thought to settling the question of which church was right. He also invested much time and effort, attending meetings, studying the scriptures, and searching longer than two years for an answer. Suggest that class members look to Joseph Smith as an example of how to study matters out in their minds as they seek revelation.

- Why does the Lord expect us to study matters out in our own minds before receiving revelation? (Answers could include that the Lord intends for us to be active, not passive, as we seek revelation from Him. He also expects us to use our agency. We grow as we use the gifts and resources He has provided to help us study matters out in our minds.) How has studying matters out in your mind helped you grow spiritually?

*B. Doctrine and Covenants 138:1–11; Joseph Smith—History 1:11–12. (Ponder and meditate on the scriptures and the teachings of latter-day prophets.)* Explain that pondering the scriptures was the catalyst for both of the revelations recorded in these passages.

- Why is it important to study and ponder the scriptures when we seek revelation? How has scripture study helped you when you have sought revelation from the Lord?

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve explained:

“Scripture reading may . . . lead to current revelation on whatever [subject] the Lord wishes to communicate to the reader at that time. We do not overstate the point when we say that the scriptures can be a Urim and Thummim to assist each of us to receive personal revelation.

“Because we believe that scripture reading can help us receive revelation, we are encouraged to read the scriptures again and again. By this means, we obtain access to what our Heavenly Father would have us know and do in our personal lives today. That is one reason Latter-day Saints believe in *daily* scripture study” (“Scripture Reading and Revelation,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1995, 8).

*C. Doctrine and Covenants 6:5, 14; 8:1; 42:61; 88:63–64. (Inquire of the Lord in faith, with an honest heart, believing that you will receive.)*

Elder Boyd K. Packer said, “No message appears in scripture more times, in more ways than ‘Ask, and ye shall receive’” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1991, 26; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1991, 21). Praying with faith is a vital part of the process of receiving revelation. Point out that most of the revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants are answers to questions that the Prophet Joseph Smith asked the Lord.

- What does it mean to “ask in faith”? (D&C 8:1; see also 1 Nephi 15:11; Moroni 10:4).

The following questions from President Spencer W. Kimball can help us understand what it means to pray with faith: “Do you offer a few trite words and worn-out phrases, or do you talk intimately to the Lord? Do you pray occasionally when you should be praying regularly, often, constantly? . . . When you pray, do you just speak, or do you also listen? . . . Do you give thanks or merely ask for favors?” (“Prayer,” *New Era*, Mar. 1978, 17).

- What does it mean to ask “with an honest heart”? (D&C 8:1; answers could include those listed on the next page).

- a. We should honestly seek to understand the Lord's will and ask only for those things that are in accordance with it.
- b. We should ensure that our motives for asking are pure.
- c. We should be repentant.
- Read Joseph Smith—History 1:13–16 with class members. What can we learn about prayer from this passage? (Answers could include the importance of praying vocally, kneeling in prayer, offering up the desires of our hearts instead of merely speaking words, and exerting all our powers to call upon God.)
- What does the Lord promise as we ask in faith, with an honest heart? (See D&C 6:14; 42:61.) How have these promises been fulfilled in your life?

*D. Doctrine and Covenants 63:23; 76:5–10; 93:1, 28; 101:7–8. (Be obedient and serve God.)*

- Why is obedience important as we seek revelation from God?  
Elder Dallin H. Oaks taught, “The way to revelation is righteousness” (*The Lord’s Way* [1991], 34). He also taught, “We cannot have the companionship of the Holy Ghost—the medium of individual revelation—if we are in transgression or if we are angry or if we are in rebellion against God’s chosen authorities” (“Teaching and Learning by the Spirit,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1997, 9).

*E. Doctrine and Covenants 5:24; 19:23; 112:10; 136:32–33. (Be meek and humble.)*

- Why is humility important as we seek revelation from God?  
David Whitmer recalled that one morning when Joseph Smith was getting ready to resume translating the Book of Mormon, “something went wrong about the house and he was put out about it. Something that Emma, his wife, had done. Oliver and I went upstairs and Joseph came up soon after to continue the translation but he could not do anything. He could not translate a single syllable. He went downstairs, out into the orchard, and made supplication to the Lord; was gone about an hour—came back to the house, and asked Emma’s forgiveness and then came upstairs where we were and then the translation went on all right. He could do nothing save he was humble and faithful” (quoted in B. H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of the Church*, 1:131).

*F. Doctrine and Covenants 25:10; 30:2. (Focus on the things of God rather than the things of the world.)*

- Why is it important to focus on “the things of [God]” rather than “the things of the earth” as we seek revelation? (D&C 30:2). How can we free ourselves from the concerns and noise of the world as we seek revelation?

Elder Boyd K. Packer taught:

“Inspiration comes more easily in peaceful settings. Such words as *quiet, still, peaceable, Comforter* abound in the scriptures. . . .

“The world grows increasingly noisy. Clothing and grooming and conduct are looser and sloppier and more disheveled. Raucous music, with obscene lyrics blasted through amplifiers while lights flash psychedelic colors, characterizes

the drug culture. Variations of these things are gaining wide acceptance and influence over our youth. . . .

“This trend to more noise, more excitement, more contention, less restraint, less dignity, less formality is not coincidental nor innocent nor harmless.

“The first order issued by a commander mounting a military invasion is the jamming of the channels of communication of those he intends to conquer.

“Irreverence suits the purposes of the adversary by obstructing the delicate channels of revelation in both mind and spirit” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1991, 27–28; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1991, 21–22).

While serving in the Presidency of the Seventy, Elder Neal A. Maxwell taught:

“Divine guidance is so crucial . . . that we need to go out of our way to put ourselves in a situation in which such special help can be given. President David O. McKay spoke of how the morning hours, before we are cluttered with the cares of day, are especially conducive to inspiration. Others have felt that solitude and reading the scriptures can create an atmosphere conducive to the Spirit and can be developed. After all, to read the words of Christ already before us is a good thing to do before asking for more” (*Wherefore, Ye Must Press Forward* [1977], 121).

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## Conclusion

Emphasize the importance of personal revelation in our lives. Testify that every member of the Church may receive revelation through the Holy Ghost. Encourage class members to prepare themselves to receive this divine guidance.

# “I Will Tell You in Your Mind and in Your Heart, by the Holy Ghost”

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<b>Purpose</b>	To help class members learn to recognize personal revelation through the Holy Ghost and to encourage them to seek this blessing in their lives.
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<b>Preparation</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Prayerfully study Doctrine and Covenants 6, 8, 9, 11, and the other scriptures in this lesson.</li> <li>2. Review the material for this lesson in the <i>Class Member Study Guide</i> (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.</li> <li>3. If you use the attention activity, bring a radio to class.</li> </ol>
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<b>Suggestions for Lesson Development</b>	<p><b>Attention Activity</b></p> <p>As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show a radio to the class but do not turn it on. Why can't we hear what is being broadcast?</li> <li>• Turn on the radio but do not tune it to a station. What must we do before we can hear a radio station clearly? How can listening to the Holy Ghost be compared to finding a radio station? (Making the effort to seek the Holy Ghost's guidance may be compared to turning on the radio. Doing what is necessary to receive the whisperings of the Holy Ghost may be compared to tuning the radio to a station or repairing the radio if necessary.)</li> </ul> <p>Explain that this lesson is intended to help class members learn how to recognize personal revelation from the Holy Ghost.</p>
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<b>Discussion and Application</b>	<p>Prayerfully select the lesson material that will best meet class members' needs. Discuss how the selected scriptures apply to daily life. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.</p> <p>Remind class members that this is the second of two lessons about personal revelation. Lesson 5 discussed how to prepare to receive personal revelation. This lesson discusses how to recognize personal revelation.</p> <p><b>1. Understanding how the Holy Ghost communicates with us</b></p> <p>Explain that revelation can come in many ways. Some of these include appearances by the Lord or His messengers, voices from the Lord or His messengers, visions, and dreams. Usually, however, revelation comes as the Holy Ghost communicates thoughts to our minds and feelings in our hearts. The Holy Ghost is a member of the Godhead. He is a revelator who teaches, comforts, warns, strengthens, and guides us.</p>
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Explain that the Holy Ghost communicates with us in a variety of ways. Have class members read the following italicized scripture references. Then have them identify what those scriptures teach about how the Holy Ghost communicates with us (suggested answers are in parentheses). Summarize responses on the chalkboard. Then discuss the responses.

A. *Doctrine and Covenants* 8:2–3; 85:6. (He uses a still, small voice to communicate to our minds and hearts.) See also 1 Kings 19:12; 1 Nephi 17:45; Helaman 5:30.

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve taught: “Visions do happen. Voices are heard from beyond the veil. I know this. But these experiences are exceptional. . . . Most of the revelation that comes to leaders and members of the Church comes by the still, small voice or by a feeling rather than by a vision or a voice that speaks specific words we can hear. I testify to the reality of that kind of revelation, which I have come to know as a familiar, even daily, experience to guide me in the work of the Lord” (“Teaching and Learning by the Spirit,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1997, 14).

Elder Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve taught: “These delicate, refined spiritual communications are not seen with our eyes nor heard with our ears. And even though it is described as a voice, it is a voice that one feels more than one hears” (*That All May Be Edified* [1982], 335).

- Why is it important to understand this principle of how the Holy Ghost communicates? What are the dangers of expecting divine communication to come in more dramatic or spectacular ways?

Elder Dallin H. Oaks cautioned:

“Some [people] have looked exclusively for the great manifestations that are recorded in the scriptures and have failed to recognize the still, small voice that is given to them. . . . We need to know that the Lord rarely speaks loudly. His messages almost always come in a whisper. . . .

“Not understanding these principles of revelation, some people postpone acknowledging their testimony until they have experienced a miraculous event. They fail to realize that with most people . . . gaining a testimony is not an event but a process” (*Ensign*, Mar. 1997, 11–12, 14).

B. *Doctrine and Covenants* 6:15; 11:13–14. (He enlightens our minds.)

- In what ways does the Spirit enlighten our minds?

Answers could include that the Spirit can enlighten our minds with new ideas or insights, flashes of inspiration, and strong feelings or impressions (see, for example, D&C 128:1). The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that revelation may come as “sudden strokes of ideas” that flow into our minds as “pure intelligence” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 151).

Invite class members to tell of experiences when the Holy Ghost has enlightened their minds with new ideas or insights, flashes of inspiration, or strong feelings or impressions.

C. *Doctrine and Covenants* 6:22–23. (He brings peace to our minds.)

Explain that Oliver Cowdery stayed in the home of Joseph Smith’s parents for a time before meeting the Prophet. During this time, Oliver had prayed and

received a peaceful assurance that Joseph's calling and work were divine. Oliver then traveled to Harmony, Pennsylvania, and began his labors as scribe for Joseph in the translation of the Book of Mormon. Soon thereafter, Oliver desired a "further witness" of the assurance he had received earlier (D&C 6:22).

- What did the Lord reveal to Oliver Cowdery about his desire for a "further witness" of the Prophet's divine mission? (See D&C 6:22–23.) Invite class members to tell of experiences when the Spirit has spoken peace to their minds. How can we become more trusting of the peace that the Spirit speaks to our minds?

*D. Doctrine and Covenants 9:7–8. (He may cause a burning in the bosom.)* See also Luke 24:32.

Point out that although the context of D&C 9 has to do with Oliver Cowdery's attempt to translate the Book of Mormon, the principles also apply to personal revelation. Emphasize that a burning in the bosom is only one way the Holy Ghost can communicate with us. You may want to use the following quotations to help class members understand this way in which the Spirit communicates.

President Boyd K. Packer explained: "This burning in the bosom is not purely a physical sensation. It is more like a warm light shining within your being" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1994, 77; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 60).

Elder Dallin H. Oaks said: "I have met persons who told me they have never had a witness from the Holy Ghost because they have never felt their bosom 'burn within' them. What does a 'burning in the bosom' mean? Does it need to be a feeling of caloric heat, like the burning produced by combustion? If that is the meaning, I have never had a burning in the bosom. Surely, the word 'burning' in this scripture signifies a feeling of comfort and serenity" (*Ensign*, Mar. 1997, 13).

*E. Doctrine and Covenants 98:12. (He often reveals things "line upon line, precept upon precept" rather than all at once.)*

Explain that we usually receive revelation in accordance with our preparation to receive it. As we become more prepared, more is revealed to us. Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve taught:

"When we seek inspiration to help make decisions, the Lord gives gentle promptings. These require us to think, to exercise faith, to work, to struggle at times, and to act. Seldom does the whole answer to a decisively important matter or complex problem come all at once. More often, it comes a piece at a time, without the end in sight" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1989, 40; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1989, 32).

Invite class members to share experiences of how they have received divine guidance line upon line, or step by step.

## 2. Cautions about personal revelation

Have class members read the following italicized scripture references. Then have them identify the caution those scriptures give about personal revelation (suggested answers are in parentheses). Summarize responses on the chalkboard.

A. *Doctrine and Covenants 109:44.* (We should pray that the Lord's will be done—and be willing to submit our will to His.) See also Matthew 6:10.

- Why is it important to submit our will to God's will when we seek personal revelation?
- How can we recognize when God answers "no"? (Answers could include that we will have negative feelings, confusion, feelings of unrest and uneasiness, or a "stupor of thought" [D&C 9:9]. Invite class members to share experiences with receiving such feelings.)
- How should we respond when a sincere prayer about something we desire very much is not answered the way we want? How can such experiences help us?

B. *Doctrine and Covenants 88:68.* (We should remember that revelation will come in the Lord's own time and way.)

Explain that we do not always receive revelation at the time or in the way we expect. If we try to force revelation to come when and how we want it, we may be deceived. Elder Dallin H. Oaks taught:

"The Lord will speak to us through the Spirit in his own time and in his own way. Many people do not understand this principle. They believe that when they are ready and when it suits their convenience, they can call upon the Lord and he will immediately respond, even in the precise way they have prescribed. Revelation does not come that way. . . .

"The principle stated in [D&C 88:68] applies to every communication from our Heavenly Father: 'It shall be in his own time, and in his own way, and according to his own will.' We cannot force spiritual things" (*Ensign*, Mar. 1997, 10–11).

C. *Doctrine and Covenants 28:2, 6–7; 43:2–4.* (We receive revelation according to our stewardship and responsibilities.)

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught, "It is contrary to the economy of God for any member of the Church, or any one, to receive instruction for those in authority, higher than themselves" (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 21).

Shortly before his call as an Apostle, Dallin H. Oaks explained: "Our Heavenly Father's house is a house of order. . . . Only the President of the Church receives revelation to guide the entire Church. . . . The person who receives revelation for the ward is the bishop. . . . Individuals can receive revelation to guide their own lives. But when one person purports to receive revelation for another person outside his or her own area of responsibility—such as a Church member who claims to have revelation to guide the entire Church or a person who claims to have a revelation to guide another person over whom he or she has no presiding authority according to the order of the Church—you can be sure that such revelations are not from the Lord" ("Revelation," *New Era*, Sept. 1982, 45–46).

- Why is this principle important for governing the Church? Why is it important to understand in our relationships with other people? (If it is appropriate for your class, you may want to refer to the second additional teaching idea for one suggestion about how to develop this discussion.)

*D. Doctrine and Covenants 11:12–14; 50:23–24. (We should discern whether the revelation has come from God.)*

Explain that it is important for us to discern whether a revelation is truly from God. Sometimes what we think is a revelation may be a projection of our own desires. And sometimes false revelations may come from Satan.

- How can we discern whether a revelation has come from God? (See D&C 11:12–14; 50:23–24. Answers could include that revelations from God will be in accordance with scripture and the counsel of the living prophets. They will be edifying. They will not lead us to do something that is contrary to the principles of righteousness.)

The First Presidency said: “When . . . inspiration conveys something out of harmony with the accepted revelations of the Church or contrary to the decisions of its constituted authorities, Latter-day Saints may know that it is not of God, no matter how plausible it may appear. . . . Anything at discord with that which comes from God through the head of the Church is not to be received as authoritative or reliable” (in James R. Clark, comp., *Messages of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. [1965–75], 4:285).

### 3. When revelation is not received or recognized

- What should we do when personal revelation does not come when we desire it? (Answers could include those listed below.)
  - a. Be patient and continue to wait faithfully on the Lord (D&C 98:2). He will answer in His time. Exercising patience helps us grow spiritually and develop attributes of godliness. You may want to read the second paragraph of the letter that is quoted in Official Declaration 2 (pages 293–94 in the Doctrine and Covenants), pointing out that even prophets must exercise patience as they seek divine guidance.
  - b. Increase our efforts to be in tune spiritually so we can receive and recognize the whisperings of the Spirit.
  - c. Increase our efforts to study and pray, recognizing that we may not have done this as long, as faithfully, or as honestly as we should.
  - d. Be more faithful in obeying the commandments (Isaiah 59:2).
  - e. Set the matter aside for a while. Flashes of inspiration often come when we least expect them, while our minds are no longer consumed by the matter.
  - f. Recognize that we may be seeking counsel on matters that we should determine for ourselves, using our best judgment based on study and reason. In these cases the Lord may leave us to decide on our own (for examples, see D&C 58:25–28; 60:5; 61:22; 62:5). The Lord often allows us to make our own decisions in righteousness.
  - g. Evaluate whether we may have received an answer already but have not accepted it because it was not what we hoped for or expected. If we insist on what we want, we may close off the Spirit’s communication with us.

Elder Boyd K. Packer counseled:

“Sometimes you may struggle with a problem and not get an answer. What could be wrong? It may be that you are not doing anything wrong. It may be

that you have not done the right things long enough. Remember, you cannot force spiritual things. Sometimes we are confused simply because we won't take no for an answer. . . .

"Put difficult questions in the back of your minds and go about your lives. Ponder and pray quietly and persistently about them.

"The answer may not come as a lightning bolt. It may come as a little inspiration here and a little there, 'line upon line, precept upon precept' (D&C 98:12).

"Some answers will come from reading the scriptures, some from hearing speakers. And, occasionally, when it is important, some will come by very direct and powerful inspiration. The promptings will be clear and unmistakable" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1979, 29–30; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1979, 21).

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## Conclusion

Emphasize that each of us has the privilege and responsibility to become fluent in the language of the Spirit. Encourage class members to make the effort necessary to receive and recognize the whisperings of the Holy Ghost. Testify that as we prepare ourselves and listen carefully, we will receive "revelation upon revelation" through the Holy Ghost (D&C 42:61).

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## Additional Teaching Ideas

### 1. Teaching children about personal revelation

If you are teaching adults, you may want to discuss how to teach the principle of personal revelation to children.

### 2. Caution about revelation for marriage

The following caution from Elder John H. Groberg of the Seventy explains an important principle of seeking divine guidance about whom to marry:

"I would . . . caution you that you cannot receive a one-sided revelation from God in regards to an eternal marriage. Only as both parties feel the same way can you have the assurance that it is from the Lord. Those who try to force another's free will into their supposed-revelation mold are doing a great disservice to themselves and to their friends" ("What Are You Doing Here?" *New Era*, Jan. 1987, 37–38).

### 3. President Joseph F. Smith's process of receiving his testimony

Share President Joseph F. Smith's account of how he received his testimony:

"When I as a boy first started out in the ministry, I would frequently go out and ask the Lord to show me some marvelous thing, in order that I might receive a testimony. But the Lord withheld marvels from me, and showed me the truth, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, until he made me to know the truth from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet, and until doubt and fear had been absolutely purged from me. He did not have to send an angel from the heavens to do this, nor did he have to speak with the trump of an archangel. By the whisperings of the still small voice of the Spirit of the living God, he gave to me the testimony I possess. And by this principle and power he will give to all the children of men a knowledge of the truth" (*Gospel Doctrine*, 5th ed. [1939], 7).

# “The First Principles and Ordinances of the Gospel”

Lesson  
**7**

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**Purpose** To help class members understand and seek the blessings that come from the first principles and ordinances of the gospel: faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, repentance, baptism, and confirmation.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study the scriptures in this lesson.
2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
3. If the following pictures are available, place them at the front of the room before the lesson begins: The Lord Jesus Christ (62572; Gospel Art Picture Kit 240); Baptism (Gospel Art Picture Kit 601); and The Gift of the Holy Ghost (Gospel Art Picture Kit 602).
4. If you use the attention activity, bring a piece of cloth to use as a blindfold.

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## Suggestions for Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Ask a class member to volunteer to come forward. Blindfold the volunteer and ask him or her to write the following phrase on the chalkboard: *Jesus is the light of the world*. Remove the blindfold and ask the person to write the same phrase again on the chalkboard. Then have the person sit down.

- How is sinning like putting on a blindfold? How is exercising faith in Jesus Christ and repenting of our sins like removing the blindfold? What can we see more clearly when we repent?

Explain that this lesson discusses the first principles and ordinances of the gospel. Through faith, repentance, baptism, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, we are better able to see our eternal path and purpose while in mortality.

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**Discussion and Application** Prayerfully select the lesson material that will best meet class members' needs. You may want to use two class periods to teach this lesson.

Explain that the Lord restored the gospel through the Prophet Joseph Smith “line upon line, precept upon precept” (D&C 128:21). Some of the first truths to be restored were the first principles and ordinances of the gospel. Invite a class member to recite the fourth article of faith. List the first principles and ordinances on the chalkboard.

### **1. Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the first principle of the gospel.**

Point out that the restoration of the gospel began with an act of faith on the part of Joseph Smith (Joseph Smith—History 1:11–14). The appearance of Moroni

also occurred in response to an act of faith by Joseph, who recorded that he had “full confidence in obtaining a divine manifestation” as he prayed for forgiveness (Joseph Smith—History 1:29).

- What does it mean to have faith in Jesus Christ? Why is it important that we center our faith in Jesus Christ?
- How can we strengthen our faith in Jesus Christ? (See D&C 19:23; 88:118; Alma 32:27. Emphasize that we strengthen faith gradually, not through a single experience. Point out also that we must nurture our faith constantly to keep it strong.) As appropriate, invite class members to share experiences that have helped them strengthen their faith in Christ.
- What are some circumstances in daily life that require us to exercise faith in Christ? How has faith helped you overcome discouragement, weaknesses, or other difficulties? How can faith in Christ strengthen our relationships with others? (Discuss specific types of relationships, such as with a spouse, a child, a parent, a ward member, or a neighbor.)
- How can we demonstrate our faith in Christ? (See D&C 20:69; James 2:14–17.) How does faith in Christ affect our desire to do good works?
- Read D&C 8:10 with class members. What can we accomplish *without* faith? What can we accomplish *with* faith? (For some answers to this question, see D&C 35:9; 42:48–51; 63:9–11; Moroni 7:33.) How have you seen the power of faith manifested?
- One frequently repeated message in the Doctrine and Covenants is the importance of praying with faith. For example, in D&C 10:46–52 the Lord says that the Book of Mormon was preserved because the ancient prophets had “faith in their prayers” that it would be preserved. What is the role of faith in our prayers?

## **2. Through sincere repentance, we can partake of the blessings of the Atonement.**

Explain that repentance is a major theme in the Doctrine and Covenants. The Lord teaches the doctrine of repentance and repeatedly emphasizes the need to repent. He promises great blessings to those who repent—and punishments for those who do not.

- What is repentance? (See D&C 58:42–43. Repentance is the process of becoming cleansed from our sins and receiving forgiveness for them through the power of the Savior’s Atonement. To repent, we must confess and forsake our sins and turn away from evil. We must also turn our heart and will to God, sincerely striving to obey His commandments. To discuss the process of repentance, see the second additional teaching idea.)
- What is the difference between true repentance and merely breaking a bad habit or changing a behavior?

President Ezra Taft Benson explained: “Repentance means more than simply a reformation of behavior. . . . True repentance is based on and flows from faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no other way. True repentance involves a change of heart and not just a change of behavior (see Alma 5:13)” (*The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson* [1988], 71).

Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve taught that “repentance requires both turning away from evil and turning to God” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1991, 40; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1991, 30).

- Read D&C 18:11–13 and 19:16–19 with class members. What do these passages teach about the Savior’s love for us? Why do we need the Savior’s Atonement to be forgiven of our sins? (See also 2 Nephi 2:6–9.) Why is it necessary that we repent to be forgiven of our sins?

Explain that when we sin, we become unclean and subject to the punishments required by the law of justice. Being imperfect, we cannot become clean again or meet the demands of justice on our own. By atoning for our sins, the Savior took upon Himself the punishments required by the law of justice and is able to offer the mercy and forgiveness we need to become clean. These blessings of the Atonement are available to us only on the condition that we repent (Alma 7:14).

- Why is faith in Jesus Christ necessary for us to truly repent?
- Write *Consequences of Not Repenting* on the chalkboard. What are the consequences of not repenting of our sins? (Have class members read the following scriptures and identify the consequences: D&C 1:33, 19:17–18, and 29:17. List these consequences on the chalkboard. Other consequences could include estrangement from God and others, guilt, low feelings of self-worth, rationalizing other sins, and being unforgiving.)
- Write *Blessings of True Repentance* on the chalkboard. What does the Lord promise as we truly repent of our sins? (Have class members read the following scriptures and identify the promises: D&C 1:32, 58:42, and 109:53. List these promises on the chalkboard.) Invite class members to tell how repentance has blessed their lives. (*Note:* you may want to caution class members not to give detailed confessions of past sins.)
- Why do we sometimes find it difficult to forgive ourselves or others even though the Lord has promised to forgive us when we repent?
- How can we become more repentant? Why do we sometimes procrastinate our repentance? How can we overcome any pride, discouragement, complacency, or anything else that may keep us from repenting?

Elder Neal A. Maxwell taught: “Repentance is a rescuing, not a dour doctrine. It is available to the gross sinner as well as to the already good individual striving for incremental improvement” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1991, 40; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1991, 30). Emphasize that even though repentance can be a difficult process, it can also bring great joy as we turn our hearts from sin to God.

### 3. Baptism is an essential ordinance.

Explain that faith and repentance lead to baptism, the first ordinance of the gospel. In the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord revealed the purposes, qualifications, and instructions for baptism. Through the Prophet Joseph Smith, John the Baptist restored the priesthood authority that is necessary to perform this ordinance (see lesson 8).

- What are the purposes of baptism? (See D&C 18:22; 49:13–14. The purposes include showing our commitment to the Savior, receiving a remission of sins,

becoming members of the Church, entering the path that leads to exaltation, and preparing to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. See also 2 Nephi 9:23; 31:10–13, 17; Mosiah 18:17.) Invite class members to share their feelings about their baptism.

- Read D&C 20:37 with class members. What qualifications must a person meet to be baptized? What covenants do we make with God when we are baptized? (See also Mosiah 18:8–10.) How can we improve our commitment to keep the promises we made to the Lord when we were baptized?
- What does baptism symbolize? (See D&C 76:51; John 3:3–5; Romans 6:3–4. Baptism by immersion symbolizes the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It also symbolizes the burial of our old self and our rebirth in Christ. In addition, it symbolizes being cleansed from our sins.)
- Why is it necessary to be baptized by one who has the proper authority? (See D&C 22.) Why is it necessary that baptism be performed by immersion? (See D&C 20:72–74.) Why is it not appropriate to baptize a person before he or she reaches age eight? (See D&C 20:71; 29:46–47; 68:25; Moroni 8:9–12.)

#### **4. Through the ordinance of confirmation, we receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.**

Explain that the Holy Ghost is a member of the Godhead and a “personage of Spirit” (D&C 130:22). After baptism by water, Church members receive the gift of the Holy Ghost through the ordinance of confirmation (D&C 33:15; 35:5–6). This ordinance is also called the “baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost” (D&C 20:41). The Prophet Joseph Smith said, “Baptism by water is but half a baptism, and is good for nothing without . . . the baptism of the Holy Ghost” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 314).

- What is the difference between a manifestation of the Holy Ghost and the gift of the Holy Ghost?

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve taught: “Manifestations of the Holy Ghost are given to lead sincere seekers to gospel truths that will persuade them to repentance and baptism. The gift of the Holy Ghost is more comprehensive. . . . [It] includes the right to constant companionship, that we may ‘always have his Spirit to be with [us]’ (D&C 20:77)” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1996, 80; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 60).

Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve compared the manifestations of the Holy Ghost that a person can receive before baptism to flashes of lightning that “[blaze] forth in a dark and stormy night.” He compared the gift of the Holy Ghost that a person receives after baptism to “the continuing blaze of the sun at noonday, shedding its rays on the path of life and on all that surrounds it” (*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* [1985], 262).

- Receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost does not automatically ensure that the Holy Ghost will always be with us. What must we do for the Holy Ghost to be with us continually?

President Joseph Fielding Smith said, “The Holy Ghost will not dwell with that person who is unwilling to obey and keep the commandments of God or who violates those commandments willfully” (*Church News*, 4 Nov. 1961, 14).

- What are some functions of the Holy Ghost? (Select some of the following scripture passages to read with class members. Discuss what each passage teaches about the functions of the Holy Ghost. Summarize the information on the chalkboard.)
  - a. D&C 18:18; 39:6; 42:14; 75:10; 79:2. (He is a teacher; see also John 14:26; 16:13; 1 Nephi 10:19; Moroni 10:5.)
  - b. D&C 39:6. (He is the Comforter; see also John 14:16.)
  - c. D&C 42:17; 100:8. (He is a testifier; see also John 15:26; Alma 5:46.)
  - d. D&C 11:12. (He leads us to do good, walk humbly, and judge righteously.)
  - e. D&C 11:13; 76:10. (He enlightens our minds and fills our souls with joy.)
  - f. D&C 84:33. (Through Him we are sanctified; see also 3 Nephi 27:20.)
  - g. D&C 31:11; 75:27; 84:85. (He inspires us in where to go, what to do, and what to say.)

Invite class members to tell how the Holy Ghost has blessed them in these or other ways. Discuss how we can enjoy these blessings more fully in our lives. Emphasize what a privilege it is for us to have the companionship of one of the members of the Godhead. Share your testimony of the importance of the companionship of the Holy Ghost.

#### 5. We must endure to the end in faith to receive eternal life.

When we are baptized, we enter the path that leads to exaltation. However, this single experience does not ensure that we will be exalted. As the Lord frequently admonishes in the Doctrine and Covenants, we must also keep the covenants we made at baptism to endure faithfully to the end of our lives.

- Read 2 Nephi 31:19–20 and D&C 14:7 with class members. What does it mean to endure to the end? What blessings has the Lord promised us if we endure to the end?
- What experiences have taught you the value of remaining true to your beliefs and covenants?
- Read D&C 24:8 with class members. Explain that enduring to the end includes remaining faithful during the trials of life. How can we remain faithful during difficult times? (Invite class members to tell what has helped them endure difficult experiences.)

#### Conclusion

Bear testimony of the importance of the first principles and ordinances of the gospel. Express your gratitude for Jesus Christ, His Atonement, and His example. Encourage class members to strengthen their faith each day, repent of their sins, keep their baptismal covenants, and live so the Holy Ghost will be their constant companion. Testify that if we endure faithfully to the end, we will receive exaltation.

#### Additional Teaching Ideas

##### 1. “The shield of faith” (D&C 27:17)

Read D&C 27:15, 17 with class members. Speaking of this scripture, President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve said:

“[The] shield of faith is not produced in a factory but at home in a cottage industry.

“The ultimate purpose of all we teach is to unite parents and children in faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, that they are happy at home, sealed in an eternal marriage, linked to their generations, and assured of exaltation in the presence of our Heavenly Father. . . .

“ . . . Therefore our leaders press members to understand that what is most worth doing must be done at home. Some still do not see that too many out-of-home activities, however well intended, leave too little time to make and fit on the shield of faith at home” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1995, 8; or *Ensign*, May 1995, 8–9).

- How can parents and children work together to produce and strengthen the shield of faith in the family?

## 2. The process of repentance

- What must we do to repent? What do D&C 58:43 and 61:2 teach about the process of repentance? Why is confession an important part of repentance? Why is it important that we forsake our sins as part of repentance?

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve outlined the essential elements of repentance as follows:

*“Sorrow for sin.* [This will] bring a sincere desire for change and a willingness to submit to every requirement for forgiveness. . . .

*“Abandonment of sin.* This is an unyielding, permanent resolve to not repeat the transgression. . . .

*“Confession of sin.* You always need to confess your sins to the Lord. If they are serious transgressions, such as immorality, they need to be confessed to a bishop or stake president. . . .

*“Restitution for sin.* You must restore as far as possible all that which is stolen, damaged, or defiled. . . .

*“Obedience to all the commandments.* Full obedience brings the complete power of the gospel into your life. . . . It includes things you might not initially consider part of repentance, such as attending meetings, paying tithing, giving service, and forgiving others. . . .

*“Recognition of the Savior.* Of all the necessary steps to repentance, I testify that the most critically important is for you to have a conviction that forgiveness comes because of the Redeemer” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1995, 102; or *Ensign*, May 1995, 76–77).

If you are teaching youth, you may want to have them read and discuss the counsel about repentance in *For the Strength of Youth*, pages 29–30 (36550).

## 3. Group presentations

Bring the Gospel Art Picture Kit (34730) to class. Divide the class into two groups and give each group half of the pictures. Then ask them to take a few minutes to develop a message using pictures from the kit to teach about the first principles and ordinances of the gospel. Encourage them to use between 5 and 10 visuals. Give each group time to make their presentation.

# The Restoration of the Priesthood

## Lesson 8

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**Purpose** To increase class members' appreciation for the restoration of the priesthood, to encourage brethren to magnify their offices and callings in the priesthood, and to help all members enjoy more fully the blessings of the priesthood.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study the following scriptures and other materials:
  - a. Doctrine and Covenants 13; 20:38–67; 27:12–13; 84:6–30; 107:1–20; 110:11–16; Joseph Smith—History 1:66–73.
  - b. Oliver Cowdery's account of the restoration of the Aaronic Priesthood, in the footnote to Joseph Smith—History 1:71.
  - c. *Our Heritage*, pages 11–14.
2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
3. If the picture Melchizedek Priesthood Restoration is available (62371; Gospel Art Picture Kit 408), prepare to use it during the lesson.
4. If you use the attention activity, bring an assortment of keys to class.

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### Suggestions for Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Hold up several keys.

- What are the purposes of these keys?

Write *Priesthood* on the chalkboard. Explain that in the Church we often refer to priesthood keys.

- What are the purposes of priesthood keys?

Explain that priesthood keys authorize priesthood holders to preside over and direct the Church within a jurisdiction, such as a stake, ward, or quorum. Presiding priesthood leaders receive these keys when they are set apart. All offices in the priesthood and organizations in the Church function under the direction of these presiding authorities. This lesson is about the restoration of the priesthood and its keys.

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**Discussion and Application** Prayerfully select the lesson material that will best meet class members' needs. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

## 1. Definition and purpose of the priesthood

Explain that the priesthood is one of the main themes in the Doctrine and Covenants. Through the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Lord gave many revelations that add greatly to our understanding of the keys, offices, organization, ordinances, duties, and blessings of the priesthood. These revelations provide guidance in using the priesthood to move forward God’s work on the earth.

- What is the priesthood? (The priesthood is the eternal power and authority of God. It is the power by which He created and governs the heavens and the earth. It is also the power by which He redeems and exalts His children. He gives a portion of His priesthood power and authority to worthy male members of the Church so they can preach the gospel, administer the ordinances of salvation, and govern His kingdom on earth.)
- Why is it important to have the priesthood on the earth? (Answers could include that the priesthood authorizes men to act for God in blessing His children and helping them prepare for exaltation.)
- What are some ways in which priesthood holders act on behalf of God to bless His children? (See selected verses from D&C 20:38–55; 107:8–12, 23, 35.) How have you been blessed through the service of priesthood holders?
- What influence has the priesthood had on you? How have you seen the power of the priesthood manifested in your life?
- How has the priesthood blessed and strengthened your family? How can you make the influence and power of the priesthood more effective in your life and for your family?

## 2. The restoration of the Aaronic Priesthood

Teach and discuss Joseph Smith—History 1:68–72; D&C 13; 84:26–27; 107:20. Explain that the Aaronic Priesthood “is an appendage to the greater, or the Melchizedek Priesthood” (D&C 107:14).

- How was the Aaronic Priesthood restored to the earth in the latter days? (See Joseph Smith—History 1:68–72 and *Our Heritage*, pages 11–13; see also D&C 13. Point out that the restoration of the Aaronic Priesthood was the first bestowal of divine authority in this dispensation.)
- (For priesthood holders) How did you feel when you received the Aaronic Priesthood?

You may want to review Oliver Cowdery’s feelings about receiving the Aaronic Priesthood (see the footnote to Joseph Smith—History 1:71). You may also want to share the following thoughts from Elder James E. Talmage, who served in the Quorum of the Twelve, about how his ordination to the office of deacon affected him:

“As soon as I had been ordained, a feeling came to me such as I have never been able to fully describe. It seemed scarcely possible, that I, a little boy, could be so honored of God as to be called to the priesthood. . . . I felt strong in the thought that I belonged to the Lord, and that he would assist me in whatever was required of me.

“The effect of my ordination . . . entered into all the affairs of my boyish life. . . . When at play on the school grounds, and perhaps tempted to take unfair advantage in the game, when in the midst of a dispute with a playmate, I would remember, and the thought would be as effective as though spoken aloud—‘I am a deacon; and it is not right that a deacon should act in this way.’ On examination days, when it seemed easy for me to copy some other boy’s work . . . , I would say in my mind, ‘It would be more wicked for me to do that than it is for them, because I am a deacon’” (*Incidents from the Lives of Our Church Leaders* [deacons instruction manual, 1914], 135–36).

- How can boys and young men prepare to receive the Aaronic Priesthood? How can parents, grandparents, and others help boys and young men prepare to receive the priesthood? How can others help instill within boys and young men a deep appreciation for the priesthood?
- What authority and blessings were restored with the Aaronic Priesthood? (See D&C 13; 84:26–27; 107:20. Use the following information to develop this discussion. Write the headings on the chalkboard.)

*The keys of the ministering of angels (D&C 13; 84:26; 107:20)*

- What does it mean to hold “the keys of the ministering of angels”? (D&C 13).

President Gordon B. Hinckley said, “That means, as I interpret it, that if you live worthy of the priesthood, you have the right to receive and enjoy the very power of heavenly beings to guide you, to protect you, to bless you” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1982, 64; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1982, 45).

Explain that the ministering of angels can occur through personal appearances and “can also be unseen. Angelic messages can be delivered by a voice or merely by thoughts or feelings communicated to the mind. . . . Most angelic communications are felt or heard rather than seen” (Dallin H. Oaks, in Conference Report, Oct. 1998, 51; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1998, 39).

- Through the restoration of the Aaronic Priesthood, the ministering of angels is available to all Church members, not just to priesthood holders. How can we receive the ministering of angels? (See Moroni 7:35–37 and the following quotation.)

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve spoke of the relationship between partaking of the sacrament and receiving the ministering of angels:

“Through the Aaronic Priesthood ordinances of baptism and the sacrament, we are cleansed of our sins and promised that if we keep our covenants we will always have His Spirit to be with us. I believe that promise not only refers to the Holy Ghost but also to the ministering of angels, for ‘angels speak by the power of the Holy Ghost; wherefore, they speak the words of Christ’ (2 Nephi 32:3). So it is that those who hold the Aaronic Priesthood open the door for all Church members who worthily partake of the sacrament to enjoy the companionship of the Spirit of the Lord and the ministering of angels” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1998, 51; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1998, 39).

You may want to review two or three scriptural passages about the ministering of angels. These passages include 3 Nephi 7:18; 17:23–24; Moroni 7:25, 29–31; and D&C 84:88.

*The keys of repentance and baptism (D&C 13; 84:26–27; 107:20)*

Explain that repentance and baptism are also called the “preparatory gospel” (D&C 84:26–27). This is because repentance and baptism help us prepare to receive the greater blessings that are administered through the Melchizedek Priesthood, such as the gift of the Holy Ghost and temple ordinances.

- Point out that John the Baptist preached repentance and baptized people in preparing the way for the Savior (Matthew 3:1–6, 11). How can Aaronic Priesthood holders in our day preach repentance? (Answers could include through home teaching, missionary work, testimony bearing, and fellowshipping.) How can Aaronic Priesthood holders participate in the ordinance of baptism? (Under the direction of the bishop, worthy priests may perform baptisms and serve as witnesses at baptisms.)

Invite brethren who have baptized someone to share their feelings about being able to perform that ordinance.

- In addition to baptism, Aaronic Priesthood holders may officiate in the ordinance of the sacrament. How is the sacrament related to repentance and baptism?

Invite brethren to share how they felt when they prepared, blessed, or passed the sacrament for the first time. Or ask parents to share their feelings when their sons have prepared, blessed, or passed the sacrament.

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve said: “We ask you young men of the Aaronic Priesthood to prepare and bless and pass these emblems of the Savior’s sacrifice worthily and reverently. What a stunning privilege and sacred trust given at such a remarkably young age! I can think of no higher compliment heaven could pay you. We do love you. Live your best and look your best when you participate in the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1995, 89; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 68).



**Susquehanna River.** The Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthoods were restored on the banks of this river in 1829 (D&C 13; 128:20).

### 3. The restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood

Teach and discuss D&C 27:12–13; 84:19–22; 107:1–12, 18–19. Explain that the Melchizedek Priesthood is the greater priesthood. Associated with it are all the authority, knowledge, and covenants that are necessary for the exaltation of God’s children.

- How was the Melchizedek Priesthood restored to the earth in the latter days? (Display the picture Melchizedek Priesthood Restoration. Explain that some weeks after John the Baptist restored the Aaronic Priesthood, Peter, James, and John appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery and conferred upon them the Melchizedek Priesthood. An account of this experience is not included in the Doctrine and Covenants, but references to it can be found in the heading to D&C 13; D&C 27:12–13; D&C 128:20; and *Our Heritage*, page 14.)
- What authority and blessings were restored with the Melchizedek Priesthood? (See D&C 84:19–22; 107:8–12, 18–19; 110:11–16. Use the following information to develop this discussion. Write the headings on the chalkboard.)

*Authority to administer the gospel of Jesus Christ (D&C 84:19)*

- What does it mean that the Melchizedek Priesthood includes the authority to administer the gospel of Jesus Christ? (See D&C 84:19. Answers could include that the Melchizedek Priesthood includes the authority to govern the Church, preach the gospel, and administer the ordinances of salvation.)

*“The keys of all the spiritual blessings of the church” (D&C 107:18)*

- What are some of the spiritual blessings that come to us through the Melchizedek Priesthood? (See D&C 84:19–22; 107:18–19. Answers could include those listed below. Discuss the meaning of each blessing and its application in class members’ lives.)
  - a. Knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom and knowledge of God (D&C 84:19; 107:19; this knowledge comes through the gift of the Holy Ghost).
  - b. The power of godliness, which is manifested through the ordinances of the gospel (D&C 84:20–21). How do priesthood ordinances make “the power of godliness” manifest in our lives? Invite class members to share experiences in which they have felt “the power of godliness” manifested through the ordinances of the gospel.
  - c. The opportunity to see, commune with, and enjoy the presence of God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ (D&C 84:22; 107:19).
- What are some ways that Melchizedek Priesthood holders should be spiritual leaders in their homes?

*The right of presidency (D&C 107:8–9)*

Explain that the right of presidency is the right to preside in the Church. The President of the Church is the only person on earth who may use (or authorize another person to use) the keys of the priesthood for governing the entire Church. He authorizes the following priesthood leaders to hold the keys that are necessary for presiding in their callings: temple presidents, mission presidents, stake presidents, bishops, district presidents, branch presidents, and quorum presidents.

*The keys of the gathering of Israel, the gospel of the dispensation of Abraham, and the sealing power (D&C 110:11–16)*

Explain that these keys were restored by Moses, Elias, and Elijah in the Kirtland Temple in 1836. They will be discussed in lesson 18.

#### 4. Blessings of the priesthood for all people

Explain that although only worthy male members of the Church hold the priesthood, everyone may partake of its blessings.

- How are women blessed by the priesthood? How are children blessed by the priesthood? (Review some of the blessings of the priesthood that women and children may receive during their lives. Emphasize that although women and children do not hold the priesthood, they are continually blessed by it. For help in answering these questions, you may want to refer to *The Latter-day Saint Woman, Part A*, chapters 12 and 13 [31113].)
- How can those who do not have faithful priesthood holders in their homes receive the blessings of the priesthood? (Answers could include through home teachers, priesthood leaders, and extended family members.) Invite class members to tell of experiences when they have received the blessings of the priesthood from priesthood holders who do not live in their home.
- How can we show our appreciation for the blessings of the priesthood?

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#### Conclusion

Testify that the priesthood and its keys have been restored. Priesthood holders hold the authority to direct God’s work on earth and to act for Him in blessing His children and helping them prepare for exaltation. Emphasize that the blessings of the priesthood are available to all. Encourage class members to seek these blessings.

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#### Additional Teaching Ideas

You may want to use one or both of the following ideas to supplement the suggested lesson outline.

##### 1. Priesthood offices, quorums, and duties

The Lord revealed to Joseph Smith important instructions about the offices of the priesthood, the duties of each office, and the quorums into which priesthood holders are organized. You may want to review some of these instructions as they are outlined in the following chart:

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#### Aaronic Priesthood

Office	Duties	Quorum
Deacon	D&C 20:57–59; 84:111	D&C 107:85
Teacher	D&C 20:53–59; 84:111	D&C 107:86
Priest	D&C 20:46–52	D&C 107:87–88
Bishop	D&C 107:13–17, 68, 71–72, 87–88	

**Melchizedek Priesthood**

<b>Office</b>	<b>Duties</b>	<b>Quorum</b>
Elder	D&C 20:38–45; 42:43–44; 43:15–16; 107:11–12	D&C 107:89; 124:137
High priest	D&C 107:10, 12, 17	D&C 124:133, 136
Patriarch	D&C 124:91–93, 124	
Seventy	D&C 107:25, 34, 38, 97	D&C 107:25–26; 93–96; 124:138–39
Apostle	D&C 27:12–13; 107:23, 33, 35, 39, 58; 112:30–32; 124:128	D&C 107:23–24

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Display a picture of the Salt Lake Temple (62433; Gospel Art Picture Kit 502). Point out that the spires on the east end of the temple are higher than those on the west end. Note also that there are five sets of windows on the east spires and four sets of windows on the west spires. Explain that this design was intended to represent the priesthood, with the Melchizedek Priesthood and its five offices represented by the east spires and the Aaronic Priesthood and its four offices represented by the west spires.

**2. “Restoration of the Priesthood” video presentation**

If *Doctrine and Covenants and Church History Video Presentations* (53912) is available, consider showing “Restoration of the Priesthood,” an eight-minute segment, to give historical background for the second section of the lesson.

Lesson  
**9**

# “The Only True and Living Church”

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**Purpose**

To teach class members about the restoration of the Church of Jesus Christ through the Prophet Joseph Smith, to help them appreciate the blessings of Church membership, and to encourage them to show the Lord their gratitude for membership in His Church.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study the following scriptures and other materials:
  - a. Doctrine and Covenants 20:1–36, 68–69, 75–79; 21; 27; 115:1–4.
  - b. *Our Heritage*, pages 14–16.
2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
3. If you use the second attention activity, bring a piece of paper and a pen or pencil for each class member.

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**Suggestions for  
Lesson Development****Attention Activity**

As appropriate, use one of the following activities to begin the lesson. Select the activity that would be most appropriate for the class.

1. If your class is small, ask each class member to briefly share one reason why he or she is grateful to be a member of the Church. If the class is large, you may want to assign a few class members to do this.
2. Write the following questions on the chalkboard. Give each class member a piece of paper and a pen or pencil. Ask them to write down the answers to as many of these questions as they can:

On what date was the Church organized in this dispensation?

How did Joseph Smith know when the Church should be organized?

Where was the Church organized?

How many members did the Church have when it was first organized?

Explain that this lesson discusses the latter-day organization of the Church of Jesus Christ. Invite class members to listen for the answers to the questions as the lesson progresses and to write down or correct their answers as needed.

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Prayerfully select the scripture passages, questions, and other lesson material that will best meet class members' needs. Discuss how the selected scriptures apply to daily life. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

### 1. The Church is organized in the latter days.

Explain that 1830 was a momentous time in the history of the world. The time had come for ancient prophecies to be fulfilled (Isaiah 11:11–12; 29:13–14; Jeremiah 31:31–33; Daniel 2:44–45). After the Book of Mormon was published and the priesthood was restored, the next major step in the restoration of the gospel was the formal organization of the Church. Doctrine and Covenants 20 contains instructions from the Lord to Joseph Smith about organizing the Church.

- On what date was the Church organized in this dispensation? (See D&C 20:1; 21:3.) Why was this date selected? (See the heading to D&C 20.)
- Ten years passed between the First Vision and the organization of the Church. During this time, what events occurred to prepare the way for the organization of the Church and to prepare Joseph Smith to lead it? (You may want to list answers on the chalkboard. If necessary, see the following quotation to help answer this question.)

While serving in the Quorum of the Twelve, Elder Gordon B. Hinckley said:

“This day of organization was, in effect, a day of commencement, the graduation for Joseph from ten years of remarkable schooling. It had begun with the incomparable vision in the grove in the spring of 1820, when the Father and the Son appeared to the fourteen-year-old boy. It had continued with the tutoring from Moroni, with both warnings and instructions given on multiple occasions. Then there was the translation of the ancient record, and the inspiration, the knowledge, the revelation that came from that experience. There was the bestowal of divine authority, the ancient priesthood again conferred upon men by those who were its rightful possessors—John the Baptist in the case of the Aaronic Priesthood, and Peter, James, and John in the case of the Melchizedek. There were revelations, a number of them, in which the voice of God was heard again, and the channel of communication opened between man and the Creator. All of these were preliminary to that historic April 6” (“150-Year Drama: A Personal View of Our History,” *Ensign*, Apr. 1980, 11–12).

- How did the coming forth of the Book of Mormon help prepare the way for the restoration of the gospel? (See D&C 20:6–12.) How did the restoration of the priesthood help prepare the way? (Priesthood authority was necessary to lead the Church and officiate in the ordinances of salvation.)

Explain that on 6 April 1830, Joseph Smith and more than 50 other people met at the log home of Peter Whitmer Sr. in Fayette, New York, for the organization of the Church. New York law required that a church have at least six members to be formally organized. So six men, all of whom had been baptized and had seen the gold plates, became the first official members of the Church. These men were Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, Hyrum Smith, Peter Whitmer Jr., Samuel H. Smith, and David Whitmer (see *History of the Church*, 1:76; for additional historical background, see *Our Heritage*, pages 14–16).

- By what name was the Church called when it was organized? (See D&C 20:1.) Explain that the Church was also called by other names in its early years, but in April 1838 the Lord revealed the name by which His Church was to be known. What name did the Lord give His Church? (See D&C 115:4.) Why is it important that the Lord’s Church be called in His name? (See 3 Nephi 27:8.)

You may want to explain that the name *Mormon* is a nickname given to the Church because of the Book of Mormon. We prefer to call our Church by its complete name to emphasize our belief in the Savior, Jesus Christ.

If you used the second attention activity, briefly review the answers to the questions (all answers are given in the preceding discussion).



**Peter Whitmer Sr. Log House.** This replica was built on the site where the Church was organized in Fayette, New York, on 6 April 1830.

## 2. The Lord commands Church members to follow the prophet.

During the meeting at which the Church was organized, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were sustained as the presiding officers of the Church (*History of the Church*, 1:77). The Lord also gave a revelation instructing members of the Church to follow Joseph Smith as the prophet. This revelation is recorded in D&C 21.

- Read D&C 1:38 and 21:4–5 with class members. What do these verses teach about how we should regard the words of the prophet? (Point out that while the statements in D&C 21 were spoken about Joseph Smith, they also apply to the prophets who have succeeded him.) Where can we find the words of the living prophet? (Answers could include in official letters, general conference, and Church magazines.) What counsel or teachings of latter-day prophets have been especially meaningful to you?
- In D&C 21:5, the Lord said we must give heed to the words of the prophet “in all patience and faith.” Why might it sometimes require patience or faith to follow the counsel of the prophet? Invite class members to share experiences when following the counsel of the prophet has required patience or faith.

- Read D&C 21:6 with class members. What blessings does the Lord promise to those who follow the prophet? (You may want to list these blessings on the chalkboard.) How are these promises fulfilled in the lives of Church members today? In what ways have you been blessed because you have followed the prophet?
- In D&C 21:9, the Lord promised “a mighty blessing” to those who labor in His service. How have you been blessed as you have served the Lord? (You may want to point out that one blessing of serving the Lord is that our testimonies of the words of the prophets are strengthened.)

### 3. The Lord encourages Church members to meet together often to partake of the sacrament.

- Explain that at the meeting in which the Church was organized, members partook of the sacrament (*History of the Church*, 1:78). Why do you think it was important to have the ordinance of the sacrament performed at the first meeting of the restored Church?
- In D&C 20, the Lord revealed information about how the sacrament should be administered (verses 75–79). Read D&C 20:75 with class members. Why is it important to partake of the sacrament often?
- Ask a class member to read the sacrament prayers (D&C 20:77, 79). What promises do we make when we partake of the sacrament? (See also Luke 22:19–20; 3 Nephi 18:7, 10–11.) You may want to point out that both prayers emphasize remembering Jesus. What does it mean to remember Him always? How does the sacrament help us remember Him?
- What promise is made in the sacrament prayers to those who partake worthily? (See D&C 20:77, 79.) As appropriate, invite class members to tell how partaking of the sacrament has blessed their lives.
- In D&C 27, the Lord gave further instructions to Joseph Smith regarding the sacrament. What was Joseph doing when he received this revelation? (See the heading to D&C 27.) What did Joseph learn about the sacrament in this revelation? (See D&C 27:2.) How can we partake of the sacrament “with an eye single to [Christ’s] glory”?

### 4. The Lord explains the duties of Church members.

- Read D&C 20:68–69 with class members. In these verses the Lord explains “the duty of the members after they are received by baptism.” What does verse 69 reveal about the Lord’s expectations of us as Church members? How can we show the Lord our gratitude for membership in His Church?

## Conclusion

Emphasize that the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ in 1830 was one of the great miracles of the latter days. Even though that small meeting in Fayette, New York, went unnoticed by most people, the events of that day have changed the world. Invite class members to reflect on the miracle of the Church’s worldwide growth from such humble beginnings. You may want to relate the following experience:

President Wilford Woodruff told of a meeting in which the Prophet Joseph Smith prophesied of the Church’s growth. The meeting was in “a small house,

perhaps 14 feet square. But it held the whole of the Priesthood of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who were then in the town of Kirtland, and who had gathered together to go off in Zion's camp." After several of the men had borne their testimonies of the work, the Prophet said:

"Brethren I have been very much edified and instructed in your testimonies here tonight, but I want to say to you before the Lord, that you know no more concerning the destinies of this Church and kingdom than a babe upon its mother's lap. You don't comprehend it. . . . It is only a little handful of Priesthood you see here tonight, but this Church will fill North and South America—it will fill the world" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1898, 57).

As prompted by the Spirit, testify of the truths discussed during the lesson.

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## **Additional Teaching Ideas**

You may want to use one or more of the following ideas to supplement the suggested lesson outline.

### **1. Growth of the Church**

Direct class members' attention to the photo of the Peter Whitmer Sr. Log House on page 50. Explain that the house in the photograph is a replica of the house in which The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was formally organized. Contrast the Church's beginnings with its worldwide growth today.

### **2. Our relationship with God**

Ask class members to read D&C 20:8–31 to identify truths about God and His relationship with His sons and daughters on the earth. Encourage class members to consider how their lives might be different if they did not know these truths. Some of the truths you may want to discuss are listed below:

- a. D&C 20:11. (God still inspires people and calls them to do His work.)
- b. D&C 20:12. (He is the same yesterday, today, and forever.)
- c. D&C 20:17. (He is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable.)
- d. D&C 20:17. (He framed the heaven and the earth and all things in them.)
- e. D&C 20:18. (He created us in His image.)
- f. D&C 20:21–25. (God gave His Only Begotten Son to atone for our sins.)
- g. D&C 20:29–31. (If we believe, repent, love and serve God, and endure to the end, we will be justified and sanctified through the grace of Jesus Christ and saved in the kingdom of God.)

### **3. "I will drink of the fruit of the vine with you" (D&C 27:5)**

- Read D&C 27:5. What promise about the sacrament does the Lord make in this verse? (He will at some future time partake of the sacrament with His followers on the earth.) Whom does the Lord say will be with Him at this event? (See D&C 27:5–14. Point out that in verse 14, He said that "all those whom my Father hath given me out of the world" will be in attendance.)

### **4. "Organization of the Church" video presentation**

If *Doctrine and Covenants and Church History Video Presentations* (53912) is available, consider showing "Organization of the Church," an eight-minute segment.

# “This Is My Voice unto All”

## Lesson 10

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**Purpose** To help class members learn to apply in their own lives the instructions the Lord has revealed to other individuals in the scriptures.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study Doctrine and Covenants 25 and the other scriptures in this lesson.
2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
3. If a picture of Emma Smith is available, prepare to use it during the lesson (62509; Gospel Art Picture Kit 405).

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### Suggestions for Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, tell the following experience or use an activity of your own to begin the lesson:

Elder Jay E. Jensen of the Seventy described a time when he was serving as a mission president and found himself frustrated and discouraged at the end of a district conference by the many problems that confronted him. As he was traveling home, he was turning the pages of his scriptures, looking for comfort and direction, when he stopped at the third section of the Doctrine and Covenants. He said:

“When I read a verse, I often insert my name in it. I did so with verse 5 and found the help I needed to remove my gloomy feelings: ‘Behold, you [Jay Jensen] have been entrusted with these things, but how strict were your commandments; and remember also the promises which were made to you [Jay Jensen]’ (D&C 3:5).

“The words ‘remember also the promises’ struck me with unusual power. . . . During those four days I had focused on nothing but problems. I had not stopped to consider one single promise” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1992, 112; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1992, 80).

Elder Jensen then reviewed in his mind the promises given to him in his patriarchal blessing, in the blessing when he was set apart as a mission president, and in the scriptures. By so doing, he was able to find the strength and comfort he needed.

- How can this idea of putting our own names in the scriptures help us as we read the scriptures?
- Read 1 Nephi 19:23 with class members. What did Nephi teach about the importance of applying the scriptures in our own lives?

Explain that this lesson discusses how we can apply the counsel that the Lord gave to individual Saints in the Doctrine and Covenants.

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Prayerfully select the lesson material that will best meet class members' needs. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

Point out that many of the revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants were given to individuals. Although the counsel in the revelations was specific to these individuals, and although these Church members lived many years ago, much of the counsel applies to us today. As the Lord repeatedly said, "What I say unto one I say unto all" (D&C 61:36; see also D&C 25:16; 82:5; 93:49).

In July 1830, the Lord directed a revelation to Emma Smith, the wife of the Prophet Joseph Smith (D&C 25). Display a picture of Emma Smith. Explain that this lesson focuses on three themes from the Lord's revelation to Emma.

### **1. Husbands and wives should support and comfort each other.**

The Lord's revelation to Emma Smith included counsel about her responsibilities to her husband. If you are teaching youth, use the material in this section to help them understand the importance of supporting their future spouse.

- Read D&C 25:5 with class members. What did the Lord counsel Emma Smith in this verse? What are some ways that husbands and wives can help each other in times of difficulty? (As class members discuss this question, invite them to share personal experiences or observations of other spouses who have comforted and supported each other.)

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught wives that they should treat their husbands "with mildness and affection. When a man is borne down with trouble, when he is perplexed with care and difficulty, if he can meet a smile instead of an argument or a murmur—if he can meet with mildness, it will calm down his soul and soothe his feelings" (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 228).

The Prophet taught husbands, "It is the duty of a husband to love, cherish, and nourish his wife, and cleave unto her and none else; he ought to honor her as himself, and he ought to regard her feelings with tenderness" (*Elders' Journal*, Aug. 1838, 61).

- Read D&C 25:14 with class members. What did the Lord counsel Emma Smith in this verse? How can spouses show that they delight in each other?

Joseph and Emma Smith were a great support to each other during the many times of affliction they faced. In 1842, when Joseph was in hiding because his life was in danger, Emma was able to visit him. Joseph later said about this visit:

"With what unspeakable delight, and what transports of joy swelled my bosom, when I took by the hand, on that night, my beloved Emma—she that was my wife, even the wife of my youth, and the choice of my heart. Many were the reverberations of my mind when I contemplated for a moment the many scenes we had been called to pass through, the fatigues and the toils, the sorrows and sufferings, and the joys and consolations, from time to time, which had strewed our paths. . . . Oh what a commingling of thought filled my mind for the moment, again she is here, . . . undaunted, firm, and unwavering—unchangeable, affectionate Emma!" (*History of the Church*, 5:107).

Joseph and Emma also supported and comforted each other as they endured the deaths of many of their children. In four years, they had four infant children die. Out of eleven children (two adopted), only three sons and one daughter lived into late adulthood.

At a time when the Prophet was carrying heavy burdens in connection with the growing Church in Kirtland, Ohio, Emma gave birth to twins, a boy and a girl, both of whom died within hours of their birth. At nearly the same time, in the nearby city of Orange, Ohio, twins were born to John and Julia Murdock, new converts to the Church. Within six hours of the Murdock twins' birth, Sister Murdock died. When Emma and Joseph learned of this, they asked Brother Murdock if they might adopt the twins. Soon the two babies, Joseph and Julia Murdock, were taken into the Smiths' home.

Joseph Smith's mother, Lucy Mack Smith, described some of the characteristics that made it possible for Emma to support Joseph through difficult times:

"I have never seen a woman in my life, who would endure every species of fatigue and hardship, from month to month, and from year to year, with that unflinching courage, zeal, and patience, which she has ever done; for I know that which she had had to endure. . . . She has breasted the storms of persecution, and buffeted the rage of men and devils, which would have borne down almost any other woman" (*History of Joseph Smith*, ed. Preston Nibley [1958], 190–91).

- What can husbands and wives learn from the example of Joseph and Emma Smith to help them be more loving and supportive?

## 2. We should be meek and avoid pride.

The Lord commanded Emma Smith to "continue in the spirit of meekness, and beware of pride" (D&C 25:14). He gave similar instructions to other Church members. Read the following verses with class members:

- D&C 23:1 (to Oliver Cowdery): "Beware of pride, lest thou shouldst enter into temptation."
  - D&C 38:39 (to the Saints in a conference of the Church): "Beware of pride, lest ye become as the Nephites of old."
  - D&C 90:17 (to the First Presidency of the Church): "Be admonished in all your high-mindedness and pride, for it bringeth a snare upon your souls."
  - D&C 98:19–20 (to the Saints in Kirtland): "I, the Lord, am not well pleased with many who are in the church at Kirtland; For they do not forsake their sins, and their wicked ways, the pride of their hearts, and their covetousness."
- What is pride? Why do you think the Lord's warnings about pride are so strong and frequent?

President Ezra Taft Benson taught:

"Most of us think of pride as self-centeredness, conceit, boastfulness, arrogance, or haughtiness. All of these are elements of the sin, but the heart, or core, is still missing.

"The central feature of pride is enmity—enmity toward God and enmity toward our fellowmen. *Enmity* means 'hatred toward, hostility to, or a state of opposition'" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1989, 3; or *Ensign*, May 1989, 4).

- How does pride affect our relationship with God?

President Benson explained:

“Pride is essentially competitive in nature. We pit our will against God’s . . . in the spirit of ‘my will and not thine be done.’ . . .

“Our will in competition to God’s will allows desires, appetites, and passions to go unbridled (see Alma 38:12; 3 Nephi 12:30). . . .

“Our enmity toward God takes on many labels, such as rebellion, hard-heartedness, stiff-neckedness, unrepentant, puffed up, easily offended, and sign seekers. The proud wish God would agree with them. They aren’t interested in changing their opinions to agree with God’s” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1989, 4; or *Ensign*, May 1989, 4).

- How does pride affect our relationship with others?

President Benson observed:

“Another major portion of this very prevalent sin of pride is enmity toward our fellowmen. We are tempted daily to elevate ourselves above others and diminish them (see Helaman 6:17; D&C 58:41). . . .

“Pride . . . is manifest in so many ways, such as fault-finding, gossiping, backbiting, murmuring, living beyond our means, envying, coveting, withholding gratitude and praise that might lift another, and being unforgiving and jealous. . . .

“Selfishness is one of the more common faces of pride. ‘How everything affects me’ is the center of all that matters—self-conceit, self-pity, worldly self-fulfillment, self-gratification, and self-seeking. . . .

“Another face of pride is contention. Arguments, fights, unrighteous dominion, generation gaps, divorces, spouse abuse, riots, and disturbances all fall into this category of pride” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1989, 4–5; or *Ensign*, May 1989, 4–6).

- How can we overcome pride and cultivate a spirit of meekness?

President Benson counseled: “The antidote for pride is humility—meekness, submissiveness (see Alma 7:23). It is the broken heart and contrite spirit. . . . We can choose to humble ourselves by loving God, submitting our will to His, and putting Him first in our lives” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1989, 6; or *Ensign*, May 1989, 6–7).

- Read the following passages with class members: D&C 1:28, 19:23, 112:10, and 124:97. According to these passages, what are some blessings that come to us when we choose to be meek and humble?
- What blessings have come into your life when you have chosen to be humble instead of proud?

### 3. We should rejoice and be of good cheer.

The Lord admonished Emma Smith, “Lift up thy heart and rejoice” (D&C 25:13). Even as the early Saints of this dispensation faced great tribulation, the Lord repeatedly gave similar admonitions to them. Read the following verses with class members:

- a. D&C 29:5 (to the Prophet Joseph Smith and others): “Lift up your hearts and be glad, for I am in your midst, and am your advocate with the Father.”
  - b. D&C 61:36 (to the Prophet Joseph Smith and others): “Be of good cheer, little children; for I am in your midst, and I have not forsaken you.”
  - c. D&C 68:6 (to Orson Hyde, Luke S. Johnson, Lyman E. Johnson, and William E. McLellin): “Be of good cheer, and do not fear, for I the Lord am with you, and will stand by you.”
  - d. D&C 78:18 (to the Prophet Joseph Smith and others): “Ye cannot bear all things now; nevertheless, be of good cheer, for I will lead you along.”
  - e. D&C 136:29 (to the Camp of Israel at Winter Quarters): “If thou art sorrowful, call on the Lord thy God with supplication, that your souls may be joyful.”
- In these passages, what reasons does the Lord give for being of good cheer? What can we do to develop and maintain good cheer? How can we help others be of good cheer?
  - What are some consequences of dwelling on the negative aspects of life, even though they may be serious and prevalent?

Elder Marvin J. Ashton of the Quorum of the Twelve counseled:

“None of us will escape tragedy and suffering. Each of us will probably react differently. However, if we can recall the Lord’s promise, ‘for I the Lord am with you,’ we will be able to face our problems with dignity and courage. We will find the strength to be of good cheer instead of becoming resentful, critical, or defeated. We will be able to meet life’s unpleasant happenings with clear vision, strength, and power. . . .

“What a joy it is to see someone of good cheer, who, when others because of an unpleasant happening or development live in angry silence or vocal disgust, meets the situation with cheerful endurance and good spirits” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1986, 84–85; or *Ensign*, May 1986, 66).

Emphasize that the Savior’s many admonitions to be of good cheer remind us that we can find peace and joy regardless of our circumstances.

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## Conclusion

Reaffirm that the Lord’s counsel to individual Saints many years ago can greatly bless our lives today. Encourage class members to read the scriptures with the intent of applying the messages to their individual circumstances.

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## Additional Teaching Idea

### Applying the scriptures in our lives

In advance, obtain photographs of a few class members. Also prepare to display a picture of Emma Smith (62509; Gospel Art Picture Kit 405).

Display the picture of Emma Smith and explain that D&C 25 contains the Lord’s instructions to her. Place the photographs of class members next to the picture of Emma. Have class members read D&C 25:16. Explain that the counsel in this revelation can also apply to us. Have class members read D&C 61:36, 82:5, and 93:49. Help them see that we can “liken all scriptures unto us” (1 Nephi 19:23).

- How has scriptural counsel to a certain person been of benefit in your life? How did you apply the counsel to your own circumstances?

Lesson  
**11**

# “The Field Is White Already to Harvest”

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**Purpose** To help class members resolve to strengthen the kingdom of God through diligent service, particularly by sharing the gospel through missionary work.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study the following scriptures and other materials:
  - a. Doctrine and Covenants 4, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 18, 31, 33, 75, and the other scriptures in this lesson.
  - b. *Our Heritage*, page 11.
2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.

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**Suggestions for  
Lesson Development**

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Write on the chalkboard *Samuel Smith* → *Phinehas Young and John P. Greene* → \_\_\_\_\_ . Explain that once the gospel was restored, the Church began a tremendous missionary effort to spread these glad tidings throughout the world. Many new converts responded with zeal to missionary calls. One of these converts was Joseph Smith’s brother Samuel.

In April 1830, Samuel Smith began traveling to neighboring towns in New York to preach the gospel and introduce people to the Book of Mormon. He had little success, though he did sell a copy of the book to a man named Phinehas Young. In June 1830, Samuel was set apart by the Prophet Joseph to take a missionary journey to the east. He walked 25 miles the first day and stopped at many houses, but the people treated him unkindly and would not listen. The next day he left a copy of the Book of Mormon with John P. Greene, a Methodist minister. John Greene’s wife, Rhoda, was Phinehas Young’s sister.

Facing rejection from almost everyone he contacted, Samuel felt that his mission had not been very successful. However, the books he left with Phinehas Young and John P. Greene led to their conversion and the conversion of many others. For example, Phinehas Young and Rhoda Greene had a brother named Brigham, who was converted and later became the second President of the Church. Brigham Young’s friend Heber C. Kimball also joined the Church. He later served in the First Presidency. Both Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball were instrumental in the conversion of thousands in the United States and England.

Point out that if you were to fill in the blank on the chalkboard with the names of all the people who have been influenced by Samuel Smith’s missionary work, you would have to write millions of names. Those directly influenced included some of the great leaders of the Church. Many of those you teach, if not all of

them, have in some way been touched by this service. You may want to write your name and the names of some of the class members on the chalkboard.

This lesson discusses some of the key revelations the Lord has given concerning service in His kingdom, particularly in sharing the gospel. Point out that just as Samuel Smith's missionary efforts have blessed many generations of Church members, when we share the gospel there is potential to bless many people now and hundreds or even thousands in the future.

## Discussion and Application

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This lesson contains more material than is possible to teach in one class period. Prayerfully select the material that will best meet class members' needs.

In February 1829, Joseph Smith's parents came to visit Joseph and Emma in Harmony, Pennsylvania. During this time, the Prophet inquired of the Lord and received the revelation recorded in D&C 4 for his father, Joseph Smith Sr.

In addition to this revelation for his father, the Prophet received revelations for many others who asked him to inquire of the Lord and learn of His will for them. Some of these revelations are recorded in D&C 11, 12, 14, 15, and 16. Although these revelations were given for individuals, the principles pertain to all who serve in the Lord's kingdom (D&C 11:27).

### 1. "Serve him with all your heart, might, mind and strength."

- Read D&C 4:1–2 with class members. According to verse 2, what does the Lord require of those who serve in His kingdom? What does it mean to serve with all our heart, might, mind, and strength? (This suggests total dedication to the Lord's service.)
- Why is it important that we devote our whole souls to the Lord's service? Why are we sometimes less than fully committed to the Lord's service? How can we improve our commitment to serve the Lord with full devotion?

Explain that Joseph Smith's father devoted his life to serving the Lord, as he was instructed in D&C 4. Share the following account, which shows the depth of his commitment to share the gospel:

"Joseph Smith, Sr., was filled with the testimony of the truth, and was always anxious to share it with others. He was almost sixty when he made the tedious journey . . . to carry the gospel to his father and mother, his sisters and brothers. Soon after his return [home,] he was imprisoned for a small debt of fourteen dollars, rather than deny the divinity of the Book of Mormon and be forgiven the debt! He was cast into a cell with a condemned murderer and left for four days without food. Later he was transferred to the prison workyard where he preached the gospel and converted two persons whom he later baptized. He was in prison a full month before his family was able to obtain his release" (E. Cecil McGavin, *The Family of Joseph Smith* [1963], 68; see also Lucy Mack Smith, *History of Joseph Smith*, ed. Preston Nibley [1958], 172–73, 179–86).

- How can we show the same commitment to sharing the gospel that Joseph Smith Sr. showed? What experiences have you had when sharing the gospel with your family or neighbors? with people at school or work? with people you meet as you travel? in other circumstances?

## 2. Prepare to serve the Lord.

Throughout the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord counsels us in how to prepare ourselves to serve Him. Explain that this preparation should be a continual effort throughout our lives.

- What are some of the attributes the Lord desires in those who serve Him? (See the following scriptures. List the attributes on the chalkboard and use the questions to encourage discussion.)
  - a. D&C 4:3; 11:8. Why is desire an important attribute in serving the Lord? How can we increase our desire to serve Him?
  - b. D&C 4:5–6; 12:8; 18:19. Which attributes are repeated most frequently in these verses? Invite class members to share experiences that show the importance of any of these attributes in serving the Lord.
  - c. D&C 11:6, 20. Why is obedience important in serving the Lord?
  - d. D&C 4:7; 31:12. How has prayer helped you in serving the Lord?

Encourage class members to select one of these attributes and prayerfully strive to improve in it.

- Read D&C 11:21 with class members. What can we learn from this verse about preparing to serve the Lord? How have your experiences shown the wisdom of this counsel?

## 3. “The field is white.”

Throughout the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord communicates a sense of urgency about spreading the gospel. This is because the purpose of missionary work is “the salvation of souls” (D&C 100:4).

- Read D&C 4:4, 11:3, and 33:3 with class members. What did the Lord mean by comparing missionary work to a field that is ready to be harvested? (Answers could include that many people are prepared to receive the gospel.)
- The Lord warned the elders not to be idle and said that they should “go forth” rather than “tarry” (D&C 60:13; 75:3). How might this warning apply to us? Why do some of us delay sharing the gospel?

Elder Henry B. Eyring of the Quorum of the Twelve related the following experience:

“It’s easy to say, ‘The time isn’t right.’ But there is danger in procrastination. Years ago I worked for a man in California. He hired me; he was kind to me; he seemed to regard me highly. I may have been the only Latter-day Saint he ever knew well. I don’t know all the reasons I found to wait for a better moment to talk with him about the gospel. I just remember my feeling of sorrow when I learned, after he had retired and I lived far away, that he and his wife had been killed in a late-night drive to their home in Carmel, California. He loved his wife. He loved his children. He had loved his parents. He loved his grandchildren, and he will love their children and will want to be with them forever.

“Now, I don’t know how the crowds will be handled in the world to come. But I suppose that I will meet him, that he will look into my eyes, and that I will see in them the question, ‘Hal, you knew. Why didn’t you tell me?’” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1998, 42; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1998, 33).

#### 4. “Open your mouths and they shall be filled.”

In the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord gives direction about *what* we should teach and *how* we should teach as we share the gospel. He also encourages us to share the gospel without fear, promising to help when we feel inadequate.

- Read some of the following verses with class members: D&C 11:9, 15:6, 18:6, 31:3–4, 33:10–11, 42:12, and 52:8–9. What do these verses reveal about *what* the Lord’s servants should teach? Why is the message of repentance so important? (See D&C 18:10–14.)
- Read some of the following verses with class members: D&C 18:20–21, 38:41, 42:6, 42:14, 75:4, and 100:7–8. What do these verses reveal about *how* the Lord’s servants should teach? Why is it important to avoid contention in teaching the gospel? What does it mean to “[lift] up your voices as with the sound of a trumpet”? (D&C 42:6; 75:4). How can we be both bold and meek as we teach the gospel? (See Alma 38:10–12.)
- The Lord repeatedly exhorted the elders to open their mouths to declare His gospel, “not fearing what man can do” (D&C 30:11; see also D&C 30:5; 33:8–11). The Lord also said that He is not pleased with those who “will not open their mouths . . . because of the fear of man” (D&C 60:2). How might this apply to us? How can we overcome fear in sharing the gospel? (See D&C 19:38; 33:12–14; 75:9–13.)
- Explain that some of us hesitate to share the gospel because we lack confidence in our speaking or teaching abilities. How can we overcome such a concern? (See D&C 11:21; 14:8; 31:3.) Invite class members to tell of experiences when the Spirit has prompted their words as they have shared the gospel.
- Refer to the account of Samuel Smith’s first mission, summarized in the attention activity. Why might Samuel Smith have felt like a failure after his first mission? In what ways was he successful? What can we learn from his experience to help us in our missionary efforts?

#### 5. The Lord promises great blessings to those who labor in His service.

- What does the Lord promise those who labor diligently in His service? (Select some of the following scripture passages to read with class members. Discuss the promises in each passage. Summarize the information on the chalkboard and use the discussion suggestions to encourage application.)
  - a. D&C 4:4; 11:3; 75:5.
  - b. D&C 18:15–16. Invite class members to express their feelings for Church members who shared the gospel with them or to describe their feelings as they shared the gospel.
  - c. D&C 31:5; 84:60–61.
  - d. D&C 31:7; 109:55–57. Invite class members to share experiences when the Lord has opened their hearts or the hearts of others to the gospel.
  - e. D&C 31:11; 84:85; 100:5–6. Invite class members to share experiences when the Spirit has guided their efforts or inspired them as they have shared the gospel.

- f. D&C 31:13; 75:9–13; 84:88. Invite class members to share experiences when they have felt the Lord support them and bear them up as they have shared the gospel.
- g. D&C 71:9–10. Point out that the Lord gave this promise at a time when the Church was under attack from a bitter apostate. How can this promise help us today?
- h. D&C 84:80. Invite class members to tell how the Lord has sustained them mentally, physically, and spiritually as they have preached the gospel.
- i. D&C 100:7–8. Invite class members to share experiences when they have felt the Holy Ghost bear record while they have shared the gospel.

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**Conclusion**

Encourage class members to give full devotion to serving the Lord. Emphasize that the Lord will bless them as they share the gospel with others. As prompted by the Spirit, testify of the truths discussed during the lesson.

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**Additional Teaching Ideas**

You may want to use one or more of the following ideas to supplement the suggested lesson outline.

**1. Repetition of teachings**

Have class members each turn to four different sections: D&C 6, 11, 12, and 14. Have one person read the first six verses of any of these sections, and ask the others to follow along in the other sections. Explain that in the scriptures the Lord repeats many instructions, often word for word.

- What can we learn from the Lord’s repetition of these instructions? Why is an understanding of these instructions important to us today?

**2. “Seek to bring forth and establish the cause of Zion” (D&C 6:6)**

- Several times the Lord admonished His servants to “seek to bring forth and establish the cause of Zion” (D&C 6:6; 11:6; 12:6; 14:6). How can we help establish the cause of Zion? (Answers could include by living righteously and building up the kingdom of God in our families, in our stakes and wards, through missionary work, and through temple work.) What are some causes that may distract us from establishing the cause of Zion?

**3. *Called to Serve* video presentation**

If the videocassette *Called to Serve* is available (53072), consider showing part of it during class (21 minutes).

# “The Gathering of My People”

## Lesson 12

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**Purpose** To help class members understand how latter-day Israel was gathered in the early days of the Church, how it is being gathered today, and how they can participate in this gathering.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study the following scriptures and other materials:
  - a. Doctrine and Covenants 29:1–8; 33:3–7; 37; 38:24–41; 52:2–5, 42–43; 57:1–3; 110:11; Articles of Faith 1:10; and the other scriptures in this lesson.
  - b. *Our Heritage*, pages 16–23, 37–39.
2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
3. Ask class members to prepare to summarize the following accounts from *Our Heritage*:
  - a. The sacrifices of Newel Knight and Joseph Knight Sr. in gathering to Kirtland (page 18).
  - b. The exodus of Saints from Fayette, led by Lucy Mack Smith (page 19).
  - c. The sacrifices of Brigham Young in gathering to Kirtland (page 23).
  - d. The journey of the Colesville Saints to Missouri and their settlement there (pages 37–39).
4. If you use the attention activity, bring several small sticks to class.

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### Suggestions for Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. Scatter several small sticks around the room. Show how easily one stick can be broken. Then invite class members to gather all the sticks, and let someone attempt to break them all at the same time.

- What can this activity teach us about the Lord’s purposes in gathering His people?

Explain that this lesson focuses on the gathering of Israel and our part in it.

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**Discussion and Application** Prayerfully select the lesson material that will best meet class members’ needs. Discuss how the scriptures apply to daily life. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

## 1. The Lord is gathering His people.

Explain that the gathering of Israel is a prominent theme in the Doctrine and Covenants. Anciently when the twelve tribes of Israel fell into apostasy, they were taken captive by their enemies and scattered among the nations of the earth, just as the Lord had warned. Although the prophets grieved over the wickedness of the people, they rejoiced as they foresaw the time in the latter days when Israel would be gathered again (see Topical Guide, “Israel, Gathering of”). This great process commenced with the restoration of the gospel and the calling of missionaries to “declare glad tidings of great joy unto this generation” (D&C 31:3).

The Prophet Joseph Smith said, “All that the prophets . . . have written, from the days of righteous Abel, down to the last man that has left any testimony on record for our consideration, in speaking of the salvation of Israel in the last days, goes directly to show that it consists in the work of the gathering” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 83).

- Read the tenth article of faith and D&C 45:71 with class members. What is the gathering of Israel? (Explain that the gathering of Israel has a spiritual meaning and a physical meaning, as outlined below.)
  - a. *Spiritual gathering.* The spiritual gathering of Israel occurs as people learn the gospel, come unto Christ, are baptized into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and keep their covenants. In this way they are gathered from the world into the Church, or the kingdom of God on earth.
  - b. *Physical gathering.* The physical gathering of Israel occurs as Church members come together in a particular location or in the stakes of Zion throughout the world.
- Read D&C 29:1–2, 7–8 with class members. What can we learn from these verses about the purposes of the gathering? How is being gathered into the Lord’s Church a blessing in your life?
- Explain that the authority to direct the gathering of Israel is provided through specific keys of the priesthood. When were the keys of the gathering of Israel restored to the earth? (See D&C 110:11 and the section heading.)
- Explain that in this dispensation, the gathering began with a few people in New York. It is now spreading throughout the earth, bringing hundreds of thousands of people each year into the Lord’s Church. What responsibilities do we have to help gather people to the Lord’s Church? (See D&C 33:7; 38:40; 39:11; 88:81.)

## 2. The Saints gathered in Ohio.

In December 1830, just eight months after the Church was organized, the Lord gave the first call in this dispensation for the Saints to gather physically. He revealed to Joseph Smith that the Saints should leave New York and gather in Ohio (D&C 37:3). You may want to refer to maps 1 and 3 on pages 274 and 276 in this manual and pages 29 and 31 in the *Class Member Study Guide*.

- What purposes did the Lord give for commanding His people to go to Ohio? (See D&C 38:31–32; 39:15.) In what way were the Saints “endowed with power from on high” after they gathered to Ohio? (See D&C 95:8; 105:33; 110:9. In part, the Saints received this endowment of power through the

appearances of the Savior and the restoration of priesthood keys after the completion of the Kirtland Temple.)

- Read D&C 38:24–27 with class members. What counsel did the Lord give in these verses as His people prepared to gather to Ohio? (Answers could include being virtuous, loving each other, and being united.) Why is unity important in the Church? How has feeling united with other Church members been a blessing in your life? How can we become more united?
- Read D&C 38:34–39 with class members. What counsel did the Lord give in these verses as His people prepared to gather to Ohio? How does this counsel apply to us? What did the Lord promise those who heeded the commandment to gather? (See D&C 38:39.)

Explain that between January and May 1831, most Church members in New York sold, rented, or left their farms and made the 300-mile journey to Ohio. Many of these Saints made great sacrifices to heed the Lord’s call to gather. Ask the assigned class members to summarize the accounts of these sacrifices from *Our Heritage* (these are the first three summaries listed under “Preparation,” item 3).

- Why do you think these Church members were willing to suffer financially and in other ways to obey the Lord’s call to gather in Ohio? What can we learn from their example? What sacrifices does the Lord ask us to make to help build His kingdom?

### 3. The Saints gathered in Missouri.

The early Saints had read prophecies about the city of Zion, or New Jerusalem, being established in the latter days (Isaiah 2:2–3; 3 Nephi 20:22; 21:22–28; Ether 13:2–12; Moses 7:61–62). Locating and establishing this city was one of the prime objectives of these Church members.

A few months after the Saints began gathering in Ohio, Joseph Smith traveled to Missouri and received a revelation designating Missouri as the place for the city of Zion (D&C 57:1–3). With this revelation, Missouri became a second gathering place for the Church in this dispensation (D&C 63:24, 36–48). From 1831 to 1838, the Church maintained centers of population in both Ohio and Missouri. You may want to refer to maps 2 and 3 on pages 275 and 276 in this manual and pages 30 and 31 in the *Class Member Study Guide*.

The following time line summarizes the early revelations about the land of Zion and the establishment of the Church in Missouri. Review the time line with class members, using the chalkboard as needed.

- September 1830 (in New York): The Lord revealed that the city of Zion would be built “on the borders by the Lamanites,” with the precise location to be identified later (D&C 28:9).
- September and October 1830 (in New York): The Lord called four missionaries to preach the gospel to the Lamanites (D&C 30:5–6; 32:1–3). These missionaries were the first Church members to go to Missouri.
- February 1831 (in Kirtland, soon after the Saints began arriving there): The Lord said He would reveal the location of the New Jerusalem in His own due time (D&C 42:62).

- d. June 1831 (in Kirtland, after the first conference there): The Lord called Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, and other elders to go on a mission to Missouri. The Lord also promised to consecrate the land of Missouri to His people as the land of their inheritance (D&C 52:2–5, 42–43).
- e. June 1831 (in Kirtland): The Lord revealed that the Saints from the Colesville Branch in New York, who had journeyed to Ohio, should continue on to Missouri (D&C 54:8).
- f. July 1831 (after the Prophet had traveled to Missouri): The Lord revealed that the city of Zion would be located in Missouri, with Independence as the center place. A temple would be built in Independence (D&C 57:1–3).

The Colesville Saints were the first to gather in Missouri, and many others soon followed. Invite the assigned class member to summarize the experiences of the Colesville Saints as they journeyed to Missouri and began to settle there (see “Preparation,” item 3d).

- What impresses you about these accounts of the Colesville Saints? (You may want to review some of the good qualities these Saints exhibited in very challenging circumstances.) What can we learn from their example?

#### **4. The Saints now gather to the stakes of Zion in their own lands.**

Church members maintained a strong presence in Ohio and Missouri from 1831 to 1838, when persecution forced most of them to leave (see lessons 26–28). In 1839 they gathered in Illinois and established the city of Nauvoo. They were forced to leave Nauvoo in 1846, and in 1847 President Brigham Young led them to a new gathering place in the Rocky Mountains near the Great Salt Lake. You may want to refer to map 3 on page 276 in this manual and page 31 in the *Class Member Study Guide*.

For many years after the Saints settled in Utah, the call continued for Church members all over the world to gather to that area. However, that phase of the gathering has now ended, and Church members are counseled to gather to the stakes of Zion wherever they live. In an area conference held in Mexico City in 1972, Elder Bruce R. McConkie said:

“[The] revealed words speak of . . . there being congregations of the covenant people of the Lord *in every nation, speaking every tongue, and among every people* when the Lord comes again. . . .

“The place of gathering for the Mexican Saints is in Mexico; the place of gathering for the Guatemalan Saints is in Guatemala; the place of gathering for the Brazilian Saints is in Brazil; and so it goes throughout the length and breadth of the whole earth. Japan is for the Japanese; Korea is for the Koreans; Australia is for the Australians; every nation is the gathering place for its own people” (in Conference Report, Mexico and Central America Area Conference 1972, 45).

In April 1973, President Harold B. Lee, the 11th President of the Church, quoted those words in general conference. In doing so, he “in effect, announced that the pioneering phase of gathering was now over. The gathering is now to be out of the world into the Church in every nation” (Boyd K. Packer, in Conference Report, Oct. 1992, 99; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1992, 71).

- What conditions in the Church brought about the change that members should gather in their own nations rather than to a central location? (Answers could include that the Church's membership and resources became sufficient to establish stakes and build temples in many areas of the world.)
- One purpose of gathering to a central location during the pioneering phase of the Church was so members could strengthen each other and find refuge and protection from the world. How are these same purposes fulfilled by gathering to the stakes of Zion today? (See D&C 115:6 and the following quotation. Invite class members to share how they have felt protected and strengthened through the stakes of Zion.) What can we do to ensure that our stakes are a refuge and a defense against evil?

President Ezra Taft Benson said:

"Presently, Israel is being gathered to the various stakes of Zion. . . . A stake has at least four purposes:

"1. [Stakes are] to unify and perfect the members who live in [their] boundaries by extending to them the Church programs, the ordinances, and gospel instruction.

"2. Members of stakes are to be models, or standards, of righteousness.

"3. Stakes are to be a defense. They do this as stake members unify under their local priesthood officers and consecrate themselves to do their duty and keep their covenants. . . .

"4. Stakes are a refuge from the storm to be poured out over the earth" ("Strengthen Thy Stakes," *Ensign*, Jan. 1991, 2, 4–5).

- Temple building was an essential part of the gathering in Kirtland, Missouri, Nauvoo, and Utah. It continues to be essential as the Saints today gather to the stakes of Zion throughout the world. Why is temple building an essential part of the gathering? How does temple work contribute to the great work of the gathering on earth and in the spirit world?

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught: "What was the object of gathering . . . the people of God in any age of the world? . . . The main object was to build unto the Lord a house whereby He could reveal unto His people the ordinances of His house and the glories of His kingdom, and teach the people the way of salvation. . . . It is for the same purpose that God gathers together His people in the last days, to build unto the Lord a house to prepare them for the ordinances and endowments, washings and anointings" (*History of the Church*, 5:423–24).

## Conclusion

Emphasize that the Lord's promises to gather Israel are being fulfilled in our day. This great work is hastening as people join the Church and worship together in the stakes of Zion in more than 160 nations throughout the world. Encourage class members to labor diligently to gather people into the Church and to build up and strengthen the Church wherever they live. Testify of the promised blessings that come through the gathering.

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## Additional Teaching Ideas

You may want to use one or both of the following ideas to supplement the suggested lesson outline.

### 1. “Zion will extend . . . all over this earth”

You may want to explain that although the center place of Zion will be in Missouri, Zion will eventually spread over all the earth. President Brigham Young said:

“When Joseph [Smith] first revealed the land where the Saints should gather, a woman in Canada asked if we thought that Jackson County would be large enough to gather all the people. . . . I will answer the question. . . . Zion will extend, eventually, all over this earth. There will be no nook or corner upon the earth but what will be in Zion. It will all be Zion. . . .

“We are going to gather as many as we can, bless them, give them their endowments, etc., preach to them the truth, lay the principles of eternal life before them, inform their minds all we have power to do, and lead them into the path of truth and righteousness” (in *Journal of Discourses*, 9:138).

### 2. The Lord’s preparation for the physical gathering of the “dispersed of Judah” (Isaiah 11:12)

A few decades after the Savior’s death, the Jews were “scattered among all nations” (2 Nephi 25:15; see also verse 14). However, the scriptures record many prophecies that in the latter days the scattered Jews will be gathered again and be given Jerusalem “for the land of their inheritance” (3 Nephi 20:33; see also 1 Nephi 15:19–20; 2 Nephi 9:1–2; 10:8).

On 27 March 1836, in the dedicatory prayer of the Kirtland Temple, the Prophet Joseph Smith prayed that the gathering of the Jews and the redemption of Jerusalem might begin (D&C 109:62–67). Share the following information to show one way in which the Lord has prepared for the gathering of the Jews:

Orson Hyde recalled that when he joined the Church, Joseph Smith prophesied, “In due time thou shalt go to Jerusalem . . . ; and by thy hands shall the Most High do a great work, which shall prepare the way and greatly facilitate the gathering together of that people” (*History of the Church*, 4:375). In the April 1840 general conference, Elder Hyde, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, was called on a mission to Palestine (*History of the Church*, 4:106). About 18 months later he arrived at his destination.

Early on Sunday morning, 24 October 1841, Elder Hyde ascended the Mount of Olives and offered a prayer. In his prayer he dedicated and consecrated the land “for the gathering together of Judah’s scattered remnants, according to the predictions of the holy Prophets—for the building up of Jerusalem again . . . and for rearing a Temple in honor of [the Lord’s] name.” He also prayed that the Lord would remember the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob forever and “give them this land for an everlasting inheritance” (*History of the Church*, 4:456).

As a witness of the deed, Elder Hyde erected a pile of stones on the top of the Mount of Olives. He also erected a pile of stones “on what was anciently called Mount Zion [possibly Mount Moriah], where the Temple stood” (*History of the Church*, 4:459).

# “This Generation Shall Have My Word through You”

Lesson  
**13**

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**Purpose** To help class members appreciate the Prophet Joseph Smith’s role in bringing forth the word of the Lord in this dispensation.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study the scriptures in this lesson and the following other materials:
  - a. *Our Heritage*, pages 23–25, 41, 58.
  - b. Bible Dictionary, “Joseph Smith Translation,” page 717.
2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
3. Ask a class member to prepare to summarize the account of Mary Elizabeth and Caroline Rollins saving pages of the Book of Commandments (*Our Heritage*, page 41).
4. If the picture *Mary and Caroline Rollins Saving the Book of Commandments* is available (62605; Gospel Art Picture Kit 409), prepare to use it during the lesson.
5. Copy selected entries from the chart on page 74 onto a poster or prepare to write them on the chalkboard.

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## Suggestions for Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. List some or all of the following subjects on the chalkboard before class begins.

Physical nature of the Godhead Our creation in God’s image Apostles and prophets Melchizedek Priesthood Aaronic Priesthood Mode of baptism The gift of the Holy Ghost Premortal existence Baptism for the dead Resurrection The three kingdoms of glory Eternal marriage Our potential to become like Heavenly Father
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Invite a class member to erase from the chalkboard anything that has not been revealed through the Prophet Joseph Smith. Help class members see that nothing can be erased from the chalkboard—that all of these truths were restored through the Prophet Joseph. This lesson discusses how Joseph Smith has been instrumental in bringing forth the word of the Lord in this dispensation.

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Prayerfully select the lesson material that will best meet class members' needs. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the principles you teach.

**1. The Lord declared that the people in this dispensation would receive His word through Joseph Smith.**

Read D&C 5:10 with class members. Explain that in this verse, the phrase “this generation” refers to this dispensation—the time in which we live. Then share the following statement by President Brigham Young:

“What I have received from the Lord, I have received by Joseph Smith” (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, sel. John A. Widtsoe [1941], 458).

- How is this statement true for you? How is it true for all Latter-day Saints?

Point out that the great outpouring of truth in this dispensation has come through the Prophet Joseph Smith. For example, latter-day scriptures, priesthood ordinances, the organization of the priesthood, and temple building have come from the Lord through the Prophet Joseph Smith.

**2. Many ancient and latter-day scriptures have come through Joseph Smith.**

- Read Moses 1:40–41 with class members. How is the prophecy in verse 41 being fulfilled? (Emphasize that in a time when many have esteemed the Lord’s words lightly, the Lord raised up the Prophet Joseph Smith. The words of the Lord are now “had again among the children of men.”)
- What scriptures have come to us through the Prophet Joseph Smith? (The Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, Pearl of Great Price, and Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible. Point out that Joseph Smith was an instrument in the Lord’s hands in restoring ancient scriptures, and he received many revelations that became latter-day scriptures.)

Speaking about Joseph Smith, Elder LeGrand Richards of the Quorum of the Twelve said, “As far as our records show, he has given us more revealed truth than any prophet who has ever lived upon the face of the earth” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1981, 43; or *Ensign*, May 1981, 33).

*The Book of Mormon*

Read 2 Nephi 3:11–15 with class members. Explain that this passage contains a prophecy about Joseph Smith. The writings mentioned in verse 12 are the Bible and the Book of Mormon.

- In what ways does the Book of Mormon help eliminate contention and establish peace? In what ways does the Book of Mormon bring people to a knowledge of the Lord’s covenants?
- How has the Book of Mormon blessed your life?
- What are some of your favorite passages in the Book of Mormon?

As part of this discussion, you may want to share one or two passages from the Book of Mormon that are particularly meaningful to you.

### *The Doctrine and Covenants*

Explain that from 1823 to 1831, Joseph Smith received more than 60 revelations from the Lord. A few handwritten copies of these revelations were given to missionaries and others, but most Church members did not have access to them. At a conference held in Ohio in late 1831, Church leaders decided to publish the revelations in a volume called the Book of Commandments (see the headings to D&C 67 and 69). Oliver Cowdery and John Whitmer were selected to take the revelations to Independence, Missouri, a distance of approximately 1,000 miles, where the book would be printed and bound.

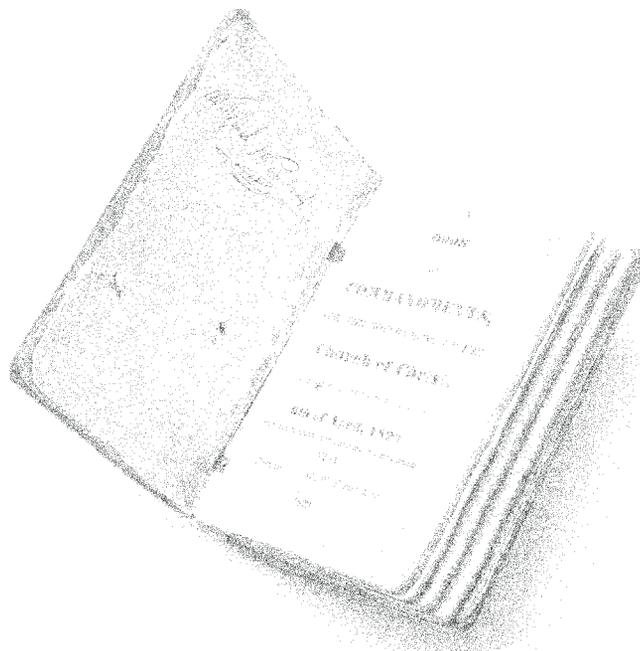
Oliver Cowdery and John Whitmer reached Independence in January 1832, and by July 1833 William W. Phelps had printed the first 160 pages of the Book of Commandments. However, on 20 July 1833 a mob destroyed Brother Phelps's printing press and many of the unbound pages of the Book of Commandments.

Ask the assigned class member to tell the story of the courage of Mary Elizabeth and Caroline Rollins (*Our Heritage*, page 41).

The pages that were salvaged were bound into a few copies of the Book of Commandments, but the revelations still were not widely available. In 1835, after 45 more revelations were added, the Book of Commandments was published as the Doctrine and Covenants.

- What does the story of Mary Elizabeth and Caroline Rollins teach about how we should value the revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants?
- How have you been blessed as you have studied the Doctrine and Covenants this year?
- What are some of your favorite passages in the Doctrine and Covenants?

As part of this discussion, you may want to share one or two passages from the Doctrine and Covenants that are particularly meaningful to you.



**The Book of Commandments.** This is the first compilation of the revelations given through the Prophet Joseph Smith. These revelations later became part of the Doctrine and Covenants.

### *The Pearl of Great Price*

Point out that the Pearl of Great Price is appropriately named. Like a pearl, it is small in size but great in worth. Although it is only 61 pages long, it spans the eternities, including passages about the Grand Council in Heaven, the restoration of the gospel in the dispensation of the fulness of times, the Savior's Second Coming, the Millennium, and everlasting life. It contains valuable teachings on the Creation, the Fall, the Atonement, and the agency of mankind. This book of scripture has five parts:

- a. Selections from the book of Moses
- b. The book of Abraham
- c. Joseph Smith—Matthew
- d. Joseph Smith—History
- e. The Articles of Faith

Ask class members to turn to the Introductory Note at the beginning of the Pearl of Great Price. Have them review the last five paragraphs, which explain the background of each part of this book of scripture.

- How have the teachings in the Pearl of Great Price helped you? What are some passages in the Pearl of Great Price that are particularly meaningful to you?

As part of this discussion, you may want to share one or two of your favorite passages from the Pearl of Great Price.

### *The Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible*

- Read the eighth article of faith with class members. What is the significance of the phrase “as far as it is translated correctly”?

Read 1 Nephi 13:24–28 with class members. (Explain that “the book [that] proceeded from the mouth of a Jew” is the Bible. The phrase “great and abominable church” refers to all those who fight against God, not to a specific church.) Remind class members that because of the Great Apostasy, the Lord withdrew the fulness of the gospel from the earth. During the centuries that followed, many parts of the Bible were changed and many plain and precious truths were lost.

Soon after the Church was restored, the Lord instructed the Prophet Joseph to begin making inspired corrections to the King James Version of the Bible. There are many references to this instruction in the Doctrine and Covenants (see, for example, D&C 35:20; 37:1; 45:60–61; 73:3–4; 93:53). Today we refer to the Prophet's work as the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible.

Joseph Smith's translation of the Bible differs from what we normally call a translation. The Prophet did not translate the Bible from one language to another. His only text was the King James Version of the Bible, and he was guided by the Spirit to make corrections and restore passages that had been lost completely.

Two excerpts from the Joseph Smith Translation are in the Pearl of Great Price (the book of Moses and Joseph Smith—Matthew). In addition, brief portions of the Joseph Smith Translation are included in the footnotes of the Latter-day Saint edition of the King James Bible. Longer excerpts are included in the appendix following the Bible Dictionary.

To help class members gain a greater appreciation of the Joseph Smith Translation, you may want to briefly compare some passages with the King James Bible. Two comparisons are suggested below:

- a. The account and teachings of Enoch are an example of the restoration of long passages in the Joseph Smith Translation. The Bible's only references to Enoch are in Genesis 5:18–24, Luke 3:37, Hebrews 11:5, and Jude 1:14–15. The Joseph Smith Translation's references to Enoch are greatly expanded to include his teachings, visions, and prophecies as recorded in Moses 6:21–68 and 7:1–69. Select a few of these verses to read in class, and discuss their value.
- b. The revisions to Matthew 4 are an example of inspired corrections to specific verses in the Bible. If class members have excerpts of the Joseph Smith Translation in the footnotes of their Bibles, have them review a few of the footnotes for Matthew 4 that begin with "JST." Discuss how these corrections clarify the verses in the King James Version.

The process of translating the Bible not only brought the correction and restoration of doctrines in the Bible. It also helped bring about the restoration of doctrines through the Doctrine and Covenants. Many revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants are responses to questions the Prophet asked while pondering the translation of the Bible. One Church member who spent many years studying the Joseph Smith Translation observed, "The Joseph Smith Translation is not just a better Bible; it was the channel, or the means, of doctrinal restoration in the infancy of this Church" (Robert J. Matthews, in *The Capstone of Our Religion: Insights into the Doctrine and Covenants* [1989], 64).

To give an example of how the Joseph Smith Translation led to "doctrinal restoration," read the second full paragraph on page 24 of *Our Heritage*. You may also want to read the heading to D&C 76 and verses 15–19 in D&C 76.

Encourage class members to use the Joseph Smith Translation as they study the scriptures.

### **3. Plain and precious doctrines of the gospel have been restored through Joseph Smith.**

The chart on page 74 highlights some of the doctrines of the gospel that were restored or clarified through the Prophet Joseph Smith. Note that the subjects listed in the left column are the same as those in the attention activity.

The middle column of the chart lists verses in the Bible where the doctrines and principles are unclear, incorrect, or incomplete. The right column shows where these doctrines and principles are explained or clarified in scripture given through Joseph Smith.

Select a few subjects from the chart, and review the accompanying scripture passages with class members. Discuss how the revelations that came through the Prophet clarify these subjects.

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<b>Subject</b>	<b>Scriptures in the Bible</b>	<b>Scriptures Given through Joseph Smith</b>
Physical nature of the Godhead	Matthew 3:16–17; John 4:24; Acts 7:55	Joseph Smith—History 1:17; D&C 130:1, 22
Our creation in God’s image	Genesis 1:27	Moses 6:8–9
Apostles and prophets	Ephesians 2:20; 4:11–16	D&C 107:23, 33, 35, 39, 58; 112:30–32
Melchizedek Priesthood	Hebrews 6:20; 7:17	D&C 84:19–25; 107:1–8, 18–19
Aaronic Priesthood	Hebrews 7:11	D&C 13; 84:18, 26–27, 30; 107:1, 13–14, 20
Mode of baptism	Matthew 3:16	3 Nephi 11:22–26; Moroni 8:8–12; D&C 20:71–74
The gift of the Holy Ghost	Acts 8:17	D&C 20:41, 43; 35:6; 121:46
Premortal existence	Jeremiah 1:4–5	D&C 93:29; Abraham 3:22–26
Baptism for the dead	1 Corinthians 15:29	D&C 128:16–18
Resurrection	Job 19:25–26; John 5:28–29; 1 Corinthians 15:22	Alma 11:42–45
The three kingdoms of glory	1 Corinthians 15:40–42	D&C 76:50–112; 131:1
Eternal marriage	Genesis 2:24; 1 Corinthians 11:11	D&C 131:1–4; 132:19
Our potential to become like Heavenly Father	Romans 8:17	D&C 88:107; 93:20; 132:20–24

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**Conclusion**

Express your appreciation for Joseph Smith’s role in bringing the Lord’s word to us. As prompted by the Spirit, testify of the truths discussed during the lesson.

# The Law of Consecration

Lesson  
**14**

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**Purpose** To help class members understand the law of consecration and its eternal purposes and desire to consecrate their lives more fully to the service of God.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study the following scriptures and other materials:
  - a. Doctrine and Covenants 42:30–42; 51; 78; 82; 104:11–18; and the other scriptures in this lesson.
  - b. *Our Heritage*, page 26.
2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
3. If you use the attention activity, bring a piece of paper and a pen or pencil for each class member.

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## Suggestions for Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. Give each class member a piece of paper and a pen or pencil. Ask each person to list five of his or her valued material possessions. Then read D&C 104:13–14 with class members.

- What do we learn from these verses about the true owner of all we possess? How do you feel about the use of your possessions when you realize that all things on the earth are the Lord's?

Explain that the principles taught in these verses are fundamental to living the law of consecration. This lesson focuses on this law and the ways in which we can more fully consecrate our lives to the Lord.

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**Discussion and Application** Prayerfully select the lesson material that will best meet class members' needs. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

### **1. The Lord revealed the law of consecration to the Saints.**

Explain that in February 1831, soon after the Saints began to gather in Kirtland, Ohio, the Lord revealed that they should begin to live the law of consecration (D&C 42:30).

- What does *consecrate* mean? (It means to set apart or dedicate something to the service of the Lord.) What is the law of consecration? (It is an organized way in which individuals consecrate their time, talents, and possessions to the Church to build the Lord's kingdom and serve His children.)

- What are the purposes of the law of consecration? (Have class members read the following scriptures and identify what they teach about the purposes of the law of consecration. Summarize these purposes on the chalkboard. Select some of the following questions to encourage discussion.)
  - a. D&C 42:30. (To care for the poor and needy.) How is caring for the poor and needy accomplished through the law of consecration? (See D&C 42:31–34.)
  - b. D&C 42:35. (To purchase lands, build houses of worship, and build the New Jerusalem.)
  - c. D&C 42:40. (To help the Lord’s people overcome pride.) How can living the law of consecration help members overcome personal pride or greed?
  - d. D&C 42:42. (To help the Lord’s people be industrious and avoid idleness.)
  - e. D&C 51:9. (To help the Lord’s people be one.) In what ways does the Lord expect us to be one? How can the law of consecration help the Saints be one?
  - f. D&C 78:3–7. (To make the Lord’s people equal in earthly things and help them receive a place in the celestial kingdom.) How does being equal in “earthly things” help us obtain “heavenly things”? (D&C 78:5).
  - g. D&C 78:14. (To help the Church “stand independent above all other creatures.”)
  - h. D&C 82:17–19. (To help the Lord’s people improve their talents for the good of all, seek the interest of their neighbor, and do all things with an eye single to God’s glory.) How can living the law of consecration help the Lord’s people develop greater charity?

Emphasize that from these purposes, it is clear that the law of consecration is not just a temporal or economic program. It is also a spiritual law that helps members grow spiritually and prepare for eternal life (D&C 29:34–35).

Explain that the principles of the law of consecration have not changed since it was revealed through the Prophet Joseph Smith. However, the application of those principles changes from time to time. The current prophet helps us understand how to apply these principles in our day.

You may want to use the following material to explain how the law of consecration was administered during the early days of the Church. The early Saints attempted to live the law for periods of time in Ohio, Missouri, and Utah. Some of the Saints lived the law well, but the Church as a whole failed to live it (see also *Our Heritage*, page 26).

#### *Consecrating possessions*

Under the law of consecration, Church members voluntarily consecrated their possessions to the Church by legal deed (D&C 42:30).

#### *Receiving a stewardship*

After Church members consecrated their possessions, the bishop granted them stewardships, or portions, from all the properties received. The size of the stewardship depended on the circumstances and needs of the family, as determined by the bishop in consultation with the member who received it (D&C 42:32; 51:3). The stewardship was given with a deed of ownership so each member would be fully responsible and accountable for managing it (D&C 51:4; 72:3–4;

104:11–13). The stewardship, then, was treated as private property, not common or communal property, even though all property ultimately belongs to God.

### *Surpluses*

If members produced a surplus from their stewardships beyond what was necessary for their families, at the end of the year they gave it to the bishop to put in the bishop's storehouse (D&C 42:33; 51:13). The bishop used the surplus to care for the poor, to build houses of worship, and for other worthy purposes (D&C 42:34–35).

### *United order*

In March 1832, the Lord revealed that there must be an organization to regulate and administer the law of consecration among His people (D&C 78:3). He called this organization the “united order” (D&C 92:1). In subsequent revelations the Lord gave further instructions concerning the united order (see, for example, D&C 104).

## **2. The law of consecration is an eternal law.**

The law of consecration is an eternal law that the Lord revealed again in our dispensation. Accounts of the Lord's people living this law are included in the Pearl of Great Price, New Testament, and Book of Mormon. Read or review the following passages with class members:

- a. Moses 7:18. (The people of Enoch.)
  - b. Acts 4:32, 34–35. (The Saints after the Savior's Resurrection.)
  - c. 4 Nephi 1:1–3, 12–13, 15. (The Nephites after the Savior's visit to them.)
- What do you think would be some of the blessings of living in a community where people lived the law of consecration?

## **3. We can consecrate our lives to the Lord now.**

As Saints of God, we must be prepared and willing to live the law of consecration in its fulness. But we do not need to wait for a future day to consecrate our lives to the Lord. As we do all we can to live the law of consecration today, we will be better prepared to live the fulness of the law when the Lord asks us to do so.

- In what ways can we live the law of consecration in our lives today? (Use the following information to discuss or add to class members' responses. Write the headings on the chalkboard as you discuss them.)

### *Realize that everything we have belongs to the Lord*

- If you used the attention activity, refer back to it. If you did not use it, read D&C 104:13–14 and Psalm 24:1 with class members. What can we learn from these verses? What does it mean to be a steward over our possessions? How should this knowledge affect our attitude toward our possessions? Why is it important to understand that everything belongs to the Lord? What does the Lord promise as we are faithful stewards over what He has given us? (See D&C 51:19; 78:22.)

Bishop Victor L. Brown, former Presiding Bishop of the Church, said that until we “feel in total harmony” with the principle that everything we have

belongs to the Lord, “it will be difficult, if not impossible, for us to accept the law of consecration. As we prepare to live this law, we will look forward with great anticipation to the day when the call will come. If, on the other hand, we hope it can be delayed so we can have the pleasure of accumulating material things, we are on the wrong path” (“The Law of Consecration,” *1976 Devotional Speeches of the Year* [1977], 439).

- Read D&C 19:26 with class members. What warning did the Lord give to Martin Harris in this verse? Why must we overcome covetousness if we are to consecrate our lives to the Lord? How can we overcome covetous feelings?

President Brigham Young said: “I am more afraid of covetousness in our Elders than I am of the hordes of hell. . . . All our enemies . . . in the world, and all hell with them marshalled against us, could not do us the injury that covetousness in the hearts of this people could do us; for it is idolatry” (in *Journal of Discourses*, 5:353).

#### *Make the sacrifices the Lord requires now*

We must be willing to make the sacrifices that the Lord requires of us at the present time. These include sacrifices of time, talents, and possessions. The First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve give us direction regarding how we implement the principles of the law of consecration in our day.

- How can we consecrate our time, talents, and possessions to help build the kingdom of God today? (Answers may include those listed below.)
  - a. Pay tithing and fast offerings and give generously in other ways to those in need. By doing these things, we can help the Church care for the poor and carry on the important activities necessary to build the kingdom of God on earth. Elder Marion G. Romney asked: “What prohibits us from giving as much in fast offerings as we would have given in surpluses under the United Order? Nothing but our own limitations” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1966, 100; or *Improvement Era*, June 1966, 537).
  - b. Serve willingly in the Church. The Lord has admonished each person to “learn his duty, and to act in the office in which he is appointed, in all diligence” (D&C 107:99). We should fulfill the callings we receive to the best of our ability. In addition to specific Church callings, we can share the gospel with others, do temple work, and seek to strengthen the testimonies of those who are new or weak in the faith.
  - c. Serve as a full-time missionary. Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve taught: “Going on a mission teaches you to live the law of consecration. It may be the only time in your life when you can give to the Lord all your time, talents, and resources. In return, the Lord will bless you with His Spirit to be with you. He will be close to you and strengthen you” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1996, 50; or *Ensign*, May 1996, 36).

#### *Develop Christlike love for others*

- Read D&C 82:19 and Jacob 2:17 with class members. What does the Lord teach in these scriptures about how we are to show our love for others? Why is developing Christlike love for others necessary if we are to live the law of consecration?

Explain that the ability to have Christlike love for others is the foundation of the law of consecration. As we grow in love, our ability to live this law will also grow. Invite class members to share experiences when they or others have sacrificed their time and resources to help others in a time of need. If appropriate, you might share the following story, told by President Thomas S. Monson:

“I have many memories of my boyhood. Anticipating Sunday dinner was one of them. Just as we children . . . sat anxiously at the table, with the aroma of roast beef filling the room, Mother would say to me, ‘Tommy, before we eat, take this plate I’ve prepared down the street to Old Bob and hurry back.’

“I could never understand why we couldn’t first eat and later deliver his plate of food. I never questioned aloud but would run down to his house and then wait anxiously as Bob’s aged feet brought him eventually to the door. Then I would hand him the plate of food. He would present to me the clean plate from the previous Sunday and offer me a dime as pay for my services. My answer was always the same: ‘I can’t accept the money. My mother would tan my hide.’ He would then run his wrinkled hand through my blond hair and say, ‘My boy, you have a wonderful mother. Tell her thank you.’ . . . Sunday dinner always seemed to taste a bit better after I had returned from my errand” (“The Long Line of the Lonely,” *Ensign*, Feb. 1992, 4).

*Strive to consecrate all aspects of our lives to the Lord*

Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve said: “We tend to think of consecration only in terms of property and money. But there are so many ways of keeping back part” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1992, 90; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1992, 66).

- What are some ways in which we might be “keeping back part” when we could achieve greater consecration in the service of God and His children? (See D&C 64:34 and the following examples from Elder Maxwell of how we sometimes fall short in the consecration we should give.)
  - a. An unwillingness to be completely submissive to the Lord’s will. “The submission of one’s will is really the only uniquely personal thing we have to place on God’s altar,” Elder Maxwell said. “The many other things we ‘give’ . . . 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! It is the only possession which is truly ours to give!” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1995, 30; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 24).
  - b. An unwillingness to give up selfish things, such as “our roles, our time, our preeminence, and our possessions” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1995, 28).
  - c. Letting hobbies and preoccupations with less important things become too consuming.
  - d. Giving commendable civic service but remaining “a comparative stranger to Jesus’ holy temples and His holy scriptures” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1995, 27).
  - e. Being dutiful in family responsibilities but not emulating Jesus’ example of gentleness with some family members.
  - f. Building up ourselves first rather than the kingdom of God.

- g. Sharing talents publicly while privately retaining a particular pride.
- h. Accepting a Church calling while having a heart more set on maintaining a certain role in the world.

(See Conference Report, Oct. 1992, 88–92; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1992, 65–67; and Conference Report, Oct. 1995, 27–30; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 22–24.)

- How are we blessed as we strive for more complete consecration?

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## Conclusion

Encourage class members to examine their lives to determine how they can consecrate themselves more fully to the Lord. Explain that we can do these things by acknowledging that all we possess belongs to the Lord, by willingly making the sacrifices required of us now, and by developing Christlike love for other people.

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## Additional Teaching Ideas

You may want to use one or both of the following ideas to supplement the suggested lesson outline.

### 1. The Lord's storehouse

The Lord's storehouse is mentioned several times in the Doctrine and Covenants in connection with caring for the poor (D&C 42:34; 78:3; 83:5–6). To help class members understand what the Lord's storehouse is and how it is used today, share the following information from the *Church Handbook of Instructions*:

“The Lord's storehouse receives, holds in trust, and dispenses consecrated offerings of the Saints. The storehouse may be as simple or sophisticated as circumstances require. It may be a list of available services, money in an account, food in a pantry, or commodities in a building. A storehouse is established when faithful members consecrate to the bishop their time, talents, skills, compassion, materials, and financial means in caring for the poor and in building up the kingdom of God on the earth.

“The Lord's storehouse, therefore, exists in each ward. The bishop is the agent of the storehouse. Guided by inspiration from the Lord, he distributes the Saints' offerings to the poor and needy. He is assisted by priesthood quorums and the Relief Society. He is instructed and supported in his responsibilities by stake and area leaders” (*Book 2: Priesthood and Auxiliary Leaders* [1998], 256).

- How can each of us contribute to the resources of the Lord's storehouse in our ward?

### 2. “Equal in earthly things” (D&C 78:6)

The word *equal* is frequently used in the Doctrine and Covenants in relation to temporal things (D&C 51:3; 70:14; 78:6). Explain that this does not mean that all stewardships are exactly the same. Rather, they are given according to the needs of each person and family (D&C 42:32; 51:3). They are equal in the sense that all Saints have “equal claims on the properties” to meet their needs (D&C 82:17).

# “Seek Ye Earnestly the Best Gifts”

## Lesson 15

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**Purpose** To help class members identify gifts of the Spirit, seek to obtain them, and use them to serve others.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study the following scriptures and other materials:
  - a. Doctrine and Covenants 46; Articles of Faith 1:7.
  - b. 1 Corinthians 12–13; Moroni 10:8–18 (supplemental scriptures).
  - c. *Our Heritage*, pages 42–43, 47–48, 63.
2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
3. Ask class members to prepare to read the following accounts from *Our Heritage*:
  - a. Newel Knight administering to Philo Dibble (pages 42–43).
  - b. Amanda Smith receiving revelation on how to treat her injured son (pages 47–48).
  - c. The Prophet Joseph Smith prophesying of Dan Jones’s missionary service (page 63).

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### Suggestions for Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. Ask class members to imagine that they are planting a garden.

- What seeds would you plant in your garden?

Give class members a moment to think, and then invite a few of them to describe what they would like to have in a garden. Call attention to differences in class members’ choices. Point out that while the gardens would be different, all of them could be beautiful and useful.

- After planting seeds, what would you need to do to have a successful garden?

After class members have responded, explain that this lesson is about gifts of the Spirit. Remind class members that people may have different plants in their gardens yet still have equally beautiful and useful gardens. Similarly, members of the Church may receive different gifts of the Spirit, but all of these gifts are useful for building up the kingdom of God. And like seeds and plants, gifts of the Spirit must be cultivated and nourished to become fully developed and useful.

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### Discussion and Application

Prayerfully select the lesson materials that will best meet class members’ needs. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

## 1. All faithful members of the Church can receive gifts of the Spirit.

Explain that gifts of the Spirit are spiritual blessings or abilities that are given through the Holy Ghost. These gifts were taken from the earth during the Great Apostasy, but God restored them in the early days of this dispensation. The exercise of these gifts can bless, edify, and unify us.

Ask the assigned class members to read the accounts from *Our Heritage* (see “Preparation,” item 3). After each account is read, discuss which gifts of the Spirit are illustrated in the story: Newel Knight had the faith to heal (D&C 46:20); Philo Dibble and Alma Smith had the faith to be healed (D&C 46:19); Amanda Smith received revelation (Articles of Faith 1:7); the Prophet Joseph Smith had the gift of prophecy (D&C 46:22); and Dan Jones received the gift to teach (Moroni 10:9–10).

- What gifts of the Spirit does the Lord identify in D&C 46? (Have class members read the following scriptures and identify the spiritual gift that is mentioned in each passage. Summarize these gifts on the chalkboard.)
  - a. D&C 46:13. (Knowledge “given by the Holy Ghost . . . that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and that he was crucified for the sins of the world.”)
  - b. D&C 46:14. (Belief in others’ testimonies of the Savior.)
  - c. D&C 46:15. (Knowledge of “the differences of administration.”) Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve said that this gift is “used in administering and regulating the church” (*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* [1985], 278).
  - d. D&C 46:16. (Discernment “to know the diversities of operations, whether they be of God.” This gift helps us discern whether a teaching or influence comes from God or from some other source.)
  - e. D&C 46:17–18. (Wisdom and knowledge.)
  - f. D&C 46:19. (Faith to be healed.)
  - g. D&C 46:20. (Faith to heal.)
  - h. D&C 46:21. (The working of miracles.)
  - i. D&C 46:22. (Prophecy.)
  - j. D&C 46:23. (Discerning of spirits.)
  - k. D&C 46:24. (Speaking in tongues.)
  - l. D&C 46:25. (Interpretation of tongues.)

You may want to point out that gifts of the Spirit are also identified in 1 Corinthians 12:4–12; 13:1–13; and Moroni 10:8–18.

- Who can receive gifts of the Spirit? (See D&C 46:8, 11. Point out that God gives at least one of these gifts to every faithful member of the Church who has received the gift of the Holy Ghost. If you are teaching youth, emphasize that they have spiritual gifts. You may also want to point out that people who have not received the gift of the Holy Ghost may still be blessed with unique abilities to lift and strengthen others.)

## 2. God gives gifts of the Spirit for the benefit of His children.

- What are some purposes of the gifts of the Spirit, as revealed in D&C 46? (Use the following information to discuss or add to class members' responses. Write the headings on the chalkboard as you discuss them.)

### *To strengthen and bless us individually*

- Read D&C 46:9 with class members. In what ways can the gifts of the Spirit help us individually? What gifts have been of special value to you? (You may want to invite class members to share experiences in which their spiritual gifts have strengthened and blessed them.)

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve taught that gifts of the Spirit “can lead us to God. They can shield us from the power of the adversary. They can compensate for our inadequacies and repair our imperfections” (“Spiritual Gifts,” *Ensign*, Sept. 1986, 72).

### *To help us serve others*

Read D&C 46:11–12, 26 with class members. Then share the following statement:

Elder Orson Pratt of the Quorum of the Twelve said, “Spiritual gifts are distributed among the members of the Church, according to their faithfulness, circumstances, natural abilities, duties, and callings; that the whole may be properly instructed, confirmed, perfected, and saved” (*Masterful Discourses and Writings of Orson Pratt*, comp. N. B. Lundwall [1953], 571).

- How has a particular spiritual gift helped you serve others? How have you been blessed through the spiritual gifts of others?

As part of this discussion, you may want to share the following story:

“As we were busily preparing for a Christmas dinner, my teenaged sister excitedly reached into the cupboard for the silver-rimmed china. The lovely . . . set had been Grandmother’s wedding present to Mom and Dad and was used only on special occasions. But as my sister removed some of the precious plates from the cupboard, she bumped her arm and the china slipped from her hands. Her desperate attempts to recover the plates were in vain, and the crash of china shattering on the floor was as heartbreaking as the look of helpless horror on her face.

“Mother’s meal-preparing hands stopped in midair, and the festive chatter of a bustling household ceased as we all stood frozen in awful silence. Without turning around to see the damage, Mother quietly slipped out of the room. Then . . . the rest of us tried to resume the tempo of our holiday duties.

“Except my sister. She stood motionless, a big tear trickling down her cheek. As another tear fell, she mechanically found the broom and dustpan and began sweeping up the scattered chips. Then on her knees, she slowly picked up the larger pieces and carefully placed them in the dustpan.

“Within a few minutes Mother returned to the kitchen and wrapped her arms around her grieving daughter. My sister began to sob out loud. . . . Quietly [Mother] soothed, ‘That’s all right, honey; people are more important than things.’

“Mother later told me that she had gone into the other room to pray and was blessed with a peaceful feeling and the inspiration of how to comfort my sister. The gift of spiritual perspective given to my mother that Christmas day became the most priceless gift our family received” (Laura Russell Bunker, “The Art of Perspective,” *Ensign*, Dec. 1998, 54–55).

You may want to discuss which gifts of the Spirit would be helpful in the following situations. Have class members again refer to D&C 46:13–25.

- a. A home teacher is called to the home of one of his families to give a priesthood blessing.
- b. A missionary presides over a small branch of Church members.
- c. A young woman is assigned to teach a lesson to her class.
- d. An Aaronic Priesthood adviser is responsible for a group of deacons on an overnight camping trip that encounters difficulty.
- e. A Relief Society president assigns visiting teachers to the sisters in her ward or branch.

*To help us avoid being deceived*

- Read D&C 46:8 with class members. How can gifts of the Spirit help us avoid evil influences or deception?

### **3. We should seek and cultivate gifts of the Spirit.**

The Lord has told us, “Seek ye earnestly the best gifts, always remembering for what they are given” (D&C 46:8).

- What can we do to discover the spiritual gifts that God has given us? (Answers could include that we can ponder, pray, fast, read our patriarchal blessings, obey the commandments, and serve others. See also the following quotation.) What can we do to cultivate and develop the spiritual gifts we have been given?

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that many gifts of the Spirit, such as wisdom or the gift to heal, are not evident until they are needed. He said that “it would require time and circumstances to call these gifts into operation” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 246).

- What can we do to seek gifts of the Spirit? (Have class members read the following scriptures and identify what they teach about seeking gifts of the Spirit. Summarize the information on the chalkboard.)
  - a. D&C 46:7, 30. (Ask of God and follow the Spirit’s guidance; see also the following statement by President George Q. Cannon.)
  - b. D&C 46:9. (Seek gifts for the benefit of others, not for selfish reasons.)
  - c. D&C 46:31. (Do all things in the name of Christ.)
  - d. D&C 46:32. (Thank God for the gifts He has given us.)
  - e. D&C 46:33. (Practice virtue and holiness continually.)

President George Q. Cannon taught: “If any of us are imperfect, it is our duty to pray for the gift that will make us perfect. Have I imperfections? I am full of them. What is my duty? To pray to God to give me the gifts that will

correct these imperfections. If I am an angry man, it is my duty to pray for charity, which suffereth long and is kind. Am I an envious man? It is my duty to seek for charity, which envieth not. So with all the gifts of the Gospel. They are intended for this purpose. No man ought to say, 'Oh, I cannot help this; it is my nature.' He is not justified in it, for the reason that God has promised to give strength to correct these things, and to give gifts that will eradicate them" (*Millennial Star*, 23 Apr. 1894, 260).

Elder Dallin H. Oaks explained how his mother applied the principle of seeking gifts of the Spirit: "Having lost her husband, my widowed mother was incomplete. How she prayed for what she needed to fulfill her responsibility to raise her three small children! She was seeking, she was worthy, and she was blessed! Her prayers were answered in many ways, including the receipt of spiritual gifts. She had many, but the ones that stand out in my memory are the gifts of faith, testimony, and wisdom. She was a mighty woman in Zion" (*Ensign*, Sept. 1986, 72).

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## Conclusion

Encourage class members to seek gifts of the Spirit and to use the gifts they have been given to serve others. As prompted by the Spirit, testify of the truths discussed during the lesson.

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## Additional Teaching Ideas

You may want to use one or more of the following ideas to supplement the suggested lesson outline.

### 1. Using spiritual gifts to serve others

If the following pictures are available, bring some or all of them to class: Young Girl Speaking at Church (Gospel Art Picture Kit 607); The Bishop (Gospel Art Picture Kit 611); Missionaries Teach the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Gospel Art Picture Kit 612); Administering to the Sick (Gospel Art Picture Kit 613); Home Teaching (Gospel Art Picture Kit 614); and Serving One Another (Gospel Art Picture Kit 615). Display the pictures one at a time, and ask class members to explain how the situation in each picture shows the need for gifts of the Spirit.

Invite class members to think about their responsibilities. For example, they might consider their responsibilities as parents, brothers and sisters, priesthood or auxiliary leaders, or home teachers and visiting teachers. Then ask them to silently ponder the following question: Which gifts of the Spirit might you seek to enable you to better serve others?

### 2. Additional spiritual gifts

- Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught: "Spiritual gifts are endless in number and infinite in variety. Those listed in the revealed word are simply illustrations" (*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*, 371). What might be some spiritual gifts in addition to those that are listed in D&C 46?

Elder Marvin J. Ashton of the Quorum of the Twelve said some "less-conspicuous gifts" include "the gift of asking; the gift of listening; the gift of hearing and using a still, small voice; . . . the gift of avoiding contention; the gift of being agreeable; . . . the gift of seeking that which is righteous; the gift of not

passing judgment; the gift of looking to God for guidance; the gift of being a disciple; the gift of caring for others; the gift of being able to ponder; the gift of offering prayer; the gift of bearing a mighty testimony; and the gift of receiving the Holy Ghost” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1987, 23; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, 20).

### 3. Discerning true gifts of the Spirit

Explain that Satan can try to deceive people with counterfeit spiritual gifts. Concerned about some false manifestations of these gifts among Church members, the Prophet Joseph Smith inquired of the Lord and received a revelation that is now recorded as D&C 50.

To help class members discern between true and false spiritual gifts, you may want to review D&C 50:17–24. Emphasize that if a gift is of God, it will be edifying and cause us to rejoice. It will lead us to do good, to love and serve God, and to believe in Christ. If a spiritual manifestation does not edify, or if it leads us to sin, it is not of God. The subject of avoiding deception and evil influences will be discussed in greater detail in lesson 24.

### 4. Teaching by the Spirit

- Explain that gospel teaching is a gift of the Spirit (Moroni 10:9–10). Then read D&C 42:13–14 and 50:17–18 with class members. What does it mean to teach by the Spirit? Why is it important to teach by the Spirit? (See 2 Nephi 33:1; D&C 50:21–22; and the following quotation.)

The *Church Handbook of Instructions* states: “A person may teach profound truths, and class members may engage in stimulating discussions, but unless the Spirit is present, these things will not be powerfully impressed upon the soul” (*Book 2: Priesthood and Auxiliary Leaders* [1998], 300).

- What can teachers do to invite the Spirit when they teach? (See page viii in this manual.) What can those who are being taught do to invite the Spirit?
- Read D&C 43:8 and 88:122 with class members. How can these verses apply to our Sunday School class? (Emphasize the importance of instructing and edifying each other.) How have you seen that teaching and learning by the Spirit help us edify each other and rejoice together?

### 5. “A Man without Eloquence” video presentation

If the videocassette *Teachings from the Doctrine and Covenants and Church History* (53933) is available, consider showing “A Man without Eloquence,” a six-minute segment. If you decide to show it, do so during the second or third section of the lesson.

Explain that the presentation is a portrayal of how a humble teacher helped Brigham Young become converted to the restored gospel. It begins with an excerpt from a conference address that President Young gave, in which he asked, “What is it that convinces man?” (in *Journal of Discourses*, 1:90). Encourage class members to look for the answer to that question as they watch the presentation. Afterward, ask the following questions:

- What convinces people of the truthfulness of the gospel?
- What can we do to follow Eleazer Miller’s example as we teach the gospel?

# “Thou Shalt . . . Offer Up Thy Sacraments upon My Holy Day”

Lesson  
**16**

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**Purpose** To help class members strengthen their desire to keep the Sabbath day holy.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study the following scriptures and other materials:
  - a. Doctrine and Covenants 59 and the other scriptures in this lesson.
  - b. Bible Dictionary, “Sabbath,” pages 764–65.
2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
3. If the picture Jesus Praying in Gethsemane is available, prepare to use it during the lesson (62175; Gospel Art Picture Kit 227).

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## Suggestions for Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

- How do you feel when you enter a temple? (If class members have not been to the temple, ask how they would expect to feel. During this discussion, contrast the atmosphere in the temple with the atmosphere in the world.)
- Read D&C 109:13 with class members. What makes a temple different from other places? (The Lord has sanctified it. It is His house.)
- Read Genesis 2:1–3 with class members. Explain that this is the account of the Lord instituting the Sabbath. According to this account, what makes the Sabbath different from other days? (The Lord has sanctified it. The Sabbath is His day.)

Explain that this lesson is about the Sabbath day. Point out that in many ways, we can “enter” each Sabbath day with the same reverence we feel when we enter the temple. We can remember that the Lord has sanctified the Sabbath and that it is our privilege to worship and serve Him on His day.

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## Discussion and Application

This lesson contains more material than is possible to teach in one class period. Prayerfully select the lesson material that will best meet class members’ needs.

### 1. The Lord established the Sabbath.

Explain that God established the pattern for the Sabbath at the time of the Creation. After laboring for six days, He rested on the seventh and sanctified it as a holy day (Genesis 2:2–3). From the earliest times, He has commanded His children to keep the Sabbath day holy (Bible Dictionary, “Sabbath,” 765).

- Read Exodus 20:8–11 and 31:13–17 with class members. Point out that this commandment is repeated many other times in the scriptures (see the

Topical Guide, “Sabbath,” 441). Why do you think the commandment to keep the Sabbath day holy has been so important throughout the ages?

In our dispensation, the Lord has again emphasized the importance of the Sabbath. Through the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Lord revealed that on this day we should pay our devotions to Him by attending church, partaking of the sacrament, and resting from our labors (D&C 59:9–13).

## 2. Pay devotions to God by worshiping Him in Sunday Church meetings.

- The Lord has said, “Thou shalt go to the house of prayer . . . upon my holy day” (D&C 59:9). Why do you think it is important to meet together to worship God on the Sabbath? How is attending Church meetings on Sunday a blessing to you?
- President Gordon B. Hinckley said that “every sacrament meeting ought to be a spiritual feast” and “a time of spiritual refreshment” (*Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley* [1997], 563, 564). How can we help accomplish this? How can we make our attendance at other Sunday meetings more spiritually enriching? (Answers could include by coming with an attitude of worship, by being punctual, by studying the scheduled lesson material before class, by participating actively, by listening carefully, by seeking to strengthen others, and by not criticizing speakers or teachers.)

President Spencer W. Kimball, the 12th President of the Church, said: “We do not go to Sabbath meetings to be entertained or even solely to be instructed. We go to worship the Lord. It is an individual responsibility, and regardless of what is said from the pulpit, if one wishes to worship the Lord in spirit and truth, he may do so by attending his meetings, partaking of the sacrament, and contemplating the beauties of the gospel. If the service is a failure to you, you have failed. No one can worship for you” (“The Sabbath—A Delight,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1978, 4–5).

- What can we do to prepare ourselves for Sunday meetings? How can parents help their children benefit more fully from Sunday meetings? (Invite class members to share experiences related to these questions.)
- How can music enhance our Sunday meetings? (See *Hymns*, pages ix–x.) Why is it important that each of us sings the hymns? (See D&C 25:12.) How has singing the hymns blessed you?

Elder Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve expressed concern that “an increasing number of our leaders and members do not sing the congregational songs.” He then counseled, “We should sing the songs of Zion—they are an essential part of our worship” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1991, 29; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1991, 22).

- How can we participate meaningfully in congregational prayers in Sunday meetings?
- Why is reverence important in Church meetings?

Elder Boyd K. Packer said that we should be reverent in the chapel so we do not intrude “when someone is struggling to feel delicate spiritual communications.” He also cautioned that reverence “does not equate with absolute silence. We must be tolerant of little babies, even an occasional outburst from

a toddler being ushered out” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1991, 28; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1991, 22).

President Gordon B. Hinckley told of an embarrassing incident he experienced as a missionary:

“We held our meetings in the . . . town hall, which we rented. The floors were hard, and . . . every time a chair moved there was a noise. But this was not the worst aspect of the situation. Far worse was the noisy socializing of the members of the branch.

“On one occasion we invited a family whom we had met while tracting. With great expectation we as missionaries stood by the door to welcome them. There was the usual convivial spirit in the hall, with the members talking noisily one with another. When this family came into the room, they quietly moved toward some chairs, knelt for a moment, and closed their eyes in a word of prayer. They then sat in an attitude of reverence amidst all the commotion.

“Frankly, I was embarrassed. They had come to what they regarded as a worship service, and they behaved themselves accordingly.

“At the close of the meeting they left quietly, and when we next met they spoke of their disappointment in what they had experienced. I have never forgotten that” (*Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley*, 557).

- How can we improve reverence in Church meetings?

### 3. Pay devotions to God by partaking of the sacrament.

Display the picture of Jesus praying in Gethsemane.

- The Lord has commanded us to partake of the sacrament on the Sabbath (D&C 59:9, 12). Why is it important to partake of the sacrament each week? (See D&C 59:9; 3 Nephi 18:6–7; and the following quotation.)

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve said: “Windows must be washed regularly to clean away dust and dirt. . . . Just as earthly windows need consistent, thorough cleaning, so do the windows of our spirituality. . . . By partaking of the sacrament worthily to renew our baptismal covenants, we clarify our view of life’s eternal purpose and divine priorities. The sacrament prayers invite personal introspection, repentance, and rededication as we pledge our willingness to remember our Savior, Jesus the Christ” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1995, 103; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 77).

- How has partaking of the sacrament been a blessing in your life?
- How can we prepare ourselves to partake of the sacrament? How can parents help their children prepare for this ordinance? (You may want to discuss how to help children of different age-groups.) How does singing the sacrament hymn help you prepare? How do the sacrament prayers help you prepare? (See D&C 20:77, 79.)
- Why must we be worthy when we partake of the sacrament? (See 1 Corinthians 11:28–29; 3 Nephi 18:29; Mormon 9:29.)
- How can we keep our minds and hearts focused on Jesus as we partake of the sacrament?

- How can we make the ordinance of the sacrament more meaningful in our lives? (Emphasize that this ordinance should not become merely habitual or routine.) How can partaking of the sacrament strengthen our commitment to the Savior on other days of the week?
- On the Sabbath we not only partake of the sacrament, but we also should offer our own sacraments and oblations to the Lord (D&C 59:9, 12). This means we should make offerings or sacrifices that show our devotion to Him. What sacrifices should we offer? (See D&C 59:8; footnote *b* for D&C 59:12; D&C 64:34; 97:8; and the following quotation.)

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve said:

“After His mortal ministry, . . . Jesus told his Nephite Apostles that He would no longer accept burnt offerings but that His disciples should offer ‘a broken heart and a contrite spirit’ (3 Ne. 9:19–20; see also D&C 59:8, 12). Instead of the Lord requiring our animals or grain, now He wants us to give up all that is ungodly. This higher practice of the law of sacrifice reaches into the inner soul of a person. . . .

“. . . 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, 10–11).

#### 4. Pay devotions to God by resting from your labors.

- In D&C 59:10, the Lord revealed that we should “rest from [our] labors” on the Sabbath day (see also verse 13). What does it mean to rest from our labors? How does resting from our labors show our devotion to God?
- As part of resting from our labors, we should refrain from buying or selling, going to places of amusement, and other worldly interests on the Sabbath (see Isaiah 58:13, noting the phrases “turn away . . . from doing thy pleasure” and “not doing thine own ways”). What activities seem to take away from the spirit of the Sabbath for you? What are some worldly cares that tend to intrude on the Sabbath? How can we free ourselves from these cares?

Presiding Bishop H. David Burton said: “Now, I know it’s hard, particularly for our young people, to choose to observe the Sabbath day when athletic teams on which they so much want to participate regularly schedule games on Sunday. I too know it seems trivial to many who are in need of just a few items on the Sabbath to quickly stop at a convenience store to make a Sunday purchase. But I also know that remembering to keep the Sabbath day holy is one of the most important commandments we can observe in preparing us to be the recipients of the whisperings of the Spirit” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1998, 9; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1998, 9).

- Resting from our labors does not mean we should be idle. Rather, we should follow the Savior’s example and “do well on the sabbath” (Matthew 12:12; see also Luke 13:10–17; John 5:1–19). What activities do you feel are good to do on the Sabbath? (List responses on the chalkboard.) How can we improve our personal worship time on the Sabbath?

President Spencer W. Kimball taught: “The Sabbath is a holy day in which to do worthy and holy things. Abstinence from work and recreation is important, but insufficient. The Sabbath calls for constructive thoughts and acts,

and if one merely lounges about doing nothing on the Sabbath, he is breaking it. To observe it, one will be on his knees in prayer, preparing lessons, studying the gospel, meditating, visiting the ill and distressed, writing letters to missionaries, taking a nap, reading wholesome material, and attending all the meetings of that day at which he is expected" (*Ensign*, Jan. 1978, 4).

- How can we determine what is appropriate for us to do on the Sabbath? (Answers could include ensuring that our activities honor God, are spiritually uplifting, nurture faith, strengthen the family, help or bless others, and are set apart from the daily activities of the world.)
- What are some ways we can strengthen our families on the Sabbath? How can parents help their children enjoy the Sabbath and keep it holy? (See the following quotations. Invite class members to share personal experiences related to these questions. Challenge class members to select one specific way they will make the Sabbath more meaningful for their families.)

President Gordon B. Hinckley said, "Let the Latter-day Saints be in their homes, teaching their families, reading the scriptures, doing things that are wholesome and beautiful and communing with the Lord on the Sabbath day" ("Excerpts from Recent Addresses of President Gordon B. Hinckley," *Ensign*, July 1996, 73).

President Hinckley also counseled: "Now I do not want to be prudish. I do not want you to lock your children in the house and read the Bible all afternoon to them. Be wise. Be careful. But make that day a day when you can sit down with your families and talk about sacred and good things" (*Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley*, 559–60).

The First Presidency gave the following counsel when announcing the consolidated Sunday meeting schedule in 1980:

"A greater responsibility will be placed upon the individual members and families for properly observing the Sabbath day. More time will be available for personal study of the scriptures and family-centered gospel study. . . .

"It is expected that this new schedule of meetings and activities will result in greater spiritual growth for members of the Church" (*Church News*, 2 Feb. 1980, 3).

- The Sabbath should be a day of prayer (D&C 59:14). In what ways could we be more prayerful on this day? How can we make our prayers more meaningful?
- What are some challenges to making the Sabbath day as meaningful as you would like? How are you working to overcome these challenges? How could careful planning help you eliminate or manage these challenges?

##### 5. The Lord blesses those who keep the Sabbath day holy.

- Read D&C 59:9, 13, 15–17 with class members. What blessings does the Lord promise to those who keep the Sabbath day holy? (List responses on the chalkboard.)
- How does observing the Sabbath help us be "unspotted from the world"? (D&C 59:9; answers could include that it helps us repent, renew our baptismal covenants, and focus our thoughts on God and matters of eternal significance rather than on the things of the world).

- How does observing the Sabbath help us receive a fulness of joy, as the Lord promised in D&C 59:13? How has proper observance of the Sabbath helped you feel physically and spiritually strengthened? How has it helped you be more productive on the other days of the week?
- The Lord has promised that those who observe the Sabbath will receive “the fulness of the earth” and “the good things . . . of the earth” (D&C 59:16–17; see also Isaiah 58:14). How have you seen this promise fulfilled?
- What are some other ways that you and your family have been blessed as you have kept the Sabbath day holy?
- The Lord revealed that the Sabbath should be a day of “rejoicing” (D&C 59:14). Isaiah said that we should “call the sabbath a delight” (Isaiah 58:13). Has the Sabbath ever seemed more like a day of restrictions than a delight to you? How can we make the Sabbath a day of rejoicing and “a delight” in our lives? (One way is by focusing on what we should do rather than on what we should not do.)

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## Conclusion

Encourage class members to examine how they could improve their observance of the Sabbath. Testify that as they keep this day holy, the Lord will bless them with increased spiritual strength and joy.

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## Additional Teaching Ideas

You may want to use one or both of the following ideas to supplement the suggested lesson outline.

### 1. Suggestions to help those who must work on Sunday

Explain that Church members should make every effort to choose employment that does not require them to work on Sunday. However, there may be times when employers require Sunday work. Ask if any class members can recall such a time for themselves or for another family member. Discuss how to maintain the spirit of the Sabbath as much as possible in these circumstances. Suggest that class members tell their employers of their desire to keep the Sabbath day holy. (If you are teaching youth, see the pamphlet *For the Strength of Youth*, pages 32–33 [36550].)

### 2. The Lord blesses us collectively as we keep the Sabbath day holy

In addition to blessing us individually as we keep the Sabbath day holy, the Lord also blesses us collectively. For example, He may bless us as a church or a community. This emphasizes the need for us to unite in keeping the Sabbath day holy.

- Ask a class member to read the last full paragraph in column 1, page 765 of the Bible Dictionary. What follows carelessness in observing the Sabbath? How has your own community either benefited or been deprived of blessings based on Sabbath observance?

# The Law of Tithing and the Law of the Fast

## Lesson 17

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**Purpose** To help class members strengthen their desire to pay a full tithe and live the law of the fast.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study the following scriptures:
  - a. Doctrine and Covenants 59:13–14, 21; 119; 120.
  - b. Isaiah 58:6–12; Malachi 3:8–12 or 3 Nephi 24:8–12; Matthew 6:16–18 or 3 Nephi 13:16–18 (supplemental scriptures).
2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
3. If you use the attention activity, bring a piece of money to class.

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### Suggestions for Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Display a piece of money.

- What might this money represent?

Allow class members to briefly suggest answers. Then point out that depending on how money is used, it can represent very different things and concepts. For example, it can represent material possessions, power, greed, or the simple necessities of life.

To conclude this discussion, emphasize that if money is used in a certain way, even in small amounts, it can represent our desire to help build the kingdom of God. It can represent our concern for others. And it can represent our faith, obedience, and love for the Lord. Explain that this lesson discusses how we can build the kingdom and serve others by paying tithing and fast offerings.

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### Discussion and Application

This lesson contains more material than is possible to teach in one class period. Prayerfully select the scripture passages, questions, and other lesson material that will best meet class members' needs.

1. **The Lord has commanded us to pay tithing. He has promised great blessings to those who obey this commandment.**

*The Lord's definition of tithing*

- The Prophet Joseph Smith received a revelation on tithing on 8 July 1838 in Far West, Missouri. Read D&C 119:3–4 with class members. What is the Lord's definition of tithing as revealed in these verses?

To help class members understand what constitutes a full tithe, share the following statements:

The First Presidency gave the following definition of tithing: “The simplest statement we know of is the statement of the Lord himself, namely, that the members of the Church should pay ‘one-tenth of all their interest annually,’ which is understood to mean income. No one is justified in making any other statement than this” (First Presidency letter, 19 Mar. 1970).

President Joseph Fielding Smith of the Quorum of the Twelve explained: “It is remarkable how many excuses can be made and interpretations given as to what constitutes the tenth. . . . It is written, however, that as we measure it shall be measured to us again. If we are stingy with the Lord, he may be stingy with us, or in other words, withhold his blessings” (*Church History and Modern Revelation*, 2 vols. [1953], 2:92).

#### *The Lord's promises to tithe payers*

- Read Malachi 3:8–9 or 3 Nephi 24:8–9 with class members. In what ways do we “rob God” if we do not pay tithes and offerings? (You may want to have class members read D&C 59:21 and 104:14 as they discuss this question.)
- Read Malachi 3:10–12 or 3 Nephi 24:10–12 with class members. What does the Lord promise those who pay tithing? (List class members’ responses on the chalkboard.)

Elder John A. Widtsoe of the Quorum of the Twelve spoke of spiritual blessings that come when we pay tithing:

“The tithe-payer establishes communion with the Lord. This is the happiest reward. Obedience to the law of tithing, as to any other law, brings a deep, inward joy, a satisfaction and understanding that can be won in no other way. Man becomes in a real sense a partner, albeit a humble one, with the Lord in the tremendous, eternal program laid out for human salvation. The principles of truth become clearer of comprehension; the living of them easier of accomplishment. A new nearness is established between man and his Maker. Prayer becomes easier. Doubt retreats; faith advances; certainty and courage buoy up the soul. The spiritual sense is sharpened; the eternal voice is heard more clearly. Man becomes more like his Father in Heaven” (in *Deseret News*, 16 May 1936, Church Section, 5).

The following story, related by Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve, illustrates how we can receive temporal blessings as we pay tithing:

“During World War II, my widowed mother supported her three young children on a schoolteacher’s salary that was meager. When I became conscious that we went without some desirable things because we didn’t have enough money, I asked my mother why she paid so much of her salary as tithing. I have never forgotten her explanation: ‘Dallin, there might be some people who can get along without paying tithing, but we can’t. The Lord has chosen to take your father and leave me to raise you children. I cannot do that without the blessings of the Lord, and I obtain those blessings by paying an honest tithing. When I pay my tithing, I have the Lord’s promise that he will bless us, and we must have those blessings if we are to get along’” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1994, 43–44; or *Ensign*, May 1994, 33).

- How have you been blessed as you have lived the law of tithing? (Invite class members to tell how they have been blessed spiritually or temporally.)

### *Reasons for paying tithing*

Emphasize that we should pay tithing because we love the Lord and have faith in Him, not just because we need blessings.

- How does paying tithing show our love for the Lord? How does it affect our relationship with Him?
- Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve said that “the payment of tithing has less to do with money, but more to do with faith” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1990, 41; or *Ensign*, May 1990, 32). How is tithing more about faith than money?
- Why is it sometimes a challenge to pay tithing? What can we do to overcome that challenge? (Invite class members to tell about situations in which they or someone they know had to overcome challenges in order to pay tithing.)

### *Use of tithing funds*

- Who determines how tithing funds are used? (See D&C 120. Note that in this revelation, the phrase “the bishop and his council” refers to the Presiding Bishopric. The phrase “high council” refers to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. The First Presidency, Quorum of the Twelve, and Presiding Bishopric constitute the Council on the Disposition of the Tithes.)

President Gordon B. Hinckley spoke of the deep respect the Council on the Disposition of the Tithes has for tithing funds:

“I keep on the credenza behind my desk a widow’s mite that was given me in Jerusalem many years ago as a reminder, a constant reminder, of the sanctity of the funds with which we have to deal. They come from the widow; they are her offering as well as the tithe of the rich man, and they are to be used with care and discretion for the purposes of the Lord. We treat them carefully and safeguard them and try in every way that we can to see that they are used as we feel the Lord would have them used for the upbuilding of His work and the betterment of people” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1996, 69; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 50).

- What are tithing funds used for?

Elder Dallin H. Oaks explained: “[Tithing] funds are spent to build and maintain temples and houses of worship, to conduct our worldwide missionary work, to translate and publish scriptures, to provide resources to redeem the dead, to fund religious education, and to support other Church purposes selected by the designated servants of the Lord” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1994, 46; or *Ensign*, May 1994, 35).

Invite class members to reflect on Elder Oaks’s statement and consider how they have been blessed because of temples, meetinghouses, missionary work, the scriptures, the work to redeem the dead, and seminary or institute. Emphasize that the greatest blessings we can receive are tied directly to obedience to the law of tithing. As we ponder these blessings, we can see that the Lord truly does

“open . . . the windows of heaven, and pour . . . out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it” (Malachi 3:10; see also 3 Nephi 24:10).

## 2. The Lord has commanded us to fast and to pay generous fast offerings.

Explain that another law that the Lord has restored in the latter days is the law of the fast. In obedience to this law, we fast as a Church once each month, usually on the first Sunday of the month. We are instructed that a proper fast day observance includes abstaining from food and drink for two consecutive meals and attending fast and testimony meeting. You may want to point out that in addition to fasting on fast days, we may fast for reasonable amounts of time whenever we feel a special need to do so.

Emphasize that fasting is more than simply going without food. Fasting can be a joyful experience when we fast with a purpose, prepare for the fast, and pray. Write on the chalkboard *Purpose, Preparation, Prayer*.

- What are some purposes for fasting? (Answers could include that we can fast to draw nearer to the Lord, receive guidance, increase our spiritual strength, humble ourselves, subject our bodily appetites to our spirits, overcome temptation or weakness, strengthen our testimonies, and ask the Lord to bless others.) In what ways has fasting with a purpose added meaning to your fasts?
- What are some things we can do to prepare to fast? In what ways is our fasting more meaningful when we prepare for it?
- We should pray at the beginning of a fast, during the fast, and the end of the fast. Why is it important to pray when we fast?
- Read D&C 59:13–14 and Matthew 6:16–18 or 3 Nephi 13:16–18 with class members. According to these scriptures, how should we act when we fast? Why do you think fasting is equated with joy and rejoicing? What have you done to make fasting a joyful experience?

Explain that on fast Sunday, a proper fast includes giving a generous fast offering to help care for those in need. Fast offerings are first used to help those in the ward and stake where the members reside. Bishops may use these funds to provide food, shelter, clothing, and other life-sustaining aid to those in need.

- Why is giving fast offerings an important part of living the law of the fast? (Answers could include that by giving fast offerings we serve others and show love for those in need.)
- How generous should we be when we pay fast offerings?

President Spencer W. Kimball said: “Sometimes we have been a bit penurious [unwilling to share] and figured that we had for breakfast one egg and that cost so many cents and then we give that to the Lord. I think that when we are affluent, as many of us are, that we ought to be very, very generous . . . and give, instead of the amount we saved by our two meals of fasting, perhaps much, much more—ten times more where we are in a position to do it” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1974, 184).

- What are some of the consequences when we pay generous fast offerings? (See Isaiah 58:6–7 and the following quotation.)

President Gordon B. Hinckley said: “Think . . . of what would happen if the principles of fast day and the fast offering were observed throughout the world. The hungry would be fed, the naked clothed, the homeless sheltered. Our burden of taxes would be lightened. The giver would not suffer but would be blessed by his small abstinence. A new measure of concern and unselfishness would grow in the hearts of people everywhere” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1991, 73; or *Ensign*, May 1991, 52–53).

- Read Isaiah 58:8–12 with class members. What has the Lord promised to those who obey the law of the fast? In what ways has fasting helped you? What can we do to become more diligent in living the law of the fast?

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## Conclusion

Emphasize that when we faithfully pay tithing, we contribute to the building of the kingdom of God. Giving generous fast offerings is one way we can manifest that we are disciples of the Savior, who said, “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me” (Matthew 25:40).

Encourage class members to pay an honest tithe and to live the law of the fast. Bear your testimony as prompted by the Spirit.

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## Additional Teaching Ideas

You may want to use one or more of the following ideas to supplement the suggested lesson outline.

### 1. Group discussions and presentations

Divide class members into four small groups. Assign each group to prepare a presentation based on the scripture passages and questions in each section of the lesson.

### 2. Making tithes and offerings our first financial obligations

Share the following counsel from Elder Marvin J. Ashton of the Quorum of the Twelve:

“Successful financial management in every LDS home begins with the payment of an honest tithe. If our tithing and fast offerings are the first obligations met following the receipt of each paycheck, our commitment to this important gospel principle will be strengthened and the likelihood of financial mismanagement will be reduced. Paying tithing promptly to Him who does not come to check up each month will teach us and our children to be more honest with those physically closer at hand” (*One for the Money: Guide to Family Finance* [pamphlet, 1992], 3).

### 3. Giving rather than receiving

Give each class member a piece of paper and a pen or pencil. Ask them to list ways in which they usually spend their money. Challenge them to keep a record of their spending habits for the next month and then evaluate how much more generous they could be to those in need.

- How can the youth of the Church help the poor and the needy? (If you teach youth, encourage them to give service and to pay fast offerings. You may also

want to point out that Aaronic Priesthood holders often assist the bishop with temporal matters such as gathering fast offerings.) What can parents do to encourage their children to help the poor and the needy?

#### 4. “God loveth a cheerful giver” (2 Corinthians 9:7)

- Read 2 Corinthians 9:6–8 with class members. How can we follow this counsel in our payment of tithes and offerings? Why are our attitudes and motivations important when we pay tithes and offerings?

#### 5. Following the Savior’s example as we fast

Explain that we can learn much from the Savior’s example when He fasted in the wilderness:

- a. When Jesus fasted, He “communed with God” (Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 4:2). For us, fasting should be a time of communion with God.
- b. When His fasting was over, the Savior resisted Satan’s temptations and “returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee” (Luke 4:2–14; see also Matthew 4:3–11). Through fasting, we can gain spiritual strength.

#### 6. Fasting to express gratitude

In a general conference address, President Gordon B. Hinckley read a letter written by a woman who expressed her gratitude to the Lord. The writer of the letter said, “Most of my fasts are ‘thankful’ fasts” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1994, 75; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 54). Share the following examples of “thankful” fasts:

On 26 December 1842 in Nauvoo, Illinois, the Prophet Joseph Smith was unjustly arrested and summoned to Springfield, Illinois. The charges against him were dismissed on 6 January 1843, allowing him to return to Nauvoo. To celebrate, the Quorum of the Twelve set aside “a day of humiliation, fasting, praise, prayer, and thanksgiving” (*History of the Church*, 5:209, 244, 248).

A mother was concerned that her son, who was serving a full-time mission, did not have a strong enough testimony to carry him through the difficult times he might face. Then she received news of his success on his mission. With heartfelt gratitude, she fasted with the sole purpose of giving thanks to the Lord that her son desired to be an exemplary missionary. When her son became aware of his mother’s fast of gratitude, he vowed to work even harder to become the missionary his mother envisioned.

Ask class members to ponder what their feelings might be if they fasted with the sole purpose of expressing gratitude to the Lord. Suggest that they devote an upcoming fast to expressing gratitude to the Lord. Encourage them to write about their experience in their journals.

#### 7. Video presentations

If *Doctrine and Covenants and Church History Video Presentations* (53912) is available, consider showing “Windows of Heaven,” an 11-minute segment, during the discussion of tithing.

If *Family Home Evening Video Supplement* (53276) is available, consider showing “The Law of the Fast,” a 4-minute segment.

# “Establish . . . a House of God”

## Lesson 18

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**Purpose** To help class members understand the significance of temples and encourage them to seek the blessings of the temple in their own lives.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study the following scriptures and other materials:
  - a. Doctrine and Covenants 95; 109; 110.
  - b. *Our Heritage*, pages 33–36.
2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
3. If the following materials are available, prepare to use them during the lesson: Pictures of the Kirtland Temple (62431; Gospel Art Picture Kit 500) and of another temple.
4. Prepare to have class members sing “The Spirit of God” if you plan to use it during the lesson (*Hymns*, no. 2). Or ask a class member or a group of class members to prepare to sing it.

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### Suggestions for Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. Write the following questions on the chalkboard so class members can see them as they enter the classroom:

*How many temples were built by the Lord’s covenant people before this dispensation?*

*How many temples were built or planned in the days of the Prophet Joseph Smith?*

Without asking for discussion of these questions, explain that we know of only four temples that were built by the Lord’s covenant people before this dispensation. The first was the temple built in the days of Solomon, which was rebuilt twice and known at different times as the temple of Zerubbabel and the temple of Herod (Bible Dictionary, “Temple,” 781). The other three are mentioned in the Book of Mormon: the temple built by Nephi (2 Nephi 5:16), the temple in the land of Zarahemla from which King Benjamin gave his final address (Mosiah 1:10; 2:1), and the temple in the land Bountiful where the people gathered before the appearance of the resurrected Lord (3 Nephi 11:1).

Explain that five temples were built or planned during the life of the Prophet Joseph Smith: in Kirtland, Independence, Far West, Adam-ondi-Ahman, and Nauvoo.

- How many temples are currently built or under construction?

Emphasize that the Prophet Joseph Smith was a temple builder. It was through him that Malachi’s prophecy of Elijah’s return was fulfilled (Malachi 4:5–6;

D&C 110:13–16). The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints continues to be a temple-building church.

This lesson discusses the Kirtland Temple, the first temple built in this dispensation.

## Discussion and Application

This lesson contains more material than is possible to teach in one class period. Prayerfully select the material that will best meet class members' needs.

### 1. The Lord commanded the Saints to build the Kirtland Temple.

Teach and discuss D&C 95. Explain that temples are an essential part of the gospel of Jesus Christ. In December 1832, the Lord commanded the Saints to build a temple in Kirtland, Ohio (D&C 88:119; 109:2; show the picture of the Kirtland Temple). Five months later the Saints had done little to fulfill this command, so the Lord called on them to repent and hasten their work (D&C 95). Four days later, men began hauling stone and digging trenches in preparation for building the temple.

- Read D&C 95:3–4, 8–9, 16–17; 109:5, 8 with class members. What do these verses teach about the purposes for building the Kirtland Temple? (Summarize class members' responses on the chalkboard. Explain that the Kirtland Temple was not like today's temples, where saving ordinances are performed for the living and the dead. The Lord restored temple ordinances a few years later while the Saints were in Nauvoo.)
- What did the Lord reveal to Joseph Smith about how to build the Kirtland Temple? (See D&C 95:13–17 and the following quotations.)

Some of the workers suggested they build the temple with logs or boards. But Joseph Smith replied: "Shall we . . . build a house for our God, of logs? No. . . . I have a plan of the house of the Lord, given by himself; and you will soon see by this, the difference between our calculations and his idea of things" (quoted in Lucy Mack Smith, *History of Joseph Smith*, ed. Preston Nibley [1958], 230).

The Lord revealed His plans for the Kirtland Temple in a vision to the First Presidency (Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, and Frederick G. Williams). President Frederick G. Williams said they knelt together in prayer, and a model of the building "appeared within viewing distance. . . . After we had taken a good look at the exterior, the building seemed to come right over us." When the temple was completed, Frederick G. Williams said it looked exactly as it had in the vision. (In *The Revelations of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, comp. Lyndon W. Cook [1981], 198.)

You may want to point out that today the First Presidency, through revelation, determines when and where to build temples.

### 2. The Saints were blessed for their great sacrifices in building the temple.

- Explain that the Kirtland Temple was the first temple built in this dispensation. What were some of the challenges and sacrifices associated with building the temple? (See D&C 109:5 and *Our Heritage*, pages 33–34.)
- How were the Saints blessed for the sacrifices they made in building the Kirtland Temple? (See *Our Heritage*, pages 34–35.)

- What sacrifices have you seen members of the Church make to receive temple blessings or to participate in temple work? What are some sacrifices we could make to participate in temple work?



**Kirtland Temple.** This was the first temple built in this dispensation, dedicated in 1836.

### 3. Joseph Smith dedicated the Kirtland Temple.

On 27 March 1836, the Prophet Joseph Smith dedicated the Kirtland Temple. The dedicatory prayer, which the Lord revealed, is recorded in D&C 109. The dedicatory service lasted seven hours and was accompanied by a great outpouring of the Spirit. It included the dedicatory prayer, hymn singing, testimony bearing, the passing of the sacrament, sermons, and a solemn assembly in which members sustained Joseph Smith and other Church leaders. The service ended with the Saints giving the Hosanna Shout—raising their hands above their heads and shouting three times, “Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna to God and the Lamb, amen, amen, and amen” (*History of the Church*, 2:427–28).

You may want to have class members sing “The Spirit of God” (*Hymns*, no. 2), which was sung at the dedication of the Kirtland Temple. Or ask the assigned class member or group of class members to sing it.

- Why do we dedicate temples? How are temples different after they are dedicated? If any class members have attended a temple dedication, invite them to share some of their thoughts and impressions of the experience.
- What spiritual manifestations occurred during the dedication of the Kirtland Temple? (See *Our Heritage*, pages 34–35.)
- Explain that in the dedicatory prayer, the Prophet emphasized some responsibilities of Church members with regard to temples. What responsibilities did he emphasize? (Some of these are outlined in the following scripture

passages. Select a few passages for class members to read and discuss. Summarize responses on the chalkboard.)

- a. D&C 109:7, 14. (We should seek diligently to learn by study and by faith.) Why is this an important responsibility with regard to temples?
  - b. D&C 109:9, 17–19. (Our incomings, outgoings, and salutations should be in the name of the Lord.) How can we fulfill this responsibility?
  - c. D&C 109:20–21. (We must be clean to enter the temple.) Why is it necessary that we be worthy when we enter the temple? (See D&C 97:15–17.) How do we verify our worthiness to enter the Lord’s house? (Through temple recommend interviews.)
  - d. D&C 109:23. (We should leave the temple bearing the great tidings of the gospel to the ends of the earth.) How can temple attendance inspire us to do this?
- Explain that in the dedicatory prayer, the Prophet prayed for many great blessings. What blessings did he pray for? (Some of these blessings are outlined in the following scripture passages. Select a few passages for class members to read and discuss. Summarize responses on the chalkboard.)
    - a. D&C 109:15. (The Lord’s people would receive a fulness of the Holy Ghost.) Invite class members to tell how temple attendance has increased the influence of the Spirit in their lives.
    - b. D&C 109:22. (The Lord’s people would go forth from the temple armed with power and watched over by angels.) Invite class members to share experiences when they have felt armed with power after attending the temple.
    - c. D&C 109:25–26. (No weapon or wickedness would prevail against the Lord’s people.) How does temple attendance protect us from evil?
    - d. D&C 109:32–33. (The Lord would break off the yoke of affliction from His people.) How has temple attendance helped you overcome or bear affliction?
    - e. D&C 109:36–37. (There would be an outpouring of the Spirit, as on the day of Pentecost; see Acts 2:1–4.) One fulfillment of this part of the prayer occurred during a priesthood meeting on the night of the dedication. The temple was filled with the sound of a mighty wind, and many brethren spoke in tongues, prophesied, and saw visions (*History of the Church*, 2:428).
    - f. D&C 109:54–58. (The Lord would have mercy on the nations of the earth, softening the hearts of the people to prepare them for the gospel message.)
    - g. D&C 109:61–64, 67. (The scattered children of Israel would begin to be gathered and redeemed.) How does temple work help bring about this blessing?
    - h. D&C 109:72–74. (The Lord’s Church would fill the whole earth.) How does temple work help bring about this blessing?

President Howard W. Hunter, the 14th President of the Church, described these promises in the dedicatory prayer of the Kirtland Temple as “stirring and wonderful” (“The Great Symbol of Our Membership,” *Ensign*, Oct. 1994, 5). This prayer, he said, “continues to be answered upon us individually, upon us as families, and upon us as a people because of the priesthood power the Lord has given us to use in His holy temples” (*Ensign*, Oct. 1994, 4).

#### 4. The Lord accepted the Kirtland Temple, and ancient prophets restored priesthood keys.

Teach and discuss D&C 110. Explain that the Lord fulfilled His promise to endow His servants with power from on high when the Kirtland Temple was completed (D&C 95:8). This endowment of power included an appearance of the Savior in the temple, an outpouring of the Spirit, many revelations, and the restoration of priesthood keys by Moses, Elias, and Elijah. With these sacred experiences and keys, the Lord's servants were able to move His work forward with greater power and authority.

- How did the Prophet Joseph Smith describe the appearance of the Savior in the Kirtland Temple? (See D&C 110:1–3.) What did the Savior say about Himself? (See D&C 110:4.) What did He say to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery about the temple? (See D&C 110:6–10.)
- What priesthood keys did Moses, Elias, and Elijah restore? (See D&C 110:11–16.) What blessings and responsibilities do we have today because Moses restored the keys of the gathering of Israel? because Elias restored the keys of the dispensation of the gospel of Abraham? because Elijah restored the keys of the sealing power? (The following chart may help your discussion. You may want to summarize the information on the chalkboard.)

Person	Keys Restored	Blessings and Responsibilities Today
Moses	Gathering of Israel	The authority to preach the gospel to gather Israel (missionary work).
Elias	The dispensation of the gospel of Abraham	The blessings of the Abrahamic covenant and the responsibilities associated with that covenant (see Abraham 2:9–11 for a review of these blessings and responsibilities).
Elijah	Sealing power	The power that makes priesthood ordinances valid in heaven. The sealing power makes possible temple marriage, sealings to children and ancestors, eternal families, and temple ordinance work for the dead.

#### 5. Temple building and temple work accelerate in our day.

- Display a picture of a temple. How has temple building accelerated in our day? (The Church had 19 temples in 1980 and 51 temples by the end of 1997. In the October 1997 general conference, President Gordon B. Hinckley announced plans to construct smaller temples. In the April 1998 conference he announced plans to have 100 temples by the end of the year 2000, which meant constructing as many temples in 3 years as were built during the first 167 years after the organization of the Church.)
- Along with the acceleration in temple building, Church leaders have given renewed emphasis to participating in temple work. Read D&C 138:53–56 with class members. Explain that worthy Church members today are among the “choice spirits who were reserved to come forth in the fulness of times to take part in . . . the building of the temples and the performance of ordinances therein.” How can we help accelerate temple work?

President Howard W. Hunter said: “Let us be a temple-attending and a temple-loving people. Let us hasten to the temple as frequently as time and means and personal circumstances allow. Let us go not only for our kindred dead, but let us also go for the personal blessing of temple worship, for the sanctity and safety which is provided within those hallowed and consecrated walls. The temple is a place of beauty, it is a place of revelation, it is a place of peace. It is the house of the Lord. It is holy unto the Lord. It should be holy unto us” (*Ensign*, Oct. 1994, 5).

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Conclusion

Encourage class members to prayerfully examine their lives and determine how they can participate in temple work. Suggest that just as the Saints made sacrifices to build the Kirtland Temple, we should make sacrifices to assist with temple work. If you are near a temple, encourage class members to attend the temple. Testify that the Lord will bless us as we participate in this great work.

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**Additional Teaching Idea**

You may want to use the following idea to supplement the suggested lesson outline.

**Pictures of temples**

Suggest that class members display pictures of temples in their homes. President Howard W. Hunter said: “Keep a picture of a temple in your home that your children may see it. Teach them about the purposes of the house of the Lord. Have them plan from their earliest years to go there and to remain worthy of that blessing” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1994, 8; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 8).

# The Plan of Salvation

## Lesson 19

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**Purpose** To help class members understand the grand scope of the plan of salvation and to encourage them to live according to their knowledge of the plan.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study the scriptures in this lesson.
2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
3. If you use the attention activity, obtain a picture, such as a photograph from a magazine. Cut a few small pieces from the picture. Make sure that class members will not be able to tell what the picture is by looking at the small pieces.

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### Suggestions for Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Display the small pieces of the picture that you have brought to class, but do not display the picture (see “Preparation,” item 3). Tell class members that these small pieces are part of a bigger picture. Invite them to briefly guess what is in the picture. Then display the picture, putting the small pieces in place.

Point out that although the small pieces are important, they would have little meaning if they were not part of the big picture. Explain that experiences we have, decisions we make, and truths we learn are like small pieces of a big picture. They have less meaning if they are not put in the context of a bigger picture: the plan of salvation. A knowledge of the plan of salvation can help us make righteous decisions, find joy in mortality, and prepare for eternal life. This lesson discusses the plan of salvation.

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**Discussion and Application** Prayerfully select the lesson material that will best meet class members’ needs. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

**1. The plan of salvation is “one of heaven’s best gifts to mankind.”**

Write on the chalkboard *Heavenly Father’s Plan of* \_\_\_\_\_.

Ask class members to complete the phrase. Encourage them to think of as many answers from the scriptures as they can. Write their responses on the chalkboard. After a minute or two, share any of the following answers that they have not mentioned:

*Salvation* (Alma 24:14; 42:5; Moses 6:62)      *Restoration* (Alma 41:2)

*Happiness* (Alma 42:8, 16)      *Mercy* (Alma 42:15, 31)

*Redemption* (Jacob 6:8; Alma 12:25–33)

- What do these words teach about Heavenly Father’s plan?
- The prophet Alma referred to Heavenly Father’s plan as “the great plan of happiness” (Alma 42:8). How can the plan of salvation bring us happiness?
- The Prophet Joseph Smith taught, “The great plan of salvation is a theme which ought to occupy our strict attention, and be regarded as one of heaven’s best gifts to mankind” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 68). What can we do to give the plan of salvation “our strict attention”?

Explain that this lesson is an overview of the plan of salvation. It shows how the principles of the gospel relate to each other as part of one great plan.

## 2. Premortal life

Explain that the plan of salvation can be divided into three parts: premortal life, mortal life, and life after death.

Write *Premortal Life* on the chalkboard. Point out that one significant blessing of the Restoration is our increased knowledge of our premortal life. This knowledge helps us understand life’s purpose and our part in God’s plan of salvation. As class members discuss the following questions, have them read the suggested scripture passages.

- We are sons and daughters of God, and we lived in a premortal existence as His spirit children (D&C 76:24; 93:29). How does the knowledge that you are a child of God influence you?
- Before the earth was created, Heavenly Father called a council in heaven and presented the plan of salvation to all His spirit children. What were some elements of the plan that Heavenly Father presented in the premortal world? (See 2 Nephi 2:24–26; Alma 34:8–9; Abraham 3:24–25. Answers could include the Atonement of Jesus Christ; the Creation of the earth; the Fall; time on earth during which we would receive a mortal body and be tested; and agency, or the power to choose good or evil.)
- How did Jehovah, the Firstborn of the Father, respond to the plan of salvation? (See Moses 4:2. To show how the Savior obeyed the Father’s will, you may want to read D&C 19:16–19 and 76:40–42. Emphasize that the Atonement of Jesus Christ makes the plan of salvation possible. The Savior is the central figure in God’s plan for our salvation.)
- Lucifer rebelled against the plan of salvation, seeking to destroy our agency and gain Heavenly Father’s power (Moses 4:1, 3; D&C 29:36). He became Satan, and he and his followers were cast out of the Father’s presence and denied mortality (D&C 29:36–38; 76:25–27; Moses 4:4; Abraham 3:26). Why is it important for us to know about the existence of Satan and his followers?
- How did we respond to the plan of salvation? (See Job 38:4–7. Explain that latter-day prophets have taught that verse 7 in this passage refers to the joy we all felt in our premortal existence when we accepted the plan of salvation.)

Explain that in the premortal world, Heavenly Father chose and foreordained noble spirits to carry forth His work on the earth (D&C 138:55–56; Abraham 3:22–23; see also *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 365).

- In what ways might our knowledge of premortal life influence our daily decisions? How can our knowledge of our premortal life help us when we face trials?

### 3. Mortal life

Point out that when we accepted Heavenly Father's plan in our premortal life, we kept our "first estate." Because of our faithfulness, we were given the opportunity to come to earth, which is our "second estate" (Abraham 3:26).

Write *Mortal Life* on the chalkboard. Explain that because of the Fall of Adam and Eve, we are in a fallen state in mortality (D&C 29:40). We are subject to physical death and also to spiritual death, or separation from the presence of God (D&C 29:41–42; Alma 42:9, 14; physical death and spiritual death will be discussed later in the lesson). From latter-day revelation we learn that the Fall is a necessary step in our eternal progress. Eve spoke of the blessings of the Fall: "Were it not for our transgression we never should have had seed, and never should have known good and evil, and the joy of our redemption, and the eternal life which God giveth unto all the obedient" (Moses 5:11).

As class members discuss the following questions, have them read the suggested scripture passages.

- What are some purposes of mortal life? (Write class members' responses on the chalkboard. Answers could include those listed below.)
  - a. To receive a physical body. The Prophet Joseph Smith said, "We came to this earth that we might have a body and present it pure before God in the celestial kingdom" (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 181).
  - b. To prove our faithfulness through obedience to God's commandments (Abraham 3:25–26). This includes repenting of our sins and receiving the ordinances of salvation (Alma 12:24; D&C 29:42–43; Articles of Faith 1:3).
  - c. To live in families and to seal children to their parents through temple ordinances (Moses 2:28; D&C 93:40; 131:1–4; 138:48).

The First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles proclaimed that "marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God and that the family is central to the Creator's plan for the eternal destiny of His children. . . . The divine plan of happiness enables family relationships to be perpetuated beyond the grave. Sacred ordinances and covenants available in holy temples make it possible for individuals to return to the presence of God and for families to be united eternally" ("The Family: A Proclamation to the World," *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102).

- How does your understanding of the purposes of mortality make a difference in your life? How does your understanding of these purposes influence the decisions you make?
- As part of our mortal life, Satan is allowed to tempt us (D&C 29:39). Why? (See D&C 29:39; see also 2 Nephi 2:11–13.) Why is agency an important part of the plan of salvation? (See D&C 58:27–28; 101:78; 2 Nephi 2:25–27.)

#### 4. Life after death

Emphasize that our life does not end at physical death. Write *Life after Death* on the chalkboard. As class members discuss the following questions, have them read the suggested scripture passages.

- When we die, our spirits will enter the spirit world (see *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 309–10.) How will our works during mortality influence our life in the postmortal spirit world? (See Alma 34:34; 40:11–14.)
- People who do not receive the gospel on earth will have that opportunity in the spirit world (D&C 137:7–9; 138:30–34). What can we do to help them receive all the blessings of the plan of salvation? (See D&C 128:6–8, 15. Answers could include that we can do family history work and can perform priesthood ordinances for them in temples.)
- Remind class members that the Fall brought physical and spiritual death into the world. How will we be delivered from physical death? (See Alma 11:42; D&C 88:14–16; 93:33. Through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, all people will be resurrected, or “raised from this temporal death.” Our spirits will reunite with our bodies, and we will be able to “receive a fulness of joy.”) How can we be delivered from spiritual death? (See Alma 42:11–13, 15; Articles of Faith 1:3.)

Explain that after we are resurrected, we will return to the presence of God to be judged according to our works (Alma 11:43–45; D&C 76:111). We will inherit a place in the celestial kingdom, the terrestrial kingdom, or the telestial kingdom based on the manner in which we have “received the testimony of Jesus” (D&C 76:51; see also verses 50, 79–82). The next lesson includes a discussion of these three kingdoms of glory.

- In what ways does the knowledge of life after death help us during mortality?

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#### Conclusion

Have a class member read the following statement by President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve:

“There are three parts to the plan. You are in the second or the middle part, the one in which you will be tested by temptation, by trials, perhaps by tragedy. . . .

“Remember this! The line ‘And they all lived happily ever after’ is never written into the second act [of a play]. That line belongs in the *third* act, when the mysteries are solved and everything is put right. . . .

“Until you have a broad perspective of the eternal nature of [the plan], you won’t make much sense out of the inequities in life. Some are born with so little and others with so much. Some are born in poverty, with handicaps, with pain, with suffering. Some experience premature death, even innocent children. There are the brutal, unforgiving forces of nature and the brutality of man to man. We have seen a lot of that recently.

“Do not suppose that God willfully causes that which, for His own purposes, He permits. When you know the plan and the purpose of it all, even these things will manifest a loving Father in Heaven” (*The Play and the Plan* [satellite broadcast, 7 May 1995], 1–2).

Emphasize that a knowledge of the plan of salvation can help us make righteous decisions, find joy in mortality, and prepare for eternal life. Express your feelings about the role of Jesus Christ in the plan of salvation. As prompted by the Spirit, testify of the truths discussed during the lesson.

### Additional Teaching Ideas

You may want to use one or both of the following ideas to supplement the suggested lesson outline.

#### 1. “The Plan of Salvation” video presentation

If the videocassette *Teachings from the Doctrine and Covenants and Church History* (53933) is available, consider showing “The Plan of Salvation,” a four-minute segment. Consider using some or all of the following questions after the presentation:

- How is our mortal life like the experience of the young man who found himself onstage in the second act?
- How does the revealed knowledge of the first act (premortal life) help us in the second act (mortality)? How does knowledge of the third act (life after death) help us in the second act?
- When the young man found himself onstage, he did not know who the villain was or who the hero was. What problems can arise if we do not know who the villains and heroes are in our lives?
- What did the young man do to gain knowledge about the play? What serves as the “script” in our lives?

#### 2. Counsel for parents

Read Alma 12:32 with class members. Before reading, explain that the word *them* in this verse refers to Adam and Eve.

Emphasize that Adam and Eve already had a knowledge of the plan of redemption when they received commandments. Then ask the following questions:

- Why is it helpful to have a knowledge of the plan of redemption when we receive commandments? How can parents follow this teaching pattern with their children?

**Purpose** To help class members carefully consider the eternal inheritances in the three kingdoms of glory and to encourage them to live in such a way that they will be able to inherit celestial glory and dwell in Heavenly Father’s presence with their families.

**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study Doctrine and Covenants 76; 131; 132:19–24; 137.
2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.

**Suggestions for Lesson Development**

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Briefly remind class members of last week’s lesson. Ensure that class members remember the three parts of our eternal existence: premortal life, mortal life, and life after death.

After this brief review, explain that if we did not have the revelations in D&C 76, 131, and 137, we would know very little about what our condition will be after we are resurrected. Then share the following statement by President Wilford Woodruff, the fourth President of the Church, about the vision recorded in D&C 76:

“I will refer to the ‘Vision’ alone, as a revelation which gives more light, more truth, and more principle than any revelation contained in any other book we ever read. It makes plain to our understanding our present condition, where we came from, why we are here, and where we are going. Any man may know through that revelation what his part and condition will be” (*The Discourses of Wilford Woodruff*, sel. G. Homer Durham [1946], 47–48).

**Discussion and Application** Prayerfully select the lesson material that will best meet class members’ needs. Be sure to leave enough time to have a meaningful discussion about the celestial kingdom toward the end of the lesson.

**1. The kingdoms of glory and “the testimony of Jesus”**

Teach and discuss D&C 76:11–24, 40–43, 119.

- What circumstances led to the vision that is recorded in D&C 76? (See D&C 76:11–19; see also the heading to D&C 76. Note that the picture on page 114 shows the room in which the Prophet Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon received this vision.)

Emphasize that the entire vision testifies of Jesus Christ and His infinite Atonement. Joseph Smith’s description of the vision begins and ends with a testimony

of the Savior. Have one class member read D&C 76:20–24 aloud and another read D&C 76:119 aloud. You may also want to have class members read D&C 76:40–43.

Doctrine and Covenants 76 shows that Heavenly Father has provided three kingdoms of glory in which most people will live after they are resurrected: the telestial kingdom, the terrestrial kingdom, and the celestial kingdom. Each of us will inherit a kingdom of glory based on the manner in which we have “received the testimony of Jesus” (D&C 76:51). Encourage class members to keep this in mind as they discuss this revelation.

## 2. Perdition

Teach and discuss D&C 76:25–39, 44–49. Begin by writing *Perdition* on the chalkboard. Explain that the word *perdition* refers to a state of loss and destruction rather than a kingdom of glory. Those who experience this are called “sons of perdition” because they follow Satan, who is called Perdition (D&C 76:25–26, 31–32). Be sure to keep this discussion brief, avoiding speculation and leaving sufficient time to discuss the celestial kingdom later in the lesson. As with other subjects, focus only on what has been taught in the scriptures and by latter-day prophets.

- When Lucifer rebelled in the Council in Heaven, he was thrust down to earth (Revelation 12:7–9; D&C 29:36–37; 76:25–28; Moses 4:1–3). What did he begin to do when he was cast out? (See D&C 76:29; Moses 4:4.) What can we do to win the war against Satan in our lives? (For some answers to this question, see 1 Nephi 14:14; D&C 10:5; 27:15–18.)
- What did the Lord reveal about the suffering of the sons of perdition? (See D&C 76:32–34, 36–38, 44–49.) Why are sons of perdition condemned to experience such great suffering? (See D&C 76:30–31, 35. For an explanation of what it means to deny the Holy Ghost, see the following quotation.)

The Prophet Joseph Smith said: “What must a man do to commit the unpardonable sin? He must receive the Holy Ghost, have the heavens opened unto him, and know God, and then sin against Him. After a man has sinned against the Holy Ghost, there is no repentance for him. He has got to say that the sun does not shine while he sees it; he has got to deny Jesus Christ when the heavens have been opened unto him, and to deny the plan of salvation with his eyes open to the truth of it; and from that time he begins to be an enemy” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 358).

## 3. The telestial kingdom

Teach and discuss D&C 76:81–90, 98–106, 109–12. Begin by writing *Telestial Kingdom* on the chalkboard and drawing a star next to it. Explain that the telestial kingdom is the lowest kingdom of glory. The Lord compared its glory to the glory of the stars (D&C 76:81, 98; see also 1 Corinthians 15:40–41, including Joseph Smith’s translation in footnote 40a).

- Who will inherit the telestial kingdom? (See D&C 76:81–83, 98–101, 103.)
- What conditions or limitations will be placed on those in the telestial kingdom? (See D&C 76:84–86, 102, 104–6, 112.)

You may need to explain that the “hell” referred to in verses 84 and 106 is spirit prison, a temporary state between death and resurrection. Those in spirit prison who do not accept the gospel will eventually be resurrected and inherit celestial glory. Have class members read verses 85 and 106 and the second paragraph in the Bible Dictionary definition of the word *hell* (the first full paragraph on page 700).

#### 4. The terrestrial kingdom

Teach and discuss D&C 76:71–80, 91, 97. Begin by writing *Terrestrial Kingdom* on the chalkboard and drawing a moon next to it. Explain that the Lord compared the glory of the terrestrial kingdom to the glory of the moon (D&C 76:78, 97; see also 1 Corinthians 15:40–41).

- Who will inherit the terrestrial kingdom? (See D&C 76:71–75, 79. To help class members understand these verses, share the following quotation.)

Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve explained: “Those destined to inherit the terrestrial kingdom are: (1) those who died ‘without law’—those heathen and pagan people who do not hear the gospel in this life, and who would not accept it with all their hearts should they hear it; (2) those who hear and reject the gospel in this life and then accept it in the spirit world; (3) those ‘who are honorable men of the earth, who [are] blinded by the craftiness of men’; and (4) those who are lukewarm members of the true church and who have testimonies, but who are not true and faithful in all things” (*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* [1985], 146).

- What conditions or limitations will be placed on those in the terrestrial kingdom? (See D&C 76:76–78.)
- How can we keep ourselves from being “blinded by the craftiness of men”? (For some answers to this question, see Ephesians 4:11–15; 1 Nephi 15:24; Helaman 5:12; D&C 3:7–8; 21:4–6; 52:14–20.)

#### 5. The celestial kingdom

Teach and discuss D&C 76:50–70, 92–96; 131:1–4; 132:19–24; 137. Begin by writing *Celestial Kingdom* on the chalkboard and drawing a sun next to it. Explain that the celestial kingdom is the highest kingdom of glory. The Lord compared its glory to the glory of the sun (D&C 76:70, 78, 96; see also 1 Corinthians 15:40–41).

- Who will inherit the celestial kingdom? (See D&C 76:50–53, 68–69. To help class members understand verse 53, you may want to explain that the Holy Spirit of Promise is the Holy Ghost, who confirms that the priesthood ordinances we have received and the covenants we have made are acceptable to God. This approval depends on our faithfulness.)
- About four years after the vision in D&C 76 was revealed, Joseph Smith received a vision in which he saw his older brother Alvin in the celestial kingdom (D&C 137:1–5). Alvin had died in 1823, before the Church was restored. What did Joseph learn from seeing Alvin in the celestial kingdom? (See D&C 137:7–9.) What else did the Prophet learn about who inherits celestial glory? (See D&C 137:10.) How can these truths bring us comfort?

- What blessings will we receive if we inherit the celestial kingdom? (See D&C 76:54–67, 94–95.)
- How does our testimony of Jesus determine the kingdom we will inherit after we die? (See D&C 76:31, 35 [perdition]; D&C 76:82, 101 [telestial]; D&C 76:79 [terrestrial]; D&C 76:51–53, 69; 121:29 [celestial].) What does it mean to you to be “valiant in the testimony of Jesus”? (D&C 76:79).

In addition to discussing class members’ responses, you may want to share the following statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie:

“What does it mean to be valiant in the testimony of Jesus?

“It is to be courageous and bold; to use all our strength, energy, and ability in the warfare with the world; to fight the good fight of faith. . . . The great cornerstone of valiance in the cause of righteousness is obedience to the whole law of the whole gospel.

“To be valiant in the testimony of Jesus is to ‘come unto Christ, and be perfected in him’; it is to deny ourselves ‘of all ungodliness,’ and ‘love God’ with all our ‘might, mind and strength.’ (Moro. 10:32.)

“To be valiant in the testimony of Jesus is to believe in Christ and his gospel with unshakable conviction. It is to know of the verity and divinity of the Lord’s work on earth.

“But this is not all. It is more than believing and knowing. We must be doers of the word and not hearers only. It is more than lip service; it is not simply confessing with the mouth the divine Sonship of the Savior. It is obedience and conformity and personal righteousness. . . .

“To be valiant in the testimony of Jesus is to ‘press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and of all men.’ It is to ‘endure to the end.’ (2 Ne. 31:20.) It is to live our religion, to practice what we preach, to keep the commandments. It is the manifestation of ‘pure religion’ in the lives of men; it is visiting ‘the fatherless and widows in their affliction’ and keeping ourselves ‘unspotted from the world.’ (James 1:27.)

“To be valiant in the testimony of Jesus is to bridle our passions, control our appetites, and rise above carnal and evil things. It is to overcome the world as did he who is our prototype and who himself was the most valiant of all our Father’s children. It is to be morally clean, to pay our tithes and offerings, to honor the Sabbath day, to pray with full purpose of heart, to lay our all upon the altar if called upon to do so.

“To be valiant in the testimony of Jesus is to take the Lord’s side on every issue. It is to vote as he would vote. It is to think what he thinks, to believe what he believes, to say what he would say and do what he would do in the same situation. It is to have the mind of Christ and be one with him as he is one with his Father” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1974, 45–46; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1974, 35).

- Eleven years after the vision in D&C 76 was revealed, the Prophet Joseph taught that there are three degrees within the celestial kingdom (D&C 131:1). Who will be exalted in the highest degree of the celestial kingdom? (See D&C 131:1–3; 132:19.)

- What blessing is available only to those who are exalted in the highest degree of the celestial kingdom? (See D&C 131:4; 132:19–20. You may need to explain that the phrases “an increase” and “a continuation of the seeds forever and ever” mean that those who abide in the covenant and are exalted in the highest degree of the celestial kingdom will have spirit children in the eternities.)
- President Joseph Fielding Smith of the Quorum of the Twelve said: “Section 76 of the Doctrine and Covenants . . . should be treasured by all members of the Church as a priceless heritage. It should strengthen their faith and be to them an incentive to seek the exaltation promised to all who are just and true” (*Church History and Modern Revelation*, 2 vols. [1953], 1:279). How can this revelation strengthen our faith and inspire us to seek exaltation? How can we overcome any discouragement we may feel as we strive for celestial glory?

## Conclusion

Emphasize that the great blessings of exaltation in the celestial kingdom are available to all people. Each of us can be made perfect through Jesus Christ and be exalted with our families in the highest degree of the celestial kingdom. The revelation in D&C 76 should encourage us to keep the commandments and receive the ordinances of salvation so we can receive these great blessings. As prompted by the Spirit, testify of the truths discussed during the lesson.

## Additional Teaching Idea

Divide the class into four groups. Assign each group one of the following scripture passages. Give the groups time to read and discuss the passages. At appropriate times during the lesson, have the groups share what they learned from their assigned passages.

D&C 76:25–49 (perdition)

D&C 76:71–80, 87, 91, 97 (terrestrial glory)

D&C 76:81–86, 88–90, 98–112 (telestial glory)    D&C 76:50–70, 92–96 (celestial glory)



**John Johnson Home.** While in this home working on a translation of the Bible, the Prophet Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon received the revelation now recorded in D&C 76, along with other revelations.

# “Looking Forth for the Great Day of the Lord to Come”

## Lesson 21

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**Purpose** To help class members understand and recognize the signs of the Second Coming and prepare for “the great day of the Lord to come” (D&C 45:39).

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study Doctrine and Covenants 29:9–29; 34:5–12; 45:16–75; 88:86–99; 101:22–34; 133; and the other scriptures in the lesson.
2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
3. If the picture *The Second Coming* is available, prepare to use it during the lesson (62562; Gospel Art Picture Kit 238).
4. If you use the attention activity, make the following preparations:
  - a. Prepare to use the following pictures in addition to the picture listed above: *The Birth of Jesus* (62116; Gospel Art Picture Kit 200); *Jesus Praying in Gethsemane* (62175; Gospel Art Picture Kit 227); and *The Crucifixion* (62505; Gospel Art Picture Kit 230).
  - b. Prepare to have class members sing “Jesus, Once of Humble Birth” (*Hymns*, no. 196). Or ask a class member or a group of class members to prepare to sing it.

*Note to the teacher:* As you teach this lesson, focus on the the Lord’s revealed words in the Doctrine and Covenants. Do not discuss speculative matters such as the timing of the Second Coming.

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### Suggestions for Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Display the pictures of Jesus’ birth, Atonement, and Second Coming (see “Preparation,” items 3 and 4a).

Have class members sing “Jesus, Once of Humble Birth,” or ask the assigned class member or group of class members to sing it. Ask class members to look for the relationship between the words of the hymn and the pictures you have displayed.

After the hymn, explain that Jesus Christ’s birth and His Second Coming are two of the most glorious events in the history of the world. When the Savior first came to the earth, He came in humble circumstances and was not generally recognized as the Messiah. However, when He comes the second time, He will come in power and great glory. This lesson is about the Savior’s Second Coming and millennial reign on the earth.

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This lesson contains more material than is possible to teach in one class period. Prayerfully select the lesson material that will best meet class members' needs.

### **1. The Savior will return to the earth in power and great glory.**

Explain that we are privileged to live in the dispensation of the fulness of times, when latter-day revelation teaches us great truths about the Second Coming, the events that will precede it, and the thousand years of peace that will begin when the Savior comes again. The Doctrine and Covenants provides a wealth of information on these important subjects.

Just as every prophecy relating to the Savior's birth was fulfilled, so too will every prophecy relating to His Second Coming be fulfilled. Select some of the following prophecies to read with class members. Discuss what each passage teaches about the Savior's Second Coming. Summarize the information on the chalkboard. You may want to divide the class into small groups and assign each group to study and report on assigned passages. Or you could assign individuals to study and report on the passages.

- a. D&C 29:9–11; 45:44. (Christ will come to earth in power and glory. The proud and the wicked will be burned, and there will not be wickedness on earth.)
- b. D&C 34:7, 12; 43:17; 110:16. (The Second Coming is near.)
- c. D&C 34:8, 11; 63:34. (All nations will tremble when the Savior comes. If we are faithful, His power and influence will be with us until He comes.)
- d. D&C 45:45–54; 88:96–99. (The Saints who have died will be resurrected and come forth to meet the Savior. The Saints who are alive on the earth will be gathered to meet Him. He will come to the Mount of Olives, and it will divide. The Jews will recognize their Savior and weep because they persecuted Him. Then those who received the gospel in spirit prison will be resurrected.)
- e. D&C 49:6. (The Savior will put all enemies under His feet.)
- f. D&C 49:7. (No one, not even the angels, knows the hour or the day when the Savior will come.)
- g. D&C 133:46–53. (The Savior will come in red apparel. His coming will be a time of vengeance upon the wicked and redemption for the righteous.)

### **2. The Millennium will be a time of joy and peace.**

The Savior's Second Coming will usher in the thousand-year period called the Millennium. The tenth article of faith declares that during this time, "Christ will reign personally upon the earth," and "the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory." Doctrine and Covenants 101 provides a description of the beauty and joy we can look forward to during the Millennium.

- What will life on earth be like during the Millennium?

To answer this question, select some of the following scripture passages to read with class members. Discuss what each passage teaches about the Millennium. Summarize the information on the chalkboard. You may want to divide the class into small groups and assign each group to study and report on assigned passages. Or you could assign individuals to study and report on the passages.

- a. D&C 101:23. (Everyone will be able to see the Savior.)
  - b. D&C 101:24. (All the wicked will be destroyed.)
  - c. D&C 101:25. (The earth will become new.)
  - d. D&C 101:26. (People and animals will live in peace.)
  - e. D&C 101:27. (People will be granted what they righteously desire.)
  - f. D&C 101:28; see also D&C 45:55; 88:110. (Satan will be bound and will not have power to tempt anyone.)
  - g. D&C 101:29. (There will be no sorrow or death.)
  - h. D&C 101:30–31. (A person will grow old, then be changed suddenly from mortal to immortal life.)
  - i. D&C 101:32–34. (The Lord will reveal all things about the earth and heaven, including how the earth was created and what will become of it.)
  - j. D&C 45:58. (Children will grow up without sin.)
  - k. D&C 45:59; 133:25. (The Lord will be the king and lawgiver for the whole earth.)
- How can this knowledge about the Millennium be a blessing in our lives now? How does it help you to know that righteousness will eventually triumph over wickedness?

### 3. We must prepare for the Second Coming.

The Lord has repeatedly emphasized that we must prepare for His coming (D&C 133:4, 10–11). Some people may feel that they can never do enough or be good enough to prepare adequately. They may become discouraged and feel that such preparation is impossible. However, the Lord has given counsel in the Doctrine and Covenants to teach us that we can prepare for this important event as part of our daily lives.

- What can we do in our lives now to prepare for the Second Coming? (Use the following information to discuss or add to class members' responses.)

#### *Watch for the signs of the Savior's coming*

Explain that in the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord reveals many of the signs that will precede His Second Coming and encourages us to “be watchful” (D&C 61:38).

- Why is it important for us to know about the signs that will precede the Savior's Second Coming? Read D&C 45:36–39 with class members. What can we learn from this parable about why these signs have been given to us?
- What are some of the signs that have been prophesied to precede the Savior's Second Coming?

To answer this question, select some of the following scripture passages to read with class members. Identify the signs that are mentioned in each passage. Summarize them on the chalkboard under the headings *Positive Signs* and *Negative Signs*. You may want to divide the class into small groups and assign each group to study and report on assigned passages. Or you could assign individuals to study and report on the passages.

### *Positive signs*

- a. D&C 45:9; 133:57–58. (The fulness of the gospel will be restored.)
- b. D&C 45:66–71. (The New Jerusalem will be built. It will be a place of peace and safety for the righteous in the last days.)
- c. D&C 65:2–6. (God’s kingdom will be established on the earth.)
- d. D&C 110:11–16. (Priesthood keys will be restored.)
- e. D&C 133:8–9, 36–39. (The gospel will be preached throughout the world.)

### *Negative signs*

- a. D&C 29:15; 88:91. (There will be great weeping, despair, and fear. Men’s hearts will fail them.)
- b. D&C 29:16; 45:31; 112:24. (There will be famines, scourges, sickness, and desolation.)
- c. D&C 34:9; 45:40–42; 88:87. (There will be signs and wonders in the heavens and in the earth.)
- d. D&C 45:26; 63:33. (There will be wars and rumors of wars, and the whole earth will be in commotion.)
- e. D&C 45:27. (The love of men will become cold, and iniquity will abound.)
- f. D&C 45:33; 88:89–90. (There will be earthquakes, tempests, and great waves of the sea. Men will harden their hearts against God and fight each other.)

Point out that some of these prophecies have already been fulfilled, some are in the process of being fulfilled, and some await fulfillment.

- The Lord counseled us to “be not troubled” during the turmoil of the last days (D&C 45:35). How can we maintain hope and avoid feeling distressed when we are surrounded by the wickedness and turmoil of the last days? (See D&C 38:30.)

### *Stand in holy places*

In addition to counseling us to watch for the signs of the Second Coming, the Lord also counsels us to prepare by being righteous. Select some of the following scripture passages to read with class members. Discuss what each passage teaches about preparing for the Savior’s Second Coming. Summarize the information on the chalkboard.

- a. D&C 27:15; 33:17. (Be steadfast in righteousness.)
- b. D&C 34:6; 39:19–20; 43:20–23. (Cry repentance and be repentant.) Why is repentance important in preparing for the Second Coming?
- c. D&C 45:32; 87:8; 101:22–23. (Stand in holy places.) What does it mean to “stand in holy places”? What are some of these holy places? (They could include our temples, our chapels, our homes, and the stakes of Zion.) What can we do to keep ourselves worthy and holy even when we are in worldly environments?
- d. D&C 45:56–57. (Have the Holy Spirit as our guide.)

President Gordon B. Hinckley taught: “How do you prepare for the Second Coming? Well, you just do not worry about it. You just live the kind of life that

if the Second Coming were to be tomorrow you would be ready. Nobody knows when it is going to happen. . . . Our responsibility is to prepare ourselves, to live worthy of the association of the Savior, to deport ourselves in such a way that we would not be embarrassed if He were to come among us. That is a challenge in this day and age” (*Church News*, 2 Jan. 1999, 2).

Elder Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve gave the following counsel:

“Teenagers also sometimes think, ‘What’s the use? The world will soon be blown all apart and come to an end.’ That feeling comes from fear, not from faith. No one knows the hour or the day (see D&C 49:7), but the end cannot come until all of the purposes of the Lord are fulfilled. Everything that I have learned from the revelations and from life convinces me that there is time and to spare for you to carefully prepare for a long life.

“One day you will cope with teenage children of your own. That will serve you right. Later, you will spoil your grandchildren, and they in turn spoil theirs. If an earlier end should happen to come to one, that is more reason to do things right” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1989, 72; or *Ensign*, May 1989, 59).

## Conclusion

Point out that the Lord has revealed more information about the Second Coming and the Millennium to us than to any other group in the history of the world. With this information, we can be prepared and steadfast in righteousness as His prophecies are being fulfilled all around us. We should look forward with joy to the time when the Savior will return and usher in the millennial reign of peace and righteousness.

As prompted by the Spirit, testify of the truths discussed during the lesson.

## Additional Teaching Ideas

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

### 1. The parable of the wheat and the tares

Doctrine and Covenants 86 provides further insight into the Second Coming. This section records a revelation that Joseph Smith received to clarify some of the meanings of the parable of the wheat and the tares. The Savior earlier gave this parable during His mortal ministry (Matthew 13:24–30).

- Review the parable in D&C 86 with class members. What do the elements of this parable represent?

The Lord’s servants are the sowers of the good seed, and Satan and his followers are the sowers of the tares. The good seed represents the followers of Jesus, and the tares represent those who succumb to evil. The wheat and the tares are allowed to grow together until the end of the world. At that time, the righteous will be gathered out from among the wicked and the wicked will be burned.

- What does this parable teach us about the events connected with the Second Coming?

## 2. Video presentations

If the videocassette *Teachings from the Doctrine and Covenants and Church History* (53933) is available, consider showing one or both of the following segments:

“Be Not Troubled” (five minutes). This presentation can help class members understand that they do not need to be frightened or troubled by the calamities that will come in the last days. If you decide to show it, do so during the third section of the lesson.

“They That Are Wise” (six minutes). This presentation portrays the Savior’s parable of the ten virgins (Matthew 25:1–13; see also D&C 45:56–59). If you decide to show it, do so during the third section of the lesson.

Before showing “They That Are Wise,” explain that the parable of the ten virgins is based on ancient Jewish wedding customs. In Jesus’ time, the bridegroom and his friends would escort the bride from her home to the home of the bridegroom. Along the way, the friends of the bride waited to join them. When they arrived at the bridegroom’s home, they all went inside for the wedding. These weddings usually took place in the evening, so those waiting for the bride carried small lamps fueled by oil. In the parable, the bridegroom represents the Savior. The virgins represent members of the Church. The wedding represents the Savior’s Second Coming. The oil in the lamps represents preparation for the Second Coming.

After showing the presentation, have class members read D&C 45:56–59. Then ask the following question:

- What do these verses teach about preparing for the Savior’s Second Coming?

You may want to share the following insights from President Spencer W. Kimball:

“In the parable, oil can be purchased at the market. In our lives the oil of preparedness is accumulated drop by drop in righteous living. Attendance at sacrament meetings adds oil to our lamps, drop by drop over the years. Fasting, family prayer, home teaching, control of bodily appetites, preaching the gospel, studying the scriptures—each act of dedication and obedience is a drop added to our store. Deeds of kindness, payment of offerings and tithes, chaste thoughts and actions, marriage in the covenant for eternity—these, too, contribute importantly to the oil with which we can at midnight refuel our exhausted lamps” (*Faith Precedes the Miracle* [1972], 256).

# The Word of Wisdom: “A Principle with Promise”

Lesson  
**22**

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<b>Purpose</b>	To encourage class members to obey the counsel in the Word of Wisdom, as well as the Lord’s other counsel about physical health.
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<b>Preparation</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Prayerfully study the following scriptures and other materials:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Doctrine and Covenants 89 (the Word of Wisdom).</li><li>b. Doctrine and Covenants 49:19–21; 59:15–21; 88:124 (supplemental scriptures).</li><li>c. <i>Our Heritage</i>, pages 25–26.</li></ol></li><li>2. Review the material for this lesson in the <i>Class Member Study Guide</i> (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.</li><li>3. Ask a class member to prepare to summarize the historical background of the Word of Wisdom (<i>Our Heritage</i>, pages 25–26).</li><li>4. You may want to bring pictures of wholesome foods to use in the third section of the lesson.</li></ol>
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<b>Suggestions for Lesson Development</b>	
Attention Activity	<p>As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. Share the following story told by President Gordon B. Hinckley:</p> <p>“I recall a bishop’s telling me of a woman who came to get a [temple] recommend. When asked if she observed the Word of Wisdom, she said that she occasionally drank a cup of coffee. She said, ‘Now, bishop, you’re not going to let that keep me from going to the temple, are you?’ To which he replied, ‘Sister, surely <i>you</i> will not let a cup of coffee stand between you and the house of the Lord’” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1990, 67; or <i>Ensign</i>, May 1990, 51).</p> <p>Explain that the Word of Wisdom is a simple, straightforward law. Many people know of the physical dangers of disobeying this law. It is important to remember these consequences, but it is also important to remember the physical and spiritual blessings that we will receive as we obey the Word of Wisdom. This lesson discusses these great promises.</p>
Discussion and Application	<p>Prayerfully select the lesson material that will best meet class members’ needs. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.</p> <p><b>1. Why was the Word of Wisdom revealed?</b></p> <p>Explain that Heavenly Father has provided our bodies for a divine purpose. They are a necessary part of His plan for our eternal progression. Because of their</p>

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importance, Heavenly Father has given us a stewardship to care for them. In our dispensation, as in ancient times, He has revealed principles of good health to help us keep our bodies clean and pure. Our obedience to these principles is an indication of our love for Him and an expression of our gratitude.

Ask the assigned class member to summarize the historical background of the Word of Wisdom from *Our Heritage*, pages 25–26. You may want to show the picture of the Newel K. Whitney Store on page 128 in this manual. The Prophet Joseph Smith received the Word of Wisdom in this store.

- Read 1 Corinthians 3:16–17 and 6:19–20 with class members. According to these verses, why is it important that we care for our bodies? (Explain that our bodies are temples and are holy to the Lord. We should keep them pure because they are the dwelling places for our spirits, which are the offspring of God. Respecting our bodies as temples of God manifests our testimony that we are children of God. It also keeps our bodies pure so they can be dwelling places for the Holy Ghost. Emphasize that how we care for our physical bodies affects us spiritually.)
- Read D&C 89:4 with class members. What does this verse teach about the Lord’s reasons for giving the Word of Wisdom? What are some examples of “evils and designs . . . in the hearts of conspiring men” with regard to the harmful substances mentioned in the Word of Wisdom? (Examples include misrepresentations made in advertising and entertainment that using these substances is associated with happiness and success.)
- How is the Word of Wisdom a manifestation of God’s love for us? How is it a manifestation of Joseph Smith’s calling as a prophet and seer? (Explain that the Lord revealed the Word of Wisdom to the Prophet Joseph Smith long before the accuracy of its principles was fully documented in scientific studies. This revelation anticipated the current epidemic of substance abuse. It forewarns and protects us against specific problems of our day.)

## 2. The Lord’s counsel about what is not good for the body

*Note to the teacher:* As you teach the second and third sections of this lesson, focus on the basic health principles revealed by the Lord. Avoid discussion of health fads, special diets, and other kinds of food and drink. Emphasize that the Lord has not specified everything that we should and should not partake of. “Such revelation is unnecessary,” President Joseph Fielding Smith said. “The Word of Wisdom is a basic law. It points the way and gives us ample instruction in regard to both food and drink. . . . If we sincerely follow what is written with the aid of the Spirit of the Lord, . . . we will know what is good and what is bad for the body” (“Your Question: The Word of Wisdom,” *Improvement Era*, Feb. 1956, 78–79).

Write *Not for the Body* and the following scripture references on the chalkboard. Read each scripture reference with class members. Then list the substance it describes.

- a. D&C 89:5–7. (Wine or strong drink.)
- b. D&C 89:8. (Tobacco.)
- c. D&C 89:9. (Hot drinks, defined as tea and coffee.)

Explain that in addition to these substances, we should not:

- a. Use any substance that contains illegal drugs.
- b. Use any other habit-forming substances except under the care of a competent physician.
- c. Misuse prescription and other drugs.

- What are some of the consequences of using these harmful substances? (Discuss physical and spiritual consequences. The following paragraphs about alcohol and tobacco are examples. If you are teaching youth, you may want to refer to the pamphlet *For the Strength of Youth*, pages 36–37 [36550].)

The First Presidency declared: “Drunken with strong drink, men have lost their reason; their counsel has been destroyed; their judgment and vision are fled. . . . Drink has brought more woe and misery, broken more hearts, wrecked more homes, committed more crimes, filled more coffins, than all the wars the world has suffered” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1942, 8).

Each year tobacco use causes approximately 2.5 million premature deaths worldwide. Tobacco use also harms millions of innocent victims. For example, smoking by pregnant mothers passes on toxic chemicals that interfere with fetal development, afflicting approximately 3 million babies each year. These babies have lower birth weight and increased risk for neurological and intellectual delays and for premature death. Other innocent victims include non-smokers who regularly inhale secondhand smoke. These people have much higher rates of respiratory illness and are three times more likely to die of lung cancer than those who do not inhale secondhand smoke. Smokeless tobacco is just as addictive as cigarettes, and users of smokeless tobacco have cancer rates up to fifty times higher than those who do not use tobacco. (See James O. Mason, “I Have a Question,” *Ensign*, Sept. 1986, 59–61.)

- The use of substances that are forbidden in the Word of Wisdom is increasing in many parts of the world, especially among youth. How does advertising entice people to use these substances? (Discuss the false messages of such advertisements.) How do peers and other people entice people to use these substances? (You may want to discuss how to resist appeals such as “Just a little won’t hurt,” “Just once won’t hurt,” “Everyone else does this,” and “No one else will know.”) What are some other ways people are tempted to use these substances?
- How can seemingly small violations of the Word of Wisdom be damaging?
- How can we strengthen ourselves against temptations to use harmful substances? (Invite class members to tell of experiences when they have resisted temptations to violate the Word of Wisdom.) How can youth help each other obey the Word of Wisdom?
- How can parents effectively teach their children about the Word of Wisdom and help them obey it? (See the *Family Home Evening Resource Book* [31106], pages 228–31.)
- The harmful substances that are prohibited in the Word of Wisdom cause addiction. Why are addictions to these substances dangerous? How can people overcome addiction to drugs and other harmful substances?

Emphasize that there is hope for people who struggle with addiction. Overcoming addiction usually requires great personal desire and discipline, together with repentance and help from the Lord. Family, friends, and Church leaders may also provide help, and in some cases professional help may be necessary. Invite class members to share examples of how people have overcome addiction to harmful substances.

### 3. The Lord's counsel about what is good for the body

Write *Good for the Body* and the following scripture references on the chalkboard. Read each scripture reference with class members. Then summarize it beside the reference. If you brought pictures of wholesome foods, display them now (see "Preparation," item 4).

- a. D&C 89:10. (Wholesome herbs—nourishing vegetables and plants.)
  - b. D&C 89:11. (Fruit.)
  - c. D&C 89:12; see also D&C 49:19. (Flesh of beasts and fowls.)
  - d. D&C 89:14–17. (Grains.)
  - e. D&C 88:124. (Retiring to bed early and rising early—getting adequate sleep.)
- What does it mean to use food "with prudence"? (D&C 89:11; see also D&C 59:18–20; answers could include that we should eat food that nourishes our bodies and use moderation in the kind and amount of food we eat). What does it mean to use food "with . . . thanksgiving"? (D&C 89:11). How can we show the Lord our gratitude for the food He provides us?
  - What guidelines has the Lord given for using meat? (See D&C 89:12; see also D&C 49:19, 21.) What guidelines has the Lord given for using grains? (See D&C 89:14, 16.)
  - What counsel has the Lord given regarding sleep? (See D&C 88:124.) How does getting adequate sleep affect us physically and spiritually?

President Brigham Young said: "Instead of doing two days' work in one day, wisdom would dictate to [the Saints] that if they desire long life and good health, they must, after sufficient exertion, allow the body to rest before it is entirely exhausted. When exhausted, some argue that they need stimulants. . . . But instead of these kind of stimulants they should recruit by rest" (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, sel. John A. Widtsoe [1941], 187).

### 4. Promised blessings for obedience to the Word of Wisdom

The Lord revealed the Word of Wisdom as "a principle with promise" (D&C 89:3). Write *Promised Blessings* and the following scripture references on the chalkboard. Read each scripture reference with class members. Then list each promise beside the reference.

- a. D&C 89:18. (Physical health.)
  - b. D&C 89:19. (Wisdom and great treasures of knowledge.)
  - c. D&C 89:20. (The ability to run and not be weary and walk and not faint.)
  - d. D&C 89:21. (Protection from the destroying angel.)
- How have you been blessed as you have obeyed the Word of Wisdom? (Invite class members to tell of physical and spiritual blessings they have received.)

You may want to point out that those who obey the Word of Wisdom will generally live longer and have a better quality of life than if they did not obey it. However, some people have severe illnesses or disabilities despite obeying the Word of Wisdom. Explain that these people can receive the spiritual blessings of obeying the Word of Wisdom even if their physical difficulties continue. Moreover, the Lord's promises are for eternity, and those who do not receive all the promised blessings in this life will receive them hereafter.

- What are some examples of how obeying the Word of Wisdom helps us “find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures”? (D&C 89:19). (Discuss how obeying the Word of Wisdom helps a person's mental capacities. Discuss also how it helps a person receive spiritual treasures of knowledge, such as testimony, knowledge of divine truths, personal revelation, patriarchal blessings, and temple ordinances and covenants.)

Elder Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve said: “I have come to know . . . that a fundamental purpose of the Word of Wisdom has to do with revelation. . . . If someone ‘under the influence’ [of harmful substances] 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” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1979, 28–29; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1979, 20).

- How might the Lord's promise in D&C 89:20 apply to us physically? How might it apply to us mentally and emotionally? (Answers could include that we will have increased mental and emotional strength, self-mastery, and self-sufficiency.) How might this promise apply to us spiritually? (See Hebrews 12:1–3. Answers could include that we will have increased strength to resist temptation and to “run with patience the race” toward eternal life.)
- How might the Lord's promise in D&C 89:21 apply to us?

Explain that anciently, just before the Exodus of the children of Israel from Egypt, the destroying angel passed over the Israelites' firstborn sons because the people obeyed the prophet Moses and marked their doors with lamb's blood (Exodus 12). Similarly, as we “[walk] in obedience to the commandments,” including the Word of Wisdom, the destroying angel will pass by us, meaning we will be saved from spiritual death and blessed with eternal life through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ. (See Boyd K. Packer, in Conference Report, Apr. 1996, 24; or *Ensign*, May 1996, 19.)

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## Conclusion

Emphasize that the Lord has given us the Word of Wisdom because He loves us and is concerned for our physical and spiritual well-being. Explain that the Word of Wisdom is more than a code of physical health; it is also a key to great spiritual blessings. Suggest that class members evaluate whether they are treating their bodies the best they can, in accordance with the Lord's counsel about health. Testify that as we follow this counsel, the Lord will fulfill His promises to bless us physically and spiritually.

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## Additional Teaching Ideas

You may want to use one or more of the following ideas to supplement the suggested lesson outline.

## 1. Obeying the Word of Wisdom would solve the world's economic problems

- President Heber J. Grant, the seventh President of the Church, taught that “the Word of Wisdom . . . would solve the economic problems . . . of every . . . country, if it were obeyed by the people of the world” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1936, 48). How do you think this could be so?

Consider the amount of land, money, and other resources that are used to produce harmful substances, advertise them, purchase them, and treat the consequences of their use. For example, in 1985 the cost in America of health care and lost productivity related to the use of tobacco was approximately \$65 billion (see *Ensign*, Sept. 1986, 61). The costs of the production and use of alcohol are also very high. Consider the potential economic impact of using these resources for beneficial purposes rather than destructive ones.

## 2. Obeying the Word of Wisdom is associated with additional benefits

Social scientists have found that Church members who live the gospel, including the Word of Wisdom, are more likely than others to be happy in their marriages and satisfied with their family life. They are less likely to engage in premarital or extramarital sex, to experience depression, and to be involved in delinquent, deviant, or antisocial behaviors. (See Robert L. Millet and Noel B. Reynolds, eds., *Latter-day Christianity: 10 Basic Issues* [booklet, 1998], 46–47.)

## 3. Obeying the Word of Wisdom helps a missionary teach with power

Obeying the Word of Wisdom blessed one missionary in an unexpected way. While he was teaching a man about the Word of Wisdom, the man looked into his eyes and asked, “Do you mean to tell me that you have never tried drugs, smoked a cigarette, or tasted alcohol in any form?” The missionary looked directly at the man and spoke with a strong voice, “No, sir. I never have.”

The missionary later described the experience that followed: “A power went through me at that moment and I knew why I had always kept the Word of Wisdom. I am grateful that when I came to that moment in my life, I was able to bear a strong testimony of the importance of the Word of Wisdom because I had always been obedient to it.”

## 4. “Do not run faster or labor more than you have strength” (D&C 10:4)

- What counsel did the Lord give Joseph Smith in D&C 10:4? (See also Mosiah 4:27.) How might this counsel apply to our health? What are the dangers of disregarding this counsel?

## 5. Tattoos and unusual body piercing

The Apostle Paul taught that our bodies are holy to the Lord and that they are temples in which the Holy Ghost can dwell (1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19–20). Just as we should not defile our bodies by partaking of harmful substances, we should not defile their external surface with tattoos or unusual piercing. Such modifications can have negative physical, social, and spiritual consequences. (See David A. Burton, “I Have a Question,” *Ensign*, Feb. 1999, 52–53.)

# “Seek Learning, Even by Study and Also by Faith”

Lesson  
**23**

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**Purpose** To encourage class members to learn “by study and also by faith” throughout their lives (D&C 88:118).

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study the scriptures in this lesson.
2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
3. If you use the attention activity, ask a class member to prepare to share one or two personal experiences that show the blessings of learning in his or her life.

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## Suggestions for Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Ask a class member to briefly tell about the blessings of learning in his or her life (see “Preparation,” item 3).

After the class member has spoken, explain that this lesson discusses the importance of learning throughout our lives.

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**Discussion and Application** Prayerfully select the lesson material that will best meet class members’ needs. Encourage class members to share experiences related to learning.

### **1. The School of the Prophets provides a pattern for us to follow in our learning.**

Point out that in this dispensation, the Lord has given great emphasis to the need for spiritual and temporal education.

The Lord instructed the Prophet Joseph Smith to begin a School of the Prophets in Kirtland, Ohio. The School of the Prophets began meeting in January 1833 in a small room above the Newel K. Whitney Store in Kirtland (see the picture on page 128). In this school, the leaders of the Church were instructed in gospel doctrine, the affairs of the Church, and other matters. They were to prepare for Church leadership and missionary service (D&C 88:77–80).

These meetings provided the setting for spiritual experiences and in-depth discussions of gospel principles. Several revelations were received. The history of the Church records that “great joy and satisfaction continually beamed in the countenances of the School of the Prophets, and the Saints, on account of the things revealed, and . . . progress in the knowledge of God” (*History of the Church*, 1:334).

- What opportunities for learning do we have at church? What can we do to better prepare ourselves to learn in our Church meetings?

- Read D&C 88:122–25 with class members. What did the Lord command the brethren in the School of the Prophets to do? What did He command them not to do? (List class members' responses on the chalkboard.) What can we learn from these verses about how to teach one another? What do these verses say about how we should learn from one another?



**Newel K. Whitney and Company Store.** The School of the Prophets was held in a small room above this store in Kirtland, Ohio. The revelation that became known as the Word of Wisdom (D&C 89) was received here, along with other revelations.

## 2. We should learn “by study and also by faith.”

- Read D&C 88:118 with class members. Why are study and faith both necessary in our efforts to learn? (See the quotation below.) How does faith increase our ability to learn? What are the dangers of learning without having faith in God and obeying His commandments? (See 2 Timothy 3:7; 2 Nephi 9:28–29.)

President Marion G. Romney of the First Presidency said: “I believe in study. I believe that men learn much through study. . . . I also believe, however, and know, that learning by study is greatly accelerated by faith” (*Learning for the Eternities*, comp. George J. Romney [1977], 72).

- In addition to studying the gospel, we should seek learning in other areas, such as history, science, and good literature. How has the study of such subjects enriched your life?
- What kind of knowledge is of most worth? What should be the relationship between gospel learning and other worthwhile study?

President John Taylor, the third President of the Church, said: “We ought to foster education and intelligence of every kind; cultivate literary tastes, and men of literary and scientific talent should improve that talent; and all should magnify the gifts which God has given unto them. . . . If there

is anything good and praiseworthy in morals, religion, science, or anything calculated to exalt and ennoble man, we are after it. But with all our getting, we want to get understanding, and that understanding which flows from God" (*The Gospel Kingdom*, sel. G. Homer Durham [1943], 277).

While serving in the Quorum of the Twelve, Elder Gordon B. Hinckley gave an address in which he quoted the Savior's injunction "Learn of me" (Matthew 11:29). Then he said: "I should like to suggest that you follow that injunction given by the Son of God. With all of your learning, learn of him. With all of your study, seek knowledge of the Master. That knowledge will complement in a wonderful way the secular training you receive and give a fulness to your life and character that can come in no other way" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1964, 118; or *Improvement Era*, Dec. 1964, 1092).

- How have you seen that knowledge of the things of God is the most important kind of knowledge?

### 3. We should continue to learn throughout our lives.

Point out that the Lord and His prophets have always emphasized the importance of learning. We should continue to learn throughout our lives.

Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve said: "Because of our sacred regard for each human intellect, we consider the obtaining of an education to be a religious responsibility. . . . Our Creator expects His children everywhere to educate themselves" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1992, 5; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1992, 6).

Write the following questions on the chalkboard:

*Why should we learn?*                      *What should we learn?*                      *How can we learn?*

Read the following scripture passages with class members. Have class members look for answers to the questions on the chalkboard. Write their answers below the appropriate questions.

D&C 6:7	D&C 88:76–80, 118	D&C 130:18–19
D&C 11:21–22	D&C 90:15	D&C 131:6
D&C 19:23	D&C 93:36–37, 53	D&C 136:32–33

- Why do you think we are commanded to learn about so many different things?

President Gordon B. Hinckley taught young people the value of education: "It is so important that you young men and you young women get all of the education that you can. The Lord has said very plainly that His people are to gain knowledge of countries and kingdoms and of things of the world through the process of education, even by study and by faith. Education is the key which will unlock the door of opportunity for you. It is worth sacrificing for. It is worth working at, and if you educate your mind and your hands, you will be able to make a great contribution to the society of which you are a part, and you will be able to reflect honorably on the Church of which you are a member. My dear young brothers and sisters, take advantage of every educational opportunity that you can possibly afford, and you fathers and mothers, encourage your sons and daughters to gain an education which will bless their lives" ("Inspirational Thoughts," *Ensign*, June 1999, 4).

- What opportunities do we have for formal education? (Answers may include secondary schools, trade schools, and colleges and universities.) How does formal education benefit our lives? What can we do to make better use of our opportunities for formal education?
- President Brigham Young taught, “Our education should be such as to improve our minds and fit us for increased usefulness; to make us of greater service to the human family” (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, sel. John A. Widtsoe [1941], 255). How can education help us serve our families? How can education help us serve others? How can education help us in our efforts to help build the kingdom of God? Invite class members to share experiences in which their education has helped them in their efforts to serve.
- Read D&C 90:15 with class members. How has your life been enriched by the study of good books?
- What are parents’ responsibilities with regard to teaching their children? (See D&C 68:25–28. Emphasize that parents have a solemn responsibility to help their children learn the gospel. Parents should also teach practical skills such as how to maintain good health, work diligently, get along with others, manage money, and get a good education.)
- How can parents encourage children to develop a love of learning that will last throughout their lives?

While serving in the Quorum of the Twelve, Elder Gordon B. Hinckley emphasized the importance of encouraging children to read: “You know that your children will read. They will read books and they will read magazines and newspapers. Cultivate within them a taste for the best. While they are very young, read to them the great stories which have become immortal because of the virtues they teach. Expose them to good books. Let there be a corner somewhere in your house, be it ever so small, where they will see at least a few books of the kind upon which great minds have been nourished” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1975, 57; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1975, 39).

President Thomas S. Monson reminded us that little children can understand the teachings in the scriptures: “A . . . hallmark of a happy home is discovered when home is a library of learning. . . . The Lord counseled, ‘Seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom; seek learning, even by study and also by faith’ (D&C 88:118). The standard works offer the library of learning of which I speak. We must be careful not to underestimate the capacity of children to read and to understand the word of God” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1988, 81–82; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1988, 70).

If you want to discuss the subject of teaching children in more detail, you may want to refer to pages 127–43 in the 1999 edition of *Teaching, No Greater Call* (36123). Lesson 45 in this manual also discusses parents’ responsibility to teach their children.

- What kinds of reading should we avoid?

President Ezra Taft Benson of the Quorum of the Twelve taught: “Today, with the abundance of books available, it is the mark of a truly educated man to know what not to read. . . . Feed only on the best. As John Wesley’s mother counseled him: ‘Avoid whatever weakens your reason, impairs the tenderness

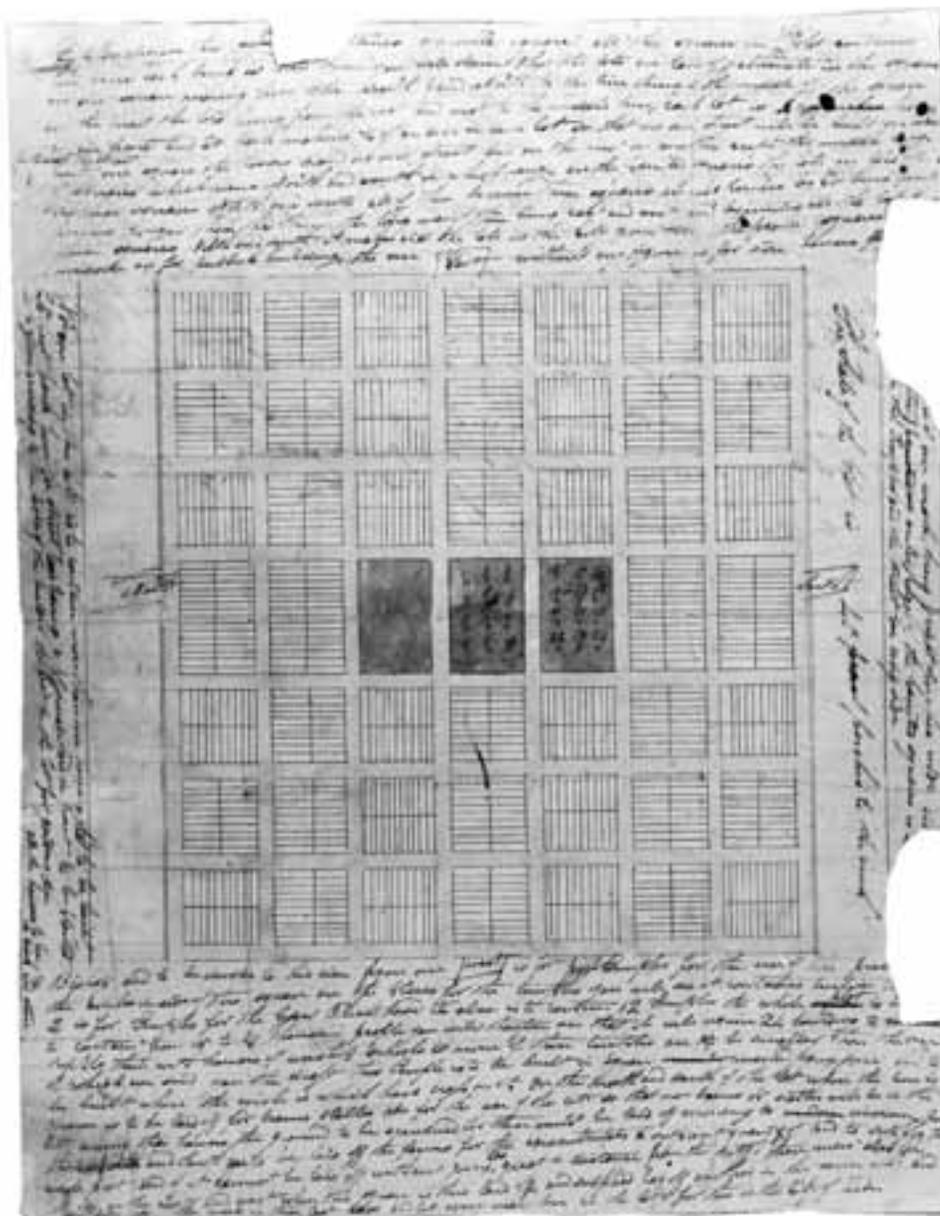
of your conscience, obscures your sense of God, takes off your relish for spiritual things, . . . increases the authority of the body over the mind'” (“In His Steps,” in *1979 Devotional Speeches of the Year* [1980], 61).

- In addition to obtaining a formal education and reading good books, what can we do to continue learning throughout our lives?

**4. In the temple we gain an education for eternity.**

Explain that in late June 1833, the Prophet Joseph Smith sent a plat for the construction of the city of Zion to the Saints in Independence, Missouri.

Display the plat for the city of Zion, shown below. Explain that in the center of the city the Saints were to build a temple. Although they were not able to build the city of Zion, they followed this concept when building Salt Lake City.



Plat for the City of Zion. The site for the temple is in the center.

- What can we learn from the plan to build a temple at the center of the city of Zion? (Answers may include that the temple is a center of learning for members of the Church and that we should put the temple at the center of our lives.)
- Read D&C 88:119 with class members. Emphasize that the temple is “a house of learning.” In what ways does the Lord teach us when we attend the temple? What can we do to receive the knowledge that is available in the temple?

Elder John A. Widtsoe of the Quorum of the Twelve taught: “*The temple is a place of instruction.* Here the principles of the gospel are reviewed and profound truths of the kingdom of God are unfolded. If we enter the temple in the right spirit and are attentive, we go out enriched in gospel knowledge and wisdom” (“Looking toward the Temple,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1972, 56–57).

Elder Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve said:

“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 in matters that are deeply spiritual. . . .

“The temple ceremony will not be fully understood at first experience. It will only be partly understood. Return again and again and again. Return to learn. Things that have troubled you or things that have been puzzling or things that have been mysterious will become known to you. Many of them will be the quiet, personal things that you really cannot explain to anyone else. But to you they are things known. . . .

“So look toward the temple. Point your children toward the temple. From the days of their infancy, direct their attention to it, and begin their preparation for the day when they may enter the holy temple.

“In the meantime, be teachable yourself, be reverent. Drink deeply from the teachings—the symbolic, deeply spiritual teachings—available only in the temple” (*The Holy Temple* [pamphlet, 1982], 6–8).

Remind class members that the ordinances and ceremonies in the temple are sacred. We should not discuss specific aspects of these ordinances and ceremonies outside the temple. Ask class members to keep this principle in mind as they respond to the following question:

- What are some truths you have learned through attending the temple?

Encourage class members to attend the temple as often as they can. President Ezra Taft Benson asked: “Do we return to the temple often to receive the personal blessings that come from regular temple worship? Prayers are answered, revelation occurs, and instruction by the Spirit takes place in the holy temples of the Lord” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1988, 98; or *Ensign*, May 1988, 85).

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## Conclusion

Encourage class members to continue to learn throughout their lives so they will be enriched and so they can better serve others. Remind them of the Lord’s command to “seek learning . . . by study and also by faith” (D&C 88:118).

As prompted by the Spirit, testify of the truths discussed during the lesson. You may want to express your gratitude for your opportunities to learn.

## Additional Teaching Ideas

You may want to use one or more of the following ideas to supplement the suggested lesson outline.

### 1. Applying the counsel in Doctrine and Covenants 88:121–26

- Read D&C 88:121–26 with class members. Point out that the principles in this passage can help us in all areas of our lives. What experiences have you had that have shown you the importance of these principles?

### 2. Learning without being overwhelmed by all there is to know

- How can we continue to learn without being overwhelmed by all there is to know?

President Wilford Woodruff counseled, “Do not be discouraged because you cannot learn all at once; learn one thing at a time, learn it well, and treasure it up, then learn another truth and treasure that up, and in a few years you will have a great store of useful knowledge which will not only be a great blessing to yourselves and your children, but to your fellow men” (*The Discourses of Wilford Woodruff*, sel. G. Homer Durham [1946], 269).

As part of this discussion, you may want to read D&C 78:17–18 with class members.

### 3. Learning the gospel in seminary and institute classes

Share the following statement by President Gordon B. Hinckley: “Our great program of Church education moves forward. The work of training students through the seminary and institute program is constantly being enlarged. . . . We urge all for whom it is available to take advantage of it. We do not hesitate to promise that your knowledge of the gospel will be increased, your faith will be strengthened, and you will develop wonderful associations and friendships” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1984, 69; or *Ensign*, May 1984, 47).

If seminary and institute classes are available in your area, you may want to take time during this discussion to encourage youth and young adults to enroll. Consider asking the following questions:

- What experiences have you had in seminary (or institute) that have helped you? How can we encourage others to attend seminary (or institute)?

### 4. Developing our talents through education

Review the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14–30; see also D&C 82:18). Ask class members to list their talents and interests on a piece of paper. Discuss with them how secular and religious education will help them develop their talents and interests.

Lesson  
**24**

# “Be Not Deceived, but Continue in Steadfastness”

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**Purpose** To help class members understand how they can avoid deception and apostasy.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study Doctrine and Covenants 26; 28; 43:1–7; 50; 52:14–19; and the other scriptures in this lesson.
2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
3. Obtain a chart of the current General Authorities from a recent conference issue of a Church magazine.
4. You may want to assign class members to present the stories in the first section of the lesson. Give them copies of the stories in advance.

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**Suggestions for Lesson Development**

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Write the following phrases on the chalkboard:

*A pint of cream*

*A misspelled name*

*No available seating at the Kirtland Temple dedication*

Tell class members that these phrases all have something in common. They are all reasons given by early Church members for their apostasy from the Church.

Explain that today’s lesson discusses how to avoid individual apostasy. These phrases and the stories that go with them will be explained later in the lesson.

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**Discussion and Application**

Prayerfully select the lesson material that will best meet class members’ needs. Discuss how the selected material applies to daily life.

**1. We should recognize the deceptions of Satan that can lead us into apostasy.**

Explain that during the early years of the Church, some members were deceived by Satan and led into apostasy, or rebellion against God. A few members who apostatized became enemies of the Church and contributed to the persecutions of the Saints in Ohio and Missouri. As members of the Church today, we must be faithful and watchful so we are not deceived.

- Read D&C 50:2–3 and 2 Nephi 2:18, 27 with class members. Why does Satan want to deceive us? What are some of the ways in which Satan tries to deceive us and lead us into apostasy? (Use the following information to discuss or add to class members’ responses. Write the headings on the chalkboard.)

### *Not recognizing the prophet as the source of revelation for the Church*

Some members are deceived by false prophets. The following account shows how several early Saints were temporarily deceived by false revelations.

In 1830, Hiram Page, one of the Eight Witnesses to the Book of Mormon, possessed a stone through which he claimed to receive revelations about the building of Zion and the order of the Church. Oliver Cowdery, the Whitmers, and others believed these claims. However, the Prophet Joseph Smith said the claims “were entirely at variance with the order of God’s house, as laid down in the New Testament, as well as in our late revelations” (*History of the Church*, 1:110).

The Prophet prayed about the matter and received a revelation in which the Lord made clear that only the President of the Church has the right to receive revelations for the Church (D&C 28). The Lord instructed Oliver Cowdery to tell Hiram Page that the revelations that came through the stone were from Satan (D&C 28:11). After hearing the Lord’s instructions, “Brother Page, as well as the whole Church who were present, renounced the said stone, and all things connected therewith” (*History of the Church*, 1:115).

### *Pride*

Some members are deceived because of their pride. The following story illustrates how pride led Thomas B. Marsh, who was President of the Quorum of the Twelve, and his wife, Elizabeth, into apostasy.

While living in Far West, Missouri, Sister Marsh and Sister Harris decided to exchange milk so they could each make a larger cheese than they otherwise could. They agreed to send each other both the milk and the cream from their cows. But Sister Marsh saved a pint of cream from each cow and sent Sister Harris the milk without the cream.

A quarrel arose, and the matter was referred to the bishop. When he determined that Sister Marsh had violated her agreement, she and her husband were upset and appealed the matter to the high council and then to the First Presidency. Each council approved the original decision that Sister Marsh had been in error.

Thomas B. Marsh declared that he would sustain the character of his wife. Soon afterward, he turned against the Church and went before a government official to declare that the Latter-day Saints were hostile toward the state of Missouri. (See George A. Smith, in *Journal of Discourses*, 3:283–84.)

President Gordon B. Hinckley said of this incident: “What a very small and trivial thing—a little cream over which two women quarreled. But it led to, or at least was a factor in, Governor Boggs’ cruel exterminating order which drove the Saints from the state of Missouri, with all of the terrible suffering and consequent death that followed. The man who should have settled this little quarrel, but who, rather, pursued it, . . . lost his standing in the Church. He lost his testimony of the gospel” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1984, 111; or *Ensign*, May 1984, 83).

After 19 years of darkness and bitterness, Thomas B. Marsh painfully made his way to the Salt Lake Valley and asked Brigham Young to forgive him and permit his rebaptism into the Church. He wrote to Heber C. Kimball, First Counselor in the First Presidency: “I began to awake to a sense of my situation; . . . I know

that I have sinned against Heaven and in thy sight.” He then described the lesson he had learned: “The Lord could get along very well without me and He has lost nothing by my falling out of the ranks; But O what have I lost?! Riches, greater riches than all this world or many planets like this could afford” (quoted by James E. Faust, in Conference Report, Apr. 1996, 6; or *Ensign*, May 1996, 7).

- What can we learn from this story? How have you seen pride lead people into deception and apostasy? What does the Lord promise to those who humble themselves before Him? (See D&C 112:2–3, 10; Ether 12:27. Note that D&C 112 is a revelation given to Thomas B. Marsh through the Prophet Joseph Smith.)

#### *Being critical of leaders' imperfections*

Some members are deceived because they become critical of Church leaders' imperfections. The following story illustrates how Simonds Ryder was deceived in this way.

Simonds Ryder was converted to the Church in 1831. Later he received a letter signed by the Prophet Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon, informing him that it was the Lord's will, made manifest by the Spirit, that he preach the gospel. Both in the letter he received and in the official commission to preach, his name was spelled *Rider* instead of *Ryder*. Simonds Ryder “thought if the ‘Spirit’ through which he had been called to preach could err in the matter of spelling his name, it might have erred in calling him to the ministry as well; or, in other words, he was led to doubt if he were called at all by the Spirit of God, because of the error in spelling his name!” (*History of the Church*, 1:261). Simonds Ryder later apostatized from the Church.

- What can we learn from this story? How does being critical of our Church leaders make us more susceptible to deception?

#### *Being offended*

Some Church members become offended by the actions of other members and allow an offense to fester until they are led into apostasy. An example of this is illustrated in the following incident.

When the Kirtland Temple was completed, many Saints gathered for the dedication. The seats in the temple filled quickly, and many people were allowed to stand, but still not everyone could be accommodated inside the building. Elder Frazier Eaton, who had given \$700 for the building of the temple, arrived after it had been filled, so he was not allowed inside for the dedication. The dedication was repeated the next day for those who could not be accommodated the first day, but this did not satisfy Frazier Eaton, and he apostatized. (See George A. Smith, in *Journal of Discourses*, 11:9.)

- What can we learn from this story? How do we today allow ourselves to be offended by others? How can being offended lead to apostasy? How can we overcome feelings of being offended?
- Read D&C 64:8–11 and 82:1 with class members. Whom does the Lord require us to forgive? Why is it sometimes difficult to be forgiving? What are some of the consequences of not forgiving someone? What can we do to help us forgive someone whom we have not yet forgiven?

*Rationalizing disobedience*

Rationalizing is excusing or defending unacceptable behavior. It is looking for a way to ease our consciences for doing something we know is wrong.

- How is rationalization a form of deception? How do we sometimes try to rationalize our behavior? Why is this dangerous? How can we recognize and overcome rationalization?

*Accepting the false teachings of the world*

- What are some of the false teachings of the world that can deceive members and lead them into apostasy? (Examples could include the false ideas that the commandments of God are too restrictive, that immorality is acceptable, and that material possessions are more important than spiritual things.)

Presiding Bishop H. David Burton taught: “One of [Satan’s] insidious strategies is to progressively soften our senses regarding what is right and wrong. Satan would have us convinced that it is fashionable to lie and cheat. He encourages us to view pornography by suggesting that it prepares us for the real world. He would have us believe that immorality is an attractive way of life and that obedience to the commandments of our Father in Heaven is old-fashioned. Satan constantly bombards us with deceptive propaganda desirably packaged and carefully disguised” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1993, 60; or *Ensign*, May 1993, 46).

**2. We can remain valiant in our testimonies and avoid deception.**

Explain that the Lord has given us many blessings and commandments to help us remain valiant in our testimonies and avoid being deceived.

- What can we do to keep ourselves from being deceived and led into apostasy? (Use the following information to develop this discussion.)

*We can know clearly whom the Lord has called to lead the Church*

- During the early years of the Church, many people claimed to receive revelations to guide the Church or correct the Prophet Joseph Smith. What did the Lord reveal in response to these claims? (See D&C 28:2, 6–7; 43:1–3. Point out that D&C 28 was revealed when Hiram Page claimed to receive revelations for the entire Church, and D&C 43 was revealed when others made similar claims.)
- Who receives revelations and commandments for the entire Church today?

President Joseph F. Smith and his counselors in the First Presidency taught: “The Lord has . . . appointed one man at a time on the earth to hold the keys of revelation to the entire body of the Church in all its organizations, authorities, ordinances and doctrines. The spirit of revelation is bestowed upon all its members for the benefit and enlightenment of each individual receiving its inspiration, and according to the sphere in which he or she is called to labor. But for the entire Church, he who stands at the head is alone appointed to receive revelations by way of commandment and as the end of controversy” (in James R. Clark, comp., *Messages of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. [1965–75], 4:270).

- How can we avoid being deceived by those who claim falsely to have received revelation for the Church? (See D&C 43:4–7.)
- Read D&C 26:2 and 28:13 with class members. What is the principle of common consent? (See D&C 20:65; 42:11. It is the practice of showing that we are willing to sustain those who are called to serve in the Church, usually by raising our right hands.) How can the principle of common consent protect us from being deceived? (It allows us to know who has been called to preside and administer in the Church, thus keeping us from being deceived by the claims of those who have not been properly called.)

Display a chart of current General Authorities (see “Preparation,” item 3). Emphasize the blessing we have of sustaining these leaders and following their counsel.

*We should study the scriptures and the doctrines of the Church*

- Read D&C 1:37 and 33:16 with class members. Explain that throughout the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord teaches the importance of studying the scriptures. How can studying the scriptures and the words of latter-day prophets help us avoid being deceived? (Answers could include those listed below.)
  - a. We can better discern the truthfulness of ideas by comparing them with the truths we learn from the scriptures and our current leaders.  
President Harold B. Lee taught: “If [someone] writes something or speaks something that goes beyond anything that you can find in the standard Church works, unless that one be the prophet, seer, and revelator—please note that one exception—you may immediately say, ‘Well, that is his own idea.’ And if he says something that contradicts what is found in the standard Church works, you may know by that same token that it is false” (*The Teachings of Harold B. Lee*, ed. Clyde J. Williams [1996], 540–41).
  - b. Scripture study strengthens our testimonies so we are less likely to become complacent in righteousness or to be influenced by false doctrine.  
President Lee taught, “If we’re not reading the scriptures daily, our testimonies are growing thinner, our spirituality isn’t increasing in depth” (*The Teachings of Harold B. Lee*, 152).
- How has studying the scriptures protected you from being deceived?

*We should recognize that the things of God will always edify us*

The Prophet Joseph Smith explained that soon after the Saints were settled in Kirtland, “many false spirits were introduced, many strange visions were seen, and wild, enthusiastic notions were entertained; men ran out of doors under the influence of this spirit, and some of them got upon the stumps of trees and shouted, and all kinds of extravagances were entered into by them; . . . many ridiculous things were entered into, calculated to bring disgrace upon the Church of God, to cause the Spirit of God to be withdrawn” (*History of the Church*, 4:580). Concerned by these excessive spiritual displays, the Prophet inquired of the Lord. The revelation in D&C 50 is the Lord’s response.

- Read D&C 50:17–24 with class members. What do these verses teach about how we can discern the things of God from the things of Satan? (The things of God will edify us by enlightening our minds and helping us grow spiritually.)

They make us want to follow the Savior and improve our lives. The things of Satan will do the opposite.)

President Joseph Fielding Smith taught: “There is no saying of greater truth than ‘that which doth not edify is not of God.’ And that which is not of God is darkness, it matters not whether it comes in the guise of religion, ethics, philosophy or revelation. No revelation from God will fail to edify” (*Church History and Modern Revelation*, 2 vols. [1953], 1:201–2).

*We should apply the Lord’s pattern for protecting ourselves from being deceived*

The Lord revealed D&C 52 the day after a conference in Kirtland. In this revelation He provides a pattern by which we can avoid being deceived.

- Read D&C 52:14–19 with class members. According to these verses, what are the characteristics of teachers who are “of God”? How can the pattern that is given in this passage help us avoid being deceived?

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## Conclusion

Review the deceptions of Satan that can lead to apostasy. Review the counsel the Lord has given for protecting ourselves from deception. Emphasize that as we follow this counsel, the Spirit of the Lord will keep us in the way of truth. As prompted by the Spirit, testify of the truths discussed during the lesson.

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## Additional Teaching Ideas

You may want to use one or both of the following ideas to supplement the suggested lesson outline.

### 1. Activity to introduce the first section of the lesson

Prepare a note for each class member. Each note could contain a short message of appreciation or an assignment to read a scripture in class or to participate in some other way. However, spell each person’s name wrong in some small way. Distribute the notes at the beginning of the first section of the lesson to introduce the story of Simonds Ryder and the other stories in that section.

### 2. Additional counsel about how to strengthen ourselves against apostasy

Elder Carlos E. Asay of the Seventy specified the following things we can do to strengthen ourselves against apostasy:

- “1. Avoid those who would tear down your faith. . . .
- “2. Keep the commandments. . . .
- “3. Follow the living prophets. . . .
- “4. Do not contend or debate over points of doctrine. [See 3 Nephi 11:29.]
- “5. Search the scriptures. . . .
- “6. Do not be swayed or diverted from the mission of the Church. . . .
- “7. Pray for your enemies. . . .
- “8. Practice ‘pure religion.’ [See James 1:27 and Alma 1:30.] . . .
- “9. Remember that there may be many questions for which we have no answers and that some things have to be accepted simply on faith” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1981, 93–94; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1981, 67–68).

Lesson  
**25**

# Priesthood: “The Power of Godliness”

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**Purpose** To help class members gain a greater understanding of the priesthood and seek the blessings that come from using it righteously.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study the following scriptures and other materials:
  - a. Doctrine and Covenants 84:33–44; 121:34–46.
  - b. Doctrine and Covenants 107 (supplemental scriptures).
  - c. *Our Heritage*, pages 26–27.
2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.

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**Suggestions for  
Lesson Development**

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Invite class members to share reasons why they are grateful to be members of the Church. Write their responses on the chalkboard.

- Which of these things would be possible without the priesthood?

Most likely, none of the things class members have listed would be possible without the priesthood. For example, if class members express gratitude for eternal marriage, point out that this would not be possible without the sealing power of the priesthood. Even something as simple as unity in the Church would not be possible without prophets, apostles, and other priesthood leaders, who help us gain a “unity of the faith” (Ephesians 4:13; see also verses 10–12).

Explain that this lesson discusses the priesthood and some of the covenants and blessings that are associated with it.

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**Discussion and Application** Prayerfully select the lesson material that will best meet class members’ needs. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

**1. Order in the restoration of the priesthood and its offices**

The Aaronic Priesthood and the Melchizedek Priesthood were restored to the earth in 1829 (see lesson 8). Following the organization of the Church in 1830, the Lord gradually revealed priesthood offices, quorums, and councils as needed to provide leadership for the growth of the Church. The following time line summarizes this restoration. Write it on the chalkboard and review it with class members. The scripture references may be omitted from the chalkboard.

Aaronic Priesthood: 15 May 1829 (D&C 13)  
 Melchizedek Priesthood: May or June 1829 (D&C 128:20)  
 Apostles, elders, priests, teachers, and deacons: April 1830 (D&C 20:38–60)  
 Bishop: 4 February 1831 (D&C 41:9–10)  
 High priests: June 1831 (heading to D&C 52)  
 First Presidency: 1832–33 (D&C 81; 90)  
 Patriarch: 18 December 1833 (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* [1976], 38–39)  
 High council: 17 February 1834 (D&C 102)  
 Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: 1835 (D&C 107:23–24)  
 Seventies: 1835 (D&C 107:25)  
 First Quorum of the Seventy: 1835 (D&C 107:26, 93–97)

Explain that in our day the Lord continues to give revelations about the organization and responsibilities of the priesthood to guide the growth of the Church. One example of this is the calling of Area Authority Seventies and the accompanying organization of the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Quorums of the Seventy in 1997 (see lesson 42, pages 247–48).

## 2. The oath and covenant of the priesthood

Write *Oath and Covenant of the Priesthood* on the chalkboard. Explain that in addition to revelations about priesthood offices and government, the Lord revealed principles about receiving and exercising the priesthood. For example, He revealed the oath and covenant of the priesthood, which is found in D&C 84:33–44. These verses outline (1) the covenants a man makes with the Lord when he receives the Melchizedek Priesthood and (2) the covenants the Lord makes with faithful Melchizedek Priesthood holders.

Elder Carlos E. Asay of the Seventy said: “Of all the holy agreements pertaining to the gospel of Jesus Christ, few, if any, would transcend in importance the oath and covenant of the priesthood. It is certainly one of the most sacred agreements, for it involves the sharing of heavenly powers and man’s upward reaching toward eternal goals” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1985, 56; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1985, 43).

As you discuss the oath and covenant of the priesthood, emphasize that “the blessings of the priesthood are not confined to men alone. These blessings are also poured out . . . upon all the faithful women of the Church. . . . The Lord offers to his daughters every spiritual gift and blessing that can be obtained by his sons, for neither is the man without the woman, nor the woman without the man in the Lord” (Joseph Fielding Smith, in Conference Report, Apr. 1970, 59; or *Improvement Era*, June 1970, 66; see also Alma 32:23).

- Write *Priesthood holders covenant to* on the chalkboard. What do priesthood holders promise as part of the oath and covenant of the priesthood? (See D&C 84:33, 36, 39–44. Summarize class members’ responses on the chalkboard.)

Priesthood holders covenant to:

- a. Be faithful in obtaining the Aaronic Priesthood and the Melchizedek Priesthood (verse 33).

- b. Magnify their callings (verse 33).
- c. Receive the Lord's servants (verse 36).
- d. Give diligent heed to the words of eternal life (verses 43–44).

- What does it mean to magnify a calling? (See D&C 107:99; Jacob 1:17–19.)

President Gordon B. Hinckley said: “We magnify our priesthood and enlarge our calling when we serve with diligence and enthusiasm in those responsibilities to which we are called by proper authority. . . . We magnify our calling, we enlarge the potential of our priesthood when we reach out to those in distress and give strength to those who falter. . . . We magnify our calling when we walk with honesty and integrity” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1989, 63; or *Ensign*, May 1989, 48–49).

- How have you been blessed by someone who magnified his or her calling?

Explain that as we magnify our callings, it is important that we find the correct balance so we do not neglect our families. Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve said:

“Sometimes, unintentionally, even certain extracurricular Church activities, insensitively administered, can hamper family life. Instructively, after the resurrected Jesus taught the Nephites, He said, ‘Go ye unto your homes, and ponder upon the things which I have said,’ and pray and prepare ‘for the morrow’ (3 Nephi 17:3). Jesus did not say go to your civic clubs, town meetings, or even stake centers!” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1994, 120; or *Ensign*, May 1994, 89).

- What does it mean to receive the Lord's servants? (D&C 84:36). Explain that as we accept the message and ordinances of the gospel from the Lord's servants, we also receive the Lord.
- Write *The Lord covenants to* on the chalkboard. What blessings does the Lord promise as part of the oath and covenant of the priesthood? (See D&C 84:33–34, 38, 42. Summarize class members' responses on the chalkboard.)

The Lord covenants to:

- a. Sanctify us by the Spirit (verse 33).
- b. Renew our bodies (verse 33).
- c. Give us the blessings promised to Abraham and his posterity (verse 34).
- d. Make us His elect, or chosen (verse 34).
- e. Give us all that the Father has (verse 38).
- f. Give His angels charge over us (verse 42).
- The Lord promises that if we are faithful, we will become “the seed of Abraham . . . and the elect of God” (D&C 84:33–34). What are the blessings and responsibilities of the seed of Abraham? (See Abraham 2:9–11.) Abraham 2:11 indicates that “all the families of the earth [will] be blessed” through the priesthood. How can this be accomplished?
- The crowning promise in the oath and covenant of the priesthood is that we can receive “all that [the] Father hath” (D&C 84:38). How can knowledge of this promise help us in times of adversity? How can it help us in times of plenty?

### 3. Principles for using the priesthood

Teach and discuss D&C 121:34–46. Explain that in these verses the Lord reveals principles for using the priesthood. He also reveals promises to those who use it righteously. In addition to their application to priesthood holders, these principles apply generally to all human relationships. Therefore, they are also important for those who do not hold the priesthood.

- In D&C 121:34–40, the Lord reveals why some priesthood holders are not able to exercise the priesthood with power. According to these verses, what prevents them from doing this? (Answers could include setting their hearts on the things of the world, aspiring to the honors of men, attempting to cover sins, gratifying pride or vain ambition, and exercising unrighteous dominion.)
- What are some examples of caring too much for “the things of this world”? (D&C 121:35). How can seeking what the world offers keep us from receiving what the Lord offers? How can a person overcome this problem?
- What are some ways that people “exercise unrighteous dominion”? (D&C 121:39; see also verse 37). What are the consequences of doing this? How can a person overcome a tendency to exercise unrighteous dominion?

Emphasize that the priesthood may be used only in righteousness and a spirit of love as a means of serving and blessing others. Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve said:

“Those who hold the priesthood must never forget that they have no right to wield priesthood authority like a club over the heads of others in the family or in Church callings. . . . Any man who . . . seeks to use the priesthood in any degree of unrighteousness in the Church or in the home simply does not understand the nature of his authority. Priesthood is for service, not servitude; compassion, not compulsion; caring, not control” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1993, 105; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, 78).

- In D&C 121:41–42, the Lord reveals principles that will help priesthood holders exercise the priesthood with power. What are these principles? How can we apply these principles as we interact with family members, neighbors, associates at work, and others?

You may want to discuss how to apply these principles in specific situations, such as when helping a child make a decision or complete a task, when making decisions in Church councils, when someone has failed to fulfill an assignment, or when there are serious differences of opinion.

- What principles for giving correction or discipline are revealed in D&C 121:43–44? (Explain that *betimes* means “promptly” or “soon.” In the context of this passage, *with sharpness* means “clearly” or “precisely,” not “severely” or “roughly.”) What experiences in your life have confirmed the importance of these principles? How do the consequences of disciplining with love differ from the consequences of disciplining with anger?
- What does it mean to “let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly”? (D&C 121:45). How can we keep evil or unvirtuous thoughts out of our minds? (See D&C 27:15–18.) How can we more actively fill our minds with virtuous thoughts?

- What does the Lord promise if we are “full of charity” and “let virtue garnish [our] thoughts unceasingly”? (See D&C 121:45–46.) What does it mean to be confident in the presence of God? (See the following quotation.) What blessings do we receive when the Holy Ghost is our constant companion?

While serving in the Quorum of the Twelve, Elder Gordon B. Hinckley said: “It has been my privilege on various occasions to converse with Presidents of the United States and important men in other governments. At the close of each such occasion I have reflected on the rewarding experience of standing with confidence in the presence of an acknowledged leader. And then I have thought, what a wonderful thing, what a marvelous thing it would be to stand with confidence—unafraid and unashamed and unembarrassed—in the presence of God. This is the promise held out to every virtuous man and woman” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1970, 66; or *Improvement Era*, Dec. 1970, 73).

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## Conclusion

Bear testimony of the importance of the priesthood. Express your gratitude for the oath and covenant of the priesthood and for the blessings the Lord promises if we are faithful. Encourage class members to seek more fully the blessings of the priesthood.

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## Additional Teaching Ideas

You may want to use one or both of the following ideas to supplement the suggested lesson outline.

### 1. Presiding quorums in the Church

An important part of the restoration of priesthood authority was the organization of the presiding quorums of the Church. Counselors had been called to assist the Prophet Joseph as early as March 1832 (D&C 81:1), and the First Presidency was formally organized one year later (see the heading to D&C 90). In February 1835, twelve men were called and ordained to be Apostles, and the Quorum of the Twelve was formed. Soon afterward, the Prophet organized the First Quorum of the Seventy.

- What are the responsibilities of members of the First Presidency? (See D&C 107:9, 22, 65–66, 78–81, 91–92; 112:30–32.)
- What are the responsibilities of members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles? (See D&C 107:23, 33, 35, 39, 58; 112:30–32.)
- What are the responsibilities of members of the Quorums of the Seventy? (See D&C 107:25–26, 34, 38, 97.)
- How are our lives blessed by the service of the presiding officers of the Church?

### 2. The importance of priesthood service

Invite a priesthood holder in the ward to share a priesthood experience with the class, such as administering the sacrament to a homebound person, assisting with a priesthood blessing, or serving a mission. Have this priesthood holder discuss the feelings he had as he provided this service. Have him bear his testimony of the priesthood and the importance of using the priesthood to serve others.

# “Go Ye into All the World, and Preach My Gospel”

Lesson  
**26**

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**Purpose** To inspire class members to follow the example of the Kirtland Saints who made great sacrifices to share the gospel and remained steadfast during times of adversity.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study the scriptures in this lesson and *Our Heritage*, pages 29–33, 36.
2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
3. Ask class members to prepare to summarize the following sections in *Our Heritage*:
  - a. “Missions of Early Ohio Converts” and “Mission of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles” (pages 30–32).
  - b. “Mission to England” (pages 32–33).
  - c. “Exodus from Kirtland” (page 36).

You may also want to assign class members to relate other stories from the lesson.

4. If you use the attention activity, put the following items in a small suitcase or bag: a set of scriptures, a pair of socks, five small coins, and a piece of paper with the following message (omit the references at the end):

This suitcase belongs to Elder Erastus Snow. I have been called by the Prophet Joseph Smith to serve a mission in western Pennsylvania. I am instructed to leave in the spring of 1836. I will be departing from Kirtland alone and on foot. I am taking all my worldly wealth. (See *Our Heritage*, page 31; “Autobiography of Erastus Snow,” *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine*, July 1923, 106.)

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## Suggestions for Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Display the suitcase or bag you have prepared (see “Preparation,” item 4). Ask a class member to open it, read what is written on the paper, and show what this missionary took with him: scriptures, socks, and five small coins. Write three words on the chalkboard: *Sacrifice*, *Courage*, and *Faith*. Ask class members to consider the sacrifice, courage, and faith it took for Elder Snow to undertake this missionary journey as the Lord directed.

Explain that this lesson includes a discussion of the missionary work carried out at great sacrifice by Saints living in Kirtland, Ohio. These missionaries helped convert many people to the gospel, strengthening the young Church.

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Prayerfully select the lesson material that will best meet class members' needs. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the principles you discuss.

### **1. The Lord poured out great blessings during the Kirtland period.**

Explain that most of the last 13 lessons have focused on the doctrines that were revealed and the events that occurred while the Saints were in Kirtland, Ohio. During this time the Lord blessed His people greatly. Use the following questions to briefly review the highlights from the Kirtland period. Refer to previous lessons and to *Our Heritage* as necessary.

- What are some of the important doctrines the Lord revealed during the Kirtland period? (Answers could include revelations on the law of consecration, the law of tithing, the kingdoms of glory, the Word of Wisdom, the Second Coming, and the priesthood.)
- What were some of the important events and accomplishments during the Kirtland period?

### **2. The Saints in Kirtland made great sacrifices to share the gospel.**

Explain that another important aspect of the Kirtland period was the calling of missionaries to preach the gospel in the United States, Canada, and England. Most of them served at great personal sacrifice.

- Read D&C 42:6 and D&C 88:81 with class members. What message does the Lord give in these verses? Explain that many revelations given in Kirtland included commandments to preach the gospel.

Ask the assigned class member to summarize the sections "Missions of Early Ohio Converts" and "Mission of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles" from *Our Heritage*, pages 30–32.

- What sacrifices did these Saints make in order to share the gospel?

You may also want to tell the following experiences:

In 1836 Elder Parley P. Pratt, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, was called to serve a mission to Canada. On his way to Toronto, Canada, "a stranger gave him a letter of introduction to John Taylor, a Methodist lay preacher in Toronto. Taylor was affiliated with a group who believed existing churches did not correspond with New Testament Christianity. For two years this group had met several times a week for the 'purpose of seeking truth, independent of any sectarian organization.' In Toronto, Elder Pratt was courteously received by the Taylors, but they were not at first enthusiastic about his message.

"Discouraged at being unable to secure a place to preach, Parley decided to leave Toronto. Before going he stopped at the Taylors to get some of his luggage and to say goodbye. While he was there, Leonora Taylor told her friend Mrs. Isabella Walton about Parley's problem and said she was sorry he was leaving. 'He may be a man of God,' she said. Mrs. Walton replied that she had been inspired by the Spirit to visit the Taylors that morning because she was willing to let Elder Pratt stay at her home and preach. He did so and was eventually invited to attend a meeting of John Taylor's group, in which John read the New Testament account of Philip's preaching in Samaria. 'Now,' said he, 'where is our Philip?'"

Where is our receiving the Word with joy, and being baptized *when we believed*? Where is our Peter and John? Our apostles? Where is our Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands? . . .’ When Parley was invited to speak, he declared that he had answers to John Taylor’s questions.

“For three weeks John Taylor attended Elder Pratt’s meetings, making detailed notes of his sermons and carefully comparing them with the scriptures. Gradually he became convinced that the true gospel of Jesus Christ was restored. He and his wife, Leonora, were baptized on 9 May 1836” (*Church History in the Fullness of Times* [Church Educational System manual, 1993], 157; see also Parley P. Pratt, *Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt* [1975], 134–40, 151).

John Taylor was ordained an elder and served faithfully as a missionary. Later he became the third President of the Church.

- How did the Lord bless Elder Pratt as he sought to preach the gospel?

Levi Hancock was baptized in November 1830, and soon afterward he was called to leave Kirtland and serve a mission in Missouri. The journey involved walking hundreds of miles, and he and his companion, Zebedee Coltrin, had success in preaching the gospel as they traveled. “But they also suffered hardships on their journey. Levi fell ill because of an infection in his feet and had to spend time recuperating with a family who took him in while Zebedee went on without him. Later, in Missouri, he continued to struggle with illness and chafed at times because of his inability to do all he wanted. But grateful to serve, he wrote: ‘I have to be honest before God and do all the good I can for his kingdom or woe is me. I care not for the world nor what they say. They have to meet my Testimony at the Judgement seat. I mean that my conduct shall be such that my words will be believed, the Lord being my helper.’”

Later, Levi served valiantly as part of Zion’s Camp. In February 1835 he was chosen as one of the Presidents of the Seventy. (See Don L. Searle, “It Is the Truth, I Can Feel It,” *Ensign*, July 1999, 48–50.)

- What can we learn about missionary work from these stories? What can we learn about overcoming adversity in missionary work?
- What sacrifices may we need to make to serve as full-time missionaries? What sacrifices may we need to make to share the gospel with our friends and neighbors?

### 3. Members of the Quorum of the Twelve taught thousands in England.

Explain that as the Church grew, the forces working against it became more vigorous. Some of the Saints faltered in their faith. During this difficult time, the Lord revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith that “something new must be done for the salvation of His Church” (*History of the Church*, 2:489).

Ask the assigned class member to explain what was done by summarizing the section “Mission to England” from *Our Heritage*, pages 32–33.

- How did the Lord bless the Church during this time of persecution and trial? What can we learn from the example of Elder Heber C. Kimball?

The Lord’s commandment for these brethren to leave Kirtland at such a difficult time may have seemed hard to understand. But the sacrifices made by these faithful brethren resulted in a great strengthening of the Church.

On 23 July 1837, the day the missionaries first preached the gospel in England, the Prophet Joseph Smith received a revelation directed to Thomas B. Marsh, the President of the Quorum of the Twelve. This revelation is now D&C 112. Verses 12–34 contain instructions that Thomas B. Marsh was to give to the Twelve.

- Read D&C 112:19–22 with class members. What promises did the Lord make to the Twelve Apostles in these verses?

Explain that the promise given in D&C 112:19 was fulfilled quickly. Within eight months, 2,000 people had joined the Church through the efforts of these missionaries, and 26 branches had been organized.

The Lord promised the Twelve that He would give them power to open nations to the preaching of the gospel if they would “humble themselves before [Him], . . . abide in [His] word, and hearken to the voice of [His] Spirit” (D&C 112:21–22). To show that the Lord continues to fulfill this promise, you may want to share the following story related by President Thomas S. Monson:

“In 1968 when I made my first visit to the German Democratic Republic, tensions were high. Trust and understanding did not exist. No diplomatic relations had been established. On a cloudy and rain-filled day I journeyed to the city of Görlitz, situated deep in the German Democratic Republic. . . . I attended my first meeting with the Saints. We assembled in a small and ancient building. As the members sang the hymns of Zion, they literally filled the hall with their faith and devotion.

“My heart was filled with sorrow when I realized the members had no patriarch, no wards or stakes—just branches. They could not receive temple blessings—either endowment or sealing. No official visitor had come from Church headquarters in a long time. The members could not leave their country. Yet they trusted in the Lord with all their hearts.

“I stood at the pulpit, and with tear-filled eyes and a voice choked with emotion, I made a promise to the people: ‘If you will remain true and faithful to the commandments of God, every blessing any member of the Church enjoys in any other country will be yours.’ Then I realized what I had said. That night, I dropped to my knees and pleaded with my Heavenly Father, ‘Father, I’m on Thy errand; this is Thy Church. I have spoken words that came not from me but from Thee and Thy Son. Wilt Thou fulfill the promise in the lives of this noble people.’ Thus concluded my first visit to the German Democratic Republic.”

Eight years later, Elder Monson offered a dedicatory prayer on the land:

“On a Sunday morning, April 27, 1975, I stood on an outcropping of rock situated between the cities of Dresden and Meissen, high above the Elbe River, and offered a prayer on the land and its people. That prayer noted the faith of the members. It emphasized the tender feelings of many hearts filled with an overwhelming desire to obtain temple blessings. A plea for peace was expressed. Divine help was requested. I spoke the words: ‘Dear Father, let this be the beginning of a new day for the members of Thy Church in this land.’

“Suddenly, from far below in the valley, a bell in a church steeple began to chime and the shrill crow of a rooster broke the morning silence, each heralding the commencement of a new day. Though my eyes were closed, I felt a

warmth from the sun's rays reaching my face, my hands, my arms. How could this be? An incessant rain had been falling all morning.

"At the conclusion of the prayer, I gazed heavenward. I noted a ray of sunshine which streamed from an opening in the heavy clouds, a ray which engulfed the spot where our small group stood. From that moment I knew divine help was at hand."

Following this inspired prayer, the Church grew rapidly in the land. District councils were organized, followed by the creation of stakes. Priesthood leaders and patriarchs were called. The Freiberg Germany temple was dedicated in 1985. And in 1989 the government permitted the Church to send full-time missionaries to the country. (In Conference Report, Apr. 1989, 66–69; or *Ensign*, May 1989, 50–53.)

#### 4. Many Saints in Kirtland remained valiant despite persecution.

Explain that by 1838, the Saints' time in Kirtland was drawing to a close. Persecution intensified, and it became unsafe to remain there. Ask the assigned class member to summarize the section "Exodus from Kirtland" from *Our Heritage*, page 36.

While some Church members fell into apostasy in Kirtland, most of them remained faithful and were a great strength to the Church. Relate the following experience from the life of Brigham Young:

While living in Kirtland, Brigham Young was in a meeting where a group of apostates, including some prominent Church leaders, were plotting to depose the Prophet Joseph Smith and put someone else in his place. Brigham Young said of this experience:

"I rose up, and in a plain and forcible manner told them that Joseph was a Prophet, and I knew it, and that they might rail and slander him as much as they pleased; they could not destroy the appointment of the Prophet of God, they could only destroy their own authority, cut the thread that bound them to the Prophet and to God, and sink themselves to hell. Many were highly enraged at my decided opposition to their measures. . . . This meeting was broken up without the apostates being able to unite on any decided measures of opposition" ("History of Brigham Young," *Deseret News*, 10 Feb. 1858, 386).

- What qualities did Brigham Young demonstrate in this situation? How does sustaining our Church leaders strengthen us? How does it strengthen the entire Church?

#### Conclusion

Emphasize that great blessings came to the Saints while they lived in Kirtland. Many of them were called to serve missions and willingly made sacrifices to share the gospel. Most of them remained faithful during a time of great adversity. Concerning these Church members, *Our Heritage* states, "In the example of their lives, they . . . left a permanent heritage of faithful obedience to the Lord's anointed leaders and personal sacrifice in the work of the Lord" (36).

Encourage class members to follow the example of the Saints in Kirtland who made great sacrifices for the Lord's work and remained faithful during times of adversity. As prompted by the Spirit, testify of truths discussed during the lesson.

Lesson  
**27**

# “They Must Needs Be Chastened and Tried, Even as Abraham”

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**Purpose**

To learn about the early Saints’ efforts to establish the city of Zion in Missouri and to encourage class members to help build Zion today.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study the following scriptures and other materials:
    - a. Doctrine and Covenants 101; 103; 105.
    - b. *Our Heritage*, pages 27–29, 37–45.
  2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
  3. Ask class members to prepare to summarize the following sections in *Our Heritage*:
    - a. “Persecution in Jackson County” and “Tarring and Feathering of Bishop Partridge” (pages 39–40, 41–42).
    - b. “Refuge in Clay County” (pages 43–44).
    - c. “Training of Leaders in Zion’s Camp” and “Persecution of Zion’s Camp” (pages 27–29 and 44–45).
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**Suggestions for Lesson Development****Attention Activity**

As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

- How would you feel if you were asked to leave your family and walk 1,000 miles in grueling conditions to help Church members who were in a hostile area? (You may want to select a well-known location 1,000 miles away and bring a map to show how far the journey would be.) What sacrifices would this require of you? How would you feel if you arrived at the destination and were told to return home without doing anything to help?

Explain that when the Saints in Jackson County, Missouri, were driven out of their homes, Joseph Smith organized Zion’s Camp, a group of 207 men, to march nearly 1,000 miles from Ohio to help them. The preceding questions can help us understand some of the challenges faced by the participants in Zion’s Camp.

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**Discussion and Application**

Prayerfully select the lesson material that will best meet class members’ needs. You may want to use two class periods to teach this lesson.

**1. The Saints settle in Jackson County, Missouri, and are later driven out.**

Briefly review the following historical information. Remind class members that from 1831 to 1838, the Church had two centers of population—one in Kirtland, Ohio, and the other in western Missouri. Important events were happening in

both places. Lessons 27 and 28 focus on doctrines and events associated with the Church in Missouri.

In July 1831, Joseph Smith made his first journey to Missouri. There he received a revelation designating Missouri as the place for the city of Zion, with Independence as the center place (D&C 57:1–3). On 2 August, Sidney Rigdon dedicated the land for the gathering of the Saints. The next day the Prophet Joseph Smith dedicated the temple site in Independence.

Members from the Colesville Branch in New York were the first Saints to settle Missouri, and others soon gathered there, eager to help build the city of Zion (D&C 63:24, 36). By 1832 there were more than 800 Saints gathered into five branches in Independence and the surrounding areas of Jackson County.

The Saints in Jackson County enjoyed a time of peace and optimism. However, problems arose in late 1832. Some members would not accept the authority of their local Church leaders. Others criticized the Prophet Joseph, who had returned to Kirtland. Some members were contentious, covetous, selfish, and unbelieving.

In addition, tensions with other settlers in the area were increasing. On 20 July 1833, these tensions escalated into violence. Ask the assigned class member to summarize the sections “Persecution in Jackson County” and “Tarring and Feathering of Bishop Partridge” from *Our Heritage*, pages 39–40 and 41–42.

Between July and November 1833, persecutions against the Saints intensified. Mobs burned their crops, destroyed their homes, whipped and beat the men, and terrorized the women and children.



**Persecution in Missouri.** The Saints were driven from their homes in Jackson County, Missouri.

On 4 November, near the Big Blue River, members of the mob began a battle against a small group of Latter-day Saint men and boys (*Our Heritage*, pages 42–43). During the next two days more than 1,000 Saints were driven from Jackson County in the bitter cold. Destitute, most of them crossed the Missouri River and found temporary refuge in Clay County. Ask the assigned class member to summarize the section “Refuge in Clay County” from *Our Heritage*, pages 43–44.

## **2. The Lord instructs the Saints who were driven from Jackson County.**

Explain that as word of the troubles in Missouri reached Joseph Smith in Kirtland, he was deeply distressed. He prayed concerning the redemption of Zion and received the revelation that is now D&C 101.

- What reasons did the Lord give for allowing afflictions to come upon the Saints in Missouri? (Read the following verses with class members. Summarize the information on the chalkboard. Select some of the questions to encourage discussion.)
  - a. D&C 101:2, 6; see also D&C 103:4. (Because of their transgressions.)
  - b. D&C 101:4. (Because they needed to be “chastened and tried, even as Abraham.”) For what purposes does the Lord chasten His people? (See D&C 95:1; 105:6; Helaman 12:3; Hebrews 12:11.) How is the Lord’s chastening a demonstration of His love for us? How does the Lord’s chastening help us learn obedience and remember Him?
  - c. D&C 101:7–8. (Because some of the Saints had been slow to hearken unto the Lord.) Why do people sometimes forget God and disregard His counsel “in the day of their peace”? What can we do to help us be eager to follow God’s counsel?
- How did the Lord show compassion for the Saints after chastening them? (Read the following verses with class members. Summarize the information on the chalkboard.)
  - a. D&C 101:9. (He promised that he would not cast them off and would be merciful “in the day of wrath.”)
  - b. D&C 101:10. (He promised that His indignation would fall upon their enemies.)
  - c. D&C 101:11–15. (He promised to save, gather, and comfort His Saints.)
  - d. D&C 101:16–19. (He promised that Zion would be redeemed in the future.)

Invite class members to share experiences in which they have felt the Lord’s love and mercy in times of special need.

- Read D&C 101:35–38 with class members. What can we learn from these verses to help us keep our mortal life in proper perspective? How has a knowledge of the Lord’s eternal promises helped you in times of trial?

## **3. Zion’s Camp is organized and marches to Missouri.**

Explain that after the Saints were driven from Jackson County, they petitioned Governor Daniel Dunklin of Missouri for assistance in restoring their homes and for protection. The governor expressed a willingness to help if the Saints would organize a group of men for their own protection.

In February 1834, Joseph Smith received word of this offer in Kirtland, Ohio. He responded by organizing a group of men to march nearly 1,000 miles to carry relief to the Saints in Missouri, help them return to their lands, and protect them afterward. The revelation giving directions for this expedition, which came to be known as Zion's Camp, is recorded in D&C 103.

Ask the assigned class member to review the story of Zion's Camp from *Our Heritage*, pages 27–29 and 44–45. To show the distance between Kirtland and Missouri, you may want to refer to map 3 on page 276 in this manual and page 31 in the *Class Member Study Guide*.

- As directed by the Lord in D&C 103, Joseph Smith organized Zion's Camp to help the Saints in Jackson County regain their homes and lands. What was the outcome of Zion's Camp with regard to this purpose? (After the camp had traveled nearly 1,000 miles to Fishing River, near Jackson County, the Lord revealed that the Saints would have to wait for the redemption of Zion. Soon afterward, the Prophet disbanded the camp.)
- When Brigham Young returned to Kirtland after Zion's Camp, he was asked, "What have you gained by this journey?" He replied, "Just what we went for; . . . I would not exchange the knowledge I have received this season for the whole of [this] County" (in *Journal of Discourses*, 2:10). What important purposes did Zion's Camp accomplish? (Answers could include those listed below.)
  - a. The participants were strengthened by several miraculous manifestations of the Lord's power (see *Our Heritage*, pages 44–45, for one example).
  - b. It provided an opportunity to try the faith of the participants, allowing them to prove that they would obey the Lord and sacrifice all things, even their lives if necessary, to do His will.
  - c. It served as a proving ground to determine who was faithful to serve in positions of Church leadership.
  - d. It gave participants an opportunity to associate closely with the Prophet and learn from him, preparing them for future leadership responsibilities.

Explain that while some people thought Zion's Camp was a failure, the accomplishment of these purposes was of great importance to the Church. Zion's Camp is an example of how God's purposes can be accomplished in ways that we may not understand at the time.

- How did the experience of Zion's Camp prepare future leaders of the Church?

In February 1835, five months after the camp was disbanded, the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and the First Quorum of the Seventy were organized. Nine of the Twelve Apostles and all 70 members of the Quorum of the Seventy had served in Zion's Camp. Speaking of how the camp helped prepare these leaders, Joseph Smith said:

"Brethren, some of you are angry with me, because you did not fight in Missouri; but let me tell you, God did not want you to fight. He could not organize His kingdom with twelve men to open the Gospel door to the nations of the earth, and with seventy men under their direction to follow in their tracks, unless He took them from a body of men who had offered their lives, and who had made as great a sacrifice as did Abraham" (*History of the Church*, 2:182).

The experience of George A. Smith demonstrates how Zion's Camp prepared men for future leadership in the Church. At age 16, he was the youngest man in the camp, inexperienced and lacking confidence. Despite personal discomfort and the complaints of many men about the poor conditions, George willingly followed all of Joseph Smith's instructions. George slept in the Prophet's tent and was able to hear much of his counsel and instructions. By closely associating with the Prophet, George learned leadership skills and developed strength that prepared him for a lifetime of leadership. Less than five years after Zion's Camp, George A. Smith was ordained an Apostle. He later served with Brigham Young as a member of the First Presidency.

- What can we learn from the experiences of Zion's Camp that we can apply in our lives? (Some possible answers are listed below, with questions to encourage discussion.)
  - a. An understanding of the purposes of trials. What were some of the trials associated with Zion's Camp? What can the experiences of Zion's Camp teach us about the purposes of trials in our lives? (See D&C 103:12.)
  - b. The importance of obedience. What can we learn from Zion's Camp about obedience? (See D&C 103:7–10, 36.)
  - c. The need to be willing to sacrifice all things for the Lord. What can we learn from Zion's Camp about sacrifice? (See D&C 103:27–28.) Why does the Lord require us to be willing to sacrifice all things for Him? How can we develop such a willingness? How can we show this willingness now?
  - d. The importance of being unified in the Lord's work. Point out that when even a few people murmur and rebel, the entire group is weakened.
  - e. The importance of sustaining the prophet and following his counsel even when it is difficult or when we do not fully understand the reasons for it.

#### **4. The Lord reveals that His people must “wait for a little season for the redemption of Zion.”**

Explain that the Lord had promised to redeem Zion and restore His people to their lands in Jackson County, Missouri. However, this promise was conditioned on the Saints' obedience (D&C 103:5–8, 11–14). Just as ancient Israel was not able to enter the promised land for 40 years because of their disobedience, the Lord revealed that modern Israel would have to “wait for a little season” for the redemption of Zion because of the disobedience and dissension of some Saints (D&C 105:9, 13).

- Read D&C 105:1–13 with class members. What are some of the requirements the Lord gave for the eventual establishment of Zion? (Answers could include those listed below. Discuss how these requirements apply in our lives.)
  - a. The Saints must learn obedience (D&C 105:3, 6; see also verse 37).
  - b. They must care for the poor and needy (D&C 105:3).
  - c. They must be “united according to the union required by the law of the celestial kingdom” (D&C 105:4; see also verse 5).
  - d. They must be taught more perfectly, gain more experience, and know their duties more perfectly (D&C 105:10).
  - e. They must be endowed with power from on high (D&C 105:11–12; see also verse 33).

- In D&C 105:38–40, the Lord counseled the Saints to seek peace, even with those who had persecuted them. He promised that in return, “all things shall work together for your good” (D&C 105:40). How have you been blessed as you have applied the counsel to seek peace?

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## Conclusion

The Lord has promised that Zion will be redeemed, and He has told us what we must do to prepare for that day. Remind class members that we should seek with all our hearts to help build Zion today in our families and stakes. As prompted by the Spirit, testify of truths discussed during the lesson.

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## Additional Teaching Ideas

You may want to use one or more of the following ideas to supplement the suggested lesson outline.

### 1. Missouri time line

The following time line of events in Missouri may be helpful as you teach this lesson. To help identify important locations, you may want to refer to map 2 on page 275 in this manual and page 30 in the *Class Member Study Guide*.

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*January 1831:* The first missionaries arrived in Missouri.

*July 1831:* The Lord designated Missouri as the location for the city of Zion.

*August 1831:* Joseph Smith dedicated the temple site in Independence, Missouri.

*July 1833:* A mob attacked the Saints in Independence, Missouri.

*November 1833:* The Battle of the Big Blue occurred. The Saints were driven from Jackson County to Clay County, Missouri.

*May–June 1834:* Zion’s Camp marched from Kirtland, Ohio, to Clay County, Missouri.

*June 1836:* Citizens of Clay County asked the Saints to leave the county.

*September 1836:* The Saints began moving to Far West and other locations that became Caldwell and Daviess Counties, Missouri.

*March 1838:* Joseph Smith and his family arrived in Far West, Missouri, after fleeing from the mobs in Kirtland, Ohio.

*October 1838:* The Battle of Crooked River occurred. Governor Boggs of Missouri issued his extermination order.

*October 1838–April 1839:* Joseph Smith and other Church leaders were kept as prisoners in Missouri.

*April 1839:* The Saints fled from Missouri to Illinois.

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### 2. The Lord’s instructions to the exiled Saints

After the Saints had been driven from Jackson County, the Lord gave specific instructions about what they should do. You may want to review the following instructions:

- a. Seek the redemption of Zion (D&C 101:43–62). With the parable in these verses, the Lord reminded the Saints that disobedience had weakened their position and allowed their enemies to overpower them. However, He assured them that Zion would be redeemed in His own time.

- b. Continue the work of the gathering (D&C 101:63–75). Even though the center place of Zion had fallen to the enemy, the Lord made it clear that the Saints were to continue to gather in the places He had appointed (verse 67). In our day, these places are the stakes of Zion throughout the world. We are to make our stakes “holy places” (D&C 101:21–22).
- c. Seek for redress (D&C 101:76–95). The Saints were commanded to make formal petitions for compensation and justice. Under the United States Constitution they were guaranteed the right to freedom of religion and property. Those rights had been violated in the state of Missouri. The Saints followed the Lord’s counsel and sought for redress at the local, state, and national levels. They were denied help, so the Saints left the responsibility for judging in the hands of the Lord and moved on.
- d. Hold claim on their property in Jackson County (D&C 101:96–101).

### **3. “Zion’s Camp” video presentation**

If the videocassette *Teachings from the Doctrine and Covenants and Church History* (53933) is available, consider showing “Zion’s Camp,” a 19-minute segment, as part of your discussion of the third section of this lesson.

# “O God, Where Art Thou?”

## Lesson 28

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**Purpose** To help class members better endure adversity by turning to the Savior.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study the following scriptures and other materials:
  - a. Doctrine and Covenants 121:1–33; 122; and the other scriptures in this lesson.
  - b. *Our Heritage*, pages 45–53.
2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
3. In advance, ask one or two class members to tell briefly what they have learned and how they have grown from adversity. Be sure they are comfortable with this assignment.
4. If you use the attention activity, bring a piece of paper and a pen or pencil for each class member.

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### Suggestions for Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Give each class member a piece of paper and a pen or pencil. Ask them to write down a difficulty or adversity they have experienced. When they have finished, have them write what they learned and how they grew from that adversity.

Explain that this lesson is about enduring adversity by turning to the Savior. Tell class members that later in the lesson they will have an opportunity to share what they have written down.

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**Discussion and Application**

Prayerfully select the lesson material that will best meet class members' needs. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

Briefly summarize the following events in Missouri. You may want to refer to *Our Heritage*, pages 45–49; the time line on page 155 in this manual; and map 2 on page 275 in this manual and page 30 in the *Class Member Study Guide*.

After the Saints were driven from Jackson County in late 1833, they found refuge in nearby Clay County until they were asked to leave in 1836. From Clay County, they moved about 60 miles north and established the community of Far West and other smaller settlements.

The Church prospered for a time in northern Missouri. The population grew rapidly, and temple sites were dedicated in Far West and Adam-ondi-Ahman. However, there continued to be conflicts among some of the Saints. Several leaders were excommunicated, including Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer.

In addition to dissension among some Church members, there continued to be conflicts with other residents in northern Missouri. In 1838, mobs and militia members began more attacks. On 25 October, three Church members were killed during a battle at Crooked River, including David W. Patten, an Apostle. Two days later, Governor Lilburn W. Boggs of Missouri issued an order that “the Mormons must be treated as enemies and *must be exterminated* or driven from the state” (*History of the Church*, 3:175).

On 30 October, a mob of approximately 200 men killed 17 men and boys at Haun’s Mill. The next day, Joseph Smith and approximately 50 other Church leaders were arrested on false charges. Most of these leaders were released within three weeks. However, six of them, including Joseph and Hyrum Smith, were detained despite their innocence. In November they were marched first to Independence, then to Richmond, and then to Liberty, where they were incarcerated in Liberty Jail until April 1839.

Conditions in Liberty Jail were harsh. The prisoners were kept in the lower level, which was like a dungeon—dark, cold, and unsanitary. The food was inadequate and filthy. The Prophet and his companions had only a little straw on the stone floor for their beds, with meager blankets for cover. The ceiling was so low that some of the brethren, including Joseph and Hyrum, could not stand upright. They were also under constant threat of death.

While the Prophet was imprisoned, about 8,000 Saints in Missouri were forced out of their homes as a result of the governor’s extermination order. Many of them were robbed, beaten, and killed by the mobs as they fled to the state of Illinois. The Prophet heard reports of the Saints’ suffering and pleaded with the Lord for help. In response, the Lord gave some powerful revelations. The Prophet included them in a letter to Church leaders in Quincy, Illinois, who were directing the Saints’ exodus from Missouri. Portions of these revelations are now sections 121, 122, and 123 of the Doctrine and Covenants.



**Liberty Jail.** While unjustly imprisoned here in 1838–39, the Prophet Joseph Smith received the revelations now recorded in D&C 121, 122, and 123.

### 1. Joseph Smith's prayer in Liberty Jail, and the Lord's response

- Read D&C 121:1–6 with class members. What do these verses indicate Joseph Smith was feeling and thinking about at this time? What did he request of the Lord? What are your thoughts and feelings as you read Joseph Smith's pleadings with the Lord in these verses?
- The Lord's reply to Joseph Smith's prayer is given in D&C 121:7–33 and D&C 122. Read D&C 121:7–10 with class members. What did the Lord teach Joseph in these verses? How would you feel if these words were spoken to you? What can we learn about the Lord from this reply?

Point out that these revelations “made Liberty jail, for a time, a center of instruction. The eyes of the saints were turned to it as the place whence would come encouragement, counsel—the word of the Lord. It was more temple than prison, so long as the Prophet was there. It was a place of meditation and prayer. . . . Joseph Smith sought God in this rude prison, and found him” (B. H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of the Church*, 1:526).

- How have the revelations given in the Liberty Jail (D&C 121 and 122) blessed your life?

### 2. The Savior's perfect understanding of our sufferings and adversity

- Ask class members to think of their own trials as someone reads D&C 122:5–8. In what way has the Savior “descended below” all things? (See Alma 7:11–12; D&C 19:16–19.)

Explain that because the Savior descended below all things, He has a perfect understanding of all our trials. Speaking of the supreme suffering of the Savior, Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve said:

“As part of His infinite atonement, Jesus . . . has borne the sins, griefs, sorrows, and, declared Jacob, the pains of every man, woman, and child (see 2 Nephi 9:21). Having been perfected in His empathy, Jesus thus knows how to succor us. . . . Nothing is beyond His redeeming reach or His encircling empathy. Therefore, we should not complain about our own life's not being a rose garden when we remember who wore the crown of thorns!” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1987, 89; or *Ensign*, May 1987, 72).

- Do we experience any trials in which we cannot be comforted by the Savior? (See Hebrews 4:15.) How can a knowledge of the Savior's suffering help us be faithful in our own tribulations?
- What can we do to more fully partake of the comfort and strength that Jesus offers through His Atonement? (See Hebrews 4:16; 1 Peter 5:6–11.) How can prayer, humility, and faith in Jesus Christ help us receive strength during times of adversity?

### 3. Purposes of adversity

Explain that adversity is part of God's plan for our testing and growth during mortality. We came to earth knowing we would experience pain, trials, and other difficulties.

The Prophet Joseph Smith experienced so many afflictions that he said they “have been my common lot all the days of my life; . . . and I feel, like Paul,

to glory in tribulation” (D&C 127:2). In addition to the comfort and counsel the Lord gave the Prophet in Liberty Jail, there were many other occasions when the Lord taught him about adversity. The rest of this lesson examines these teachings in the Doctrine and Covenants.

- What does the Lord reveal in the Doctrine and Covenants about the purposes of adversity? (Read the following verses with class members. Summarize the information on the chalkboard.)
  - a. D&C 98:12, 14–15; 101:4; 136:31. (The Lord allows adversity to come into our lives to try us and to prove us to see whether we will abide in His covenant.) Why does the Lord want His people to be “tried in all things”?
  - b. D&C 101:1–2. (Some adversity is a result of our transgressions.)
  - c. D&C 122:7. (The Lord allows adversity to give us experience and help us grow.)
- How can understanding these purposes of adversity help us “endure it well”? (D&C 121:8).
- Some people incorrectly believe that all afflictions are punishments from God. What are the dangers of such a belief? Why is adversity not withheld from the righteous?

Emphasize that while transgression is one source of adversity, it is not the only source. Some adversity comes because even for the righteous “there is an opposition in all things” (2 Nephi 2:11). Some adversity comes as a natural consequence of the frailty and corruptibility of the mortal body. Some comes because of accidents, because of our own choices that aren’t necessarily transgressions, and because of other people’s choices—things that God can protect us from but sometimes does not because “the basic gospel law is free agency and eternal development” (Spencer W. Kimball, *Faith Precedes the Miracle* [1973], 96). Adversity can also come “to accomplish the Lord’s own purposes in our life that we may receive the refinement that comes from testing” (Richard G. Scott, in Conference Report, Oct. 1995, 18; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 16).

While serving in the Quorum of the Twelve, Elder Harold B. Lee said that “living the gospel of Jesus Christ is no guarantee that adversity will not come into our lives; but living the gospel does give us the strength and faith and power to rise above that adversity and look beyond the present trouble to the brighter day” (quoted by A. Theodore Tuttle, in Conference Report, Oct. 1967, 15; or *Improvement Era*, Dec. 1967, 47).

For other scriptural teachings about the purposes of adversity, you may want to see 2 Nephi 2:11; Alma 32:5–6; 62:41; and Helaman 12:1–3.

#### **4. The Lord’s counsel to those who experience adversity**

- What counsel does the Lord give in the Doctrine and Covenants to help us when we experience adversity? (Read the following verses with class members. Summarize the information on the chalkboard. Select some of the questions to encourage discussion.)
  - a. D&C 24:8; 31:9; 54:10; 121:7. (Be patient in afflictions; they will “be but a small moment”; see also Alma 17:11.) How can we increase our patience to

endure trials? In what sense did Joseph Smith's afflictions last for only "a small moment"? How can we come to see adversity from the Lord's eternal perspective?

- b. D&C 98:1. (Rejoice and give thanks.) Why should we give thanks to God even when we are experiencing trials? What are some blessings we continue to have even during the most severe adversity?
  - c. D&C 98:11. (We should remain obedient and "cleave unto all good.") Why is it sometimes difficult to remain obedient when we experience adversity?
  - d. D&C 101:36–38. (Care for the soul, not for the body, and seek the Lord.) How can we apply this counsel?
  - e. D&C 122:9. (We should not fear what man may do, for God will be with us forever; see also D&C 98:13.)
- Why are some people embittered by trials while others grow and are strengthened? What can we do to face our trials and adversities better? (See Alma 62:49–51.) What accounts in the scriptures have helped or inspired you during times of adversity?
  - What have others done to help you through adversity? How can we help others during their trials? How can we use what our own trials have taught us in helping others? What benefits can come from serving others when we are in the midst of our own trials? (See Luke 9:24; Galatians 6:2.)
  - What can we do if we feel ourselves become despairing and hopeless because of adversity? (See Alma 36:3.) How can we prepare now to be strong in future times when we may experience greater adversity?

### 5. The Lord's promises to those who are faithful in adversity

- What promises does the Lord give in the Doctrine and Covenants to those who are faithful in adversity? (Read some of the following verses with class members. Summarize the information on the chalkboard. Select some of the questions to encourage discussion.)
  - a. D&C 3:8; 24:8; 112:13; 122:4. (The Lord will be with us, stand by us, and heal us in our afflictions; see also Jacob 3:1; Mosiah 24:13–14; Alma 36:27.) Why is it important to know the Lord will be with us in afflictions? What experiences have shown you that the Lord is with you during times of trial?
  - b. D&C 58:2–4; 101:35–36; 103:12; 121:29; 127:4; 136:31. (Those who are faithful in tribulation will receive glory, joy, and other blessings.)
  - c. D&C 98:3; 122:7. (All things will work together for our good and to the Lord's glory; see also D&C 90:24; 100:15; 2 Nephi 2:2; Romans 8:28.) How can adversity be for our good?

Ask the assigned class members to tell briefly what they have learned and how they have grown from adversity (see "Preparation," item 3). If you used the attention activity, invite other class members to share what they wrote. If you did not use the attention activity, invite other class members to tell what they have learned and how they have grown from adversity.

While serving in the Quorum of the Twelve, Elder James E. Faust said: "In the pain, the agony, and the heroic endeavors of life, we pass through a refiner's fire, and the insignificant and the unimportant in our lives can

melt away like dross and make our faith bright, intact, and strong. . . . It is part of the purging toll exacted of some to become acquainted with God. In the agonies of life, we seem to listen better to the faint, godly whisperings of the Divine Shepherd” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1979, 77; or *Ensign*, May 1979, 53).

Elder Marion G. Romney of the Quorum of the Twelve said:

“I have seen the remorse and despair in the lives of men who, in the hour of trial, have cursed God and died spiritually. And I have seen people rise to great heights from what seemed to be unbearable burdens.

“Finally, I have sought the Lord in my own extremities and learned for myself that my soul has made its greatest growth as I have been driven to my knees by adversity and affliction” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1969, 60; or *Improvement Era*, Dec. 1969, 69).

d. D&C 121:8; 127:2. (Those who are faithful in affliction will be exalted.)

- What can we do during our periods of trial to feel more fully the peace the Lord speaks of in D&C 121:7? (See also D&C 19:23.)

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## Conclusion

In April 1839, after the Prophet and his companions had been held in Liberty Jail for nearly five months, they were sent to Daviess County and then to Boone County for trial. While they were being moved to Boone County, the guards let them escape because some officials concluded that they could not be successfully prosecuted. Joseph Smith and the other prisoners then made their way to Illinois, where they joined their families and the rest of the Saints.

Encourage class members to read the revelations given in Liberty Jail in times of adversity. Testify that through the Atonement, Jesus Christ has borne our griefs. If we turn to Him, He will comfort and lift us even in our darkest days. Express your gratitude for the example of Joseph Smith in dealing with adversity and the willingness of Christ to help us endure and learn from adversity.

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## Additional Teaching Ideas

### 1. The courage to stand up for our convictions

Prior to their incarceration in Liberty Jail, Joseph Smith and his companions were chained together under guard in an old vacant house in Richmond, Missouri, for over two weeks. Review the account of Joseph Smith’s response to the abusive guards in Richmond, as recorded in *Our Heritage*, pages 49 (last paragraph) to 51.

- How can we develop the courage needed to face difficult situations? What are some situations where courage is needed on a daily basis? (Invite class members to share experiences when they or those they know have shown courage in upholding the principles of the gospel.)

### 2. Amanda Smith received inspiration to help her son Alma

*Our Heritage* includes an account of Amanda Smith receiving inspiration to help her son Alma, who was wounded during the Haun’s Mill Massacre (pages 47–48). If you did not review this account in lesson 15, you may want to do so in this lesson.

# Building the Kingdom of God in Nauvoo, Illinois

## Lesson 29

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<b>Purpose</b>	To teach about how the early Saints worked to build the kingdom of God in Nauvoo and to encourage class members to follow their example.
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<b>Preparation</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Prayerfully study the following scriptures and other materials:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Doctrine and Covenants 124:1–21, 87–90, 97–110; 126.</li><li>b. <i>Our Heritage</i>, pages 51–52, 55–58, 61–62.</li></ol></li><li>2. Review the material for this lesson in the <i>Class Member Study Guide</i> (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.</li><li>3. Ask class members to prepare to summarize the following accounts from <i>Our Heritage</i>:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. The trials that John Hammer and his family experienced as they sought refuge in Illinois, from the section titled “Exodus to Illinois” (pages 51–52).</li><li>b. “Sacrifices of Nauvoo Missionaries” (pages 55–58).</li><li>c. “The Relief Society” (pages 61–62).</li></ol></li><li>4. If you want to have the Relief Society president or one of her counselors talk about the purposes of Relief Society, extend the invitation in advance. Ask her to prepare to read the Relief Society declaration that was presented in the 1999 general Relief Society meeting. The declaration is included on page 166 of this manual and is also available as a separate item (36175, 36185, and 36195).</li></ol>
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<b>Suggestions for Lesson Development</b>	
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<b>Attention Activity</b>	<p>As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.</p> <p>Write the following sentences on the chalkboard:</p> <p><i>The doctrine of baptism for the dead was revealed.</i></p> <p><i>Temple endowments were first performed.</i></p> <p><i>The Relief Society was organized.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Where did these things occur?</li></ul> <p>Explain that these things and many other important events occurred in Nauvoo, Illinois. This lesson discusses how the early Nauvoo Saints worked to build the kingdom of God and how we can learn from their example as we strive to build the kingdom of God today.</p>
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<b>Discussion and Application</b>	Prayerfully select the lesson material that will best meet class members’ needs. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.
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## 1. The Saints sought refuge in Illinois.

Explain that while Joseph Smith was in jail at Liberty, Missouri, the main responsibility for directing the Saints' flight from Missouri fell upon Brigham Young, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. To escape their persecutors, the Saints began crossing the Mississippi River into Illinois in late 1838. Map 3 on page 276 in this manual and page 31 in the *Class Member Study Guide* shows the route the Saints used when they were driven out of Missouri.

Ask the assigned class member to tell of the trials that John Hammer and his family experienced as they sought refuge in Illinois (*Our Heritage*, pages 51–52).

The Saints gathered first in Quincy, Illinois. After Joseph Smith returned from Liberty Jail, they moved about 35 miles up the Mississippi River to what was then the small village of Commerce. The Saints quickly started draining the swampy land, planting crops, and building homes. During the summer of 1839, the Prophet renamed the place Nauvoo. He said, "The name of our City (Nauvoo) is of Hebrew origin, and signifies a beautiful situation, or place, carrying with it, also, the idea of rest" (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 182).

In December 1840 the state of Illinois granted Nauvoo a charter that allowed the city to establish a militia, a municipal court, and a university. Nauvoo became the second largest city in Illinois as the Church grew rapidly and new converts gathered there.

On 19 January 1841, the Prophet Joseph Smith received a revelation in which the Lord gave commandments to the Saints about their responsibilities in Nauvoo. This revelation is recorded in D&C 124. Explain that by studying D&C 124 and the examples of the early Nauvoo Saints, we can more clearly understand the vital role each of us plays in building the kingdom of God.

## 2. Missionaries sent from Nauvoo converted thousands of people.

Explain that many Church members in Nauvoo, including the members of the Quorum of the Twelve, were called to serve as missionaries. Ask the assigned class member to report on the missions of the Nauvoo Saints (*Our Heritage*, pages 55–58).

Within a few months after arriving in England, Elder Wilford Woodruff had baptized and confirmed many people. Then he had the following experience:

"I . . . met with a large assembly of Saints and strangers, and while singing the first hymn the spirit of the Lord rested upon me and the voice of God said to me, 'This is the last meeting that you will hold with this people for many days.' I was astonished at this, as I had many appointments out in that district. When I arose to speak to the people, I told them that it was the last meeting I should hold with them for many days. They were as much astonished as I was. At the close of the meeting four persons came forward for baptism; we went down into the water and baptized them.

"In the morning I went in secret before the Lord, and asked Him what was His will concerning me. The answer I received was that I should go to the south; for the Lord had a great work for me to perform there, as many souls were waiting for His word."

For the next two days he traveled south until he came to the farm of John Benbow in Herefordshire. Mr. Benbow and his wife, Jane, received him gladly and said that there was a company of over 600 men and women who had formed their own congregation called the United Brethren. Elder Woodruff said:

“This body of United Brethren were searching for light and truth, but had gone as far as they could, and were calling upon the Lord continually to open the way before them and send them light and knowledge, that they might know the true way to be saved. When I heard these things I could clearly see why the Lord had commanded me, while in the town of Hanley, to leave that place of labor and go to the south; for in Herefordshire there was a great harvest-field for gathering many saints into the Kingdom of God.”

Elder Woodruff’s efforts in this area of England enabled him “to bring into the Church, through the blessings of God, over eighteen hundred souls during eight months, including all of the six hundred United Brethren except one person” (in *Wilford Woodruff: History of His Life and Labors*, ed. Matthias F. Cowley [1909], 116–19).

- What can we learn from Elder Woodruff’s experience?

Point out that the Church was strengthened by the sacrifices and efforts of the missionaries who served in England. Elder Harold B. Lee summarized what happened during this remarkable time:

“In one year, 1840 to 1841—one year and fourteen days, to be exact—nine members of the twelve were called to labor in the British Mission. If you remember the history [in Nauvoo], those years marked the period of some of the severest persecution that the Church was to undergo in this dispensation. In that one year and fourteen days the nine members of the twelve, with their associates, established churches in every noted town and city in the kingdom of Great Britain. They baptized between 7000 and 8000 converts. They printed 5000 copies of the Book of Mormon, 3000 hymnbooks, and 50,000 tracts, . . . and [they] emigrated 1000 souls to America” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1960, 108).

### **3. The examples of the Nauvoo Saints show the importance of enduring to the end in righteousness.**

Explain that D&C 124 includes many instructions and promises to individuals who lived during the Nauvoo period. Read some of the following verses with class members and identify the instructions and promises:

- D&C 124:12–14 (to Robert B. Thompson).
- D&C 124:16–17 (to John C. Bennett).
- D&C 124:18–19 (to Lyman Wight).
- D&C 124:87–90, 97–102 (to William Law).
- D&C 124:103–10 (to Sidney Rigdon).

During the Nauvoo period, most of the Saints remained faithful and were greatly blessed. However, John C. Bennett, Lyman Wight, William Law, and Sidney Rigdon were among those who fell into apostasy and forfeited many of their blessings.

- What has helped you most in your efforts to endure to the end in righteousness?

- Read D&C 124:15 with class members. What character traits did the Lord praise in Hyrum Smith? (See also the following quotation.) How can we develop integrity of heart? How can we develop a love of what is right?

The Prophet Joseph Smith said of his brother Hyrum, “I could pray in my heart that all my brethren were like unto my beloved brother Hyrum, who possesses the mildness of a lamb, and the integrity of a Job, and in short, the meekness and humility of Christ; and I love him with that love that is stronger than death, for I never had occasion to rebuke him, nor he me” (*History of the Church*, 2:338).

#### 4. The Relief Society was organized in Nauvoo.

Explain that while the Saints were living in Nauvoo, they were blessed with a new Church organization. By the authority of the priesthood, the Prophet Joseph Smith organized the Relief Society. Ask the assigned class member to summarize the section “The Relief Society” from *Our Heritage*, pages 61–62.

To emphasize the purposes of the Relief Society, read the following declaration, which was presented in the 1999 general Relief Society meeting. If you have asked the Relief Society president or one of her counselors to make this presentation, invite her to do so now.

“We are beloved spirit daughters of God, and our lives have meaning, purpose, and direction. As a worldwide sisterhood, we are united in our devotion to Jesus Christ, our Savior and Exemplar. We are women of faith, virtue, vision, and charity who:

“Increase our testimonies of Jesus Christ through prayer and scripture study.

“Seek spiritual strength by following the promptings of the Holy Ghost.

“Dedicate ourselves to strengthening marriages, families, and homes.

“Find nobility in motherhood and joy in womanhood.

“Delight in service and good works.

“Love life and learning.

“Stand for truth and righteousness.

“Sustain the priesthood as the authority of God on earth.

“Rejoice in the blessings of the temple, understand our divine destiny, and strive for exaltation” (Mary Ellen Smoot, “Rejoice, Daughters of Zion,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 92–93).

- How does the Relief Society build faith and strengthen testimonies? How does it strengthen marriages and families? How does it help people in need?
- What blessings have come into your life because of the Relief Society?

#### Conclusion

Emphasize that the early Saints in Nauvoo dedicated their lives to building up the kingdom of God through missionary work and through serving in many other ways. By following their examples, we can more faithfully help to build the kingdom of God today.

As prompted by the Spirit, testify of the truths discussed during the lesson.

## Additional Teaching Ideas

You may want to use one or more of the following ideas to supplement the suggested lesson outline.

### 1. The early Saints were excused from building a temple in Missouri

- The Saints had not built a temple in Missouri even though the Lord had commanded them to build one in Independence and one in Far West (D&C 57:1–3; 97:10–12; 115:7–12). What principle did the Lord teach the Saints in D&C 124:49–53? How can this principle apply to us today?

### 2. The Apostles' efforts to fulfill the Lord's words

Explain that D&C 118 contains the Lord's instructions that the Twelve Apostles cross the "great waters" and preach the gospel. The Brethren were to leave from the temple site at Far West, Missouri, on 26 April 1839. However, by March 1839 most of the Saints had fled from Missouri to Illinois. Mobs threatened any leaders who returned to Far West.

Despite these threats, Brigham Young, four other Apostles, and several others returned to the Far West temple site shortly after midnight on the morning of 26 April 1839. There they ordained two additional Apostles—Wilford Woodruff and George A. Smith. They sang and prayed, and a large stone was rolled to a corner of the proposed temple site. Soon afterward, they left for their missions to England.

### 3. A proclamation to the world

- Read D&C 124:1–7 with class members. What did the Lord command the Prophet Joseph Smith to write?

Explain that the Prophet Joseph Smith and others worked on this proclamation until the Prophet's martyrdom in 1844. The Quorum of the Twelve then finished the document and published it on 6 April 1845.

The proclamation was addressed to the kings of the world, the president of the United States, and the rulers and people of all nations. The leaders of the Church proclaimed that God had again spoken from the heavens and that the kingdom of God and the holy priesthood had been restored to prepare the way for the Second Coming of the Savior. They also declared:

"We send unto you with authority from on high, and command you all to repent and humble yourselves as little children, before the majesty of the Holy One; and come unto Jesus with a broken heart and a contrite spirit; and be baptized in his name, for the remission of sins . . . , and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, through the laying on of the hands of the Apostles and elders, of this great and last dispensation of mercy to man.

"This Spirit shall bear witness to you, of the truth of our testimony; and shall enlighten your minds, and be in you as the spirit of prophecy and revelation. It shall bring things past to your understanding and remembrance; and shall show you things to come.

"It shall also impart unto you many great and glorious gifts; such as the gift of healing the sick, and of being healed, by the laying on of hands in the name

of Jesus; and of expelling Demons; and even seeing visions, and convening with Angels and spirits from the unseen world.

“By the light of this Spirit, received through the ministration of the ordinances—by the power and authority of the Holy Apostleship and Priesthood, you will be enabled to understand, and to be the children of light; and thus be prepared to escape all the things that are coming on the earth, and so stand before the Son of Man.

“We testify that the foregoing doctrine is the doctrine or gospel of Jesus Christ, in its fulness; and that it is the only true, everlasting, and unchangeable gospel; and the only plan revealed on earth whereby man can be saved” (in James R. Clark, comp., *Messages of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. [1965–75], 1:252–54).

In 1975, President Ezra Taft Benson of the Quorum of the Twelve quoted part of this document in general conference and declared that the Church was once again proclaiming these truths to the world. He said:

“As humble servants of the Lord, we call upon the leaders of nations to humble themselves before God, to seek his inspiration and guidance. We call upon rulers and people alike to repent of their evil ways. Turn unto the Lord, seek his forgiveness, and unite yourselves in humility with his kingdom. There is no other way. If you will do this, your sins will be blotted out, peace will come and remain, and you will become a part of the kingdom of God in preparation for Christ’s second coming. But if you refuse to repent or to accept the testimony of his inspired messengers and unite yourselves with God’s kingdom, then the terrible judgments and calamities promised the wicked will be yours” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1975, 48; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1975, 34).

#### **4. “The Heart and a Willing Mind” video presentation**

If the videocassette *Teachings from the Doctrine and Covenants and Church History* (53933) is available, consider showing “The Heart and a Willing Mind,” an eight-minute segment. This presentation is a portrayal of Elder Heber C. Kimball’s willingness to serve the Lord by preaching the gospel. It also shows the dedication of his wife and children as they supported him when he left both Kirtland and Nauvoo to serve the Lord in England.

You may want to show this presentation during the second section of the lesson. Use the following questions to discuss the presentation with class members:

- Read D&C 64:33–34 with class members. How did Elder Kimball show that he gave his heart to the work of the Lord? How did he show that he had a “willing mind”? What is the difference between merely being obedient and being both obedient and willing?
- Elder Kimball and his family showed that they were willing to make sacrifices to help move forward the cause of Zion. What are some sacrifices that we need to make today to be able to serve in the work of the Lord? In what ways are our sacrifices different from theirs? In what ways are our sacrifices similar to theirs?

## 5. The Prophet Joseph Smith's red brick store

Explain that the Prophet Joseph Smith's red brick store was one of the most important buildings in the Church throughout the Nauvoo period (see the picture below). In addition to being a general store, it was a center of religious, social, and civic activity. The Saints established a public school there. They also used the building for Church and civic meetings and youth gatherings. The Relief Society was organized in this store on 17 March 1842. Before the temple was completed, the upper floor was used as an ordinance room. The first endowments in this dispensation were given there.



**The Prophet Joseph Smith's Red Brick Store.** This was an important building in the Church throughout the Nauvoo period.

Lesson  
**30**

# “The Prisoners Shall Go Free”

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**Purpose**

To help class members rejoice in their opportunity to provide ordinances for the dead.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study the following scriptures and other materials:
  - a. Doctrine and Covenants 2; 124:25–55; 127; 128; Joseph Smith—History 1:36–39.
  - b. *Our Heritage*, pages 58–61, information under “The Nauvoo Temple.”
2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
3. In advance, give the following assignments:
  - a. Ask a class member to prepare to tell about the building of the Nauvoo Temple. Have him or her base the presentation on the first four paragraphs under “The Nauvoo Temple” on pages 58–60 in *Our Heritage*.
  - b. Ask two class members to prepare to briefly share experiences they have had performing baptisms for the dead. Ask them to tell how they feel knowing that through baptisms for the dead they can help others receive salvation. If they have performed baptisms for their deceased ancestors, ask them to talk about how these experiences have helped them turn their hearts to their ancestors.
  - c. Ask one or more converts to prepare to explain how they felt when they first learned that they could be baptized for their deceased family members.
4. If the following pictures are available, prepare to use them during the lesson: Nauvoo Temple (62432; Gospel Art Picture Kit 501) and Temple Baptismal Font (62031; Gospel Art Picture Kit 504).

*Note to the teacher:* Class members may have questions about how to find out about ancestors who have died before receiving the gospel. Suggest that they talk with the ward family history consultant and obtain a copy of *A Member’s Guide to Temple and Family History Work* (34697). They also may contact one of the Church’s Family History Centers. You might also mention that lesson 40 will focus on specific things that Church members can do to participate in temple and family history work.

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**Suggestions for  
Lesson Development**

- Attention Activity    As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.
- Read the following description the Prophet Joseph Smith gave of his oldest brother, Alvin:

“He was . . . the noblest of my father’s family. He was one of the noblest of the sons of men. . . . In him there was no guile. . . . He was one of the soberest of men, and when he died the angel of the Lord visited him in his last moments” (*History of the Church*, 5:126–27).

Explain that Alvin died in 1823, three years after accepting Joseph’s testimony of the First Vision but more than five years before the priesthood was restored.

- Who are some men and women in your family who died before they could receive the fulness of the gospel? What do you know about these family members?

Point out that as members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, we have the fulness of the gospel and the saving ordinances of the priesthood. Because of temple work for the dead, we can provide these ordinances for the billions of men and women who never received them during their mortal lives.

Explain that this lesson is about the work of redeeming the dead. It primarily discusses baptism for the dead.

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Discussion and Application

Prayerfully select the scripture passages, questions, and other lesson materials that will best meet class members’ needs. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

**1. Through the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Lord revealed the doctrine of priesthood ordinances for the dead.**

- Why do we perform ordinances for the dead? (Explain that all people must have the opportunity to hear the gospel and receive the saving ordinances of the priesthood. People who did not receive these blessings during mortality will have that opportunity in the spirit world. Because they do not have physical bodies in the spirit world, they cannot receive the ordinances themselves. However, we can receive the ordinances in their behalf. Individuals in the spirit world then choose whether to accept or reject the ordinances that have been performed for them.)

Point out that the Lord began teaching Joseph Smith about work for the dead very early in the Prophet’s ministry (Joseph Smith—History 1:36–39; heading to D&C 2; D&C 2:1–3). President Gordon B. Hinckley commented on this teaching:

“It is tremendously significant to me that . . . this repetition of the wondrous words of Malachi concerning the work for the dead, was given to the boy Joseph four years before he was allowed to take the plates from the hill. It was given before he received either the Aaronic or Melchizedek Priesthood, before he was baptized, and well before the Church was organized. It says much concerning the priority of this work in the plan of the Lord” (“A Century of Family History Service,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1995, 61).

Explain that on 15 August 1840, the Prophet Joseph preached at the funeral of a Church member named Seymour Brunson. As part of his sermon, he read extensively from 1 Corinthians 15, which includes a reference to baptism for the dead (verse 29). Then he announced that the Saints could be baptized in behalf of their friends and relatives who had died without receiving the gospel. He declared that the plan of salvation was intended to save everyone who was willing

to obey the requirements of the law of God. After this sermon, Church members began performing baptisms for the dead in the nearby Mississippi River. (See Journal History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 15 Aug. 1840.)

## 2. The Lord commanded the Saints to build a temple in Nauvoo.

- On 19 January 1841, several months after the Saints had begun performing baptisms for the dead, the Lord commanded them to build a temple in Nauvoo (D&C 124:25–27). What reasons did the Lord give for this commandment? (Read the following scriptures with class members to find answers to this question. Possible answers are also listed below.)
  - a. D&C 124:28, 40–41. (To reveal additional priesthood ordinances.)
  - b. D&C 124:29–30, 33. (To provide a place to perform baptisms for the dead.)
  - c. D&C 124:55. (To have the Saints prove their faithfulness in keeping His commandments so He could bless them with honor, immortality, and eternal life.)

Point out that the Nauvoo Temple was the second temple built in this dispensation. One of the primary purposes of this temple was to provide a place for the Saints to perform ordinances such as baptisms and confirmations for the dead, the endowment, and temple marriage. These ordinances were not performed in the Kirtland Temple.

Display the picture of the Nauvoo Temple. Explain that the Saints made great sacrifices to obey the commandment to build this temple. Ask the assigned class member to report on the building of the Nauvoo Temple, as presented in *Our Heritage* (pages 58–60, first four paragraphs under “The Nauvoo Temple”).



**Nauvoo Temple.** This model shows the beauty of the original structure before it burned in 1848.

- What impresses you about the sacrifices made by the early Saints in building the Nauvoo Temple?

Explain that for a short time, the Lord permitted the Saints to continue performing baptisms for the dead in the Mississippi River (D&C 124:31–32; *History of the Church*, 4:xxxviii). But on 3 October 1841, the Prophet Joseph announced that “there shall be no more baptisms for the dead, until the ordinance can be attended to in the Lord’s House” (*History of the Church*, 4:426). On 8 November 1841, Brigham Young dedicated a temporary but carefully crafted wooden baptismal font in the basement of the unfinished temple (*History of the Church*, 4:446–47). Today all ordinances for the dead must be performed in temples.

- What can we learn from the Saints’ determination to build a baptismal font before the temple was completed? (As class members discuss this question, invite them to reflect on their feelings about redeeming the dead. Suggest that they ask themselves if they are as anxious to do the work as the early Saints were.)

### 3. We should be enthusiastic and joyful in our efforts to perform baptisms for the dead.

Explain that some baptisms for the dead were done in New Testament times following the Resurrection of Christ (1 Corinthians 15:29). However, the great work of providing saving ordinances for the dead is now the responsibility of Church members in this dispensation. Display the picture of a temple baptismal font.

Emphasize that members of the Church who are 12 and older, including new converts, can be baptized for the dead. To be able to be baptized for the dead, a member must hold a current temple recommend. Male members must hold the priesthood.

- Read D&C 128:15 with class members. In what ways do the dead depend on us for their salvation? In what ways does our salvation depend on the salvation of the dead? (See D&C 128:17–18 and the following quotations.)

President Gordon B. Hinckley said: “That which goes on in the House of the Lord . . . comes nearer to the spirit of sacrifice of the Lord than any other activity of which I know. Why? Because it is done by those who give freely of time and substance, without any expectation of thanks or reward, to do for others that which they cannot do for themselves” (*Ensign*, Mar. 1995, 62–63).

Elder John A. Widtsoe of the Quorum of the Twelve said: “In our preexistent state, in the day of the great council, we made a certain agreement with the Almighty. The Lord proposed a plan, conceived by him. We accepted it. Since the plan is intended for all men, we become parties to the salvation of every person under that plan. We agreed, right then and there, to be not only saviors for ourselves, but . . . saviors for the whole human family. We went into a partnership with the Lord. The working out of the plan became then not merely the Father’s work, and the Savior’s work, but also our work. The least of us, the humblest, is in partnership with the Almighty in achieving the purpose of the eternal plan of salvation” (“The Worth of Souls,” *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine*, Oct. 1934, 189).

- Read D&C 2 with class members. How can performing baptisms for the dead help us turn our hearts to our ancestors?

Ask the assigned class members to talk briefly about how they feel knowing that through baptisms for the dead they can help others receive salvation (see “Preparation,” item 3b).

If you teach youth, you may also want to share the following story about a group of young women who did research to find names of people who had died without receiving the gospel:

“After researching more than 400 names, both male and female, the Young Women of the Meridian [Idaho] 15th Ward invited the Young Men to go with them to the Boise [Idaho] Temple to do baptisms. The temple arranged for the names to be kept in a file for their ward. Heather Bennett, 15, said, ‘The best part was being baptized for them. The names sounded familiar to me. That was the neatest thing about the whole project. We did work for people that otherwise wouldn’t have been done. They might have been forgotten.’”

Cori Christensen, another member of the group, said, “While we were sitting in the baptistry in the temple, we had this totally good feeling. It was a feeling of victory. We’d given them a chance” (“Names and Faces,” *New Era*, Feb. 1994, 32).

- Read D&C 128:19, 22–24 with class members. According to these verses, what should our attitude be about the gospel and about performing baptisms for the dead? Why does the subject of baptisms for the dead bring such gladness, both to the living and the dead?

Ask the assigned class members to explain how they felt when they first learned that they could be baptized for their deceased family members (see “Preparation,” item 3c).

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## Conclusion

Read D&C 128:17 with class members. Emphasize that the Prophet Joseph Smith called the work of redeeming the dead the “most glorious of all subjects belonging to the everlasting gospel.” Encourage class members to do all they can to perform baptisms for the dead. As prompted by the Spirit, testify of the truths discussed during the lesson.

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## Additional Teaching Ideas

You may want to use one or both of the following ideas to supplement the suggested lesson outline.

### 1. Historical background for Doctrine and Covenants 127 and 128

Use the following information to give historical background for D&C 127 and 128:

In the summer of 1842 a group of men were seeking unjustly to imprison the Prophet Joseph Smith. Because of this persecution, the Prophet left Nauvoo. He said, “I have thought it expedient and wisdom in me to leave the place for a season, for my own safety and the safety of this people” (D&C 127:1). Despite such difficult circumstances, he wrote joyful words in letters to the Saints.

- During this time of persecution, what was the subject that occupied the Prophet's mind and pressed on his feelings the strongest? (See D&C 128:1.)

## **2. The importance of record keeping**

Explain that through the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Lord commanded the Saints to keep careful records of baptisms for the dead (D&C 127:5–9; 128:1–9). These records are now stored in computers.

- Why are we to keep records of baptisms for the dead? (See D&C 128:6–8, 24. These records made on earth are also recorded in heaven, and the dead will be judged from these books. At the time of the Second Coming, we will present the records to the Lord as an offering to Him.)

Lesson  
**31**

# “Sealed . . . for Time and for All Eternity”

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**Purpose**

To help class members understand that eternal marriage is an essential part of Heavenly Father’s plan, to help youth prepare for eternal marriage, and to encourage married couples to abide in the marriage covenant.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study Doctrine and Covenants 131:1–4; 132:4–33; and the other scriptures in this lesson.
2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
3. If you teach youth, bring to class one or more copies of *For the Strength of Youth* (36550). You may want to bring a copy for each class member or ask class members to bring their own copies to class.
4. If you use the attention activity, contact a ward member who has been married in the temple. Ask the person to prepare to take four or five minutes at the beginning of class to talk about the day he or she was married in the temple. You might ask the person to bring a photograph or other memento of the wedding. Ask him or her to consider the following questions in preparation:
  - What did you do to prepare for temple marriage?
  - What difference does it make to be married in the temple?
  - What counsel could you give class members who have not yet been married in the temple to help them prepare?

*Note to the teacher:* As you teach this lesson, be sensitive to the feelings of single parents and others who are not in traditional family situations (see the first additional teaching idea). If class members ask questions about divorce or other sensitive issues, encourage them to speak with the bishop in private rather than discuss the questions in class.

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**Suggestions for  
Lesson Development**

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. Invite the assigned ward member to talk about the day he or she was married in the temple (see “Preparation,” item 4). After the presentation, comment briefly on the things the person has said. Explain that this lesson is about eternal marriage.

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**Discussion and  
Application**

Prayerfully select the lesson material that will best meet class members’ needs. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

## 1. Eternal marriage is essential in Heavenly Father's plan.

Teach and discuss D&C 131:1–4; 132:4–33. Explain that these passages contain revelations from the Lord to the Prophet Joseph Smith about eternal marriage. Elder Parley P. Pratt, one of the original members of the Quorum of the Twelve in this dispensation, recalled his feelings when he first heard the Prophet Joseph teach these doctrines:

“I had loved before, but I knew not why. But now I loved—with a pureness—an intensity of elevated, exalted feeling, which would lift my soul. . . . I felt that God was my heavenly Father indeed; that Jesus was my brother, and that the wife of my bosom was an immortal, eternal companion. . . . In short, I could now love with the spirit and with the understanding also” (*Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt* [1975], 298).

- The First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles have declared that “marriage between man and woman is essential to [God’s] eternal plan” (“The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102; see also D&C 49:15). Why is marriage an essential part of God’s eternal plan? (See D&C 131:1–4; 1 Corinthians 11:11.)

Share one or more of the following statements. After sharing a statement, invite class members to discuss its meaning and application.

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve said: “The sweet companionship of eternal marriage is one of the greatest blessings God has granted to His children. Certainly, the many years I have shared with my beautiful companion have brought me the deepest joys of my life. From the beginning of time, marital companionship of husband and wife has been fundamental to our Heavenly Father’s great plan of happiness. Our lives are touched for good, and we are both edified and ennobled as we savor the sweet blessings of association with dear members of the family” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1997, 42; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 32).

President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve taught: “The ultimate purpose of all we teach is to unite parents and children in faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, that they are happy at home, sealed in an eternal marriage, linked to their generations, and assured of exaltation in the presence of our Heavenly Father” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1995, 8; or *Ensign*, May 1995, 8).

President Joseph Fielding Smith said: “Marriage, as understood by Latter-day Saints, is a covenant ordained to be everlasting. *It is the foundation for eternal exaltation, for without it there could be no eternal progress in the kingdom of God*” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. [1954–56], 2:58).

- If a husband and wife are not married in the temple for time and eternity, what will be the status of their marriage when one of them dies? (See D&C 132:7, 15–18. Their marriage will “not [be] valid neither of force,” even if they have made a vow to be together forever.)
- When a man and woman are married for time and eternity in the temple, they make a covenant with the Lord. What blessings will they receive if they are true to their covenant? (See D&C 131:1–4; 132:19–24, 30–31. Answers could include those listed on the following page.)

- a. They will be together “in time, and through all eternity” (D&C 132:19). Their children may also be part of their eternal family. (You may want to explain that the Holy Spirit of Promise is the Holy Ghost, who confirms that the priesthood ordinances we have received and the covenants we have made are acceptable to God. This approval depends on our faithfulness.)
  - b. They will be exalted in the highest degree of the celestial kingdom with Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ (D&C 131:1–3; 132:23–24).
  - c. They will “inherit thrones, kingdoms, principalities, . . . powers, [and] dominions” (D&C 132:19).
  - d. They will continue to have seed, or spirit children, throughout eternity (D&C 132:19, 30–31; see also D&C 131:4).
  - e. “They shall be gods, because they have all power” (D&C 132:20–21).
- What blessings does temple marriage bring in mortality? (Invite class members to share their feelings about being married in the temple. If you have not read the statement by Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin on page 177, you may want to do so now.)

## 2. Youth should prepare now for eternal marriage.

If you are teaching youth, use this section of the lesson to encourage them to prepare for temple marriage. If you are teaching adults, you may want to omit this section or use only a small portion of it.

- Why do you think temple marriage is emphasized so much to the youth of the Church? (Help class members understand that the decision to marry in the temple is one of the most important decisions a person can make. Church members should begin preparing for eternal marriage when they are young.)

President Spencer W. Kimball said: “Marriage is perhaps the most vital of all . . . 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).

- What are some things that young men and women can do to prepare to be married in the temple?
- How does dating during teenage years influence marriage later in life? (If you brought copies of *For the Strength of Youth*, have class members read “Dating,” pages 24–25.)
- What kind of person do you want to marry someday? (You may want to ask each class member to name one quality and say why it is important. List responses on the chalkboard. See also the following quotations for other ideas.) How must you live in order to prepare to marry such a person? (Invite class members to ponder this question silently rather than answer aloud.)

President Gordon B. Hinckley counseled: “Choose a companion of your own faith. You are much more likely to be happy. Choose a companion you can always honor, you can always respect, one who will complement you in your

own life, one to whom you can give your entire heart, your entire love, your entire allegiance, your entire loyalty” (“Life’s Obligations,” *Ensign*, Feb. 1999, 2).

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve said:

“There is more to a foundation of eternal marriage than a pretty face or an attractive figure. There is more to consider than popularity or charisma. As you seek an eternal companion, look for someone who is developing the essential attributes that bring happiness: a deep love of the Lord and of His commandments, a determination to live them, one that is kindly understanding, forgiving of others, and willing to give of self, with the desire to have a family crowned with beautiful children and a commitment to teach them the principles of truth in the home.

“An essential priority of a prospective wife is the desire to be a wife and mother. She should be developing the sacred qualities that God has given His daughters to excel as a wife and mother: patience, kindness, a love of children, and a desire to care for them rather than seeking professional pursuits. She should be acquiring a good education to prepare for the demands of motherhood.

“A prospective husband should also honor his priesthood and use it in service to others. Seek a man who accepts his role as provider of the necessities of life, has the capacity to do it, and is making concerted efforts to prepare himself to fulfill those responsibilities” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1999, 31; or *Ensign*, May 1999, 26).

- How can parents and other adults help youth prepare for eternal marriage? How can they help small children prepare for eternal marriage?

### **3. After a husband and wife are sealed in the temple, they must abide in the covenant to receive the promised blessings.**

Have a female class member read the following quotation. Then ask class members to guess who said it.

“I was just sure the first ten years would be bliss. But during our first year together I discovered . . . there were a lot of adjustments. Of course, they weren’t the kind of thing you ran home to mother about. But I cried into my pillow now and again. The problems were almost always related to learning to live on someone else’s schedule and to do things someone else’s way. We loved each other, there was no doubt about that. But we also had to get used to each other. I think *every* couple has to get used to each other.”

Tell class members that the statement was made by Sister Marjorie P. Hinckley, wife of President Gordon B. Hinckley (in Sheri L. Dew, *Go Forward with Faith: The Biography of Gordon B. Hinckley* [1996], 118). Emphasize that it takes love, work, and dedication to have a successful marriage. When a man and woman are sealed in the temple, they will receive the promised blessings only if they “abide in [the] covenant” (D&C 132:19). Use the questions, scriptures, and quotations in this section of the lesson to help class members understand specific things husbands and wives should do to “abide in [the] covenant.”

- Read D&C 42:22 with class members. Explain that this commandment applies equally to men and women. What does it mean to love a husband or wife with all one's heart? What does it mean to cleave to a husband or wife and none else?

President Spencer W. Kimball explained:

“When the Lord says *all* thy heart, it allows for no sharing nor dividing nor depriving. . . .

“The words *none else* eliminate everyone and everything. The spouse then becomes preeminent in the life of the husband or wife, and neither social life nor occupational life nor political life nor any other interest nor person nor thing shall ever take precedence over the companion spouse. . . .

“Marriage presupposes total allegiance and total fidelity. Each spouse takes the partner with the understanding that he or she gives totally to the spouse all the heart, strength, loyalty, honor, and affection, with all dignity. Any divergence is sin; any sharing of the heart is transgression. As we should have ‘an eye single to the glory of God,’ so should we have an eye, an ear, a heart single to the marriage and the spouse and family” (*Faith Precedes the Miracle* [1972], 142–43).

President Gordon B. Hinckley gave this simple counsel to married couples: “Be fiercely loyal one to another” (*Ensign*, Feb. 1999, 4).

- When a man and woman are married in the temple, they covenant to be true to one another and to be true to the Lord. What are some things that married couples can do to strengthen their love for each other and for the Lord? (Write class members' responses on the chalkboard. Answers could include praying and reading the scriptures together, seeking to be guided by the Spirit together, holding family home evening, going on dates together, taking time to talk to one another, helping one another around the house, and attending the temple together. You may want to use the second additional teaching idea as part of this discussion.)

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## Conclusion

If you are teaching youth or others who have not yet been married in the temple, encourage them to prepare for eternal marriage. Encourage class members who have been married in the temple to abide in the marriage covenant.

As prompted by the Spirit, testify of the truths discussed during the lesson.

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## Additional Teaching Ideas

You may want to use one or more of the following ideas to supplement the suggested lesson outline.

### 1. Faithful Saints will not be denied the blessings of eternity

Share the following statements concerning those who are single.

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve counseled:

“We know that many worthy and wonderful Latter-day Saints currently lack the ideal opportunities and essential requirements for their progress. Singleness,

childlessness, death, and divorce frustrate ideals and postpone the fulfillment of promised blessings. In addition, some women who desire to be full-time mothers and homemakers have been literally compelled to enter the full-time workforce. But these frustrations are only temporary. The Lord has promised that in the eternities no blessing will be denied his sons and daughters who keep the commandments, are true to their covenants, and desire what is right.

“Many of the most important deprivations of mortality will be set right in the Millennium, which is the time for fulfilling all that is incomplete in the great plan of happiness for all of our Father’s worthy children. We know that will be true of temple ordinances. I believe it will also be true of family relationships and experiences” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1993, 101; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, 75).

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve counseled: “If you are single and haven’t identified a solid prospect for celestial marriage, live for it. Pray for it. Expect it in the timetable of the Lord. Do not compromise your standards in any way that would rule out that blessing on this or the other side of the veil. The Lord knows the intent of your heart. His prophets have stated that you will have that blessing as you consistently live to qualify for it. We do not know whether it will be on this or the other side of the veil. But live for it. Pray for it” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1999, 33; or *Ensign*, May 1999, 27).

## 2. Examples of happy, enduring temple marriages

After prayerful consideration, contact a man and a woman in the ward who are good examples of successful temple marriages. Ask each person to prepare to take two or three minutes of class time to share suggestions for a happy, enduring marriage.

After these presentations, you may want to give class members the opportunity to share other suggestions.

## 3. Assignment for youth and young single adults

If you teach youth or young single adults, encourage each class member to go home and write a letter expressing love for his or her future spouse. Instruct class members to keep their letters until they are married and can share them with their spouses.

## 4. Avoiding worldly trends

- What are some trends showing that people are disregarding God’s standards about marriage? What can we do to stay true to the Lord’s standards?

## 5. “Temples and Families” video presentation

If *Doctrine and Covenants and Church History Video Presentations* (53912) is available, consider showing “Temples and Families,” a nine-minute segment.

## 6. Plural marriage

The following information is provided to help you if class members have questions about the practice of plural marriage. It should not be the focus of the lesson.

*The Lord's purpose for commanding His people to practice plural marriage*

In the Book of Mormon, the prophet Jacob taught: "For there shall not any man among you have save it be one wife. . . . [But] if I will, saith the Lord of Hosts, raise up seed unto me, I will command my people; otherwise they shall hearken unto these things" (Jacob 2:27, 30). At various times throughout biblical history, the Lord commanded people to practice plural marriage. For example, He gave this commandment to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, and Solomon (see D&C 132:1).

*The revelation to practice plural marriage in this dispensation*

In this dispensation, the Lord commanded some of the early Saints to practice plural marriage. The Prophet Joseph Smith and those closest to him, including Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball, were challenged by this command, but they obeyed it. Church leaders regulated the practice. Those entering into it had to be authorized to do so, and the marriages had to be performed through the sealing power of the priesthood.

*The Church's position on plural marriage today*

In 1890, President Wilford Woodruff received a revelation that the leaders of the Church should cease teaching the practice of plural marriage (Official Declaration 1, pages 291–92 in the Doctrine and Covenants; see also the excerpts from addresses by President Woodruff that immediately follow Official Declaration 1).

In 1998, President Gordon B. Hinckley made the following statement about the Church's position on plural marriage: "This Church has nothing whatever to do with those practicing polygamy. They are not members of this Church. . . . If any of our members are found to be practicing plural marriage, they are excommunicated, the most serious penalty the Church can impose. Not only are those so involved in direct violation of the civil law, they are in violation of the law of this Church" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1998, 92; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1998, 71).

# “To Seal the Testimony”

Lesson  
**32**

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**Purpose** To teach class members about the martyrdom of the Prophet Joseph Smith and to strengthen their testimonies of his calling as a prophet of God.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study the following scriptures and other materials:
  - a. Doctrine and Covenants 135.
  - b. *Our Heritage*, pages 62–66.
2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
3. Ask a class member to prepare to summarize the first five paragraphs of the section “The Martyrdom” from *Our Heritage* (pages 62–63).
4. If the following pictures are available, prepare to use them during the lesson: The Prophet Joseph Smith (62002; Gospel Art Picture Kit 401) and Brother Joseph (62161).
5. If you use the attention activity, prepare to use the following pictures in addition to those listed above: John Preaching in the Wilderness (62132; Gospel Art Picture Kit 207) and Abinadi before King Noah (62042; Gospel Art Picture Kit 308).

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## Suggestions for Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Display the pictures listed in the “Preparation” section, items 4 and 5. Ask class members to think about what the men in these pictures have in common. After a moment, point out that one thing they have in common is that they all were martyred because of their commitment to the truth.

Ask class members to identify other martyrs from the scriptures and Church history. Answers might include Zacharias (Matthew 23:35), Stephen (Acts 7:56–60), and Hyrum Smith (D&C 135:1).

Explain that this lesson discusses the martyrdom of the Prophet Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum. It also discusses the contributions of the Prophet Joseph.

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**Discussion and Application** Prayerfully select the lesson material that will best meet class members’ needs. Encourage class members to share insights that relate to the scriptural principles.

### **1. The Prophet Joseph Smith sealed his testimony with his blood.**

Explain that the Saints prospered for a few years in Nauvoo. The Church and the city grew rapidly, work on the temple progressed, and the Prophet Joseph Smith received many revelations. However, during 1843 and 1844, animosity

against the Church increased. Enemies both inside and outside the Church began trying to destroy it. This opposition climaxed on 27 June 1844.

Ask the assigned class member to report on the first five paragraphs of the section “The Martyrdom” from *Our Heritage*, pages 62–63. Also read D&C 135:4–5 with class members. Explain that D&C 135 was written by Elder John Taylor, who was wounded during the attack on the Prophet Joseph.

- Why do you think the Prophet Joseph Smith could be as “calm as a summer’s morning” when he knew he might be martyred at Carthage? What comfort do you think Joseph and Hyrum would have received from Ether 12:36–38?



The Prophet Joseph Smith

Read D&C 135:1–2 with class members. Also read the following account of the martyrdom by Elder Willard Richards, or ask a class member to read it. Explain that Elder Richards was a friend of the Prophet and a member of the Quorum of the Twelve. He was in Carthage Jail when the Prophet was martyred. His account begins as the mob arrived at the jail just after 5:00 P.M. on the afternoon of 27 June 1844:

“A shower of musket balls were thrown up the stairway against the door of the prison in the second story, followed by many rapid footsteps. . . .

“ . . . A ball was sent through the door, which passed between us, and showed that our enemies were desperadoes. . . .

“ . . . Joseph Smith, Mr. Taylor and myself sprang back to the front part of the room, and . . . Hyrum Smith retreated two-thirds across the chamber directly in front of and facing the door.

“A ball was sent through the door which hit Hyrum on the side of his nose, when he fell backwards, extended at length, without moving his feet.

“From the holes in his [clothing], it appears evident that a ball must have been thrown from without, through the window, which entered his back on the right side, and passing through, lodged against his watch. . . . At the same instant the ball from the door entered his nose.

“As he struck the floor he exclaimed emphatically, ‘I am a dead man.’ Joseph looked towards him and responded, ‘Oh, dear brother Hyrum!’ and opening the door two or three inches with his left hand, discharged one barrel of a six shooter (pistol) at random in the entry. . . . A ball [from the musket of one of the mob] grazed Hyrum’s breast, and entering his throat passed into his head, while other muskets were aimed at him and some balls hit him.

“Joseph continued snapping his revolver round the casing of the door into the space as before . . . , while Mr. Taylor with a walking stick stood by his side and knocked down the bayonets and muskets which were constantly discharging through the doorway. . . .

“When the revolver failed, we had no more firearms, and expected an immediate rush of the mob, and the doorway full of muskets, half way in the room, and no hope but instant death from within.

“Mr. Taylor rushed into the window, which is some fifteen or twenty feet from the ground. When his body was nearly on a balance, a ball from the door within entered his leg, and a ball from without struck his watch . . . in his vest pocket near the left breast, . . . the force of which ball threw him back on the floor, and he rolled under the bed which stood by his side. . . .

“Joseph attempted, as the last resort, to leap [from] the same window from whence Mr. Taylor fell, when two balls pierced him from the door, and one entered his right breast from without, and he fell outward, exclaiming, ‘Oh Lord, my God!’ . . . He fell on his left side a dead man” (*History of the Church*, 6:619–20).

Elder John Taylor was shot four times but recovered from his wounds. In fulfillment of a prophecy that the Prophet had made more than a year before, Elder Willard Richards received no wounds. Elder Richards recalled that in this prophecy, the Prophet had told him that “the time would come that the balls would fly around him like hail, and he should see his friends fall on the right and on the left, but that there should not be a hole in his garment” (*History of the Church*, 6:619).



**Carthage Jail.** Here the Prophet Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum were martyred on 27 June 1844.

- Read D&C 135:6 with class members. What are your feelings as you think about the sacrifice the Prophet and his brother Hyrum made for their testimonies of the gospel?

Explain that before Joseph Smith Sr. died, he gave the Prophet a blessing and told him: “You shall even live to finish your work. . . . You shall live to lay out

the plan of all the work which God has given you to do” (quoted in Lucy Mack Smith, *History of Joseph Smith*, ed. Preston Nibley [1958], 309–10). Joseph Smith valiantly completed his mission, doing all that God asked him to do.

- From what you know about the Prophet Joseph Smith’s life, what impresses you most about him?

## 2. The Prophet Joseph Smith did more for the salvation of men in this world than anyone except Jesus.

- Read D&C 135:3 with class members. According to this verse, what were some of the Prophet Joseph Smith’s major achievements? In what ways did he do “more, save Jesus only, for the salvation of men in this world, than any other man that ever lived in it”?

Answers could include that his work blessed not only the Saints of this dispensation, but also the billions of people who have lived at all other times without receiving the blessings of the gospel or the saving ordinances of the priesthood. Use the following material to discuss these contributions in detail. Write the headings on the chalkboard. Explain that we can better appreciate the Prophet’s life and mission when we review how his many contributions bless our daily lives and will bless us eternally.

### *Truths about the Godhead*

- What truths about the Godhead were restored through the Prophet Joseph Smith? (See D&C 130:22–23; Joseph Smith—History 1:17; and the following quotation.)

In a sermon given at the funeral of Elder King Follett on 7 April 1844, the Prophet Joseph Smith taught:

“God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens! That is the great secret. If the veil were rent today, and the great God who holds this world in its orbit, and who upholds all worlds and all things by his power, was to make himself visible,—I say, if you were to see him today, you would see him like a man in form—like yourselves in all the person, image, and very form as a man; for Adam was created in the very fashion, image and likeness of God, and received instruction from, and walked, talked and conversed with him, as one man talks and communes with another” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 345).

- Why are the truths about the Godhead that were restored through Joseph Smith important to us?

Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve said: “Knowledge of God is the greatest truth in all eternity. . . . Joseph Smith came to reveal God, in a day of almost total spiritual darkness, in a day when men no longer knew the nature and kind of Being whom they should worship” (“This Generation Shall Have My Word through You,” *Ensign*, June 1980, 55).

### *The authority of the priesthood*

Point out that through Joseph Smith, heavenly messengers restored the Aaronic Priesthood, the Melchizedek Priesthood, and keys of the priesthood (D&C 13;

110:11–16). As the Restoration unfolded, the Lord gave revelations about priesthood offices, organization, covenants, ordinances, duties, and blessings. We would not understand the priesthood or how it operates without these revelations.

- What blessings do you have in your life because of the priesthood? How can we show our appreciation for the blessings of the priesthood?

For more information about the priesthood, see lessons 8 and 25.

#### *Truths about our origin and relationship to God*

- What truths about our origin and relationship to God were restored through the Prophet Joseph Smith? (Answers could include that we are literally the spirit children of God and that we lived with Him before we were born on earth. See D&C 76:23–24; Abraham 3:22–28.)
- How is the knowledge that you are literally a child of God a blessing in your life?

#### *Scriptures*

Elder Bruce R. McConkie said that the Prophet Joseph Smith “has given to our present world more holy scripture than any single prophet who ever lived” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1976, 142; or *Ensign*, May 1976, 95). These scriptures include the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, the Pearl of Great Price, and the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible.

While serving in the Quorum of the Twelve, Elder Gordon B. Hinckley said: “[Joseph Smith] translated and published the Book of Mormon, a volume of 522 pages which has since been retranslated into [many] languages and which is accepted by millions across the earth as the word of God. The revelations he received and other writings he produced are likewise scripture to these millions. The total in book pages constitutes the equivalent of almost the entire Old Testament of the Bible, and it all came through one man in the space of a few years” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1977, 96; or *Ensign*, May 1977, 65).

- How have the scriptures that were brought forth through the Prophet Joseph Smith been a blessing in your life?

For more information about these scriptures, see lessons 1, 4, and 13.

#### *Truths about the plan of salvation*

- What truths about the plan of salvation were restored through the Prophet Joseph Smith? (You may want to review some of the material in lessons 19 and 20.)
- How has knowing these truths been a blessing in your life?

#### *Truths about the salvation of the dead*

- What truths about the salvation of the dead were restored through the Prophet Joseph Smith? (Answers could include that we can perform vicarious baptisms in temples for those who died without receiving this ordinance. See D&C 128:18.) Why are these truths important?

Explain that the salvation of the dead is one of the most enlarging and inspiring doctrines restored through the Prophet Joseph Smith. For more information, see lessons 29 and 39.

*The building of temples and the performance of temple ordinances*

- What are some of the blessings that have come into your life because of temples and temple ordinances? (You may want to discuss the blessing of eternal families, which is made possible by the sealing ordinance in the temple.)

*Other contributions*

You may want to review briefly some of the other contributions of the Prophet Joseph Smith and the blessings they bring to our lives:

- a. The Church was restored through him (see lesson 9).
  - b. He began the work in this dispensation of taking the gospel to all nations and gathering Israel (see lesson 12).
  - c. The law of consecration was revealed through him (see lesson 14).
  - d. The Word of Wisdom was revealed through him (see lesson 22).
  - e. Information about the building of the latter-day Zion was revealed through him (see lessons 27 and 46).
  - f. He wrote the Articles of Faith (see the first additional teaching idea).
- Why is it important that we each have a testimony that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God? How did your testimony of Joseph Smith's calling develop? How has this year's study of the Doctrine and Covenants strengthened your testimony?
  - How can we show our gratitude for the life and mission of the Prophet Joseph Smith?

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Conclusion

Emphasize the importance of the contributions of the Prophet Joseph Smith in our lives. You may want to bear your own testimony of his calling as a prophet of God.

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**Additional Teaching Ideas**

You may want to use one or more of the following ideas to supplement the suggested lesson outline.

**1. The Articles of Faith**

Explain that the Articles of Faith state many of the basic doctrines of the Church. They were written by the Prophet Joseph Smith as part of a letter to John Wentworth, a newspaper editor in Chicago who had requested a statement on the Church's history and beliefs. They were later canonized as scripture in the Pearl of Great Price.

President Spencer W. Kimball asked: "How many of you know the Articles of Faith? . . . Do you know them? Have you repeated them? You are always prepared with a sermon when you know the Articles of Faith. And they are basic,

aren't they? I would think it would be a wonderful thing if [we] would learn them word-perfect. That means that you don't miss and you don't forget" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1975, 119; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1975, 79).

- Why is it important that we know the Articles of Faith? Invite class members to tell of experiences in which the Articles of Faith have helped them.

## 2. "Praise to the Man"

Prepare to have class members sing "Praise to the Man" (*Hymns*, no. 27). Or invite a class member or a group of class members to prepare to sing it. Explain that William W. Phelps wrote the text of this hymn to honor the Prophet Joseph Smith.

## 3. Video presentations

If the videocassette *Teachings from the Doctrine and Covenants and Church History* (53933) is available, consider showing "Joseph Smith: The Prophet of the Restoration," a 13-minute segment.

If *Doctrine and Covenants and Church History Video Presentations* (53912) is available, consider showing "The Martyrdom of Joseph Smith," a 2-minute segment.

Lesson  
**33**

# President Brigham Young Leads the Saints

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**Purpose**

To help class members understand the process of succession in Church leadership and to show how Brigham Young began preparing the Saints for their journey west.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study the following scriptures and other materials:
    - a. Doctrine and Covenants 107:22–24.
    - b. *Our Heritage*, pages 66–71.
  2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
  3. Ask class members to prepare to summarize the following sections in *Our Heritage*:
    - a. “Succession in the Presidency” (pages 66–67).
    - b. “Preparing to Leave Nauvoo” and “The Trials of a Winter Trek” (pages 69–70).
  4. If the following pictures are available, prepare to use some of them during the lesson: Nauvoo Temple (62432; Gospel Art Picture Kit 501); Exodus from Nauvoo, February–May 1846 (62493; Gospel Art Picture Kit 410); and Exodus from Nauvoo (Gospel Art Picture Kit 411).
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**Suggestions for  
Lesson Development****Attention Activity**

As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. Explain that with the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith, many people predicted that the Church would cease to exist.

- What did such people fail to understand about the leadership of the Church?

Read the following statement by President Joseph Fielding Smith:

“No man of himself can lead this church. It is the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ; he is at the head. . . .

“He chooses men and calls them to be instruments in his hands to accomplish his purposes, and he guides and directs them in their labors. But men are only instruments in the Lord’s hands, and the honor and glory for all that his servants accomplish is and should be ascribed unto him forever.

“If this were the work of man, it would fail, but it is the work of the Lord, and he does not fail” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1970, 113; or *Improvement Era*, June 1970, 26).

Explain that following the martyrdom of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Brigham Young became the leader of the Church through an inspired process of succession that continues in the Church today. This lesson discusses the process of succession in the Presidency of the Church and describes how Brigham Young began to prepare the Saints for their westward trek to the Salt Lake Valley.

Discussion and Application

Prayerfully select the lesson material that will best meet class members' needs. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

**1. The Prophet Joseph Smith gave the Twelve the keys of the kingdom and taught the principles of succession in the Presidency.**

Explain that in Nauvoo in the winter of 1843–44, the Prophet Joseph Smith spent several days giving the Quorum of the Twelve their temple endowments and teaching them about their responsibilities. He told the Twelve that he had been concerned that he would soon die without having bestowed the keys of the kingdom on others. Wilford Woodruff, who was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve at the time, recalled the following words from the Prophet Joseph:

“Now, brethren, I thank God I have lived to see the day that I have been enabled to give you your endowments, and I have now sealed upon your heads all the powers of the Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthoods and Apostleship, with all the keys and powers thereof, which God has sealed upon me; and I now roll off all the labor, burden and care of this Church and Kingdom of God upon your shoulders, and I now command you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to round up your shoulders, and bear off this Church and Kingdom of God before heaven and earth, and before God, angels and men” (in James R. Clark, comp., *Messages of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. [1965–75], 3:134).

- An important principle relating to succession in the Presidency is recorded in D&C 107:22–24. Read these verses with class members. What do these verses teach about the relationship of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles? (Explain that the First Presidency and the Twelve Apostles each form a quorum. The two quorums are equal in authority and power, but the First Presidency is called to preside.)
- Why is it important to understand this relationship between these two presiding quorums of the Church?

President Harold B. Lee said: “The Prophet Joseph Smith declared that ‘where the president is not, there is no First Presidency.’ Immediately following the death of a President, the next ranking body, the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, becomes the presiding authority, with the President of the Twelve automatically becoming the acting President of the Church until a President of the Church is officially ordained and sustained in his office” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1970, 123; or *Improvement Era*, June 1970, 28).

For additional information on the process of succession, see the first additional teaching idea.

**2. After Joseph Smith’s martyrdom, the Twelve presided over the Church until Brigham Young was sustained as President.**



President Brigham Young

Explain that when Joseph Smith died, the First Presidency was dissolved, and the Quorum of the Twelve became the presiding authority in the Church. Ask the assigned class member to summarize the section “Succession in the Presidency” from *Our Heritage*, pages 66–67.

- What did Sidney Rigdon fail to understand about Church leadership? What was Brigham Young’s initial response to the question of who would lead the Church? (See *Our Heritage*, page 66. He wanted to know the Lord’s will concerning the matter.) What can we learn from Brigham Young’s example?

- In the afternoon session of the meeting to discuss Church leadership, Brigham Young prophesied that those who did not follow the Twelve Apostles would not be successful and that only the Apostles would be able to build the kingdom of God (*Our Heritage*, page 67). How has this proved true in the history of the Church and in our own day?

Explain that at the conclusion of the meeting, the Saints voted unanimously to sustain the Quorum of the Twelve as the leaders of the Church (*Our Heritage*, page 67). The Quorum of the Twelve, with Brigham Young as President of the quorum, presided over the Church for three and one-half years. On 27 December 1847, the First Presidency was formally reorganized with Brigham Young as the President.

**3. Before leaving Nauvoo, the Saints received temple ordinances.**

Display a picture of the Nauvoo Temple. Explain that at the same time the Saints were preparing to leave Nauvoo, they worked hard to complete the temple. As soon as the temple was ready, they gathered in large numbers to receive their temple ordinances. The following entries from President Brigham Young’s journal show how anxious the Saints were to receive these ordinances:

“This morning there was an immense crowd at the reception room waiting for admission. . . . One hundred twenty-one persons received ordinances” (*History of the Church*, 7:565).

“Such has been the anxiety manifested by the saints to receive the ordinances [of the Temple], and such the anxiety on our part to administer to them, that I have given myself up entirely to the work of the Lord in the Temple night and day, not taking more than four hours of sleep, upon an average, per day, and going home but once a week.

“Elder Heber C. Kimball and the others of the Twelve Apostles were in constant attendance but in consequence of close application some of them have had to leave the Temple to rest and recruit their health” (*History of the Church*, 7:567).

Persecution against the Saints increased in January 1846. Early in February 1846, President Young announced that ordinances in the temple would cease so the Saints could leave Nauvoo. However, those who had not yet received the ordinances were not willing to depart. President Young recorded the following on 3 February 1846:

“Notwithstanding that I had announced that we would not attend to the administration of the ordinances, the House of the Lord was thronged all day, the anxiety being so great to receive, as if the brethren would have us stay here and continue the endowments until our way would be hedged up, and our enemies would intercept us. But I informed the brethren that this was not wise, and that we should build more Temples, and have further opportunities to receive the blessings of the Lord, as soon as the saints were prepared to receive them. In this Temple we have been abundantly rewarded, if we receive no more. I also informed the brethren that I was going to get my wagons started and be off. I walked some distance from the Temple supposing the crowd would disperse, but on returning I found the house filled to overflowing.

“Looking upon the multitude and knowing their anxiety, as they were thirsting and hungering for the word, we continued at work diligently in the House of the Lord. Two hundred and ninety-five persons received ordinances” (*History of the Church*, 7:579).

- What can we learn from the Saints' eagerness to receive temple ordinances? Why do you think it was so important that the Saints receive the temple ordinances before beginning their journey from Nauvoo? (Answers could include that the added knowledge and strength would help them withstand the trials they would face.) In what ways is the temple a source of strength and guidance to you?

Explain that temple work continued for the rest of the week, and the temple was then closed. All together, nearly 6,000 Saints received their endowments before commencing their westward journey.

#### **4. The Saints experienced trials and miracles as they began journeying west.**

Display a picture of the exodus from Nauvoo. Explain that some of the Saints began leaving Nauvoo on 4 February 1846. Ask the assigned class member to summarize the sections “Preparing to Leave Nauvoo” and “The Trials of a Winter Trek” from *Our Heritage*, pages 69–70.

Because the Saints began leaving Nauvoo in the winter and were forced to make hurried preparations, they had a very difficult journey. One notable experience occurred in early February at Sugar Creek, approximately seven miles from Nauvoo on the Iowa side of the Mississippi River. On the first night of encampment at Sugar Creek, nine infants were born. The weather was extremely cold, and the Saints did not have adequate shelter. Eliza R. Snow recorded:

“Mothers gave birth to offspring under almost every variety of circumstances imaginable, except those to which they had been accustomed; some in tents, others in wagons—in rain-storms and in snow-storms. I heard of one birth which

occurred under the rude shelter of a hut, the sides of which were formed of blankets fastened to poles stuck in the ground, with a bark roof through which the rain was dripping. Kind sisters stood holding dishes to catch the water as it fell, thus protecting the new-comer and its mother from a shower-bath. . . .

“Let it be remembered that the mothers of these wilderness-born babes were not . . . accustomed to roam the forest and brave the storm and tempest. . . . Most of them were born and educated in the Eastern States—had there embraced the gospel as taught by Jesus and his apostles, and, for the sake of their religion, had gathered with the saints, and under trying circumstances had assisted, by their faith, patience and energies, in making Nauvoo what its name indicates, ‘the beautiful.’ There they had lovely homes, decorated with flowers and enriched with choice fruit trees, just beginning to yield plentifully.

“To these homes . . . they had just bade a final adieu, and with what little of their substance could be packed into one, two, and in some instances, three wagons, had started out, desertward” (in Edward W. Tullidge, *The Women of Mormonism* [1877], 307–8).

- What impresses you about the Saints in this account?

Explain that by September 1846, most of the Saints had left Nauvoo and were scattered across Iowa in settlements they had prepared for the coming winter. Determined to drive the remaining Saints out of Nauvoo, mobs looted their homes and drove them down to the river. Some escaped across the river but were unable to take provisions or additional clothing. Those who were not able to escape were beaten or thrown into the river by the mob.

Refugee camps of five to six hundred homeless men, women, and children were scattered along two miles of the riverbank. Most had only blankets or brush for shelter and very little to eat. Many of them too sick to travel, and some died. Bishop Newel K. Whitney purchased some flour and distributed it as best he could, but this was not enough to sustain the people. Then the Lord provided for them in a miraculous way:

On 9 October, when food was in especially short supply, several large flocks of quail flew into camp and landed on the ground and even on tables. Many of them were caught, cooked, and eaten by the hungry Saints. To the faithful it was a sign of God’s mercy to modern Israel as a similar incident had been to ancient Israel. (See B. H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of the Church*, 3:135–36.)

- What similar miracle did the Lord perform for the ancient Israelites? (See Exodus 16:12–15.) How has the Lord provided for you in times of need?

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Conclusion

As prompted by the Spirit, bear testimony of the truths discussed in the lesson.

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**Additional Teaching Ideas**

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

**1. Additional information on succession in the Presidency of the Church**

The process of succession in the Presidency of the Church has occurred many times and now follows the pattern outlined on page 191. If you feel that class

members would benefit from a detailed description of this process, review the following steps with them.

1. A man who has been foreordained to preside one day over the Church is called by revelation to be a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.
2. He is trained for his future calling through his association with members of the Quorum and the First Presidency and through his assignments. As he outlives other members of the Quorum, he advances in seniority until he is President of the Quorum of the Twelve and only the President of the Church has been an Apostle longer than he has.
3. When a President of the Church dies, the First Presidency is dissolved. Counselors in the First Presidency return to their places in the Quorum of the Twelve (if they were members of the quorum). The Quorum of the Twelve becomes the presiding quorum in the Church. The President of the Twelve becomes the presiding authority in the Church.
4. Members of the Twelve assemble in the temple in a spirit of fasting and prayer. Guided by revelation, they come to a unanimous decision regarding the reorganization of the First Presidency. In accordance with this decision, they sustain the senior member of the Twelve as the President of the Church. They then lay their hands on his head and ordain him and set him apart as President of the Church.
5. The new President chooses two men (usually members of the Quorum of the Twelve) to be his counselors.
6. Vacancies in the Quorum of the Twelve caused by the reorganization of the Presidency are filled.

For more information on the subject of succession, see “‘The Kingdom of God Will Roll On: Succession in the Presidency,’” by Brent L. Top and Lawrence R. Flake, *Ensign*, Aug. 1996, pages 22–35.

## **2. The adversary’s opposition to temple work**

The Saints in Nauvoo experienced great opposition as they worked to complete the temple. In discussing the persecution of the Saints each time they tried to build a temple, Elder Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve said:

“The opposition was leveled at the Saints because the adversary was afraid of the temple. He would do anything to prevent their construction of it” (*The Holy Temple* [1980], 175).

- Why is the adversary fearful of temples and temple work? What can we do to strengthen our resolve to attend the temple regardless of the obstacles we face?

## **3. “Come, Come, Ye Saints”**

Prepare to have class members sing “Come, Come, Ye Saints” (*Hymns*, no. 30). Or ask a class member or a group of class members to prepare to sing it. After the hymn, summarize the events that inspired William Clayton to write it (*Our Heritage*, page 71).

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**Purpose** To help class members understand how the pioneers' journey to the Salt Lake Valley parallels our journey back to our Heavenly Father and to help class members appreciate the sacrifices made by the pioneers.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study the following scriptures and other materials:
  - a. Doctrine and Covenants 136.
  - b. *Our Heritage*, pages 71–77.
2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
3. Ask class members to prepare to summarize the following sections in *Our Heritage*:
  - a. “Winter Quarters” (pages 71–72).
  - b. “The Brooklyn Saints” (pages 74–75).
  - c. “The Gathering Continues” (pages 75–76).
  - d. “This Is the Right Place” (pages 76–77).
4. If the following pictures are available, prepare to use them during the lesson: Mary Fielding and Joseph F. Smith Crossing the Plains (62608; Gospel Art Picture Kit 412) and Pioneers Arrive by Ship in San Francisco Bay (Gospel Art Picture Kit 421).

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**Suggestions for Lesson Development**

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Write *Promised Land* on the chalkboard. Explain that many times in the scriptures the Lord has led groups of people from where they were living to a “promised land.” The scriptures often refer to such a place as a choice land, a land of peace, or a land of inheritance (1 Nephi 2:20; D&C 45:66; 103:11).

- Can you name any groups from the scriptures who were led on a journey to a promised land? (Write class members' answers on the chalkboard. Answers could include the Jaredites, the family of Lehi, the children of Israel in the Old Testament, and Brigham Young and the pioneers.)

Explain that our mortal life is like a journey to the “promised land” of the celestial kingdom. Speaking of the pioneers who laid the foundations of this dispensation, Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve said:

“Their journeys parallel our own. There are lessons for *us* in every footstep they took—lessons of love, courage, commitment, devotion, endurance, and, most of all, faith” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1997, 81; or *Ensign*, May 1997, 59).

This lesson discusses one of the greatest journeys in history—the trek of the pioneers to the Salt Lake Valley. During the lesson, invite class members to compare the pioneers’ journey to their own journey toward eternal life.

## Discussion and Application

Prayerfully select the lesson material that will best meet class members’ needs. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

### 1. The Lord instructed the Saints regarding their physical preparations for their journey.

Ask the assigned class member to summarize the account of the Saints in Winter Quarters from *Our Heritage*, pages 71–72.

- The Saints in Winter Quarters suffered much from sickness and other hardships, yet they continued working and making preparations for their journey. In what ways were they and others blessed for their continued determination? (Answers could include that their preparations made their journey easier and helped those who would come after them.) How have you been blessed by persevering in a time of hardship? How can persevering in a time of difficulty help those who come after us?

Explain that at Winter Quarters in January 1847, President Brigham Young received a revelation concerning the Saints’ westward journey. This revelation is recorded in D&C 136.

- What instructions did the Lord give the Saints regarding preparations for their journey? (Read the following verses with class members and identify the instructions in each passage. Select some of the questions to help class members discuss and apply these instructions.)
  - a. D&C 136:2. (Make a “covenant and promise to keep all the commandments and statutes of the Lord.”) Why was this instruction so important for the Saints? How can we apply this instruction to our journey?
  - b. D&C 136:3. (Organize companies under the direction of the Quorum of the Twelve, with a president and two counselors and with captains of hundreds, fifties, and tens.) How is this organization similar to the way wards and stakes are organized?
  - c. D&C 136:5. (“Let each company provide themselves with all . . . they can.”) Why is it important that we strive to be self-reliant?
  - d. D&C 136:6. (“Prepare for those who are to tarry [remain behind].”) What preparations did the Saints make for those who would remain behind? (See D&C 136:7, 9.) How can this instruction apply to us?
  - e. D&C 136:8. (Care for “the poor, the widows, [and] the fatherless.”) How can we fulfill these responsibilities today?
  - f. D&C 136:10. (“Let every man use all his influence and property to remove this people to . . . a stake of Zion.”) How can this instruction apply to us?

### 2. The Lord instructed the Saints regarding their conduct.

Teach and discuss D&C 136:17–33. Explain that in addition to giving instructions on physical preparations, the Lord gave the Saints directions regarding spiritual matters and their conduct toward each other.

- What instructions did the Lord give the Saints about how they should conduct themselves? (Read the following verses with class members and identify the instructions in each passage. Select some of the questions to help class members discuss and apply these instructions.)
  - a. D&C 136:19. (“If any man shall seek to build up himself, and seeketh not my counsel, he shall have no power.”) Why would humility be important to the Saints on their journey? How do people sometimes seek to build themselves up? How can we more fully seek the Lord’s glory rather than our own?
  - b. D&C 136:21. (“Keep yourselves from evil to take the name of the Lord in vain.” See also Exodus 20:7.) Why is it important that we treat the Lord’s name with reverence?
  - c. D&C 136:23–24. (“Cease to contend one with another; cease to speak evil one of another. . . . Let your words tend to edifying one another.”) How do contentions and evil speaking hinder us as a people? How can we overcome contentions with each other? What can we do to edify each other?
  - d. D&C 136:25–26. (Return borrowed or lost items.)
  - e. D&C 136:27. (“Be diligent in preserving what thou hast.”) What do you think it means to be a “wise steward”? How can our stewardship over physical possessions affect our spiritual well-being?

In D&C 136:28, the Lord gives instruction on appropriate recreation. Speaking on this subject, Elder David O. McKay taught:

“On the plains, after a day’s march, the wagons were drawn up in a circle, a man with the violin would take his place by the campfire and there on the prairie the sturdy Pioneers would join hands in a dance, opening it by prayer, and participate in amusement that fostered the spirit of the gospel. . . . President Brigham Young . . . once said, in substance: ‘The atmosphere of the dance should be such that if any elder be called from the party to go to administer to a sick person, he could leave with the same spirit that he would go from his elders’ quorum meeting’” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1920, 117).

- How can we apply this counsel?
- What did the Lord instruct the Saints to do to learn wisdom? (See D&C 136:32–33.) In what ways have you found these instructions to be true in your life?

### **3. Under the direction of President Brigham Young, the Saints journeyed to the Salt Lake Valley.**

Refer to map 3 on page 276 in this manual and page 31 in the *Class Member Study Guide*. Explain that two years before the Prophet Joseph Smith died, he prophesied that “the Saints would continue to suffer much affliction and would be driven to the Rocky Mountains,” and that some of them would “live to go and assist in making settlements and build cities and see the Saints become a mighty people in the midst of the Rocky Mountains” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 255). In fulfillment of this prophecy, some 70,000 Church members from all over the world made the trek to Utah between 1847 and 1869.



**Exodus to the West.** On 4 February 1846 the first wagons crossed the Mississippi River to begin the historic trek west.

Display the pictures of Mary Fielding and Joseph F. Smith and of the Saints arriving in San Francisco. Explain that there are many stories of faith and courage as the Saints journeyed to Utah.

Ask the assigned class members to summarize the following sections from *Our Heritage*: “The Brooklyn Saints” (pages 74–75), “The Gathering Continues” (pages 75–76), and “This Is the Right Place” (pages 76–77). As time permits, you may want to tell other inspiring pioneer stories (see the first additional teaching idea for an example). You could also invite class members to tell pioneer stories that are inspiring to them. These pioneer stories could also be from other periods in the history of the Church and from other countries where the Church is established.

- How do you feel when you consider the legacy of faith and sacrifice that the pioneers and other Saints have given us? Who are the pioneers of the Church in your area? How can we pass on this same kind of legacy to those who will follow us?
- What lessons can we learn from the pioneer trek to help us on our journey back to God’s presence? (After class members have had a chance to respond, read the following statement from Elder M. Russell Ballard.)

“Life isn’t always easy. At some point in our journey we may feel much as the pioneers did as they crossed Iowa—up to our knees in mud, forced to bury some of our dreams along the way. We all face rocky ridges, with the wind in our face and winter coming on too soon. Sometimes it seems as though

there is no end to the dust that stings our eyes and clouds our vision. Sharp edges of despair and discouragement jut out of the terrain to slow our passage. . . . Occasionally we reach the top of one summit in life, as the pioneers did, only to see more mountain peaks ahead, higher and more challenging than the one we have just traversed. Tapping unseen reservoirs of faith and endurance, we, as did our forebears, inch ever forward toward that day when our voices can join with those of all pioneers who have endured in faith, singing, ‘All is well! All is well!’” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1997, 82; or *Ensign*, May 1997, 61).

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## Conclusion

Emphasize that in many ways our journey toward eternal life is similar to the journey of the pioneers across America. The pioneers crossed the plains at profound personal sacrifice and often under severe hardship. Demonstrating great faith, courage, and endurance, they set an example for us to follow.

Explain that this is our day in the history of the kingdom of God on the earth. The pioneers laid the foundation, but it is now up to us to complete the work. As President James E. Faust testified, “Faith in every future footstep will fulfill prophetic vision concerning the glorious destiny of this Church” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1997, 58; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 42).

Elder M. Russell Ballard said: “We are the inheritors of a tremendous heritage. Now it is our privilege and responsibility to be part of the Restoration’s continuing drama, and there are great and heroic stories of faith to be written in our day. It will require every bit of our strength, wisdom, and energy to overcome the obstacles that will confront us. But even that will not be enough. We will learn, as did our pioneer ancestors, that it is only in faith—*real* faith, whole-souled, tested and tried—that we will find safety and confidence as we walk our own perilous pathways through life” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1997, 83; or *Ensign*, May 1997, 61).

Bear testimony that many of the ways in which the pioneers were counseled in D&C 136 to prepare for their journey apply to our journey also. Encourage class members to show their gratitude for the pioneers by continuing their legacy of faith.

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## Additional Teaching Ideas

You may want to use one or both of the following ideas to supplement the suggested lesson outline.

### 1. Sacrifices made by the pioneers

In addition to prophesying that many of the Saints would live to become a great people in the Rocky Mountains, Joseph Smith foretold of their suffering. He said that some would “be put to death by our persecutors or lose their lives in consequence of exposure or disease” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 255).

Share the following account related by Elder Thomas S. Monson while serving in the Quorum of the Twelve:

“Mormon pioneers by the hundreds suffered and died from disease, exposure, or starvation. There were some who, lacking wagons and teams, literally walked

the 1,300 miles across the plains and through the mountains, pushing and pulling handcarts. In these groups, one in six perished.

“For many the journey didn’t begin at Nauvoo, Kirtland, Far West, or New York, but rather in distant England, Scotland, Scandinavia, and Germany. . . . Between the safety of home and the promise of Zion stood the angry and treacherous waters of the mighty Atlantic. Who can recount the fear that gripped the human heart during those perilous crossings? Prompted by the silent whisperings of the Spirit, sustained by a simple, yet abiding faith, they trusted in their God and set sail on their journey. . . .

“On board one of those overcrowded and creaking vessels [ships] of yesteryear were my great grandparents, their tiny family, and a few meager possessions. The waves were so high, the voyage so long, the quarters so cramped. Tiny Mary [their daughter] had always been frail, but now, with the passage of each day, her anxious mother knew the little one was becoming especially weak. She had taken seriously ill. . . . Day after day worried parents peered for land, but there was no land. Now Mary could not stand. . . . The end drew near. Little Mary peacefully passed beyond this veil of tears.

“As the family and friends gathered on the open deck, the ship’s captain directed the service, and that precious, ever-so-small body, placed tenderly in a tear-stained canvas, was committed to the angry sea. Strong father, in emotion-choked tones, comforted grieving mother, repeating, ‘The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. We’ll see our Mary again!’” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1967, 55–56; or *Improvement Era*, June 1967, 55).

## 2. “Faith in Every Footstep” video presentation

If the videocassette *Teachings from the Doctrine and Covenants and Church History* (53933) is available, consider showing “Faith in Every Footstep,” a 16-minute segment.

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**Purpose**

To teach about the rescue of the Martin and Willie handcart companies, to show that the gospel of Jesus Christ is a message of rescue, and to encourage class members to help rescue those in need.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study the following scriptures and other materials:
    - a. Doctrine and Covenants 4:3–7; 18:10–16; 52:40; 81:5–6; 138:58.
    - b. 3 Nephi 18:31–32; Moroni 7:45–48 (supplemental scriptures).
    - c. The quotations in this lesson.
    - d. *Our Heritage*, pages 77–80.
  2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
  3. If the following pictures are available, prepare to use them during the lesson: Martin Handcart Co., Bitter Creek, Wyoming, 1856 (62554; Gospel Art Picture Kit 414) and Three Young Men Rescue the Martin Handcart Company (Gospel Art Picture Kit 415).
  4. If you use the attention activity, prepare to use the following pictures in addition to those listed above: Exodus from Nauvoo (62493; Gospel Art Picture Kit 411); Handcart Company (62528); and Mary Fielding and Joseph F. Smith Crossing the Plains (62608).
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**Suggestions for  
Lesson Development**

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Display the pictures listed in the “Preparation” section, items 3 and 4.

- Why is it important to continue to repeat the stories about the experiences of the early Latter-day Saint pioneers?

President Gordon B. Hinckley said: “Stories of the beleaguered Saints and of their suffering and death will be repeated again and again. . . . Stories of their rescue need to be repeated again and again. They speak of the very essence of the gospel of Jesus Christ” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1996, 118; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 86).

Referring to the pioneers, President Hinckley also said: “I will never get over being thankful to them; I hope you never get over being thankful to them. I hope that we will always remember them. . . . Let us read again and again, and read to our children or our children’s children, the accounts of those who suffered so much” (*Church News*, 31 July 1999, 5).

Explain that this lesson discusses an account of suffering, death, and rescue: the story of the Martin and Willie handcart companies.

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Discussion and Application

Prayerfully select the lesson materials that will best meet class members' needs. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the principles you teach.

**1. President Brigham Young guided the rescue of the Martin and Willie handcart companies.**

Display the picture of the Martin handcart company. Summarize the first paragraph under "Handcart Pioneers" on page 77 of *Our Heritage*. Then share the following account as told by President Gordon B. Hinckley:

"I take you back to the general conference of October 1856. On Saturday of that conference, Franklin D. Richards and a handful of associates arrived in the valley. They had traveled from Winter Quarters with strong teams and light wagons and had been able to make good time. Brother Richards immediately sought out President Young. He reported that there were hundreds of men, women, and children scattered over the long trail. . . . They were in desperate trouble. Winter had come early. Snow-laden winds were howling across the highlands. . . . Our people were hungry; their carts and their wagons were breaking down; their oxen dying. The people themselves were dying. All of them would perish unless they were rescued.

"I think President Young did not sleep that night. I think visions of those destitute, freezing, dying people paraded through his mind. The next morning he came to the old Tabernacle which stood on this square. He said to the people:

"I will now give this people the subject and the text for the Elders who may speak. . . . It is this. . . . Many of our brethren and sisters are on the plains with handcarts, and probably many are now seven hundred miles from this place, and they must be brought here, we must send assistance to them. The text will be, "to get them here." . . .

"That is my religion; that is the dictation of the Holy Ghost that I possess. It is to save the people. . . .

"I shall call upon the Bishops this day. I shall not wait until tomorrow, nor until the next day, for 60 good mule teams and 12 or 15 wagons. I do not want to send oxen. I want good horses and mules. They are in this Territory, and we must have them. Also 12 tons of flour and 40 good teamsters, besides those that drive the teams. . . .

"I will tell you all that your faith, religion, and profession of religion, will never save one soul of you in the Celestial Kingdom of our God, unless you carry out just such principles as I am now teaching you. *Go and bring in those people now on the plains'* (in LeRoy R. Hafen and Ann W. Hafen, *Handcarts to Zion* [1960], 120–21).

"That afternoon, food, bedding, and clothing in great quantities were assembled by the women. The next morning, horses were shod and wagons were repaired and loaded. The following morning, . . . 16 mule teams pulled out and headed

eastward. By the end of October there were 250 teams on the road to give relief” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1996, 117–18; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 85–86).

Point out that the Martin and Willie handcart companies had done all they could to reach the Salt Lake Valley, but they could go no farther. They needed to be rescued. Without the rescue parties, they all would have died.

- What experiences have you had in which you have been rescued? How did you feel when you were in need of help? How did you feel when someone came to your aid?
- How might the Saints in the handcart companies have felt when the rescue parties found them?

President Hinckley shared this account of the rescue:

“It was in . . . desperate and terrible circumstances—hungry, exhausted, their clothes thin and ragged—that [the handcart companies] were found by the rescue party. As the rescuers appeared on the western horizon breaking a trail through the snow, they seemed as angels of mercy. And indeed they were. The beleaguered emigrants shouted for joy, some of them. Others, too weak to shout, simply wept and wept and wept.

“There was now food to eat and some warmer clothing. But the suffering was not over, nor would it ever end in mortality. Limbs had been frozen, and the gangrenous flesh sloughed off from the bones.

“The carts were abandoned, and the survivors were crowded into the wagons of the rescuers. The long rough journey of three hundred, four hundred, even five hundred miles between them and this valley was especially slow and tedious because of the storms. On November 30, 104 wagons, loaded with suffering human cargo, came into the Salt Lake Valley. Word of their expected arrival had preceded them. It was Sunday, and again the Saints were gathered in the Tabernacle. Brigham Young stood before the congregation and said:

“‘As soon as this meeting is dismissed I want the brethren and sisters to repair to their homes. . . .

“‘The afternoon meeting will be omitted, for I wish the sisters to . . . prepare to give those who have just arrived a mouthful of something to eat, and to wash them and nurse them. . . .

“‘Some you will find with their feet frozen to their ankles; some are frozen to their knees and some have their hands frosted . . . ; we want you to receive them as your own children, and to have the same feeling for them’ (quoted in Hafen, *Handcarts to Zion*, p. 139)” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1991, 76–77; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1991, 54).

- What impresses you about the efforts to rescue the handcart pioneers?

## **2. The Savior rescues us through His atoning sacrifice.**

Point out that the gospel of Jesus Christ is a message of rescue. In a conference address, after sharing the story of the rescue of the handcart companies, President Gordon B. Hinckley testified of the rescuing mission of the Savior:

“It is because of the sacrificial redemption wrought by the Savior of the world that the great plan of the eternal gospel is made available to us, under which those who die in the Lord shall not taste of death but shall have the opportunity of going on to a celestial and eternal glory.

“In our own helplessness, He becomes our rescuer, saving us from damnation and bringing us to eternal life.

“In times of despair, in seasons of loneliness and fear, He is there on the horizon to bring succor and comfort and assurance and faith. He is our King, our Savior, our Deliverer, our Lord and our God” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1991, 78; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1991, 54).

- In what ways do we need to be rescued by the Savior? Why is the Savior able to rescue us? (See Alma 7:11–13; D&C 18:11–12.) What must we do to fully receive His offer of rescue?

### 3. As Latter-day Saints, we are to rescue those in need.

Display the picture of the three young men rescuing handcart pioneers. Then read the following story shared by President Thomas S. Monson:

“Let us for a moment join Captain Edward Martin and the handcart company he led. While we will not feel the pangs of hunger which they felt or experience the bitter cold that penetrated their weary bodies, we will emerge from our visit with a better appreciation of hardship borne, courage demonstrated, and faith fulfilled. We will witness with tear-filled eyes a dramatic answer to the question ‘Am I my brother’s keeper?’

““The handcarts moved on November 3 and reached the [Sweetwater] river, filled with floating ice. To cross would require more courage and fortitude, it seemed, than human nature could muster. Women shrank back and men wept. Some pushed through, but others were unequal to the ordeal.

““Three eighteen-year-old boys belonging to the relief party came to the rescue; and to the astonishment of all who saw, carried nearly every member of that ill-fated handcart company across the snow-bound stream. The strain was so terrible, and the exposure so great, that in later years all the boys died from the effects of it. When President Brigham Young heard of this heroic act, he wept like a child, and later declared publicly, “That act alone will ensure C. Allen Huntington, George W. Grant, and David P. Kimball an everlasting salvation in the Celestial Kingdom of God, worlds without end”” (LeRoy R. Hafen and Ann W. Hafen, *Handcarts to Zion* [Glendale, California: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1960], pp. 132–33).

“Our service to others may not be so dramatic, but we can bolster human spirits, clothe cold bodies, feed hungry people, comfort grieving hearts, and lift to new heights precious souls” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1990, 61–62; or *Ensign*, May 1990, 46–47).

Emphasize that as members of the Church of Jesus Christ, we have a rescue mission. “Our mission in life, as followers of the Lord Jesus Christ,” said President Gordon B. Hinckley, “must be a mission of saving” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1991, 78; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1991, 59). As President Monson said, our service may

not be as dramatic as the sacrifice made by the three young men in the story. However, we can help rescue family members, friends, and others through our simple daily efforts to love, serve, and teach them.

- What are some specific things we can do to rescue those in need? (Write class members' responses on the chalkboard. As part of the discussion, share the following quotation.)

Referring to the suffering of the Martin and Willie handcart companies, President Hinckley said:

"I am grateful that those days of pioneering are behind us. I am thankful that we do not have brethren and sisters stranded in the snow, freezing and dying, while trying to get to this, their Zion in the mountains. But there are people, not a few, whose circumstances are desperate and who cry out for help and relief.

"There are so many who are hungry and destitute across this world who need help. . . . Ours is a great and solemn duty to reach out and help them, to lift them, to feed them if they are hungry, to nurture their spirits if they thirst for truth and righteousness.

"There are so many young people who wander aimlessly and walk the tragic trail of drugs, gangs, immorality, and the whole brood of ills that accompany these things. There are widows who long for friendly voices and that spirit of anxious concern which speaks of love. There are those who were once warm in the faith, but whose faith has grown cold. Many of them wish to come back but do not know quite how to do it. They need friendly hands reaching out to them. With a little effort, many of them can be brought back to feast again at the table of the Lord.

"My brethren and sisters, I would hope, I would pray that each of us . . . would resolve to seek those who need help, who are in desperate and difficult circumstances, and lift them in the spirit of love into the embrace of the Church, where strong hands and loving hearts will warm them, comfort them, sustain them, and put them on the way of happy and productive lives" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1996, 118; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 86).

Have class members read the following scriptures, looking for counsel on what we can do to rescue those in need. Use the questions to encourage discussion and application.

- a. D&C 4:3–7; Moroni 7:45–48. How can the qualities listed in these verses help us rescue those in need?
- b. D&C 18:10–16. What opportunities do we have to teach the gospel and lead others to repentance?
- c. D&C 52:40. What can we do to help "the poor and the needy, the sick and the afflicted"? Why are we not the Savior's disciples if we do not help those in need?
- d. D&C 81:5–6. What does it mean to "lift up the hands which hang down, and strengthen the feeble knees"? How might this commandment apply to spiritual needs as well as physical needs?
- e. D&C 138:58. How do we rescue people through temple work?

- f. 3 Nephi 18:31–32. What can we do to “continue to minister” to those who have fallen away?
- Ask class members to reflect on the rescue of the Martin and Willie handcart companies. As we strive to rescue others, what can we learn from the examples of President Brigham Young and the Saints who rescued the stranded handcart companies? (Answers could include that we should not delay our efforts, that we often need to put aside our own concerns to attend to the needs of others, and that we should exercise faith.)

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## Conclusion

Encourage class members to find ways to apply the principles discussed in this lesson. Emphasize that as we strive to help those who are in need of rescue, we must never give up hope. We must let go of selfishness, and we must reach out with love. As prompted by the Spirit, testify of the truths discussed during the lesson.

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## Additional Teaching Ideas

You may want to use one or more of the following ideas to supplement the suggested lesson outline.

### 1. “We became acquainted with [God] in our extremities”

Ask a class member to prepare to share the story of Nellie Pucell from *Our Heritage*, pages 77–78. Invite another class member to prepare to share the story of the man who testified that he and the other handcart pioneers “became acquainted with [God] in [their] extremities” (*Our Heritage*, page 78).

- What can we learn from these stories? How have you seen that we can become better acquainted with God as we endure trials?

As part of this discussion, you may want to have class members read D&C 122:5–8.

### 2. “If the world is going to be saved, we have to do it”

To emphasize our responsibility to rescue those in need, share the following statement by President Gordon B. Hinckley:

“Our message is so imperative, when you stop to think that the salvation, the eternal salvation of the world, rests upon the shoulders of this Church. When all is said and done, if the world is going to be saved, we have to do it. There is no escaping from that. No other people in the history of the world have received the kind of mandate that we have received. We are responsible for all who have lived upon the earth. That involves our family history and temple work. We are responsible for all who now live upon the earth, and that involves our missionary work. And we are going to be responsible for all who will yet live upon the earth” (*Church News*, 3 July 1999, 3).

### 3. “Tried in All Things” video presentation

If the videocassette *Teachings from the Doctrine and Covenants and Church History* (53933) is available, consider showing “Tried in All Things,” a four-minute segment.

Lesson  
**36**

# “The Desert Shall Rejoice, and Blossom as the Rose”

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**Purpose** To help class members understand how they have been blessed by the sacrifices of the early Saints in the Salt Lake Valley and to encourage them to follow the example of these faithful members.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study *Our Heritage*, pages 81–96.
2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
3. Ask class members to prepare to summarize the following sections from *Our Heritage*:
  - a. “The First Year in the Valley” and “Explorations” (pages 82–84).
  - b. “Callings to Colonize” (pages 86–89).
  - c. “Missionaries Answer the Call” (pages 84–86).
  - d. “Missionary Work” (pages 93–96).
4. If the following pictures are available, prepare to display them during the lesson: Salt Lake Temple (62433; Gospel Art Picture Kit 502; page 210 in this manual); Brigham Young (Gospel Art Picture Kit 507); and John Taylor (Gospel Art Picture Kit 508).

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**Suggestions for  
Lesson Development**

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Display a picture of the Salt Lake Temple. Explain that deep in the ground underneath the temple is a strong foundation of stone blocks. The foundation has supported this magnificent temple for over 150 years.

- Why is it so important that the foundation of a building be strong and deep?

Explain that just as buildings require strong foundations, so do our lives. This lesson discusses the building of the Salt Lake Temple and the efforts of the pioneers to colonize their new home and spread the gospel. It also discusses some of the foundation principles upon which the early Saints built their lives and how we can learn from their examples.

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**Discussion and Application** Prayerfully select the lesson material that will best meet class members’ needs. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the principles you discuss.

**1. “Right here will stand the temple of our God.”**

Explain that on 28 July 1847, four days after arriving in the Salt Lake Valley, President Brigham Young stood on the spot where the Salt Lake Temple now

stands. He struck his cane on the ground and said, “Right here will stand the temple of our God” (in Wilford Woodruff, *Deseret Evening News*, 25 July 1888, 2). Thus the sacrifice and blessings of building another temple began.

Elder John A. Widtsoe of the Quorum of the Twelve said, “The pioneers were hungry and weary; they needed food and rest; a hostile desert looked them in the face; yet in the midst of such physical requirements they turned first to the building of temples and to the spiritual food and strength that the temples provide” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1943, 38).

Within one week after President Young marked the spot for the temple, the Saints began surveying the new city, with the temple at the center of the survey. The layout of the city focused the people on the temple.

- Why should the temple be central in our lives today? (See the following quotation.) How can we make the temple a more important part of our lives?

President Howard W. Hunter taught:

“We . . . emphasize the personal blessings of temple worship and the sanctity and safety that are provided within those hallowed walls. It is the house of the Lord, a place of revelation and of peace. As we attend the temple, we learn more richly and deeply the purpose of life and the significance of the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us make the temple, with temple worship and temple covenants and temple marriage, our ultimate earthly goal and the supreme mortal experience. . . .

“May you let the meaning and beauty and peace of the temple come into your everyday life more directly” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1994, 118; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 87–88).

Display a picture of the Salt Lake Temple. Explain that excavation for the large foundation was done by hand, requiring thousands of hours of labor. The cornerstones were laid on 6 April 1853. After a few years of work on the foundation, the Saints stopped work because of a problem with the United States government. The president of the United States had heard false stories that the Saints were rebelling against the government, so he sent an army to the Salt Lake Valley. In response, President Young had the Saints cover the foundation with dirt to make it look like an ordinary field.

When the Saints later unearthed the sandstone foundation, they noticed cracks in the rocks. They removed the sandstone and replaced it with solid granite blocks. President Young insisted that only the best materials and craftsmanship be used in the construction of the temple. He said:

“I want to see the temple built in a manner that it will endure through the Millennium. This is not the only temple we shall build; there will be hundreds of them built and dedicated to the Lord. . . . And when the Millennium is over, . . . I want that temple still to stand as a proud monument of the faith, perseverance and industry of the Saints of God in the mountains, in the nineteenth century” (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, sel. John A. Widtsoe [1941], 395).

It took years for the Saints to quarry, transport, and shape the granite blocks for the construction of the temple. During this time, they struggled just to survive, as they lost crops to the elements, served missions in faraway lands, and accepted calls to leave their homes and establish communities in remote

areas. In spite of these many challenges, the Saints persevered, and with the Lord's help they prevailed. The Salt Lake Temple was dedicated in 1893, 40 years after the cornerstones had been laid.

- What can we learn from the perseverance of the Saints as they built the Salt Lake Temple? How can the Saints' example of perseverance help us?

When Jeffrey R. Holland was president of Brigham Young University, he compared the building of our lives to the building of the Salt Lake Temple:

"The prestigious *Scientific American* referred to [the Salt Lake Temple] as a 'monument to Mormon perseverance.' And so it was. Blood, toil, tears, and sweat. The best things are always worth finishing. 'Know ye not that ye are the temple of God?' (1 Corinthians 3:16.) Most assuredly we are. As long and laborious as the effort may seem, we must keep shaping and setting the stones that will make *our* accomplishments 'a grand and imposing spectacle.' We must take advantage of every opportunity to learn and grow, dream dreams and see visions, work toward their realization, wait patiently when we have no other choice, lean on our sword and rest a while, but get up and fight again. . . . We are laying the foundation of a great work—our own inestimable future" (*However Long and Hard the Road* [1985], 127).



Salt Lake Temple. Dedicated in 1893, this temple took 40 years to build.

## 2. The Saints were obedient as they settled and colonized the Salt Lake Valley and the surrounding areas.

Explain that the Saints faced great challenges as they began the task of settling the Salt Lake Valley and the surrounding areas. Ask the assigned class member to summarize the sections "The First Year in the Valley" and "Explorations" from *Our Heritage*, pages 82–84.

- What characteristics helped the Saints overcome the great difficulties they faced during their first years in the Salt Lake Valley? What situations in our lives today might require these same characteristics?
- How were the Saints blessed during their times of adversity? How has the Lord blessed you in times of adversity?

Ask the assigned class member to summarize the section “Callings to Colonize” from *Our Heritage*, pages 86–89.

- What impresses you about the stories of Charles Lowell Walker and Charles C. Rich?

Explain that these two brethren and their families are great examples of obedience. One of the great teachings of Church history is that we will be blessed as we obey the Lord and follow His prophets. The Doctrine and Covenants also contains many teachings about the blessings of obedience. Read the following scriptures with class members. Discuss what each passage teaches about obedience, as shown below.

- a. D&C 58:2–4. (If we keep the commandments and are “faithful in tribulation,” we will be “crowned with much glory.”)
  - b. D&C 64:33–34. (Those who are willing and obedient will be blessed in the land of Zion in the last days.)
  - c. D&C 82:10. (The Lord is bound when we do what He says. He will bless us when we obey His commandments.)
  - d. D&C 93:1. (Those who repent, come unto the Savior, and keep His commandments will see His face.)
  - e. D&C 130:19–21. (A person who gains more knowledge and intelligence through diligence and obedience in this life will have an advantage in the world to come. We obtain blessings by obeying God’s laws.)
- What experiences could you appropriately share that have taught you the importance of obedience? Although we are not called to colonize new areas, in what ways are we asked to obey the prophet today? What feelings do you have when you are obedient to God’s will?

### 3. Missionaries made sacrifices to teach the gospel throughout the world.

Explain that while the Saints settled in the Salt Lake Valley, President Brigham Young called many missionaries to serve throughout the world. Ask the assigned class member to summarize the section “Missionaries Answer the Call” from *Our Heritage*, pages 84–86.

- In what areas of the world did the Saints preach the gospel while President Brigham Young led the Church? What sacrifices did these early Saints make to share the gospel with people around the world?
- How did the faith and prayers of Elder Lorenzo Snow help open the hearts of the people in Italy to the gospel message?
- What can we learn from the examples of Elder Edward Stevenson? Elizabeth and Charles Wood? Elder Joseph F. Smith?

President Brigham Young led the Church for 33 years. After President Young died in 1877, John Taylor led the Church for three years as President of the Quorum of the Twelve and was then sustained as President of the Church on 10 October 1880 (*Our Heritage*, page 93).

Explain that under President Taylor's leadership, the Saints continued to preach the gospel throughout the world. Ask the assigned class member to summarize the section "Missionary Work" from *Our Heritage*, pages 93–96.

- In what areas of the world did the Saints preach the gospel while President John Taylor led the Church?
- How was Milton Trejo guided throughout his life to be able to participate in building the kingdom of God? How can we better prepare ourselves to build the kingdom of God?
- What can we learn from the stories of Elder Thomas Biesinger? Elders Kimo Pelio and Samuela Manoa? Elder and Sister Dean? Jonathan and Kitty Napela?

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#### Conclusion

Point out that in the Salt Lake Valley, the Saints built a strong foundation for the Lord's temple and for their lives. Encourage class members to follow the early Saints' example of faith, perseverance, obedience, and desire to share the gospel. As prompted by the Spirit, testify of the truths discussed during the lesson.

# “We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet”

Lesson  
**37**

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**Purpose** To help class members recognize the need for our living prophet, understand his roles, and more faithfully obey his counsel.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study the scriptures in this lesson and *Our Heritage*, page 131.
2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
3. Ask a class member to prepare to tell the story of Elder Spencer W. Kimball helping a mother and her children in an airport (*Our Heritage*, page 131).
4. Prepare to have class members sing “We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet” (*Hymns*, no. 19) if you plan to use it at the conclusion of the lesson. Or ask a class member or a group of class members to prepare to sing it.

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## Suggestions for Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. Share the following story, told by President Hugh B. Brown of the First Presidency:

Before President Brown was called as a General Authority, he spent some time in England working as a barrister, or attorney. He befriended a prominent Englishman who was a member of the House of Commons and a former justice of the supreme court of Britain. The two men often discussed various subjects, including religion.

In 1939, when it appeared that World War II would soon break out, the English gentleman called Brother Brown into his office. He asked Brother Brown to defend his religious beliefs in the same way he would discuss a legal problem. In a general conference address, President Brown recalled part of their conversation:

“I began by asking, ‘May I proceed, sir, on the assumption that you are a Christian?’

“‘I am.’

“‘I assume that you believe in the Bible—the Old and New Testaments?’

“‘I do!’”

The English gentleman said that he believed the biblical accounts of the Lord speaking to prophets. However, he maintained that such communication had stopped soon after the Resurrection of Christ. The conversation continued with another question from Brother Brown: “Why do you think it stopped?”

“‘I can’t say.’

“‘You think that God hasn’t spoken since then?’

“‘Not to my knowledge.’

“‘May I suggest some possible reasons why he has not spoken. Perhaps it is because he cannot. He has lost the power.’

“‘He said, ‘Of course that would be blasphemous.’

“‘Well, then, if you don’t accept that, perhaps he doesn’t speak to men because he doesn’t love us anymore. He is no longer interested in the affairs of men.’

“‘No,’ he said, ‘God loves all men, and he is no respecter of persons.’

“‘Well, then, . . . the only other possible answer as I see it is that we don’t need him. We have made such rapid strides in education and science that we don’t need God any more.’

“And then he said, and his voice trembled as he thought of impending war, ‘Mr. Brown, there never was a time in the history of the world when the voice of God was needed as it is needed now. Perhaps you can tell me why he doesn’t speak.’

“My answer was, ‘He does speak, he has spoken; but men need faith to hear him’” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1967, 117–18; or *Improvement Era*, Dec. 1967, 36–37).

Emphasize that the Lord continues to speak today through a living prophet. This lesson discusses the blessings of being led by a living prophet and our responsibility to follow his counsel.

## Discussion and Application

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Prayerfully select the lesson material that will best meet class members’ needs. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the principles you discuss.

### 1. Our need for a living prophet

- Why do we need a living prophet today? (You may want to point out that the counsel of the living prophet helps us respond to all the major problems and needs of our day.)

While serving as President of the Quorum of the Twelve, President Ezra Taft Benson said: “The most important prophet, so far as we are concerned, is the one who is living in our day and age. This is the prophet who has today’s instructions from God to us today. God’s revelation to Adam did not instruct Noah how to build the ark. Every generation has need of the ancient scripture plus the current scripture from the living prophet. Therefore, the most crucial reading and pondering which you should do is of the latest inspired words from the Lord’s mouthpiece” (in Conference Report, Korea Area Conference 1975, 52).

- How have you been blessed because there is a living prophet on earth today?

### 2. The roles of our living prophet

Explain that the members of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles are all prophets, seers, and revelators. However, only the President of the Church is authorized to receive revelation for the entire Church and to exercise all the priesthood keys necessary to govern the Church.

The Doctrine and Covenants provides important information about the roles of our living prophet. Have class members read the following italicized scripture references. Then have them identify what those scriptures teach about the roles of our living prophet (suggested answers are in parentheses). Summarize responses on the chalkboard. Then discuss the responses.

*A. Doctrine and Covenants 1:38; 21:4–5; 43:2; 68:3–4. (The prophet speaks for the Lord and reveals the Lord’s will.)*

- What are some subjects on which we have received guidance from recent prophets? (Answers could include building strong families, doing temple work, helping new members of the Church, staying out of debt, and reading the Book of Mormon.)

*B. Doctrine and Covenants 20:21–26; Mosiah 13:33. (The prophet testifies of Jesus Christ and teaches the gospel.)*

- How has your testimony of the Savior been strengthened by the words of our living prophet?

*C. Doctrine and Covenants 21:1; Mosiah 8:13–18. (The prophet is a seer.)*

- What is a seer? (A seer is a prophet upon whom God bestows great power to know the past and the future. He can know of things that are not known or are hidden. He also can have the power to translate ancient records.)
- Read D&C 101:43–54 with class members. In this parable, which commandment did the servants fail to obey? (See D&C 101:46–50.) What could have been avoided if the servants had built the tower? (See D&C 101:51–54.) How does this apply to the attention we give the President of the Church?
- The President of the Church can see the enemy “while he [is] yet afar off” (D&C 101:54). What dangers have latter-day prophets seen and warned us about?

*D. Doctrine and Covenants 107:91–92. (The prophet presides over the Church.)*

- What blessings do we receive because the true Church is always led by a prophet who is chosen and guided by God?
- How can we sustain the prophet in his role as President of the Church? (See D&C 107:22.)

### **3. Heeding the words of our living prophet**

- Read D&C 21:4–6 with class members. What do these verses teach about our responsibility to listen to the prophet? What does the Lord promise us if we obey the prophet’s counsel?

President Harold B. Lee taught: “The only safety we have as members of this church is to do exactly what the Lord said to the Church in that day when the Church was organized [see D&C 21:4–5]. . . . There will be some things that take patience and faith. You may not like what comes from the authority of the Church. It may contradict your political views. It may contradict your social views. It may interfere with some of your social life. But if you listen to these things, as if from the mouth of the Lord himself, with patience

and faith, the promise is that ‘the gates of hell shall not prevail against you’ [D&C 21:6]” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1970, 152; or *Improvement Era*, Dec. 1970, 126).

- How can we learn of the prophet’s inspired counsel? (By studying general conference talks, First Presidency Messages, and other articles in the Church magazines and by listening to letters from the First Presidency that are read in Church meetings.)

At the close of a general conference, President Ezra Taft Benson said, “For the next six months, your conference edition of the *Ensign* should stand next to your standard works and be referred to frequently” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1988, 97; or *Ensign*, May 1988, 84).

While serving in the Quorum of the Twelve, Elder Harold B. Lee made a similar statement during general conference. He said that the report of the conference should “be the guide to [our] walk and talk during the next six months” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1946, 68).

- How can we better study and use the prophet’s general conference addresses individually and in our families?
- How have you been blessed as you have followed the counsel of the prophet?

Share the following story related by Elder Bruce D. Porter of the Seventy:

“When my wife and I were a young married couple, we lived in the Boston area, where I attended school. Another young couple moved into our ward shortly after we did. They were converts of about two years. . . . I was concerned about how they would do, . . . so it was with pleasure that I accepted the calling to be their home teacher. I looked forward to helping strengthen their testimonies of the gospel.

“My companion and I arrived at their modest apartment one evening to home teach them. They had just completed a home evening with their little baby. I made a mental note that it would be a good idea for my wife and I to start holding home evenings so . . . when a child arrived we would already have the habit. They then eagerly showed us their Book of Remembrance in which they had collected many names of ancestors from both sides of their family. I remembered that it had been a long time since I had looked at my Book of Remembrance.

“After our lesson they took us out to the screened back porch where were stacked ice cream buckets filled with wheat, sugar, flour, and other food—a complete year’s supply of food. I had supposed, somehow, that as students that counsel didn’t apply to us! By now I was feeling very humble. I had come to teach them, but they were teaching me in every point. As we left their little apartment I noticed a picture of the temple hanging near their door. I remembered that President Spencer W. Kimball said that every Latter-day Saint family should have a picture of the temple prominently displayed in their home, and I remembered that we didn’t have one. . . .

“I went home, filled with a spirit of repentance, and found a small picture of the Swiss Temple in a mission brochure. I cut it out and taped it on our wall. Since that time we have always had a picture of the temple in our home. Every

time I look at it, it reminds me of a young convert couple who taught us what it meant to ‘follow the prophet’” (address given in the Bountiful Mueller Park Stake conference, 17 Jan. 1999).

#### 4. Latter-day prophets’ example of Christlike love

Point out that the Presidents of the Church have served others selflessly and with great love. We can learn much from their example.

Relate the following account from the life of the Prophet Joseph Smith:

John Lyman Smith and his family came to Nauvoo when it was first being settled by the Saints. The only place the family could find to live at first was a stable made of logs. Everyone in the family except the mother soon came down with fevers as a result of living in the swampy area. John Lyman Smith said of the experience:

“The Prophet Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum visited us and administered to all of us, father being delirious from the effects of the fever. Their words comforted us greatly, as they said in the name of the Lord ‘you all shall be well again.’ Upon leaving the hovel, Joseph placed his slippers upon my father’s feet and sprang upon his horse from the doorway and rode home barefoot. The next day Joseph removed father to his own house and nursed him until he recovered” (quoted in *Stories about Joseph Smith the Prophet: A Collection of Incidents Related by Friends Who Knew Him*, comp. Edwin F. Parry [1934], 33–34).

Ask the assigned class member to share the story of Elder Spencer W. Kimball helping a mother and her children in an airport (*Our Heritage*, page 131).

After the class member’s presentation, relate the following story about President Gordon B. Hinckley:

In 1998 a devastating hurricane caused great destruction in Central America. The Church sent large amounts of relief food and supplies. President Gordon B. Hinckley felt that he should go to Honduras and Nicaragua to meet with and encourage the people there. Later in a Christmas devotional, President Hinckley spoke of a two-year-old girl he met on this trip who had been orphaned in the disaster. Her mother had died a few months before the hurricane, and when the hurricane hit, the father piled the furniture in his house to avoid the rising water.

President Hinckley related that the father “took a little mattress and placed it at the top and laid [his daughter] on it. In his frantic and desperate effort he suffered a stroke and died. . . . No one knew anything of her, until a young man, two days later, happened to look up in that abandoned house and saw her still alive. He tenderly brought her down and delivered her to the bishop and the bishop’s wife. It was there that we saw her. . . .

“I would hope that at this Christmas season, when there will be no gift-giving among these devastated people, this small orphan girl might receive perhaps a little taste of candy, something sweet and delicious. I must see that that happens.

“God bless the people everywhere . . . that their hearts may be opened and their hands extended to help the needy” (*Church News*, 12 Dec. 1998, 4).

- What impresses you about the actions of these prophets? What can we learn from their example?

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## Conclusion

Emphasize that we are led by the word of God given through His prophet. As we listen to the prophet's counsel and act on his instructions, we will receive the direction and strength necessary to meet the challenges of our day. As prompted by the Spirit, testify of the truths discussed during the lesson.

You may want to have class members sing "We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet" (*Hymns*, no. 19). Or ask the assigned class member or group of class members to sing it.

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## Additional Teaching Ideas

### 1. The prophet will never lead us astray

Emphasize that we can have complete confidence that the prophet appointed by God will always lead us correctly.

While serving in the Quorum of the Twelve, Elder Ezra Taft Benson taught, "Keep your eye on the Prophet, for the Lord will never permit his Prophet to lead this Church astray" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1966, 123; or *Improvement Era*, Dec. 1966, 1145).

While serving as a counselor in the First Presidency, President Joseph F. Smith taught: "If [the President of the Church] should become unfaithful, God would remove him out of his place. I testify in the name of Israel's God that he will not suffer the head of the Church, whom he has chosen to stand at the head, to transgress his laws and apostatize; the moment he should take a course that would in time lead to it, God would take him away. Why? Because to suffer a wicked man to occupy that position would be to allow, as it were, the fountain to become corrupted, which is something he will never permit" (*Gospel Doctrine*, 5th ed. [1939], 44–45).

### 2. Prophecy and revelation on war

As you discuss the roles of a prophet, you may want to read D&C 87 with class members. This revelation was given through Joseph Smith in 1832. It foretold the United States Civil War, which began in 1861.

### 3. "Watchmen on the Tower" video presentation

If the videocassette *Teachings from the Doctrine and Covenants and Church History* (53933) is available, consider showing "Watchmen on the Tower," a four-minute segment.

### 4. Contributions of latter-day Presidents of the Church

Display pictures of the latter-day Presidents of the Church (62575; Gospel Art Picture Kit 401, 507–20; see also page 219). If you use pictures from the meetinghouse library or the Gospel Art Picture Kit, you may want to display by each picture the prophet's name and the dates he served as President of the Church, as shown on page 219.

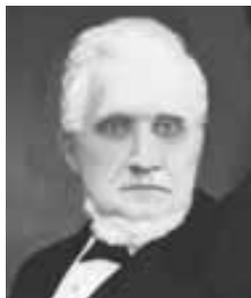
Ask class members to turn to "Church History Chronology" (pages 272–73 in this manual and pages 27–28 in the *Class Member Study Guide*). Explain that this is a helpful resource in finding some of the major contributions of each President of the Church.



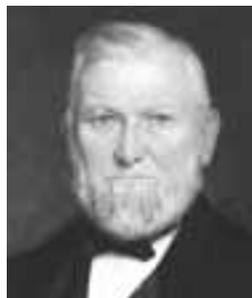
Joseph Smith  
1830-44



Brigham Young  
1847-77



John Taylor  
1880-87



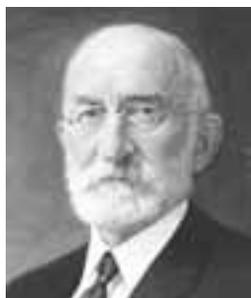
Wilford Woodruff  
1889-98



Lorenzo Snow  
1898-1901



Joseph F. Smith  
1901-18



Heber J. Grant  
1918-45



George Albert Smith  
1945-51



David O. McKay  
1951-70



Joseph Fielding Smith  
1970-72



Harold B. Lee  
1972-73



Spencer W. Kimball  
1973-85



Ezra Taft Benson  
1985-94



Howard W. Hunter  
1994-95



Gordon B. Hinckley  
1995-

Lesson  
**38**

# “In Mine Own Way”

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**Purpose**

To help class members understand the principles of spiritual and temporal welfare and commit themselves to greater self-reliance and service to the poor and needy.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study the following scriptures and other materials:
    - a. Doctrine and Covenants 38:30; 42:30–31, 42; 58:26–28; 104:13–18; and the other scriptures in this lesson.
    - b. *Our Heritage*, pages 108–9, 111–14.
  2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
  3. Ask class members to prepare to summarize the following information from *Our Heritage*:
    - a. The establishment of the welfare program (pages 108–9).
    - b. The welfare help given to those in Europe after World War II (last paragraph on page 111 through the middle of page 114).
  4. If you use the attention activity, bring a backpack or bag to class. Also bring several large rocks with the following labels on them: *Lack of faith, Idleness, Lack of education, Debt, Failure to prepare for the future.*
- 

**Suggestions for Lesson Development****Attention Activity**

As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Invite a class member to put on the backpack or lift up the bag you brought to class (see “Preparation,” item 4). Explain that many of us needlessly carry heavy burdens throughout life. Start adding the rocks to the backpack or bag, one at a time, discussing why each one can be a burden. By the time you add the last rock, have class members note how heavy the pack or bag has become.

Now remove the rocks one at a time. Explain that as we take responsibility for ridding ourselves of some of these burdens, our lives will be better.

Explain that latter-day prophets have always taught the importance of being self-reliant and helping those in need. This lesson discusses these principles as well as the welfare program of the Church, which encourages members to apply these principles.

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**Discussion and Application**

Prayerfully select the lesson materials that will best meet class members’ needs. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the principles you discuss.

## 1. Developing spiritual self-reliance

- Read D&C 38:30 with class members. What does this passage teach about the importance of self-reliance? How have you found this counsel to be true in your life?
- What does it mean to be self-reliant in spiritual things? (We should strive to develop spiritual strength that will enable us to resolve difficult problems in our lives and strengthen others in their times of spiritual need.) Why is it important to be spiritually self-reliant?

Elder Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve said:

“We have been taught to store a year’s supply of food, clothing, and, if possible, fuel—*at home*. . . . Can we not see that the same principle applies to inspiration and revelation, the solving of problems, to counsel, and to guidance? We need to have a source of it *stored in every home*. . . .

“If we lose our emotional and spiritual independence, our self-reliance, we can be weakened quite as much, perhaps even more, than when we become dependent materially” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1978, 136–37; or *Ensign*, May 1978, 91–92).

- How can we become more self-reliant in spiritual things?
- How can parents help their children learn spiritual self-reliance?

## 2. Developing temporal self-reliance

- What does it mean to be self-reliant in temporal things? (We should use the blessings the Lord has given us to take care of ourselves and our families. When we are physically and emotionally able, we should not shift the burden of our own or our family’s care to someone else.) Why is it important to be temporally self-reliant?
- How can we become more self-reliant in temporal things? (Answers could include learning to work effectively, storing food and other essentials for a time of need, managing our money well, and gaining a good education. Use the following information to discuss or add to class members’ responses. For information about gaining a good education, see lesson 23.)

### *Work*

Explain that soon after arriving in the Salt Lake Valley, President Brigham Young named the region *Deseret*, which is a word from the Book of Mormon meaning “a honey bee” (Ether 2:3). President Young wanted the Saints to be industrious in their new home and to work together for the common good, similar to honeybees. We should have this same attitude toward work in our lives.

- Read D&C 42:42 and 56:17 with class members. What warning has the Lord given to those who choose to be idle? What value does work have in our lives? (See the following quotation.) How has work been a blessing in your life? How have you learned the value of work? How can adults teach children the value of work?

“To become self-reliant, a person must work. Work is physical, mental, or spiritual effort. It is a basic source of happiness, self-worth, and prosperity.

Through work, people accomplish many good things in their lives” (*Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 2: Priesthood and Auxiliary Leaders* [1998], 257).

- Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve said, “Work is always a spiritual necessity even if, for some, work is not an economic necessity” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1998, 50; or *Ensign*, May 1998, 38). Why is work important to us spiritually as well as temporally?

#### *Storage of food and other necessities*

Explain that for many years, latter-day prophets have told us to store a year’s supply of food and other necessities where possible. When we follow this counsel, we become more self-reliant because we are able to care for ourselves in times of need.

The *Church Handbook of Instructions* explains:

“Church leaders have not given an exact formula for what to store. Rather, they suggest that Church members begin by storing what would be required to keep them alive if they did not have anything else to eat. . . .

“Through careful planning, most Church members can store a year’s supply of the basic items needed to sustain life. However, some members do not have the money or space for such storage, and some are prohibited by law from storing a year’s supply of food. These members should store as much as they can according to their circumstances. All members can provide themselves with added security by learning to produce and prepare basic food items” (*Book 2*, 258).

- What are the food essentials that can be stored in your area? What have you or others done to build up a supply of food storage? How can having adequate food storage be a spiritual blessing as well as a temporal blessing?

#### *Financial security*

To be self-reliant, it is important that we know how to manage our money. Poor money management can lead to many problems in our individual and family lives.

- What can we do to become more self-reliant in our finances? How can parents teach children to be financially self-reliant?

The *Church Handbook of Instructions* explains: “To become self-reliant in resource management, Church members should pay tithes and offerings, avoid unnecessary debt, save for the future, and satisfy all of their promised obligations. Members also should use their resources, including their time, frugally and avoid wasting them” (*Book 2*, 258).

- How can paying tithing help us better manage our resources?
- Why is it important that we avoid unnecessary debt? What practices have helped you avoid debt or get out of debt?

President Gordon B. Hinckley warned against the dangers of debt:

“I urge you to be modest in your expenditures; discipline yourselves in your purchases to avoid debt to the extent possible. Pay off debt as quickly as you can, and free yourselves from bondage. . . .

“. . . If you have paid your debts, if you have a reserve, even though it be small, then should storms howl about your head, you will have shelter for your wives and children and peace in your hearts” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1998, 72; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1998, 54).

### 3. Caring for the needy

In the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord repeatedly emphasizes the importance of caring for the needy. Read the following verses with class members. Identify what each passage teaches about our responsibility to care for those in need.

- a. D&C 42:30–31. (When we give our substance to the poor, we are doing it unto the Lord.)
  - b. D&C 44:6. (We “must visit the poor and needy and administer to their relief.”)
  - c. D&C 52:40. (If we do not remember the poor, the needy, the sick, and the afflicted, we are not the Savior’s disciples.)
  - d. D&C 56:16. (If we are rich and do not share with the poor, our riches will canker our souls.)
  - e. D&C 88:123. (We should love one another and give to each other as the gospel requires.)
  - f. D&C 104:18. (If we do not impart of our abundance to the poor, we will dwell among the wicked in torment.)
- In D&C 104:13–18, the Lord explains His way of providing for the temporal needs of His children. What is the Lord’s “own way” of providing for the poor? What is our responsibility when we receive of the Lord’s abundance? (See also Jacob 2:17–19.)

Explain that providing for the poor and needy in the Lord’s “own way” means helping those who are in need by giving according to what we have received from God. It means giving freely and lovingly, recognizing that Heavenly Father is the source of all blessings and that we are responsible to use them in the service of others. Those who receive this help should accept it with gratitude. They should use it to release themselves from the limitations of their need and to become more able to rise to their full potential. They should then reach out to help others.

- How are we blessed when we give to others who are in need? How have you been blessed because others have given to you in a time of need?

Explain that there are many ways we can help those in need. The Church provides organized ways in which we can give help, and we can also care for those around us in quiet, individual ways.

- One way we can help provide for the needy is by contributing fast offerings. How are fast offerings used to care for the poor? (The bishop uses them to provide food, shelter, clothing, and other relief to those in need.)
- How much should we contribute in fast offerings? (See the following quotation.) Why is it important that we contribute fast offerings?

“The Church designates one Sunday each month as a fast day. On this day Church members go without food and drink for two consecutive meals. They . . . give to the Church a fast offering at least equal to the value of the food

they would have eaten. If possible, members should be very generous and give much more than the value of two meals” (*Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 2, 256*).

For more information about fasting and contributing fast offerings, see lesson 17.

Another way the Church helps us provide for the needy is through organized humanitarian assistance. For many years the Church has been involved in humanitarian relief and self-reliance efforts throughout the world. This assistance is given to members and nonmembers alike to help alleviate the devastating effects of poverty, war, and natural disasters.

- How can individual members make donations to the Church’s humanitarian aid fund? (By filling out the appropriate portion of the tithing donation slip. You may want to show class members one of these slips.) What are some ways in which the Church’s humanitarian aid has blessed those in need?

President Thomas S. Monson told about some results of the Church’s humanitarian aid:

“In 1992 a devastating hurricane . . . struck the east coast of Florida, leaving a path of ruin behind it, with homes battered, roofs gone, people hungry. Our members were there to help. Home after home was cleaned and repaired without charge. It mattered not the faith or color of the person who occupied the home. . . .

“Far away in the foothills on the western slopes of Mount Kenya, along the fringe of the colossal Rift Valley, pure water is now coming to the thirsty people. A potable water project has changed the lives of more than 1,100 families. When we originally became aware of the need for pure water, we were able to help fund a project in cooperation with TechnoServe, a private voluntary organization. With villagers providing the labor, drinkable water now flows through 25 miles of pipes to waiting homes in a 15-village area. The simple blessing of safe drinking water recalls the words of the Lord, ‘I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink’ [Matthew 25:35]” (“Our Brothers’ Keepers,” *Ensign*, June 1998, 37).

- In addition to opportunities provided by the Church, we should seek other ways to bless those in need around us. Read D&C 58:26–28 with class members. How can we apply this scripture to our efforts to serve the poor and needy?
- What are some obstacles we may encounter in caring for the poor and needy? How can we overcome these obstacles?

#### **4. The Church welfare program**

Explain that in 1936, as a result of inspiration from the Lord, the First Presidency established the Church welfare program as an organized way to encourage self-reliance and help those in need. Ask the assigned class member to report on the establishment of the welfare program from *Our Heritage*, pages 108–9.

You may want to share the following statement from the First Presidency to emphasize the purposes of the Church welfare program:

“Our primary purpose was to set up, in so far as it might be possible, a system under which the curse of idleness would be done away with, the evils of a dole abolished, and independence, industry, thrift and self respect be once more established amongst our people. The aim of the Church is to help the people to help themselves. Work is to be re-enthroned as the ruling principle of the lives of our Church membership” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1936, 3).

- How does the Church welfare program help fulfill these purposes?

Explain that the Church’s aid to the people in Europe after World War II is an inspiring example of how the Church welfare program can bless many people. Ask the assigned class member to report on how the welfare program blessed those in need in Europe, starting with the last paragraph on page 111 of *Our Heritage* and continuing through the middle of page 114.

- What impresses you about the efforts of those involved in these projects? In what ways can we follow their example?

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#### Conclusion

Emphasize the importance of being self-reliant and caring for the poor and needy. You may want to bear testimony of how your life has been blessed by obedience to these principles.

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#### Additional Teaching Ideas

You may want to use one or both of the following ideas to supplement the suggested lesson outline.

##### 1. Education is vital for self-reliance

Point out that Church members have always been counseled to educate themselves as well as possible. The early Saints were very interested in furthering their education. During the first year in the Salt Lake Valley, a school for children was taught in a tent. Later, Church leaders directed every ward to establish a school. The University of Deseret was created in 1850. For additional information about the value of education in developing self-reliance, see lesson 23.

##### 2. “Caring for the Needy” video presentation

If *Doctrine and Covenants and Church History Video Presentations* (53912) is available, consider showing “Caring for the Needy,” a seven-minute segment.

Lesson  
**39**

# “The Hearts of the Children Shall Turn to Their Fathers”

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**Purpose**

To help class members understand the need to seek out their ancestors and receive priesthood ordinances in their behalf.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study the following scriptures and other materials:
  - a. Doctrine and Covenants 2; 110:13–16; 138; Joseph Smith—History 1:37–39.
  - b. *Our Heritage*, pages 98–99, 101–2, 105–7.
2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
3. In advance, give the following assignments:
  - a. Ask a class member to prepare to summarize the story about Bishop Henry Ballard and his daughter from *Our Heritage*, page 99.
  - b. Ask another class member to prepare to report briefly on the revelation that President Wilford Woodruff received about tracing our family histories and sealing children to their parents (see the second full paragraph on page 101 of *Our Heritage*).
  - c. Ask one or two class members to prepare to talk briefly about their experiences in providing priesthood ordinances for the dead. Invite these class members to tell how they have felt toward the people for whom they have provided these ordinances.
  - d. Ask a class member to prepare to report briefly on President Joseph F. Smith’s prophecy that the time would come when the land would “be dotted with temples” (see the last full paragraph on page 106 of *Our Heritage*).
4. If the following pictures are available, prepare to use them during the lesson: Elijah Restores the Power to Seal Families for Eternity (Gospel Art Picture Kit 417); Wilford Woodruff (Gospel Art Picture Kit 509); Joseph F. Smith (Gospel Art Picture Kit 511); and Gordon B. Hinckley (63001; Gospel Art Picture Kit 520). Rather than using the individual pictures of Presidents Woodruff, Smith, and Hinckley, you could use the picture Latter-day Prophets (62575; Gospel Art Picture Kit 506).

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**Suggestions for  
Lesson Development****Attention Activity**

As appropriate, share the following story or use an activity of your own to begin the lesson.

Frederick William Hurst was working as a gold miner in Australia when he first heard Latter-day Saint missionaries preach the restored gospel. He and his brother Charles were baptized in January 1854. He tried to help his other family members become converted, but they rejected him and the truths he taught.

Fred settled in Salt Lake City four years after joining the Church, and he served faithfully as a missionary in several different countries. He also worked as a painter in the Salt Lake Temple. In one of his final journal entries, he wrote:

“Along about the 1st of March, 1893, I found myself alone in the dining room, all had gone to bed. I was sitting at the table when to my great surprize my elder brother Alfred walked in and sat down opposite me at the table and smiled. I said to him (he looked so natural): ‘When did you arrive in Utah?’

“He said: ‘I have just come from the Spirit World, this is not my body that you see, it is lying in the tomb. I want to tell you that when you were on your mission you told me many things about the Gospel, and the hereafter, and about the Spirit World being as real and tangible as the earth. I could not believe you, but when I died and went there and saw for myself I realized that you had told the truth. I attended the Mormon meetings.’ He raised his hand and said with much warmth: ‘I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ with all my heart. I believe in faith, and repentance and baptism for the remission of sins, but that is as far as I can go. I look to you to do the work for me in the temple. . . . You are watched closely. . . . We are all looking to you as our head in this great work. I want to tell you that there are a great many spirits who weep and mourn because they have relatives in the Church here who are careless and are doing nothing for them” (*Diary of Frederick William Hurst*, comp. Samuel H. and Ida Hurst [1961], 204).

Explain that in this lesson you will discuss the redemption of the dead by briefly studying the work of four prophets: Elijah, President Wilford Woodruff, President Joseph F. Smith, and President Gordon B. Hinckley. The purpose of this lesson is to gain a greater understanding of the need to redeem the dead. The next lesson discusses some ways we can participate in temple and family history work.

## Discussion and Application

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Prayerfully select the lesson materials that will best meet class members’ needs. Encourage members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

### 1. Elijah: “The keys of this dispensation are committed into your hands.”

Teach and discuss D&C 2; 110:13–16; 138:47–48; Joseph Smith—History 1:37–39. Display the picture of Elijah restoring the sealing power of the priesthood.

- When the angel Moroni came to Joseph Smith, he said that Elijah would “plant in the hearts of the children the promises made to the fathers” (D&C 2:2; Joseph Smith—History 1:39). In this prophecy, the word *fathers* refers to our ancestors. What promises were made to our ancestors?

President Joseph Fielding Smith taught: “What was the promise made to the fathers that was to be fulfilled in the latter days by the turning of the hearts of the children to their fathers? It was the promise of the Lord made through Enoch, Isaiah, and the prophets, to the nations of the earth, that *the time should come when the dead should be redeemed*” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. [1954–56], 2:154).

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve said, “God made those promises to the ancient patriarchs—Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and so forth—and we undoubtedly made them to our own lineal fathers and mothers, those who came to earth before the gospel was restored but whom

we promised to provide its saving ordinances” (*Christ and the New Covenant* [1997], 297).

- On 3 April 1836 in the Kirtland Temple, the prophet Elijah appeared to the Prophet Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. What was Elijah’s purpose in visiting Joseph and Oliver? (See D&C 110:13–16; see also D&C 2; Joseph Smith—History 1:38–39. He conferred the sealing power of the priesthood on Joseph Smith. This power makes possible eternal marriage, sealings to parents, and temple ordinance work for the dead.)
- Read Joseph Smith—History 1:37–39 and D&C 138:47–48 with class members. Why would the earth be “utterly wasted at [the Lord’s] coming” if we did not have the sealing power? (One of the primary purposes of life on earth is to establish eternal family relationships. Without the sealing power, this would be impossible.)

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland taught that without the sealing power, “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].’ Inasmuch as . . . 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’” (*Christ and the New Covenant*, 297–98).

## 2. President Wilford Woodruff: “Somebody has got to redeem them.”

Display the picture of President Wilford Woodruff. Explain that President Woodruff was devoted to the work of redeeming the dead and sealing families for eternity. During his ministry, many members of the Church served genealogical missions, and in 1894 the First Presidency directed the organization of a genealogical society (*Our Heritage*, page 101). According to Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve, “events of that historic year [1894] established family history research and temple service as *one work* in the Church” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1994, 114; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 85).

Use the following stories to teach about the urgency of temple work for the dead and the need for us to be sealed to our parents and ancestors.

### *The urgency of temple work for the dead*

Ask the assigned class member to summarize the story about Bishop Henry Ballard and his daughter from *Our Heritage*, pages 98–99.

Explain that for a period of time, President Woodruff served as president of the temple in St. George, Utah. It was in that temple that endowments for the dead were performed for the first time in this dispensation (see *Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:171). While serving there, President Woodruff was visited by the spirits of many “eminent men” who had died. Invite a class member to share the following account by President Woodruff:

“The spirits of the dead gathered around me, wanting to know why we did not redeem them. Said they, ‘You have had the use of the Endowment House for a number of years, and yet nothing has ever been done for us. We laid the foundation of the government you now enjoy, and we . . . remained true to it and

were faithful to God.’ These were the signers of the Declaration of Independence [of the United States of America], and they waited on me for two days and two nights. . . . I straightway went into the baptismal font and called upon Brother McAllister to baptize me for the signers of the Declaration of Independence, and fifty other eminent men, making one hundred in all, including John Wesley, Columbus, and others” (*The Discourses of Wilford Woodruff*, sel. G. Homer Durham [1946], 160–61).

- What can we learn from these two stories? (Answers could include that those who are dead are anxious for us to perform ordinances for them and that we should be diligent in our efforts to redeem the dead.)

While serving in the Quorum of the Twelve, Elder Wilford Woodruff taught: “For the last eighteen hundred years, the people that have lived and passed away never heard the voice of an inspired man, never heard a Gospel sermon, until they entered the spirit-world. Somebody has got to redeem them, by performing such ordinances for them in the flesh as they cannot attend to themselves in the spirit, and in order that this work may be done, we must have Temples in which to do it” (in *Journal of Discourses*, 19:228–29).

#### *The need for us to be sealed to our parents and ancestors*

Have the assigned class member report on the revelation that President Woodruff received about tracing our family histories and sealing children to their parents (*Our Heritage*, page 101).

- What does this revelation teach about families? How does the revelation help fulfill the prophecy about turning the hearts of the children to their fathers?

### **3. President Joseph F. Smith: “The eyes of my understanding were opened.”**

Read or share in your own words the following statement by President Woodruff:

“President [Brigham] Young, who followed President Joseph Smith, . . . laid the foundation of [the Salt Lake Temple], as well as others in the mountains of Israel. What for? That we might carry out these principles of redemption for the dead. He accomplished all that God required at his hands. But he did not receive all the revelations that belong to this work; neither did President [John] Taylor, nor has Wilford Woodruff” (*The Discourses of Wilford Woodruff*, 153–54).

Display the picture of President Joseph F. Smith. Explain that President Smith, the sixth President of the Church, received a revelation that helped the work of redeeming the dead continue to move forward. On 4 October 1918, just weeks before his death, he said in general conference:

“I have been undergoing a siege of very serious illness for the last five months. . . . I have not lived alone these five months. I have dwelt in the spirit of prayer, of supplication, of faith and of determination; and I have had my communication with the Spirit of the Lord continuously” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1918, 2).

The day before President Smith made this statement, he had received a revelation that would expand the Saints’ understanding of the redemption of the dead. This revelation is now section 138 of the Doctrine and Covenants. It is a record of the Savior’s visit to the spirit world while His body was in the tomb.

- What was President Smith doing when he received the vision of the redemption of the dead? (See D&C 138:1–11. He was pondering the scriptures and the Atonement of Jesus Christ. As he pondered, he was led to read 1 Peter 3 and 4, which include information about Jesus’ ministry in the postmortal spirit world.)
- Read D&C 138:12–19 with class members. Whom did the Savior visit in the spirit world? (Answers include those listed below. You may want to summarize them on the chalkboard.)

The Savior went to the spirits who:

- a. “Had been faithful in the testimony of Jesus while they lived in mortality” (D&C 138:12).
  - b. “Had offered sacrifice in the similitude of the great sacrifice of the Son of God” (D&C 138:13).
  - c. “Had suffered tribulation in their Redeemer’s name” (D&C 138:13).
  - d. “Had departed the mortal life, firm in the hope of a glorious resurrection, through the grace of God the Father and his Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ” (D&C 138:14).
  - e. “Were filled with joy and gladness, and were rejoicing together because the day of their deliverance was at hand” (D&C 138:15).
- To whom did the Savior *not* go? (See D&C 138:20–21.) What did the Savior do so the gospel could be preached to “those who had died in their sins, without a knowledge of the truth”? (See D&C 138:27–37. He organized the righteous spirits and commissioned them to teach those who had not yet accepted the gospel.) Who preaches the gospel in the spirit world today? (See D&C 138:57.)
  - Read D&C 138:22–24, 57–59 with class members. Ask them to look for differences between those in the spirit world who have been faithful in the testimony of Jesus and those who have not. What do these verses teach about the importance of teaching the gospel in the spirit world? How do these verses make you feel about your responsibility to provide priesthood ordinances for the dead?

Ask the assigned class members to talk briefly about their experiences and feelings as they have provided ordinances for the dead (see “Preparation,” item 3c).

#### **4. President Gordon B. Hinckley: “We are determined . . . to take the temples to the people.”**

Have the assigned class member report on President Joseph F. Smith’s prophecy that the time would come when the land would “be dotted with temples” (*Our Heritage*, page 106).

Display the picture of President Gordon B. Hinckley. Explain that President Hinckley is another prophet who has expanded our understanding of temple work. When he became President of the Church in 1995, there were 47 temples in operation. About two and one-half years later, he made the following announcement:

“There are many areas of the Church that are remote, where the membership is small and not likely to grow very much in the near future. Are those who live in these places to be denied forever the blessings of the temple ordinances? While visiting such an area a few months ago, we prayerfully pondered this question. The answer, we believe, came bright and clear.

“We will construct small temples in some of these areas, buildings with all of the facilities to administer all of the ordinances. They would be built to temple standards, which are much higher than meetinghouse standards. They would accommodate baptisms for the dead, the endowment service, sealings, and all other ordinances to be had in the Lord’s house for both the living and the dead. . . .

“ . . . We are determined . . . to take the temples to the people and afford them every opportunity for the very precious blessings that come of temple worship” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1997, 68–69; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 49–50).

In April 1998, President Hinckley announced a goal to have 100 temples in operation by the end of the century (see Conference Report, Apr. 1998, 115; or *Ensign*, May 1998, 88).

- How has the increase in temple construction affected you? How has it affected others you know? (You may want to point out how many people would not be enjoying the blessings of the temple if President Hinckley had not received the revelation to accelerate the building of temples.) How will the accelerated building of temples affect those who have died without receiving the gospel?

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#### Conclusion

Emphasize that no people in history have ever had the opportunity to do so much for so many people as we do today. Explain that the next lesson will include discussion about specific ways to participate in temple and family history work. As directed by the Spirit, testify of the importance of temple and family history work.

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#### Additional Teaching Idea

You may want to use the following idea to supplement the suggested lesson outline.

##### Youth participation in temple work

If you are teaching youth, encourage them to participate in temple work by being baptized for the dead. If you are teaching adults, suggest that parents help their children participate in temple work. Consider sharing the following story told by Elder J Ballard Washburn of the Seventy:

“After a stake conference, I was talking with a family with teenage children. I said to them, ‘You must live righteously so that someday you can go to the temple with your parents.’ A sixteen-year-old daughter responded, ‘Oh, we go to the temple with our parents almost every week. We go and do baptisms for our family file names.’ I thought, *What a wonderful thing, for families to go to the temple together*” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1995, 12; or *Ensign*, May 1995, 11).

- In what other ways can youth help further the work done in temples? (Answers could include that they can do family history research and support their parents’ efforts to attend the temple.)

Lesson  
**40**

# Finding Joy in Temple and Family History Work

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**Purpose** To help class members see the many different ways they can participate in temple and family history work and to encourage them to prayerfully determine the ways they should participate now.

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**Preparation**

1. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
2. A week in advance, ask two class members to participate in temple and family history work in some way during the coming week. Help them understand that there are many ways to do this work. For example, they could complete a family group record, submit the name of an ancestor for temple work, attend the temple, write in a journal or personal history, or teach children about their ancestors. Invite them to prepare to tell about their experiences as part of the lesson.
3. You may want to obtain copies of some of the resources the Church provides for doing temple and family history work so you can show them in the third section of the lesson (see page 236). If your ward or branch has a family history consultant, you may want to ask him or her to prepare a brief presentation on these resources.

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**Suggestions for Lesson Development**

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Write your name in the center of the chalkboard. On other areas of the chalkboard, write the names of your parents, some of your ancestors, and, if you are a parent, your children. Briefly tell class members about how you are related to each person whose name you have written.

Explain the ways in which some of these people have been temporarily separated from each other. For example, some are separated because of death. Some might be separated because they live in different places.

Point out that even when family members are separated temporarily, they can be unified eternally. Their hearts can turn to one another (D&C 110:14–15).

Explain that this lesson discusses ways we can participate in temple and family history work. As we participate in this work, we gain a greater understanding of what it means to be part of an eternal family. Our hearts turn to our ancestors, their hearts turn to us, and the hearts of parents and children turn to one another.

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Prayerfully select the lesson materials that will best meet class members' needs. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the principles you discuss.

Remind class members that this is the second of two lessons about temple and family history work. Lesson 39 discussed the need to attend the temple and perform priesthood ordinances in behalf of those who have died without receiving them. This lesson discusses a few other ways we can participate in temple and family history work.

### **1. The Spirit of Elijah is prompting people to turn their hearts to their ancestors.**

Explain that Latter-day Saints often talk about the Spirit of Elijah. This phrase refers to the desire people have to “turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers” (D&C 110:15). We call it the Spirit of Elijah because Elijah restored the keys of the sealing power of the priesthood to Joseph Smith (D&C 110:13–16). Through this power, sealing ordinances can be performed that unite families for eternity.

- What does the Spirit of Elijah influence members of the Church to do? (Answers could include that it prompts us to receive temple ordinances for ourselves, do family history research, and attend the temple to receive priesthood ordinances for the dead. See also the following quotation.) What experiences have you had when you have felt influenced by the Spirit of Elijah?

President Gordon B. Hinckley emphasized: “All of our vast family history endeavor is directed to temple work. There is no other purpose for it. The temple ordinances become the crowning blessings the Church has to offer” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1998, 115–16; or *Ensign*, May 1998, 88).

- What are some things that the Spirit of Elijah is guiding people to do throughout the world? (Answers could include that genealogy has become a popular hobby throughout the world and that technological advances are making genealogy easier and more accessible.)

### **2. Each member of the Church can participate in temple and family history work.**

Ask the assigned class members to briefly tell about the experiences they had with temple and family history work in the past week (see “Preparation,” item 2).

After these class members have shared their experiences, read the following statement by President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve:

“No work is more of a protection to this church than temple work and the genealogical research that supports it. No work is more spiritually refining. No work we do gives us more power” (“The Holy Temple,” *Ensign*, Feb. 1995, 36).

- How has temple and family history work helped you feel increased spiritual refinement and power?

Point out that we all can participate in temple and family history work in some way throughout our lives. Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve said: “In the work of redeeming the dead there are many tasks to be performed,

and . . . all members should participate by prayerfully selecting those ways that fit their personal circumstances at a particular time. . . . Our effort is not to compel everyone to do everything, but to encourage everyone to do something” (“Family History: ‘In Wisdom and Order,’” *Ensign*, June 1989, 6).

- What are some things you have done to participate in temple and family history work? (Write class members’ responses on the chalkboard. Use the following information to discuss or add to these responses. If you are teaching adults, you may want to ask how they have participated in temple and family history work at different stages of their lives.)

*Have a current temple recommend and attend the temple regularly*

Explain that one thing we can do to participate in temple and family history work is have a current temple recommend and attend the temple as often as circumstances allow. President Gordon B. Hinckley said:

“I urge our people everywhere, with all of the persuasiveness of which I am capable, to live worthy to hold a temple recommend, to secure one and regard it as a precious asset, and to make a greater effort to go to the house of the Lord and partake of the spirit and the blessings to be had therein. I am satisfied that every man or woman who goes to the temple in a spirit of sincerity and faith leaves the house of the Lord a better man or woman. There is need for constant improvement in all of our lives. There is need occasionally to leave the noise and the tumult of the world and step within the walls of a sacred house of God, there to feel His spirit in an environment of holiness and peace” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1995, 72; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 53).

Point out that even if our circumstances do not allow us to attend regularly, we should hold a temple recommend. President Howard W. Hunter said: “It would please the Lord if every adult member would be worthy of—and carry—a current temple recommend. The things that we must do and not do to be worthy of a temple recommend are the very things that ensure we will be happy as individuals and as families” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1994, 8; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 8).

- What blessings can we receive through holding a temple recommend and attending the temple?
- How can parents teach their children about the importance of the temple? (Answers could include that parents can attend the temple regularly or actively work toward attending, teach children about the temple and testify of the blessings we receive through temples, and take children 12 years of age and older to the temple to be baptized for the dead.)

*Prepare to have ordinances performed for deceased relatives*

Explain that another way we can participate in temple and family history work is to prepare to have ordinances performed for deceased relatives. Even if others in our families have worked on family history, we can often find deceased relatives who still need to have temple ordinances performed for them.

We begin this process by identifying our deceased relatives. We can list those whom we remember, look through family records, and ask parents, grandparents, and other family members to tell us about other ancestors. We can

also use Church-produced computer programs in our homes and in Family History Centers to help us in these efforts. Emphasize the powerful influence of the Spirit in helping us identify ancestors. As we exercise faith, names and information may come to us in unexpected ways and places.

As we learn about our ancestors, we should record the information we find on family history forms, such as pedigree charts and family group records. If an ancestor received any priesthood ordinances before death, it is helpful to record the dates when those ordinances were performed so we can know which ones still need to be done.

Family history consultants in the ward, branch, or stake can help us prepare the information that the temple will need before ordinances may be performed for our ancestors. Church family history publications, local priesthood leaders, and temples should also have these instructions.

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve counseled: “Arrange to participate for deceased ancestors in the sealing and other ordinances. . . . I find it helpful when receiving ordinances for another to try and relate to that person specifically. I think of him and pray that he will accept the ordinance and benefit from it. Do these things with a prayer in your heart that the Holy Spirit will enhance your understanding and enrich your life. Those worthy prayers will be answered” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1999, 33; or *Ensign*, May 1999, 27).

#### *Learn about ancestors' lives*

- How have you learned about your ancestors' lives? How has learning about your ancestors' lives been helpful to you?
- What can parents do to teach their children about their ancestors?

Elder Dennis B. Neuenschwander of the Seventy told of his responsibility to teach his children and grandchildren about their family's history:

“Not one of my children has any recollection of my grandparents. If I want my children and grandchildren to know those who still live in my memory, then I must build the bridge between them. I alone am the link to the generations that stand on either side of me. It is my responsibility to knit their hearts together through love and respect, even though they may never have known each other personally. My grandchildren will have no knowledge of their family's history if I do nothing to preserve it for them. That which I do not in some way record will be lost at my death, and that which I do not pass on to my posterity, they will never have. The work of gathering and sharing eternal family keepsakes is a personal responsibility. It cannot be passed off or given to another” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1999, 109; or *Ensign*, May 1999, 83–84).

#### *Keep a journal or prepare a personal history or family history*

- How does keeping a journal or a personal history help us participate in family history? What are the blessings of keeping a journal or preparing a history? (Suggest that class members discuss how they personally are blessed and how their descendants may be blessed.)
- How can preparing a family history help turn our hearts to our family members?

### 3. The Church provides many resources to help us participate in temple and family history work.

Explain that the Church provides many resources to help us participate in temple and family history work. These include:

- a. *A Member's Guide to Temple and Family History Work* (34697).
- b. Family history forms (such as pedigree charts and family group records).
- c. Computer programs.
- d. Information on the Internet.
- e. Family History Centers (you may want to find out where the nearest one is located).

Show copies of *A Member's Guide* and of family history forms and explain how class members can obtain them. If you asked the ward or branch family history consultant to tell class members about these resources, have him or her do so now (see "Preparation," item 3). Make sure class members understand that they can participate in temple and family history work even if they do not have access to these resources.

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#### Conclusion

Express your feelings about the importance of participating in temple and family history work. Encourage class members to prayerfully determine the ways they should participate in this work now. As prompted by the Spirit, testify of the truths discussed during the lesson.

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#### Additional Teaching Idea

You may want to use the following idea to supplement the suggested lesson outline.

##### Activity for class members

Obtain enough copies of a current family history form, such as a pedigree chart or family group record, to be able to give one to each class member. You can obtain these forms through priesthood leaders or the family history consultant.

As part of the lesson, give each class member a copy of the form. If there is time, you could distribute pens or pencils and have class members start working on the form during class. If there is not time in class, encourage class members to work on the form at home.

# “Every Member a Missionary”

## Lesson 41

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**Purpose** To inspire class members to participate in taking the gospel to all the world and to strengthen new converts.

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- Preparation**
1. Prayerfully study the following scriptures and other materials:
    - a. Doctrine and Covenants 1:4–5, 30; 65; 88:81; 109:72–74.
    - b. *Our Heritage*, pages 116–17, 124–25.
  2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
  3. Ask class members to prepare to summarize the following information from *Our Heritage*:
    - a. Missionary work under the administration of President David O. McKay (pages 116–17).
    - b. President Spencer W. Kimball’s address to the regional representatives of the Church (first two paragraphs on page 125).
  4. You may want to ask one or two class members who are converts to share briefly the feelings they had as new members of the Church. Ask them to tell how other members helped them; they could also suggest how other members could have been more helpful.
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### Suggestions for Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. Write the following on the chalkboard before class:

England	Germany	Samoa
Tahiti	Tonga	New Zealand
Australia	Turkey	South America
Iceland	Mexico	France
Italy	Czechoslovakia	Hawaii
Switzerland	China	

- Which of these areas do you think were visited by missionaries in the first 20 years after the Church was organized?

President Spencer W. Kimball said: “When I read Church history, I am amazed at the boldness of the early brethren as they went out into the world. They

seemed to find a way. . . . As early as 1837 the Twelve were in England fighting Satan, in Tahiti in 1844, Australia in 1851, Iceland [in] 1853, Italy [in] 1850, and also in Switzerland, Germany, Tonga, Turkey, Mexico, Japan, Czechoslovakia, China, Samoa, New Zealand, South America, France, and Hawaii in 1850. . . . Much of this early proselyting was done while the leaders were climbing the Rockies and planting the sod and starting their homes. It is faith and super faith" ("When the World Will Be Converted," *Ensign*, Oct. 1974, 6).

Emphasize that from the earliest days of the Restoration, Church leaders have sought to fulfill the commission to take the gospel to all the world. President Kimball expressed his confidence that we can continue to do so: "Somehow, . . . I feel that when we have done all in our power that the Lord will find a way to open doors. That is my faith" (*Ensign*, Oct. 1974, 7).

Explain that this lesson discusses a few ways in which the gospel is going forth into all the world.

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## Discussion and Application

Prayerfully select the lesson material that will best meet class members' needs. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

### 1. The Church is coming forth out of obscurity.

This year's course of study has shown how the Church began as a small group of people who were little known. The Church has now grown to include members in almost every country of the world. This dramatic increase in membership and visibility would have been difficult to comprehend during the Church's early days of struggle, persecution, and poverty. But the Lord revealed the marvelous destiny of His Church through the Prophet Joseph Smith.

Ask class members to read the following scriptures and discuss what each teaches about the destiny of the Church.

- a. D&C 1:30. (Those called by God to lead His Church would have power to bring it forth out of obscurity.)
- b. D&C 65:1–6. (The gospel will roll forth until it has filled the whole earth. Those who receive it will be prepared for the Second Coming of the Savior.)
- c. D&C 109:72–74. (The Church will fill the whole earth. It will come out of the wilderness and "shine forth . . . clear as the sun.")

The Prophet Joseph Smith declared, "No unhallowed hand can stop the work from progressing; persecutions may rage, mobs may combine, armies may assemble, calumny may defame, but the truth of God will go forth boldly, nobly, and independent, till it has penetrated every continent, visited every clime, swept every country, and sounded in every ear, till the purposes of God shall be accomplished, and the Great Jehovah shall say the work is done" (*History of the Church*, 4:540).

- In what ways is the Church coming out of obscurity throughout the world?

### 2. Latter-day prophets have challenged us to take the gospel to all the world.

Explain that one important way the Church moves forward throughout the world is through the missionary efforts of each member. Latter-day prophets

have challenged us to make greater efforts to share the gospel as member missionaries and as full-time missionaries.

President David O. McKay became well known for his saying “Every member a missionary.” Ask the assigned class member to report on missionary work under President McKay (*Our Heritage*, pages 116–17).

Later, President Spencer W. Kimball called on Church members to lengthen their stride in missionary service. He asked Church members to pray that the doors of nations would be opened to the preaching of the gospel and to increase the number of prepared missionaries so we could enter those doors. Ask the assigned class member to report on President Kimball’s address to the regional representatives (*Our Heritage*, page 125, first two paragraphs). Explain that President Kimball’s vision of how missionary work would move across the earth is now coming to pass.

President Gordon B. Hinckley taught that each of us has a responsibility to bring to pass this vision of the gospel filling the earth:

“Now, what of the future? What of the years that lie ahead? It looks promising indeed. People are beginning to see us for what we are and for the values we espouse. . . .

“If we will go forward, never losing sight of our goal, speaking ill of no one, living the great principles we know to be true, this cause will roll on in majesty and power to fill the earth. Doors now closed to the preaching of the gospel will be opened. The Almighty, if necessary, may have to shake the nations to humble them and cause them to listen to the servants of the living God. Whatever is needed will come to pass.

“The key to the great challenges facing us and to the success of the work will be the faith of all who call themselves Latter-day Saints” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1997, 92; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 68).

- How are these prophecies of the gospel filling the earth being fulfilled?

### 3. “Every member a missionary.”

- Read D&C 1:4–5 and 88:81 with class members. What do these passages teach about our responsibility to share the gospel?
- What can each of us do to assist in missionary work? (Use the following information to discuss or add to class members’ responses. Write the headings on the chalkboard as you discuss them.)

#### *Prepare to serve full-time missions*

- How can we prepare ourselves to serve full-time missions? Why is it important that we prepare ourselves before we are called?

President Spencer W. Kimball said: “When I ask for more missionaries, I am not asking for more testimony-barren or unworthy missionaries. I am asking that we start earlier and train our missionaries better in every branch and every ward in the world. . . . Young people [should] understand that it is a great privilege to go on a mission and that they must be physically well, mentally well, spiritually well, and that ‘the Lord cannot look upon sin with the

least degree of allowance' [D&C 1:31]" ("When the World Will Be Converted," *Ensign*, Oct. 1974, 7).

- How can parents and other adults help young people prepare to be full-time missionaries? (Answers could include teaching them to be worthy and ready for a mission call at the proper time, sharing mission experiences with them, teaching them of the joys and blessings of missionary work, telling conversion stories of their own or of ancestors, starting missionary funds for them, and teaching them how to work hard.)
- What challenges do youth face as they prepare to serve full-time missions? How can they overcome these challenges? What challenges do older members face as they prepare to serve full-time missions? How can they overcome these challenges?

#### *Serve full-time missions*

- Who should serve full-time missions?

All worthy, able young men ages 19 through 25 should serve full-time missions. Full-time missionary service is a priesthood responsibility for these young men. Women ages 21 and older may also be recommended to serve full-time missions if they desire. Older couples are also encouraged to serve missions when they are able to do so. All missionaries must be worthy.

Elder David B. Haight of the Quorum of the Twelve counseled: "The goal of every physically able couple in the Church, just as it is for every nineteen-year-old young man in the Church, should be to serve a mission. No finer example can be given, no finer testimony can be borne by parents to children or grandchildren, than through missionary service in their mature years" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1987, 73; or *Ensign*, May 1987, 61).

#### *Support full-time missionaries*

- How can we support missionaries who are now serving? (Answers could include remembering them in prayers, writing encouraging letters, and contributing to the ward or branch missionary fund or the General Missionary Fund. We can support missionaries who are serving in our area by helping them find and teach investigators and by giving other assistance.)

President Gordon B. Hinckley said: "My brethren and sisters, we can let the missionaries try to do it alone, or we can help them. If they do it alone, they will knock on doors day after day and the harvest will be meager. Or as members we can assist them in finding and teaching investigators" ("Find the Lambs, Feed the Sheep," *Ensign*, May 1999, 107).

#### *Share the gospel throughout our lives*

- Why is it important for us to share the gospel with others throughout our lives? What experiences have you had in sharing the gospel with others?
- Why are we sometimes afraid to share the gospel? How can we overcome these fears?
- Were any of you influenced to join the Church because of the example and friendship of a Church member? How did the actions of this Church member affect you?

- What are some ways we can share the gospel with others as part of our daily lives? (Answers could include the following.)
  - a. Set a good example for family members, neighbors, and friends.
  - b. Share copies of the Book of Mormon.
  - c. Refer names of interested people to the missionaries.
  - d. Share your feelings about the gospel with people.
  - e. Invite people to Church activities, meetings, and firesides.
  - f. Invite people to family home evening and to neighborhood activities.
  - g. Invite people who are interested in genealogy to visit a Family History Center.
  - h. Invite people to baptismal services.

President Spencer W. Kimball said: “It seems to me that the Lord chose his words when he said [that the gospel must go to] ‘every nation,’ ‘every land,’ ‘uttermost bounds of the earth,’ ‘every tongue,’ ‘every people,’ ‘every soul,’ ‘all the world,’ ‘many lands.’ Surely there is significance in these words! . . . I wonder if we are doing all we can. Are we complacent in our approach to teaching all the world? . . . Are we prepared to lengthen our stride? To enlarge our vision?” (*Ensign*, Oct. 1974, 5).

- In what ways can each of us lengthen our stride as we seek to share the gospel in our daily lives?

President Kimball also said: “Our great need, and our great calling, is to bring to the people of this world the candle of understanding to light their way out of obscurity and darkness and into the joy, peace, and truths of the gospel. I believe we must not weary in our well-doing. I believe it is time again to ask ourselves the question, what can I do to help take the gospel to others and to the inhabitants of the world?” (“Are We Doing All We Can?” *Ensign*, Feb. 1983, 5).

President Hinckley requested that each priesthood leader accept the responsibility and set the example for finding and friendshipping investigators. He asked that this subject be discussed occasionally in sacrament meetings. He also asked that priesthood, Relief Society, Young Women, Primary, ward council, and stake council meetings be used to plan how to find and friendship investigators. (*Ensign*, May 1999, 107.)

#### **4. Nurturing new converts is our continuing responsibility.**

Write the following statement on the chalkboard: “Any investigator worthy of baptism becomes a convert worthy of saving” (Gordon B. Hinckley, *Ensign*, May 1999, 109). Explain that each year, hundreds of thousands of converts are brought into the Church. These new members need to be nurtured and strengthened by all of us.

- Why is it sometimes difficult for new converts to stay active in the Church?

President Gordon B. Hinckley said: “It is not an easy thing to become a member of this Church. In most cases it involves setting aside old habits, leaving old friends and associations, and stepping into a new society which is different and somewhat demanding” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1997, 66; or *Ensign*, May 1997, 47).

- What can new converts do to strengthen themselves? What can other members do to strengthen new converts? How have you seen members do this effectively?

President Hinckley taught that “every convert needs three things:

“1. A friend in the Church to whom he can constantly turn, who will walk beside him, who will answer his questions, who will understand his problems.

“2. An assignment. Activity is the genius of this Church. It is the process by which we grow. Faith and love for the Lord are like the muscle of my arm. If I use them, they grow stronger. If I put them in a sling, they become weaker. Every convert deserves a responsibility. . . .

“3. Every convert must be ‘nourished by the good word of God’ (Moro. 6:4). It is imperative that he or she become affiliated with a priesthood quorum or the Relief Society, the Young Women, the Young Men, the Sunday School, or the Primary. He or she must be encouraged to come to sacrament meeting” (*Ensign*, May 1999, 108).

If you asked class members to share the feelings they had as new members of the Church, have them do so now (see “Preparation,” item 4).

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## Conclusion

Emphasize that the Lord is guiding His Church and opening the way for the gospel to be taken to all the earth. Encourage class members to lengthen their stride as they prepare for full-time missions and share the gospel with those around them. Also encourage them to nurture and strengthen new members. As prompted by the Spirit, testify of the truths discussed during the lesson.

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## Additional Teaching Idea

You may want to use the following idea to supplement the suggested lesson outline.

### ***An Ensign to the Nations* video presentation**

If the videocassette *An Ensign to the Nations* (53980) is available, consider showing a segment of it as part of the lesson. This presentation contains inspiring stories of the Church’s growth in Europe, the Pacific Islands, Latin America, Asia, and Africa. It concludes with visuals of temples and of people from all over the world singing the hymn “Faith in Every Footstep.”

Because the videocassette is 60 minutes long, you will not be able to show the entire presentation in class. However, as you preview the presentation, you may find a segment that will be particularly inspiring for those you teach.

# Continuing Revelation to Latter-day Prophets

Lesson  
**42**

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**Purpose** To show class members that the Lord continues to guide the Church through revelation to latter-day prophets, seers, and revelators.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study the following scriptures and other materials:
  - a. Doctrine and Covenants 1:38; 68:1–4; 84:109–10; 107:25, 34, 93–98; 132:8.
  - b. Official Declaration 2 (pages 293–94 in the Doctrine and Covenants).
  - c. *Our Heritage*, pages 117–19, 125–27.
2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
3. Ask class members to prepare to summarize the following information from *Our Heritage*:
  - a. The information on Church correlation (last paragraph on page 117 through the end of page 118).
  - b. The account of the revelation extending the blessings of the priesthood to every worthy male member of the Church (pages 125–27).

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## Suggestions for Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Tell the following story, which was shared by President Harold B. Lee:

“Elder John A. Widtsoe of the Council of the Twelve once told of a discussion he had with a group of stake officers. In the course of the discussion someone said to him, ‘Brother Widtsoe, how long has it been since the Church received a revelation?’ Brother Widtsoe rubbed his chin thoughtfully and said in reply, ‘Oh, probably since last Thursday’” (*Stand Ye in Holy Places* [1974], 132–33).

President Spencer W. Kimball declared that the Church continues to be guided by revelation:

“We testify to the world that revelation continues and that the vaults and files of the Church contain these revelations which come month to month and day to day. We testify also that there is, since 1830 when The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized, and will continue to be, so long as time shall last, a prophet, recognized of God and his people, who will continue to interpret the mind and will of the Lord. . . .

“Expecting the spectacular, one may not be fully alerted to the constant flow of revealed communication. I say, in the deepest of humility, but also by the power and force of a burning testimony in my soul, that from the prophet of the Restoration to the prophet of our own year, the communication line is unbroken, the authority is continuous, a light, brilliant and penetrating,

continues to shine. The sound of the voice of the Lord is a continuous melody and a thunderous appeal. For nearly a century and a half there has been no interruption” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1977, 115; or *Ensign*, May 1977, 78).

Emphasize that President Kimball’s statement continues to be true today. The heavens are open, and the Lord continues to reveal His will to latter-day prophets.

## Discussion and Application

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Prayerfully select the lesson materials that will best meet class members’ needs. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the principles you discuss.

Read D&C 1:38 and 68:1–4 with class members. Emphasize that the members of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles are latter-day prophets, seers, and revelators. They continue to receive revelation to guide the Church. Their direction is “the will of the Lord, . . . the mind of the Lord, . . . the word of the Lord, . . . the voice of the Lord, and the power of God unto salvation” (D&C 68:4). Explain that this lesson discusses a few examples of continuing revelation to guide the Church.

### 1. Church correlation

Ask the assigned class member to summarize the information on Church correlation from *Our Heritage*, beginning with the last paragraph on page 117 and including all of page 118. Emphasize that Church correlation was initiated and continues to operate today by revelation from the Lord to His prophets.

Explain that the purpose of Church correlation is to preserve “the right way of God” (Jacob 7:7). Ultimately it is intended to help accomplish the mission of the Church, which is to invite all people to “come unto Christ, and be perfected in him” (Moroni 10:32; see also D&C 20:59).

The First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve oversee correlation in the Church. Correlation includes:

- a. Maintaining purity of doctrine.
- b. Emphasizing the importance of the family and the home.
- c. Placing all the work of the Church under priesthood direction.
- d. Establishing proper relationships among the organizations of the Church.
- e. Achieving unity and order in the Church.
- f. Ensuring simplicity of Church programs and materials.

Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve said that correlation is a process “in which we take all the programs of the Church, bring them to one focal point, wrap them in one package, operate them as one program, involve all members of the Church in the operation—and do it all under priesthood direction” (*Let Every Man Learn His Duty* [pamphlet, 1976], 2).

Use the following material to discuss how the Church’s correlation efforts bless our lives. Write the headings on the chalkboard as you discuss them.

#### *Importance of the family*

The correlation effort has emphasized the importance of the family in many ways. One is the establishment of the family home evening program. Parents

are to hold a weekly family home evening to teach and strengthen their families. Monday evenings are reserved for family home evening throughout the Church and should be kept free from Church meetings and activities.

- How has family home evening influenced your life? What have you done to make family home evenings successful?

The correlation effort has also emphasized the importance of the family by clarifying the role of the organizations, programs, and activities of the Church in relation to the family. The *Church Handbook of Instructions* states:

“The most important place for gospel teaching and leadership is in the family and the home (see Mosiah 4:14–15; D&C 68:25–28). . . . Quorums, auxiliaries, programs, and activities in the Church should strengthen and support the family. They should enhance gospel-centered family activities, not compete with them” (*Book 2: Priesthood and Auxiliary Leaders* [1998], 299).

- Why is it important to understand that Church auxiliaries, programs, and activities exist to support the family? How have Church organizations and activities strengthened you and your family?

The correlation effort also emphasizes that Church programs and activities should not make unnecessary demands on the effort, time, or other resources of Church members.

#### *Operation of Church auxiliaries*

One important role of correlation is to unify and coordinate the auxiliary organizations of the Church—the Relief Society, Young Men, Young Women, Primary, and Sunday School. For many years these organizations were somewhat independent. At the general Church level, some had their own magazines, funding, and conferences. As they grew, they became increasingly complex and often had unnecessary duplication in their programs and materials.

Through the process of correlation, such complexity and duplication have been reduced. Through correlation, there has also been an emphasis on auxiliary organizations functioning under the direction of priesthood leaders. For example, in a ward these organizations all function under the direction of the bishopric.

- Why is it important to unify and coordinate the efforts of the auxiliary organizations in the ward? How have you seen these organizations be able to work more effectively by coordinating their efforts?

#### *Preparation of Church publications*

Explain that Church publications, such as lesson manuals and Church magazines, are produced to help members learn and live the gospel of Jesus Christ. The correlation process helps ensure that these materials are scripture-based, doctrinally accurate, and appropriate for the intended audience. All Church publications are planned, prepared, reviewed, and implemented under the direction of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve.

One result of correlation in Church publications is that adult and youth Gospel Doctrine classes and most Primary classes study the same book of scripture during the year. This can encourage and facilitate discussion of the scriptures in the home.

- How can lessons taught at church support parents' efforts to teach their children at home?

### *Home teaching*

Read D&C 20:53–55 with class members. Explain that home visits by priesthood holders have been part of the Church since the time of the Prophet Joseph Smith. As part of the correlation effort, these visits were reemphasized in the 1960s and called home teaching. Home teaching continues to be a vital responsibility of teachers, priests, and Melchizedek Priesthood holders.

- What are the purposes of home teaching? What experiences have shown you the importance of home teaching?

To conclude your discussion on Church correlation, read D&C 84:109–10 and 132:8 with class members.

- In what ways does Church correlation help us fulfill these words?
- What can we do individually and in our Church callings to apply the principles of Church correlation?

## **2. Revelation extending the blessings of the priesthood to every worthy male member of the Church**

Explain that in June 1978, President Spencer W. Kimball announced a revelation that extended the blessings of the priesthood to every worthy male member of the Church. Ask the assigned class member to summarize the account of this revelation from *Our Heritage*, pages 125–27.

- Read Official Declaration 2 with class members. How has this revelation been a blessing to the Church?
- What can we learn from the process President Kimball went through before receiving this revelation? (See *Our Heritage*, page 126.)

## **3. Publication of new Latter-day Saint editions of the scriptures**

Explain that in 1979, after years of careful work under the direction of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve, the Church published a Latter-day Saint edition of the Bible. This edition of the Bible has the same text as the King James Version, but it includes special study aids, such as the Topical Guide, the Bible Dictionary, and footnotes referring to passages in other books of scripture and to excerpts from Joseph Smith's translation of the Bible.

In 1981, the Church published a new edition of the triple combination (the Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and Pearl of Great Price in a single volume), with expanded footnotes and index entries.

- Read Ezekiel 37:15–19 with class members. Explain that “the stick of Judah” is the Bible and “the stick of Ephraim” is the Book of Mormon. How do the new editions of the scriptures help the Bible and Book of Mormon become “one in [your] hand”?

Explain that many footnotes in the Bible refer to scriptures in the Book of Mormon, and many footnotes in the Book of Mormon refer to scriptures in the Bible. Elder Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve observed: “The stick or record of Judah—the Old Testament and the New Testament—

and the stick or record of Ephraim—the Book of Mormon, which is another testament of Jesus Christ—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” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1982, 75; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1982, 53).

Take a few minutes to show class members the study aids in the Latter-day Saint editions of the scriptures (you may want to use the second additional teaching idea). Then ask the following questions:

- In what ways have you used the study aids in the scriptures? How have these resources helped you in your scripture study? In what ways do you think the Church has been blessed because of the Latter-day Saint editions of the scriptures?

Soon after these scriptures were printed, Elder Boyd K. Packer prophesied: “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 [generation] 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” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1982, 75; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1982, 53).

In the April 1995 general conference, President Gordon B. Hinckley made an observation that shows that Elder Packer’s words are being fulfilled: “I look back to my own youth. Neither young men nor young women were doing much scripture reading at that time. What a marvelous change has been wrought. A new generation is arising who are familiar with the word of the Lord” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1995, 117; or *Ensign*, May 1995, 87).

#### 4. Additional Quorums of the Seventy

Explain that as the Church has grown, the Lord has revealed how general Church administration should change to meet the needs of members all over the world. These changes have been especially evident in the organization of additional Quorums of the Seventy.

- Read D&C 107:25, 34 with class members. What are the responsibilities of the Seventy?

Explain that for many years there were only seven General Authorities of the Church who served as Seventies. They made up the First Council of the Seventy. In 1975, others were called; they served in the First Quorum of the Seventy. Further expansion came in 1989, when a Second Quorum of the Seventy was added.

In April 1995, President Gordon B. Hinckley announced the calling of new local officers, called Area Authorities, who would serve for a period of about six years. (See Conference Report, Apr. 1995, 71–72; or *Ensign*, May 1995, 52.)

In 1997, President Hinckley announced that Area Authorities would be ordained Seventies and would form the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Quorums of the Seventy. Unlike Seventies who serve as General Authorities, Area Authority Seventies

serve in the areas in which they live and continue in their present employment. (See Conference Report, Apr. 1997, 4–5; or *Ensign*, May 1997, 5–6.)

- Read D&C 107:93–97 with class members. How does creation of additional Quorums of the Seventy comply with the instructions in this revelation?
- How do you think the calling of Area Authority Seventies will help the Church as it grows?

Concerning the creation of additional Quorums of the Seventy, President Hinckley said: “With these respective quorums in place, we have established a pattern under which the Church may grow to any size with an organization of Area Presidencies and Area Authority Seventies, chosen and working across the world according to need. Now, the Lord is watching over His kingdom. He is inspiring its leadership to care for its ever growing membership” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1997, 5; or *Ensign*, May 1997, 6).

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## Conclusion

If you did not use the attention activity, read the statement by President Spencer W. Kimball on pages 243–44. Give particular attention to President Kimball’s testimony that “the sound of the voice of the Lord [to His prophets] is a continuous melody and a thunderous appeal.” Express your gratitude for the Lord’s guidance through latter-day prophets.

As prompted by the Spirit, testify of the truths discussed during the lesson.

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## Additional Teaching Ideas

You may want to use one or both of the following ideas to supplement the suggested lesson outline.

### 1. “Revelation on Priesthood” video presentation

If *Doctrine and Covenants and Church History Video Presentations* (53912) is available, consider showing “Revelation on Priesthood,” a seven-minute segment, during the second section of the lesson.

### 2. Activity to encourage the use of the Topical Guide

Use the following activity to help class members use the Topical Guide:

Ask class members to close their scriptures. Then ask them to list from memory as many scripture references as they can about two or three different gospel subjects that have extensive listings in the Topical Guide. For example, you could ask them to list references about humility, obedience, and the gift of the Holy Ghost. When they cannot list any more references, have them find the same subjects in the Topical Guide. Read a few of the scriptures listed under those subjects.

After you have completed this activity, have class members turn to pages 240–58 of the Topical Guide to see the many listings about the Savior. As they examine these references, you may want to share a statement by President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve. He referred to those pages as “the most comprehensive compilation of scriptural references on the subject of Jesus Christ that has ever been assembled in the history of the world” (“The Peaceable Followers of Christ,” *Ensign*, Apr. 1998, 64).

# “Take upon You My Whole Armor”

Lesson  
**43**

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**Purpose** To help class members put on the full armor of God to protect them in the battle against evil.

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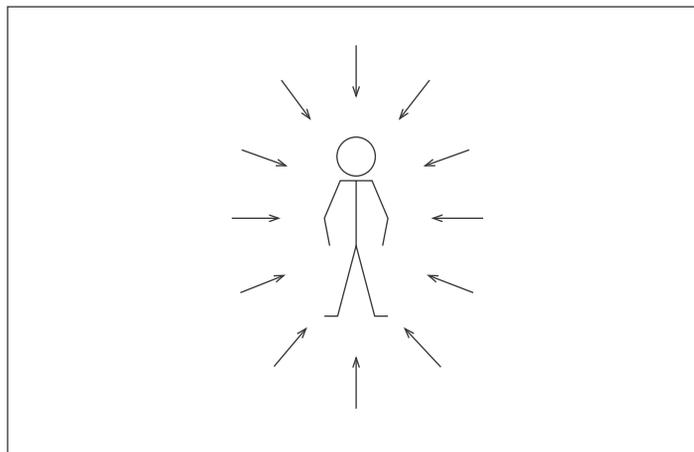
**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study the scriptures in this lesson.
2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
3. If you are teaching youth, ask class members to prepare to summarize the information in some or all of the following sections of *For the Strength of Youth* (36550):
  - a. “Sexual Purity” (pages 26–28).
  - b. “Dress and Appearance” (pages 14–16).
  - c. “Entertainment and the Media” (pages 17–19).
  - d. “Music and Dancing” (pages 20–21).
  - e. “Honesty” (page 31).
  - f. “Language” (pages 22–23).

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## Suggestions for Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. On the chalkboard, draw a stick figure that represents a person, as in the drawing below. Then draw several darts or arrows pointing toward the figure, coming from many directions.



Explain that the scriptures sometimes refer to temptations as “the fiery darts of the adversary” (D&C 3:8; see also Ephesians 6:16; 1 Nephi 15:24; D&C 27:17).

This lesson is about some of these temptations and the “armor” we can wear to protect ourselves from them.

## Discussion and Application

Prayerfully select the lesson material that will best meet class members’ needs. Encourage class members to discuss how to apply these principles in their lives.

### 1. Put on the whole armor of God.

- Read D&C 76:25–28 and Moses 4:3 with class members. Who were the leaders of the two forces involved in the War in Heaven, and what were their objectives? How are we involved in a similar conflict on the earth today? (See D&C 76:29; Moses 4:4.)
- Emphasize that the Lord has not left us unprotected in the battle against evil. Read D&C 27:15–18 with class members. What is the Lord’s armor described in these verses? (Write the following items on the chalkboard. If you used the attention activity, write them near the stick figure you drew.)

*Loins girt about with truth*

*Breastplate of righteousness*

*Feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace*

*Shield of faith*

*Helmet of salvation*

*Sword of God’s Spirit and His word through revelation*

- What can we do to put on the “whole armor” of God? How have you felt added protection from temptation as you have prayed? studied the scriptures? kept the Sabbath day holy? gone to the temple? honored the priesthood?
- What might be the consequences of wearing only part of the Lord’s armor or neglecting to wear it for even a brief time?

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve warned that Satan “seeks to find any chink in the armor of each person. He knows our weaknesses and knows how to exploit them if we allow him to do so. We can defend ourselves against his attacks and deceptions only by understanding the commandments and by fortifying ourselves each day through praying, studying the scriptures, and following the counsel of the Lord’s anointed” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1988, 44; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1988, 35).

Explain that the rest of this lesson will focus on three areas in which Satan is trying to exploit weaknesses in our armor today: chastity, honesty, and language.

### 2. Live the law of chastity.

- What is the Lord’s law of chastity? (See D&C 42:22–24; 59:6; 63:16; and the following quotations.)

The First Presidency stated: “The Lord’s law of moral conduct is abstinence outside of lawful marriage and fidelity within marriage. Sexual relations are proper only between husband and wife appropriately expressed within the bonds of marriage. Any other sexual contact, including fornication, adultery, and homosexual and lesbian behavior, is sinful” (First Presidency letter, 14 Nov. 1991).

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve taught: “Any sexual intimacy outside of the bonds of marriage—I mean any intentional contact with the sacred, private parts of another’s body, with or without clothing—is a sin and is forbidden by God. It is also a transgression to intentionally stimulate these emotions within your own body” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1994, 51; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 38).

If you asked a class member to summarize the section “Sexual Purity” in *For the Strength of Youth*, have him or her do so now.

- What are some consequences of violating the law of chastity? (Discuss consequences that are spiritual and physical, immediate and long-term.) How does a person’s violation of the law of chastity affect others?

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin taught: “One of the most pervasive deceptions in recent years is the notion that immorality is normal and acceptable and has no negative consequences. In truth, immorality is the underlying cause of much suffering and many other problems that are prevalent today, including rampant disease, abortion, broken families, families without fathers, and mothers who themselves are children” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1994, 100; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 76).

- How are we blessed as we live the law of chastity? (See D&C 121:45–46. Answers include that we feel increased peace and joy, love for our spouse and other family members, self-respect, and respect for others. Living the law of chastity is also necessary for us to have the companionship of the Holy Ghost, receive priesthood ordinances, and partake of the sacrament worthily.) How might our obedience to the law of chastity affect others?
- How does Satan tempt people to violate the law of chastity? How do people try to rationalize violating this law?

If you asked class members to summarize sections of *For the Strength of Youth*, have them give the following summaries now: “Dress and Appearance,” “Entertainment and the Media,” and “Music and Dancing.”

President Gordon B. Hinckley warned: “You must not fool around with the Internet to find pornographic material. You must not dial a long-distance telephone number to listen to filth. You must not rent videos with pornography of any kind. This salacious stuff simply is not for you. Stay away from pornography as you would avoid a serious disease. It is destructive. It can become habitual, and those who indulge in it get so they cannot leave it alone. It is addictive” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1998, 66–67; or *Ensign*, May 1998, 49).

- How can we protect ourselves from temptations to violate the law of chastity? What can we do in our homes to avoid immoral influences?
- The law of chastity includes purity of thought as well as action. How are we affected spiritually when our thoughts are unclean? (See D&C 63:16.) How can we dismiss unclean thoughts from our minds?

Elder Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve counseled us to evict unworthy thoughts from our minds by putting “something edifying in their place” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1977, 90; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1977, 60).

Discuss how to follow this counsel. Suggestions include praying for strength, singing a favorite hymn or reciting a favorite scripture in our minds, or thinking about our love for family members.

### 3. Be honest.

- What does it mean to be honest?

President James E. Faust taught: “Honesty is more than not lying. It is truth telling, truth speaking, truth living, and truth loving” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1996, 57; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 41).

If you asked a class member to summarize the section “Honesty” in *For the Strength of Youth*, have him or her do so now.

- Read D&C 42:21, 51:9, and 97:8 with class members. Why is it important to be honest in all aspects of our lives? What are the consequences of being dishonest? How are we blessed as we are honest?
- What are some ways we are tempted to be dishonest? How can giving in to small temptations to be dishonest make us more vulnerable to other temptations? How can we overcome temptations to be dishonest?
- What does it mean to be honest with the Lord? (Answers may include keeping covenants and other promises we have made to the Lord, fulfilling Church assignments, partaking of the sacrament worthily, and paying tithes and offerings.)
- What does it mean to be honest with ourselves? (One meaning is that we do not rationalize or excuse sin.)
- How can we effectively teach honesty in our homes? (After class members respond, you may want to suggest they use the *Family Home Evening Resource Book* [31106], pages 194–96, to teach honesty in their homes.)

Invite class members to share experiences when they chose to be honest even though it was difficult to do so. Or ask them to share examples of honesty they have seen in their workplace, school, community, or home.

### 4. Use language that reverences God and is edifying.

- Read D&C 63:60–62 and 136:21 with class members. What is the Lord’s commandment concerning how we use His name? What are some ways that people take the Lord’s name in vain? (Answers could include by using it disrespectfully, using it in a way that is common or casual, and using it in association with coarse thoughts or evil acts.)
- In addition to taking the Lord’s name in vain, what other kinds of language should we avoid? (Answers could include language that is vulgar, obscene, crude, or degrading.)

President Hinckley said: “Don’t swear. Don’t profane. Avoid so-called dirty jokes. Stay away from conversation that is sprinkled with foul and filthy words. You will be happier if you do so, and your example will give strength to others” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1987, 59; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, 48).

If you asked a class member to summarize the section “Language” in *For the Strength of Youth*, have him or her do so now.

- What are some consequences of using bad language? (Answers could include offending God, offending others, degrading oneself, and losing the companionship of the Holy Ghost.)

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve said, “Profanity and vulgarity . . . are sins that separate us from God and cripple our spiritual defenses by causing the Holy Ghost to withdraw from us” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1986, 69; or *Ensign*, May 1986, 52).

- How does Satan tempt people to use profane, vulgar, or obscene language? How can we overcome temptations to use bad language? (You may want to discuss how to break a habit of using bad language.)
- Why is learning to control our words essential to our spiritual growth? How can controlling our words help us stay away from other temptations?
- How should we respond when we are around people who use bad language or when bad language is used in movies, television, or books? (When possible, we should leave places where bad language is being used. We also can raise objections to such language.)
- How can parents teach children not to use bad language? (After class members respond, you may want to suggest they use the *Family Home Evening Resource Book*, pages 215–16, to teach children not to use bad language.)
- What kind of language would the Lord like us to use? (See D&C 52:16; 136:24; Ephesians 4:29.) In what ways can our words edify others? How can we encourage others to use language that reverences God and is edifying?

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## Conclusion

Emphasize that Heavenly Father loves us and wants us to put on His “whole armor” so we will be protected from temptation. Encourage class members to live the law of chastity, be honest, and use edifying language. As prompted by the Spirit, testify of truths discussed during the lesson.

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## Additional Teaching Ideas

You may want to use one or more of the following ideas to supplement the suggested lesson outline.

### 1. The armor of God includes weapons that we can wield

While serving in the Quorum of the Twelve, Elder Harold B. Lee explained that the armor of God includes not only defensive protections but also weapons that we can actively wield:

“[The] armoured man hold[s] in his hand a shield and in his other hand a sword. . . . That shield was the shield of faith and the sword was the sword of the spirit which is the Word of God. I can’t think of any more powerful weapons than faith and a knowledge of the scriptures in . . . which are contained the Word of God. One so armoured and one so prepared with those weapons is prepared to go out against the enemy” (“*Feet Shod with the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace*,” Brigham Young University Speeches of the Year [9 Nov. 1954], 7).

## **2. Activity with *For the Strength of Youth***

Explain that living by the standards in *For the Strength of Youth* helps provide armor that is strong and sure. Divide class members into groups and assign a topic in *For the Strength of Youth* to each group.

Have the groups spend five minutes discussing their topic and preparing ideas to present to the class. Then have each group make a brief presentation. You might suggest that the groups use one or more of the following approaches in their presentation:

- a. Identify real examples of situations where the standard is an issue.
- b. Share related personal experiences or friends' experiences.
- c. Use role playing to illustrate how to deal with a related real-life situation.
- d. Talk about what has personally helped them maintain this standard.
- e. Share ideas of how to help others maintain this standard.
- f. Discuss what to do if living this standard creates conflict in a peer group or with an individual.

## **3. Supporting youth**

If you are teaching adults, invite a parent or a Young Men or Young Women leader to briefly outline some of the challenges and successes youth are having.

Ask class members to consider carefully what they have heard. Invite them to think of ways they can be more supportive of the youth. Summarize responses on the chalkboard. Some suggestions are listed below:

- a. Learn and remember their names.
- b. Be honestly interested in them and let them know you care.
- c. Identify special needs and take initiative to respond to them.
- d. Look for opportunities to share talents, personal stories, growing-up experiences, and testimony-building experiences.
- e. Continue associating with youth after being released from Church callings in which you taught or worked with them.
- f. Set a good example of Christlike living.
- g. Forgive past mistakes and refrain from labeling individuals negatively.

## **4. "The Whole Armor of God" video presentation**

If *New Testament Video Presentations* (53914) is available, consider showing "The Whole Armor of God," a 13-minute segment.

# Being Good Citizens

## Lesson 44

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**Purpose** To encourage Church members to be good citizens by participating in government, obeying the law, and strengthening the community.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study the following scriptures and other materials:
  - a. Doctrine and Covenants 58:21–22, 26–28; 98:4–10; 134; Articles of Faith 1:12.
  - b. *Our Heritage*, pages 133–34, focusing on Elder Ezra Taft Benson’s service as Secretary of Agriculture for the United States of America.

2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.

*Note to the teacher:* Governments and laws vary among different countries and cultures. Be sensitive to local conditions as you decide what to discuss in this lesson. In some areas it may be best to spend the majority of class time discussing the third section of the lesson. Avoid discussions that encourage controversy or criticism. Remember that Church leaders have always instructed us to work within the law to bring about needed changes.

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### Suggestions for Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Explain that in 1952, while serving in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, Elder Ezra Taft Benson was asked by Dwight D. Eisenhower, President of the United States, to serve as the nation’s Secretary of Agriculture. With the encouragement of Church President David O. McKay, Elder Benson accepted the assignment and served well. In his first general conference address after becoming Secretary of Agriculture, he said:

“I have been happy in the privilege to serve, in a small way at least, this great country and the government under which we live. I am grateful to the First Presidency and my brethren that they have been willing, not only to give consent, but also to give me their blessing as I responded to the call of the chief executive” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1953, 40).

- Why do you think Elder Benson was encouraged to accept such a responsibility?

Explain that Church leaders have encouraged us to be good citizens and to strengthen our communities and nations. There are many ways to be good citizens. These include participating in government or political processes, obeying the law, and serving in our communities. This lesson discusses the Lord’s teachings regarding government and good citizenship.

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Prayerfully select the lesson material that will best meet class members' needs. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

### 1. Participating in government

Explain that in August 1835, a general assembly of the Church at Kirtland, Ohio, unanimously approved a declaration of beliefs about government. This declaration is recorded in D&C 134.

- What are the purposes of civil governments? (See D&C 134:1, 6–8, 11. Answers could include those listed below.)
  - a. “For the good and safety of society” (D&C 134:1).
  - b. “For the protection of the innocent and the punishment of the guilty” (D&C 134:6).
  - c. “For the protection of all citizens in the free exercise of their religious belief” (D&C 134:7).
  - d. “For redress of all wrongs and grievances” (D&C 134:11).
- What can we do as citizens to help fulfill these purposes of government?

Read the following statement by Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve:

“As Church members, we live under the banner of many different flags. How important it is that we understand our place and our position in the lands in which we live! We should be familiar with the history, heritage, and laws of the lands that govern us. In those countries that allow us the right to participate in the affairs of government, we should use our free agency and be actively engaged in supporting and defending the principles of truth, right, and freedom” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1987, 87; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, 72).

- How can we support and defend truth, right, and freedom through our participation in government?
- Doctrine and Covenants 134 teaches that we should seek for and uphold leaders who “administer the law in equity and justice” (verse 3). What other qualities should we look for when choosing leaders? (See, for example, D&C 98:10.) How can we prepare ourselves to choose leaders wisely?

Explain that as we participate in government and political processes, we should do so with the understanding that “the Church is politically neutral. It does not endorse political parties, platforms, or candidates. Candidates should not imply that they are endorsed by the Church or its leaders. Church leaders and members should avoid any statements or conduct that might be interpreted as Church endorsement of political parties or candidates” (*Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 2: Priesthood and Auxiliary Leaders* [1998], 325).

### 2. Obeying the laws of the land

- What is our responsibility regarding the laws of the land? (See D&C 58:21–22; 98:4–6; 134:5–6; Articles of Faith 1:12.) How can parents, teachers, and leaders teach children to obey the laws of the land?

- How should we treat law-enforcement officers and other civil officers? (See D&C 134:3, 6.) How can we show our appreciation for their efforts?
- What relationship should exist between religion and civil governments? (See D&C 134:4, 9. These verses teach that government should not impose laws upon religion unless religious exercise infringes upon the rights and liberties of others.) How can religion strengthen government?

### 3. Strengthening the community

Read the following statement from the *Church Handbook of Instructions*:

“Members should do their civic duty by supporting measures that strengthen society morally, economically, and culturally. Members are urged to be actively engaged in worthy causes to improve their communities and make them wholesome places in which to live and rear families” (*Book 2*, page 325).

Write *Strengthen the Community* on the chalkboard.

- What are some ways we can strengthen our community? (Use the following information to discuss or add to class members’ responses. Write the headings on the chalkboard as you discuss them.)

#### *Serve others*

- Why is it important that Church members serve in their communities?
- What are some community service projects that you or other Church members have participated in? (Invite class members to share these experiences.) How did you become aware of the need? What did the group do to make the project successful?
- What are some individual, informal ways that you or other Church members have given community service?
- What opportunities for service exist in our community today? (For some suggestions, see the second additional teaching idea.) How can we become more aware of opportunities for community service? (Answers could include reading newspapers, discussing community needs in Church leadership meetings, and meeting with public officials to discuss how we can help.)
- In what ways does community service benefit the community? What are some of the ways we are blessed when we serve?

#### *Serve in elected or appointed public service positions*

Read the following statement from the First Presidency to Church members:

“We strongly urge men and women to be willing to serve on school boards, city and county councils and commissions, state legislatures, and other high offices of either election or appointment” (First Presidency letter, 15 Jan. 1998).

- What are some examples of public service positions in our community? How are people in such positions able to bring about good in a community?

*Support worthy causes or activities*

- Read D&C 58:27 with class members. How can we become “anxiously engaged” in good causes in the community?

Share the following account of a Latter-day Saint who made a significant contribution to her community and nation by supporting a worthy cause:

“While Dolina Smith was serving as Young Women president in the Toronto Ontario Stake in 1986, she asked an expert to speak at a fireside about the growing problem of pornography. Later she became involved with a nationwide group called Canadians for Decency, which mobilizes thousands of anti-pornography Canadians to contact their elected officials as specific concerns about pornography arise. . . .

“ . . . In 1990 her involvement increased when she was named chairperson of Canadians for Decency. In this new role she has given numerous presentations before the provincial and federal governing bodies that make and change pornography laws. She has also spoken to many groups of citizens who work with local governments to clamp down on the spread of pornography in their communities” (Donald S. Conkey, “Together We Can Make a Difference,” *Ensign*, Feb. 1996, 68).

- What are some worthy causes we can support in the community? How can we appropriately fight evil influences in our community?
- What are some challenges to serving in the community? How can we overcome these challenges? (One challenge may be scheduling the time we need to serve. One way to overcome this challenge is for family members or ward members to serve together, when possible. This allows a family to be together rather than apart while serving.)

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Conclusion

Share the following statement by Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve:

“In the Church, we often state the couplet, ‘Be in the world but not of the world.’ . . . Perhaps we should state the couplet . . . as two separate admonitions. First, ‘*Be in the world.*’ Be involved; be informed. Try to be understanding and tolerant and to appreciate diversity. Make meaningful contributions to society through service and involvement. Second, ‘*Be not of the world.*’ Do not follow wrong paths or bend to accommodate or accept what is not right. . . .

“Members of the Church need to influence more than we are influenced. We should work to stem the tide of sin and evil instead of passively being swept along by it. We each need to help solve the problem rather than avoid or ignore it” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1989, 100–101; or *Ensign*, May 1989, 80).

Emphasize that as Latter-day Saints we should be good citizens regardless of where we live. Encourage class members to do what they can to support good government and strengthen their communities.

## Additional Teaching Ideas

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

### 1. Report on volunteer services in the community

In advance, assign a ward or branch member to report on the structured volunteer services in your community and how to participate in these services. Or invite a class member who is involved in some type of community service to explain what he or she does.

As part of the discussion, emphasize that we do not need to wait for calls or assignments from Church leaders before we serve the community as individuals or a group.

### 2. Ideas for community service

If class members have difficulty thinking of ways to give community service, you may want to suggest some of the following ideas. As part of this discussion, have class members read Matthew 25:34–40.

*Health services:* Make clothes and food for people who are sick; take care of sick children in a hospital or in your neighborhood; take flowers to patients in hospitals who have no families; on special holidays, remember people who are sick.

*Social services:* Help organize or lead groups that help youth develop skills; demonstrate sewing, cooking, crafts, or other skills to those in orphanages and community schools or to those who are disabled; read to the elderly in a rest home; teach language skills to those who do not speak your language; read to the blind; visit and talk to elderly people in your own family and neighborhood.

### 3. Strengthening the community through acts of courtesy

Share the following statement by President Gordon B. Hinckley:

“It is amazing what courtesy will accomplish. It is tragic what a lack of courtesy can bring. We see it every day as we move in the traffic of the cities in which we live. A moment spent in letting someone else get into the line does good for the one who is helped, and it also does good for the one who helps. Something happens inside of us when we are courteous and deferential toward others. It is all part of a refining process which, if persisted in, will change our very natures” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1996, 70; or *Ensign*, May 1996, 49).

- What opportunities do we have each day to show courtesy to others? (Answers could include when we are working, driving, shopping, or simply walking down the street.) How can courtesy strengthen a community?

Lesson  
**45**

# “The Family Is Ordained of God”

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**Purpose**

To help class members understand the eternal importance of the family and to inspire them to strengthen their families.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study “The Family: A Proclamation to the World” (*Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102). Each class member should have a copy of the proclamation to refer to during the lesson. The proclamation is included on page 265 of this manual and on pages 25–26 of the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). It is also available as a separate item (35602 and 35538).
2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide*. Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
3. If you use the attention activity, prepare to have class members sing “Families Can Be Together Forever” (*Hymns*, no. 300; *Children’s Songbook*, 188). Or invite a small group of Primary children to come to your class and sing the song.

*Note to the teacher:* Family circumstances may vary among class members. Be sensitive to these differences, and emphasize that everyone is part of a family with both earthly and heavenly parents.

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**Suggestions for Lesson Development****Attention Activity**

As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Have class members sing “Families Can Be Together Forever,” or ask the group of Primary children to sing it (see “Preparation,” item 3).

After singing the song, remind class members of the words from the chorus: “I always want to be with my own family, / And the Lord has shown me how I can.”

Explain that this lesson discusses “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” which contains the Lord’s teachings regarding the family, given through the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve. By following these teachings, we can strengthen and unify our families now and prepare to live as eternal families.

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**Discussion and Application**

Prayerfully select the lesson material that will best meet class members’ needs. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the principles you discuss.

**1. The family is central to God’s plan.**

Explain that “The Family: A Proclamation to the World” was presented by President Gordon B. Hinckley at the general Relief Society meeting in September 1995. Since that time, it has been reprinted in many languages for Church

members and others throughout the world. It has also been presented to government leaders in many lands.

Invite a class member to read the title, subtitle, and first two paragraphs of the proclamation.

- What is happening in our own families, communities, and nation that suggests a need for this counsel and warning from God’s prophets?

President Gordon B. Hinckley taught: “Why do we have this proclamation on the family now? Because the family is under attack. All across the world families are falling apart. The place to begin to improve society is in the home. Children do, for the most part, what they are taught. We are trying to make the world better by making the family stronger” (“Inspirational Thoughts,” *Ensign*, Aug. 1997, 5).

- The proclamation states that marriage and family are “ordained of God” and “central to [His] plan for the eternal destiny of His children.” Why is the family central to God’s plan for the eternal destiny of His children? (See D&C 131:1–4; 1 Corinthians 11:11.)
- The proclamation states that we are all spirit children of God, created in His image (see also Genesis 1:26–27). What does this doctrine teach about our potential? How does the knowledge that you are a member of Heavenly Father’s family affect the way you feel about earthly families? How can this doctrine strengthen us?

## **2. Sacred ordinances make it possible for families to be together eternally.**

Invite a class member to read the third paragraph of the proclamation.

- What does this paragraph teach about the purpose of mortal life? How can our earthly experience help us in our eternal progression?
- What is necessary for a marriage and family to be eternal? (A couple must receive the sealing ordinance in the temple and keep the covenants that are associated with that ordinance.)
- How can we strengthen our commitment to keep our temple covenants? In what ways can parents help children prepare to enter the temple?
- How should the promise that we can live eternally with our families affect the way we treat family members now?

## **3. The power to create mortal life is sacred.**

Invite a class member to read the fourth and fifth paragraphs of the proclamation.

- What has God commanded regarding the use of the power to create mortal life? Why is obedience to this commandment important?

Elder Henry B. Eyring of the Quorum of the Twelve taught:

“Children are the inheritance of the Lord to us in this life and also in eternity. Eternal life is not only to have forever our descendants from this life. It is also to have eternal increase. . . .

“We can understand why our Heavenly Father commands us to reverence life and to cherish the powers that produce it as sacred. If we do not have those

reverential feelings in this life, how could our Father give them to us in the eternities?" ("The Family," *Ensign*, Feb. 1998, 15).

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve taught: "*The body is an essential part of the soul. . . . We declare that one who uses the God-given body of another without divine sanction abuses the very soul of that individual, abuses the central purpose and processes of life. . . . In sexual transgression the soul is at stake—the body and the spirit*" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1998, 99–100; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1998, 76).

- What can parents do to help children understand the importance of moral cleanliness? (You may want to suggest that parents review with their children the teachings on sexual purity found in *For the Strength of Youth* [36550] or *A Parent's Guide* [31125].)

#### **4. Parents have a sacred duty to care for each other and teach their children.**

Invite a class member to read the sixth paragraph of the proclamation.

- What can married couples do to strengthen their love for each other?

President Gordon B. Hinckley taught: "When you are married, be fiercely loyal one to another. Selfishness is the great destroyer of happy family life. If you will make your first concern the comfort, the well-being, and the happiness of your companion, sublimating any personal concern to that loftier goal, you will be happy, and your marriage will go on throughout eternity" ("Excerpts from Recent Addresses of President Gordon B. Hinckley," *Ensign*, Dec. 1995, 67).

- How are children blessed when they have parents who love and care for each other?
- What are parents responsible to teach their children? (See Mosiah 4:14–15; D&C 68:25–28; 93:40.) What are some effective ways to teach these principles to children? How have you benefited from your parents' teachings?
- What are some settings in which parents have an opportunity to teach their children? (Answers could include family home evening, family prayer, mealtime, bedtime, traveling together, and working together.) Invite class members to share experiences when they have taught their children (or when their parents have taught them) in any of these settings.
- What is the role of the Church in teaching children? (See the following quotation.) How can parents work together with the Church to teach their children?

President Spencer W. Kimball said: "It is the responsibility of the parents to teach their children. The Sunday School, the Primary, [Mutual,] and other organizations of the Church play a secondary role" (*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball [1982], 332).

#### **5. Successful marriages and families are based on righteous principles.**

Invite a class member to read the seventh paragraph of the proclamation.

- The proclamation teaches that "happiness in family life is most likely to be achieved when founded upon the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ." How have the teachings of Christ brought happiness into your home?

- The proclamation states that “successful marriages and families are established and maintained on principles of faith, prayer, repentance, forgiveness, respect, love, compassion, work, and wholesome recreational activities.” Which of these principles have been especially important in your marriage and family? What effective ways have you found for teaching these principles in your family? (As prompted by the Spirit, you may want to focus on only one or two of the principles. If you want to spend more time on this part of the proclamation, see the fourth additional teaching idea.)
- According to the proclamation, what are the primary responsibilities of fathers? What does it mean to “preside . . . in love and righteousness”? (See D&C 121:41–46.)
- How can boys and young men prepare themselves now to provide for their families? What can parents do to encourage youth to gain a formal education and learn practical skills?
- What primary responsibility does the proclamation describe for mothers? How can young women prepare themselves now to fulfill this responsibility?  
President Gordon B. Hinckley taught:  
“If there is to be a return to old and sacred values, it must begin in the home. It is here that truth is learned, that integrity is cultivated, that self-discipline is instilled, and that love is nurtured. . . .  
“Sisters, guard your children. . . . Nothing is more precious to you as mothers, absolutely nothing. Your children are the most valuable thing you will have in time or all eternity. You will be fortunate indeed if, as you grow old and look at those you brought into the world, you find in them uprightness of life, virtue in living, and integrity in their behavior” (“Walking in the Light of the Lord,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1998, 99).
- How can fathers help nurture their children? Why is it important for parents to help each other as equal partners?

### 6. Strengthening families is everyone’s responsibility.

The proclamation concludes by warning of the serious consequences of family disintegration and by calling upon all people to strengthen the family. Invite a class member to read the final two paragraphs of the proclamation.

- What are some of the things you have done that have helped bring greater strength and unity in your family?
- What can we do as individuals and families to promote stronger families in our own communities?

President Gordon B. Hinckley told a gathering of mayors and other public officials: “To you men and women of great influence, you who preside in the cities of the nation, to you I say that it will cost far less to reform our schools, to teach the virtues of good citizenship, than it will to go on building and maintaining costly jails and prisons. . . . But there is another institution of even greater importance than the schools. It is the home. I believe that no nation can rise higher than the strength of its families” (“U.S. Conference of Mayors,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1998, 109).

- Why must families be strong in order for nations to survive?

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## Conclusion

Challenge class members to think about their families and consider the following questions: Do all my family members sense my love for them? Are we striving to live as an eternal family? What can I do to strengthen my family?

Testify of the truthfulness of the principles in the proclamation, and encourage class members to continue to study and apply its teachings.

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## Additional Teaching Ideas

You may want to use one or more of the following ideas to supplement the suggested lesson outline.

### 1. Recognizing and avoiding abuse

The proclamation warns that those “who abuse spouse or offspring . . . will one day stand accountable before God.” Church leaders have spoken out against abuse of any kind. The following quotation from President Gordon B. Hinckley to priesthood brethren can be applied to both men and women:

“Never abuse your wives. Never abuse your children. But gather them in your arms and make them feel of your love and your appreciation and your respect. Be good husbands. Be good fathers” (“Inspirational Thoughts,” *Ensign*, June 1999, 2).

### 2. “Responsibility of Parents” video presentation

If *Doctrine and Covenants and Church History Video Presentations* (53912) is available, consider showing “Responsibility of Parents,” a seven-minute segment. Ask class members to ponder the following questions as they watch the presentation:

- In what ways have you been blessed by the teachings of your parents? What would you like your children to learn from you?

### 3. Additional statement on the family

You may want to read the following statement by Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve:

“The plan of the Father is that family love and companionship will continue into the eternities. Being . . . in a family carries a great responsibility of caring, loving, lifting, and strengthening each member of the family so that all can righteously endure to the end in mortality and dwell together throughout eternity. It is not enough just to save ourselves. It is equally important that parents, brothers, and sisters are saved in our families. If we return home lone to our Heavenly Father, we will be asked, ‘Where is the rest of the family?’” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1996, 88; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 65).

### 4. Group discussions

Write on the chalkboard the nine principles for successful marriages and families that are listed in the seventh paragraph of the proclamation (following the phrase “successful marriages and families”). Divide class members into groups and assign one or more principles to each group. Ask the groups to think of ways they could help establish and strengthen these principles in their families.

After the groups have had a few minutes to discuss this, invite one person from each group to share the group's ideas.

## 5. Discussing the proclamation in family home evening

Suggest that class members discuss the proclamation on the family during family home evening this week. Ask them to prepare to report on this experience at the beginning of class next week.

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### THE FAMILY

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# A PROCLAMATION TO THE WORLD

THE FIRST PRESIDENCY AND COUNCIL OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES  
OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

*W*E, THE FIRST PRESIDENCY and the Council of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, solemnly proclaim that marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God and that the family is central to the Creator's plan for the eternal destiny of His children.

*A*LL 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.

*I*N THE PREMORTAL REALM, spirit sons and daughters knew and worshiped God as their Eternal Father and accepted His plan by which His children could obtain a physical body and gain earthly experience to progress toward perfection and ultimately realize his or her divine destiny as an heir of eternal life. The divine plan of happiness enables family relationships to be perpetuated beyond the grave. Sacred ordinances and covenants available in holy temples make it possible for individuals to return to the presence of God and for families to be united eternally.

*T*HE FIRST COMMANDMENT that God gave to Adam and Eve pertained to their potential for parenthood as husband and wife. We declare that God's commandment for His children to multiply and replenish the earth remains in force. We further declare that God has commanded that the sacred powers of procreation are to be employed only between man and woman, lawfully wedded as husband and wife.

*W*E DECLARE the means by which mortal life is created to be divinely appointed. We affirm the sanctity of life and of its importance in God's eternal plan.

*H*USBAND AND WIFE have a solemn responsibility to love and care for each other and for their children. "Children are an heritage of the Lord" (Psalms 127:3). Parents have a

sacred duty to rear their children in love and righteousness, to provide for their physical and spiritual needs, to teach them to love and serve one another, to observe the commandments of God and to be law-abiding citizens wherever they live. Husbands and wives—mothers and fathers—will be held accountable before God for the discharge of these obligations.

*T*HE FAMILY is ordained of God. Marriage between man and woman is essential to His eternal plan. Children are entitled to birth within the bonds of matrimony, and to be reared by a father and a mother who honor marital vows with complete fidelity. Happiness in family life is most likely to be achieved when founded upon the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. Successful marriages and families are established and maintained on principles of faith, prayer, repentance, forgiveness, respect, love, compassion, work, and wholesome recreational activities. By divine design, fathers are to preside over their families in love and righteousness and are responsible to provide the necessities of life and protection for their families. 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. Disability, death, or other circumstances may necessitate individual adaptation. Extended families should lend support when needed.

*W*E WARN that individuals who violate covenants of chastity, who abuse spouse or offspring, or who fail to fulfill family responsibilities will one day stand accountable before God. Further, we warn that the disintegration of the family will bring upon individuals, communities, and nations the calamities foretold by ancient and modern prophets.

*W*E CALL UPON responsible citizens and officers of government everywhere to promote those measures designed to maintain and strengthen the family as the fundamental unit of society.

*This proclamation was read by President Gordon B. Hinckley as part of his message at the General Relief Society Meeting held September 23, 1995, in Salt Lake City, Utah.*

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Lesson  
**46**

# “Zion—The Pure in Heart”

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**Purpose** To help class members understand what the scriptures teach about Zion and to inspire them in their efforts to establish Zion.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study the following scriptures and other materials:
  - a. Doctrine and Covenants 57:1–3; 64:33–43; 82:14–15; 97:8–28; 105:1–12; Moses 7:12–19, 61–63, 68–69; Articles of Faith 1:10.
  - b. *Our Heritage*, pages 37–38, 145–46.
2. Review the material for this lesson in the *Class Member Study Guide* (35686). Plan ways to refer to the material during the lesson.
3. Ask a class member to prepare to summarize the account of the city of Enoch as recorded in Moses 7:12–19, 68–69.
4. If you use the attention activity, bring a piece of paper and a pen or pencil for each class member.

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**Suggestions for  
Lesson Development**

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. Give each class member a piece of paper and a pen or pencil. Ask them to write down five important things they would like to accomplish in life. After they have had time to write, read the following statement by the Prophet Joseph Smith:

“We ought to have the building up of Zion as our greatest object. . . . The time is soon coming, when no man will have any peace but in Zion and her stakes” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 160–61).

Ask class members to ponder the following questions without answering aloud:

- As you look at your list, how many of the items could help build up Zion? How might you modify your list to respond to the admonition of the Prophet Joseph Smith?

The revelations recorded in the Doctrine and Covenants contain many instructions about building up Zion. This lesson discusses what Zion is and what is required of us to help establish it.

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**Discussion and Application** Prayerfully select the lesson material that will best meet class members’ needs. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

### 1. The word *Zion* has several meanings.

Explain that the word *Zion* has various meanings in the scriptures. Read the following scripture passages with class members. Identify the meaning of *Zion* in each passage, and write the meaning on the chalkboard.

- a. D&C 97:21. (The pure in heart.)
- b. D&C 82:14. (The Church and its stakes.)
- c. Moses 7:19. (The city of Enoch.)
- d. 2 Samuel 5:6–7; 1 Kings 8:1. (The ancient city of Jerusalem.)
- e. D&C 45:66–67; 57:1–2; Articles of Faith 1:10. (The New Jerusalem, which will be built in Missouri.)
- f. Hebrews 12:22–23. (The dwelling place of those who are exalted.)

Emphasize that in the scriptures, *Zion* can mean the Lord's people (the pure in heart), a specific place, or both. In this lesson, when we speak of building Zion in our day, we are referring to purifying our hearts so that the places we live can be called Zion.

### 2. Zion has existed in previous dispensations.

Explain that there have been a few times in previous dispensations when Zion has existed among God's people. The city of Enoch is one example of a people who established Zion. Ask the assigned class member to summarize the events recorded in Moses 7:12–19, 68–69.

- What characterized the Zion of Enoch's time? (See Moses 7:12–19.) Why was their city called Zion? (See Moses 7:18.) What does it mean to be "of one heart and one mind"?
- What will happen to the city of Enoch in the Millennium? (See Moses 7:61–63. It will return to the earth and become part of the New Jerusalem.) Why is the account of Enoch and his people important to us today? (In addition to helping us understand the destiny of the city of Enoch, the account can help us understand what we must do to establish Zion.)

### 3. The Saints of our dispensation have been commanded to establish Zion.

One of the most frequently mentioned subjects in the Doctrine and Covenants is the establishing of Zion in the latter days. There are more than 200 references to Zion in these revelations. Some of these refer to a physical location, some to a condition of the heart, and some to building the Lord's Church. Even before the Church was formally organized, the Lord directed a number of brethren to "seek to bring forth and establish the cause of Zion" (D&C 6:6; 11:6; 12:6; 14:6).

For the early Saints, establishing Zion not only meant becoming pure in heart and living in unity. It also meant building the city of Zion, or New Jerusalem. In July 1831, the Lord revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith that the city of Zion should be built in Missouri, with Independence as the center place (D&C 57:1–3). After this revelation, many Saints gathered to Missouri. They prospered for a time, but contentions and divisions soon arose among them. There were also tensions with other settlers in the area. In November 1833, mobs drove the

Saints from their homes. A few months later, in July 1834, the Lord revealed that the Saints would have to “wait a little season for the redemption of Zion” (D&C 105:9). (See lessons 12 and 27 for more information about establishing the city of Zion in Missouri.)

- Why were the early Saints unable to build the city of Zion? (See D&C 101:6–8; 105:1–12.) What can we learn from their experience that can help us build Zion today? (Explain that to build Zion—whether in a city, in our stakes, or in our homes—we must develop the qualities of a Zion people: pure hearts, unity, and unselfishness.)

Explain that although the building of the city of Zion was postponed, latter-day prophets have exhorted us to continue our efforts to establish Zion in our hearts, stakes, and homes. President Harold B. Lee said:

“The borders of Zion, where the righteous and pure in heart may dwell, must now begin to be enlarged. The stakes of Zion must be strengthened. All this so that Zion may arise and shine by becoming increasingly diligent in carrying out the plan of salvation throughout the world” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1973, 5; or *Ensign*, July 1973, 3).

- Read D&C 82:14–15 with class members. What did the Lord command in these verses? What are some specific things we should do to build Zion? (Have class members read the following scriptures and identify what they teach about building Zion. Summarize the information on the chalkboard. Select some of the following questions to encourage discussion.)
  - a. D&C 97:21. (Strive to be pure in heart.) The Lord gave the simplest definition of Zion when He called it “the pure in heart” (D&C 97:21). What can we do to help us become pure in heart? (See Moroni 7:47–48; 10:32.)
  - b. D&C 38:27. (Become unified.) The people in the city of Enoch were described as “being of one heart and one mind” (Moses 7:18). Lack of unity was one of the reasons the early Saints were not able to build the city of Zion (D&C 101:6; 105:4). What are some effective ways to increase unity in families? How can we be more unified in our ward?
  - c. D&C 64:34–35; 105:3, 5–6. (Be obedient.) In D&C 105, the Lord cited disobedience as one of the reasons the city of Zion was not to be established at that time. In what ways have you or your family been strengthened as a result of obedience to gospel principles? How has your ward or stake been strengthened by members’ obedience to gospel principles?
  - d. D&C 105:3. (Care for the poor and afflicted.) The Saints who were trying to establish Zion in Missouri were chastised by the Lord for failing to care for “the poor and afflicted among them” (D&C 105:3). Why is caring for the needy a necessary part of building Zion? What opportunities do we have to care for those who are in need?
  - e. D&C 97:10–16. (Build temples and receive the blessings of the temple.) Why are temples important in building Zion? (See D&C 97:13–16; 105:9–12.)
  - f. D&C 105:10. (Teach one another and learn our duties more perfectly.) What can we do to improve teaching in our families and in formal Church settings? In what ways might we need to learn our duties more perfectly?

- g. D&C 133:8–9. (Preach the gospel to the world.) The Lord directed the elders of the Church to call people out from Babylon (the world) to Zion. In what ways does preaching the gospel strengthen the stakes of Zion?

#### 4. The scriptures include glorious promises about the future of Zion.

In the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord speaks of many blessings that will come to Zion in the last days. For some examples of these blessings, have class members read D&C 97:18–25, and invite them to identify specific blessings promised to Zion. See also the following list.

- a. Zion will spread and become glorious and great (D&C 97:18).
  - b. Zion will be honored by the nations of the earth (D&C 97:19).
  - c. The Lord will be Zion’s salvation (D&C 97:20).
  - d. Zion will rejoice (D&C 97:21).
  - e. Zion will escape the Lord’s vengeance (D&C 97:22–25).
- What must we do to enjoy these blessings? (See D&C 97:25.)
  - How do you feel as you consider the future of Zion?

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught: “The building up of Zion is a cause that has interested the people of God in every age; it is a theme upon which prophets, priests and kings have dwelt with peculiar delight; they have looked forward with joyful anticipation to the day in which we live; and fired with heavenly and joyful anticipations they have sung and written and prophesied of this our day; . . . we are the favored people that God has [chosen] to bring about the Latter-day glory” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 231).

#### Conclusion

Share the following statement by President Gordon B. Hinckley:

“I see a wonderful future in a very uncertain world. If we will cling to our values, if we will build on our inheritance, if we will walk in obedience before the Lord, if we will simply live the gospel, we will be blessed in a magnificent and wonderful way. We will be looked upon as a peculiar people who have found the key to a peculiar happiness.

“‘And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord . . . : for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem’ (Isaiah 2:3).

“Great has been our past, wonderful is our present, glorious can be our future” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1997, 94; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 69).

Encourage class members to establish Zion within their hearts, their families, and their stakes. As prompted by the Spirit, testify of the truths discussed during the lesson.

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**Additional  
Teaching Idea**

You may want to use the following idea to supplement the suggested lesson outline.

**Hymns of Zion**

Prepare to have class members sing or read the words to one of the following hymns: “High on the Mountain Top” (*Hymns*, no. 5); “Israel, Israel, God Is Calling” (no. 7); or “Beautiful Zion, Built Above” (no. 44). Or have a soloist or small group prepare to sing one of the hymns. Discuss how the hymn celebrates the building of Zion.

# Church History Chronology and Maps

# Church History Chronology

## 1805, December 23

Joseph Smith born to Joseph Smith Sr. and Lucy Mack Smith in Sharon, Vermont (see Joseph Smith—History 1:3–4).

## 1820, Early Spring

Joseph Smith received the First Vision in a grove of trees near his home in the state of New York (see Joseph Smith—History 1:15–20).

## 1823, September 21–22

Joseph Smith visited by the angel Moroni and told of the Book of Mormon record. Joseph viewed the gold plates buried in a nearby hill (Cumorah) (see Joseph Smith—History 1:27–54).

## 1827, September 22

Joseph Smith obtained the gold plates from Moroni at the Hill Cumorah (see Joseph Smith—History 1:59).

## 1829, May 15

John the Baptist conferred the Aaronic Priesthood on Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in Harmony, Pennsylvania (see D&C 13; Joseph Smith—History 1:71–72).

## 1829, May

Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery received the Melchizedek Priesthood from Peter, James, and John near the Susquehanna River between Harmony, Pennsylvania, and Colesville, New York (see D&C 128:20).

## 1829, June

Translation of the Book of Mormon completed. The Three Witnesses and the Eight Witnesses shown the gold plates (see 2 Nephi 11:3; 27:12–13; D&C 17).

## 1830, March 26

First printed copies of the Book of Mormon available in Palmyra, New York.

## 1830, April 6

Organization of the Church in Fayette Township, New York.

## 1830, September–October

First missionaries called to preach to the Lamanites (Native Americans) (see D&C 28; 30; 32).

## 1830, December to 1831, January

The Lord commanded the Saints to gather to Ohio (see D&C 37; 38:31–32).

## 1831, July 20

Site for the city of Zion (the New Jerusalem) in Independence, Missouri, revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith (see D&C 57; Articles of Faith 1:10).

## 1833, March 18

Sidney Rigdon and Frederick G. Williams set apart as Counselors in the Presidency of the Church and given the keys of the kingdom (see the headings to D&C 81 and 90; see also D&C 90:6).

## 1833, November 7

Saints began fleeing from mobs in Jackson County, Missouri, across the Missouri River and into Clay County, Missouri.

## 1834, May 5

Joseph Smith left Kirtland, Ohio, for Missouri as the leader of Zion's Camp to bring relief to Saints expelled from Jackson County.

## 1835, February 14

The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles organized in Kirtland, Ohio (see D&C 107:23–24).

## 1835, February 28

The organization of the First Quorum of the Seventy commenced in Kirtland, Ohio.

## 1835, August 17

The Doctrine and Covenants accepted as a standard work of the Church in Kirtland, Ohio.

## 1836, March 27

The Kirtland Temple dedicated (see D&C 109).

## 1836, April 3

Jesus Christ appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in the Kirtland Temple (see D&C 110:1–10). Moses, Elias, and Elijah appeared and conveyed priesthood keys (see D&C 110:11–16).

## 1837, July 19

Elder Heber C. Kimball and six others arrived in Liverpool, England, on the first overseas mission.

## 1838, April 26

Name of the Church specified by revelation (see D&C 115:4).

## 1838, December 1 to 1839, April 16

The Prophet Joseph Smith and others imprisoned at Liberty Jail in Liberty, Missouri (see D&C 121–23).

## 1840, August 15

Baptism for the dead publicly announced by the Prophet Joseph Smith.

## 1841, October 24

Elder Orson Hyde dedicated Palestine for return of the children of Abraham.

## 1842, March 17

Female Relief Society organized in Nauvoo, Illinois.

## 1842, May 4

First full temple endowments given in Nauvoo, Illinois.

## 1844, June 27

Joseph and Hyrum Smith martyred at Carthage Jail in Carthage, Illinois (see D&C 135).

## 1846, February 4

Nauvoo Saints began crossing the Mississippi River to move west. Some Saints sailed from New York City for California on the ship *Brooklyn*.

## 1846, July 16

Mormon Battalion mustered into United States service in Iowa.

## 1847, April

President Brigham Young's pioneer company left Winter Quarters on the journey west (see D&C 136).

## 1847, July 24

President Brigham Young entered the Salt Lake Valley.

## 1847, December 27

Brigham Young sustained as President of the Church.

## 1848, May–June

Crickets in the Salt Lake Valley devastated the crops. The fields were saved from complete destruction as flocks of seagulls consumed the crickets.

## 1849, December 9

Sunday School organized by Richard Ballantyne.

**1850, June 15**

*Deseret News* began publication in Salt Lake City.

**1856, October**

Willie and Martin handcart companies detained by early snowstorms. Found by rescue party from the Salt Lake Valley.

**1869, November 28**

Young Ladies' Retrenchment Association organized, forerunner of the Young Women program.

**1875, June 10**

Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association organized, forerunner of the Young Men program.

**1877, April 6**

St. George Utah Temple dedicated. President Brigham Young received revelation to set in order the priesthood organization and stakes of Zion.

**1878, August 25**

Aurelia Spencer Rogers held the first Primary meeting in Farmington, Utah.

**1880, October 10**

John Taylor sustained as President of the Church. The Pearl of Great Price accepted as a standard work.

**1883, April 14**

Revelation given to President John Taylor on the organization of the Seventy.

**1889, April 7**

Wilford Woodruff sustained as President of the Church.

**1890, October 6**

"Manifesto" sustained in general conference, ending the practice of entering into plural marriage (see Official Declaration 1).

**1893, April 6**

President Wilford Woodruff dedicated the Salt Lake Temple after 40 years of construction.

**1898, September 13**

Lorenzo Snow became President of the Church.

**1899, May 17**

President Lorenzo Snow received revelation in St. George, Utah, prompting him to emphasize tithing.

**1901, October 17**

Joseph F. Smith became President of the Church.

**1918, October 3**

President Joseph F. Smith received the vision of the redemption of the dead (see D&C 138).

**1918, November 23**

Heber J. Grant became President of the Church.

**1936, April**

Church Security Program instituted to assist the poor during the Great Depression; became the Church welfare program. This program grew out of a revelation received previously by President Heber J. Grant.

**1941, April 6**

Assistants to the Twelve first called.

**1945, May 21**

George Albert Smith became President of the Church.

**1951, April 9**

David O. McKay sustained as President of the Church.

**1961, September 30**

Under the direction of the First Presidency, Elder Harold B. Lee announced that all Church programs were to be correlated through the priesthood to strengthen families and individuals.

**1964, October**

Observance of family home evening emphasized.

**1970, January 23**

Joseph Fielding Smith became President of the Church.

**1971, January**

New Church magazines—*Ensign*, *New Era*, and *Friend*—commenced publication.

**1972, July 7**

Harold B. Lee became President of the Church.

**1973, December 30**

Spencer W. Kimball became President of the Church.

**1975, October 3**

President Spencer W. Kimball announced reorganization of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

**1976, April 3**

Two revelations added to the Pearl of Great Price. In 1981 they were moved to become D&C 137 and 138.

**1978, September 30**

Revelation granting the priesthood to every worthy male member regardless of race or color sustained by the Church (see Official Declaration 2).

**1979, September**

LDS edition of King James Bible with study aids published.

**1981, September**

New editions of the Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and Pearl of Great Price published.

**1984, June**

Area Presidencies inaugurated, with members called from the Seventy.

**1985, November 10**

Ezra Taft Benson became President of the Church.

**1989, April 1**

Second Quorum of the Seventy reorganized.

**1994, June 5**

Howard W. Hunter became President of the Church.

**1995, March 12**

Gordon B. Hinckley became President of the Church.

**1995, April 1**

Announcement of a new leadership position to be known as an Area Authority.

**1995, September 23**

President Gordon B. Hinckley read "The Family: A Proclamation to the World," from the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, at a general Relief Society meeting.

**1997, April 5**

Area Authorities to be ordained Seventies. Third, Fourth, and Fifth Quorums of the Seventy organized.

**1997, October 4**

President Gordon B. Hinckley announced plans to build smaller temples.

**1997, November**

Church membership reached 10 million.

**1998, April 5**

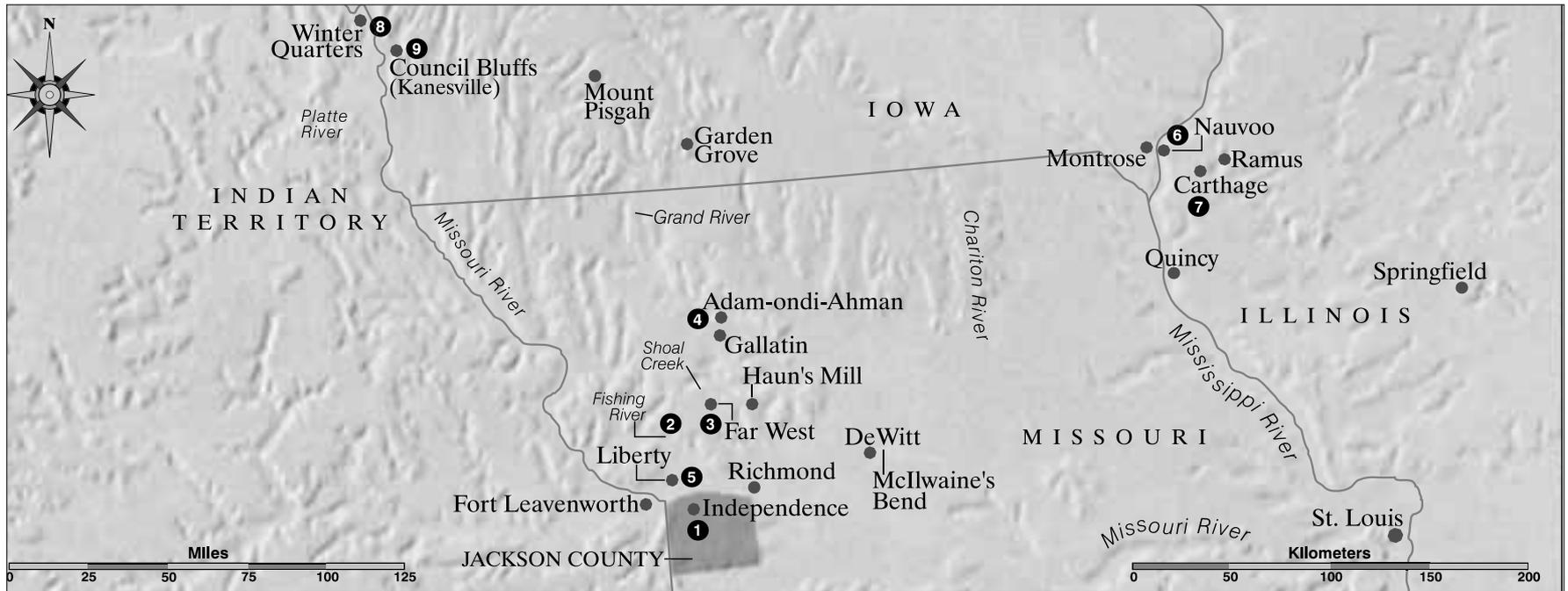
President Gordon B. Hinckley announced goal of having 100 temples in service in the year 2000.



1. **South Bainbridge.** Joseph Smith Jr. and Emma Hale were married here on 18 January 1827 (see Joseph Smith—History 1:57).
2. **Colesville.** One of the first branches of the Church was organized at the Joseph Knight Sr. home, in Colesville Township, in 1830.
3. **Joseph Smith Jr. Home in Harmony.** Most of the translation of the Book of Mormon was completed here. On the banks of the Susquehanna River the priesthood was restored in 1829 (see D&C 13; 128:20; Joseph Smith—History 1:71–72).
4. **Fayette.** The Three Witnesses saw the gold plates and the angel Moroni here (see D&C 17). The Book of Mormon translation was completed here in June 1829. The Church

- was organized here on 6 April 1830 (see D&C 20–21).
5. **Mendon.** Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball lived here when they first heard the restored gospel.
  6. **Kirtland.** Missionaries who had been sent to the Lamanites stopped here in 1830 and baptized Sidney Rigdon and others in the area. Kirtland was the headquarters of the Church from early February 1831 to 12 January 1838. The first temple of this dispensation was built here and was dedicated on 27 March 1836 (see D&C 109).
  7. **Erie Canal.** The three branches of the Church in New York emigrated via the Erie Canal and Lake Erie to Kirtland, Ohio, in April and May 1831.

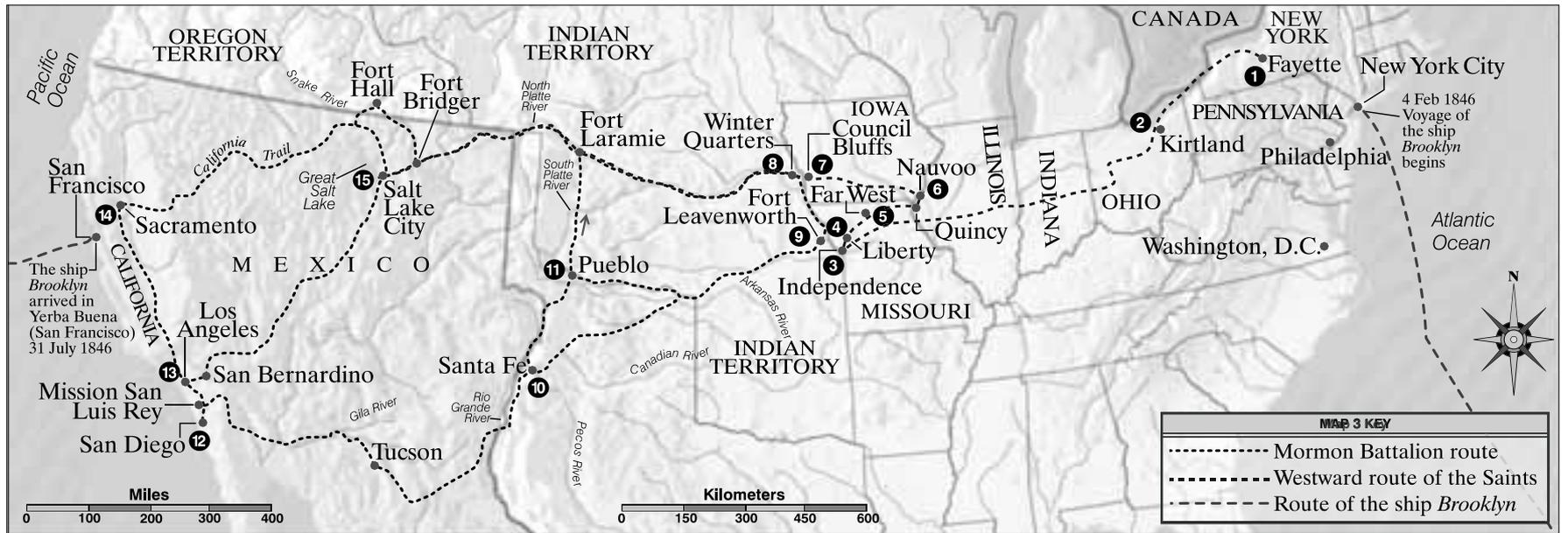
8. **Hiram.** Joseph and Emma lived here from September 1831 to September 1832. Joseph and Sidney Rigdon worked on the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible. Revelations received here: D&C 1, 65, 67–69, 71, 73–74, 76–81, 99, and 133.
9. **Amherst.** Here Joseph Smith was sustained as President of the High Priesthood on 25 January 1832 (see *History of the Church*, 1:243; see also the heading to D&C 75).
10. **Toronto.** Home of John Taylor, who became the third President of the Church, and Mary Fielding, who later married Hyrum Smith.



1. **Independence.** The Lord identified Independence as the center place of Zion in July 1831 (see D&C 57:2–3). A temple site was dedicated here on 3 August 1831. Mobs forced the Saints out of Independence and Jackson County in November 1833.
2. **Fishing River.** Joseph Smith and Zion's Camp traveled from Kirtland, Ohio, to Missouri in 1834 to restore the Jackson County Saints to their land. D&C 105 was revealed on the banks of this river.
3. **Far West.** A refuge was established here for the Saints from 1836 to 1838. It was the headquarters of the Church for part of 1838. A temple site was dedicated here (see D&C 115). On 8 July 1838, the Quorum of the Twelve received a call from the Lord to serve missions abroad (see D&C 118). In 1838–39 the Saints were forced to flee to Illinois.

4. **Adam-ondi-Ahman.** Adam blessed his righteous posterity here three years before he died (see D&C 107:53–57). A great gathering will take place here just before the Savior's Second Coming (see Daniel 7:9–14; D&C 78:15; 116; *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 157).
5. **Liberty.** The Saints from Jackson County gathered in this area from 1833 until 1836, when they were required to leave. Joseph Smith and others were wrongfully imprisoned here from December 1838 to April 1839. In the midst of troubled times for the Church, Joseph called on the Lord for direction and received D&C 121–23.
6. **Nauvoo.** Located on the Mississippi River, this area was the headquarters of the Church from 1839 to 1846. Here a temple was built,

- and ordinances such as baptism for the dead, the endowment, and the sealing of families began. Here the Relief Society was organized in 1842. Revelations received here include D&C 124–29.
7. **Carthage.** Here the Prophet Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum were martyred on 27 June 1844 (see D&C 135).
  8. **Winter Quarters.** The headquarters settlement for the Saints en route to the Salt Lake Valley (1846–48). Here the Camp of Israel was organized for the westward journey (see D&C 136).
  9. **Council Bluffs (Kanesville).** The First Presidency was sustained here on 27 December 1847, with Brigham Young as President.



1. **Fayette.** The Prophet Joseph Smith left Fayette for Kirtland, Ohio, in January 1831. The three New York branches followed in April and May 1831 under the Lord's command to gather (see D&C 37–38).
2. **Kirtland.** The headquarters of the Church from early February 1831 to 12 January 1838, when the Prophet moved to Far West, Missouri.
3. **Independence.** The Lord identified Independence as the center place of Zion in July 1831 (see D&C 57:2–3). Mobs forced the Saints from here in November 1833.
4. **Liberty.** The Saints from Jackson County gathered in this area from 1833 until 1836, when they were required to leave.
5. **Far West.** A refuge was established here for the Saints from 1836 to 1838. It was the headquarters of the Church for part of 1838.

- In 1838–39 the Saints were forced to flee to Illinois.
6. **Nauvoo.** The headquarters of the Church from 1839 to 1846. About two years after the martyrdom of the Prophet and his brother Hyrum, the Saints moved west.
  7. **Council Bluffs (Kanesville).** The pioneers arrived here in June 1846. Members of the Mormon Battalion departed on 21 July 1846 under Lieutenant Colonel James Allen.
  8. **Winter Quarters.** The headquarters settlement for the Saints en route to the Salt Lake Valley (1846–48). The vanguard company under the direction of President Brigham Young departed in April 1847.
  9. **Fort Leavenworth.** The Mormon Battalion was outfitted here before starting the march west in August 1846.

10. **Santa Fe.** Lieutenant Colonel Philip Cooke commanded the Mormon Battalion as it marched from here on 19 October 1846.
11. **Pueblo.** Three sick detachments from the Mormon Battalion were ordered to recuperate in Pueblo, where they spent the winter of 1846–47 with Saints from Mississippi. These parties entered the Salt Lake Valley in July 1847.
12. **San Diego.** The Mormon Battalion finished its 2,000-mile march here on 29 January 1847.
13. **Los Angeles.** The Mormon Battalion was discharged here on 16 July 1847.
14. **Sacramento.** Some discharged battalion members worked here and at Sutter's Mill farther east on the American River, where they helped discover gold.
15. **Salt Lake City.** President Brigham Young arrived in the Salt Lake Valley on 24 July 1847.