

New Testament

S E M I N A R Y



STUDENT STUDY GUIDE

New Testament Student Study Guide

**Prepared by the
Church Educational System**

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How to Use This Manual

As the title of this manual suggests, it is a guide in your study of the scriptures. It contains several sections to help increase your understanding of what you read.



A **Introduction**

Beneath the chapter headings, which are printed on pictures of a sheet of parchment, are introductions to the chapters in the scriptures you are assigned to read and explanations of any chapters you are not assigned to read. This section contains the following kinds of information:

- The historical setting
- An explanation of how the scripture block relates to chapters before or after it
- Questions and ideas to think about before or during your reading that will help you concentrate on the message of the block

B **Understanding the Scriptures**

The "Understanding the Scriptures" section provides help for difficult words and phrases and commentary to help you understand ideas and concepts contained in the scriptures. The commentary often includes statements by General Authorities of the Church.

C **Studying the Scriptures**

The "Studying the Scriptures" section contains questions and activities to help you discover, think about, and apply the principles of the gospel found in the scriptures. There is not room to write in the manual, so you will need to do these activities in a notebook or on your own paper.

The following steps will help you as you study the scriptures:

- Begin with prayer.
- Read the introduction to the chapter you will be studying, and consider other "Before Reading" study skills (see pp. 3–4).
- Read the assigned chapter, referring to the appropriate "Understanding the Scriptures" section for help. Use "During Reading" study skills (see pp. 4–5). Write notes and questions in your notebook. Also write about feelings or impressions that are important to you.
- Do the activities in the "Studying the Scriptures" section for the chapter you are studying. Sometimes you will get to choose which activities to complete. If you want to learn more, complete all of the activities.

Home-Study Seminary Program

If you are in a home-study seminary program, the reading chart on page 7 shows you what you should read each week of seminary. Remember that seminary is a daily religious education program, that prayerfully reading your scriptures should be a daily practice, and that you should work on your seminary assignments each school day even though you will not attend seminary each day. If you have more or less than thirty-six weeks in your seminary year, your teacher will tell you which chapters you should read in a week and which assignments to complete. Reading the scriptures and using this study guide should take thirty to forty minutes each school day you do not attend seminary class.

Each week you should give your teacher the pages from your notebook that contain your thoughts about the scriptures and the study guide activities you completed for that week. Your teacher will read and respond to them and return your notebook to you. You might choose to have two notebooks and use them every other week. You could also write in a loose-leaf binder and turn in the pages you did that week. When your teacher returns the pages, put them back into the notebook.

Daily Seminary Program

If you are in a daily seminary program, you will use this study guide as instructed by your teacher.

Studying the Scriptures

This study guide has been prepared to help you read, study, and understand the scriptures. Since most of your study time will be spent reading and thinking about the scriptures, this section has been included to help you make it more effective.

Elder Howard W. Hunter, who was then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, gave Church members valuable counsel on scripture study, which is summarized below. You may want to write his ideas on a card and put the card in a place where you can see it while you study.

- Read carefully to understand the scriptures.
- Study every day.
- Set a regular time every day when you will study.
- Study in a place where you can concentrate without distractions or interruptions.
- Study for a period of time rather than reading a certain amount of chapters or pages: sixty minutes is ideal, thirty minutes is a great accomplishment, yet fifteen minutes can be meaningful also.
- Have a study plan.
(See Conference Report, Oct. 1979, pp. 91–93; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1979, pp. 64–65.)

Using the study helps found in the Latter-day Saint editions of the scriptures and good study skills will also benefit your scripture study.

Study Helps in the Latter-day Saint Editions of the Scriptures

Cross-References

A cross-reference is a scripture reference that will lead you to additional information and insight on the topic you are studying.

15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

17 ¶ Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

19 Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

20 For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the

For example, read Matthew 5:14–16 and notice footnote 16a. By looking up and reading the scripture referred to in the footnotes, what additional insights do you gain about what it means to “let your light so shine” (Matthew 5:16)?

12c TC Persecution.	b D&C 1: 3
13a See Lev. 2: 13 and Num. 18: 19, where salt is a token of the covenant and was part of sacrifice ritual.	19a TC Sin.
14a TC Mission of Early Saints.	b JST Matt. (Appendix 2: 28; d TC Mission)
15a Luke 11: 33 (33–34).	20a TC Right.
16a 3 Ne. 18: 24. TC Children of Light; Example; Light.	b TC Scribe
b 1 Pet. 2: 12. TC Good Works.	21a TC Comm. God.
c John 15: 8.	b TC Blood Murder.
17a D&C 10: 52 (52, 54).	c GR subject demnatic
b TC Law of Moses.	22a Prov. 29: 3
18a TC Law of Moses.	3 Ne. 12: TC Anger
	b JST Matt. 12: 22 OT

Topical Guide and Bible Dictionary References

The Topical Guide (TG) contains an alphabetical list of hundreds of words and topics with scripture references in all four standard works of the Church. The Bible Dictionary (BD) gives definitions and explanations for many biblical names and subjects. Although not referenced in the footnotes, you may want to check the index for the Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price for additional references.

25 And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind; and God saw that it was good.

26 ¶ And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

29 ¶ And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.

30 And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have

For example, read Genesis 1:26. As you do, you may wonder about the word *us* in “Let us make man in our image.” Who helped God with the Creation? Notice the footnote that refers you to the Topical Guide. Find a scripture reference that clearly says Jesus Christ is the Creator. Look in the Bible Dictionary under “Christ” (p. 633) to find a list of other names by which He is known.

22a D&C 45: 58; 132: 63 (55–56, 63); Moses 2: 22; Abr. 4: 22.	46); Mos 28); Abr 4: 22.
24a TC Order.	TC Man, Become Father.
26a Abr. 4: 27 (26–31); 5: 7. TC Godhead; Jesus Christ, Creator.	27a TC God, poreal N
b TC Creation.	b TC Wom
c TC Adam; Man, Physical Creation of.	28a TC Child
d Messiah 7: 27; Ether 3: 15 (14–17); D&C 20: 18 (17–18); Moses 1: 6 (6, 13, 16); 2: 26 (26–29); 6: 9 (8–10); Abr. 4: 26 (26–31).	b TC Birth Marriage
e Gen. 5: 3.	c HEB fill; in v. 22.
f Prov. 12: 10; D&C 49: 19 (18–21); 76: 111 (110–112); 121: 37 (34–	d TC Earth
	e Gen. 9: 7
	29a HEB food (29–30); (29–30).
	Word of

Help with Words and Phrases

Some words and phrases are labeled with the following notations:

- **HEB**: An alternate (substitute) translation from the Hebrew (the original language of the Old Testament).
- **GR**: An alternate translation from the Greek (the original language of the New Testament).
- **IE**: An explanation of idioms (words or phrases used in a specific way when the scriptures were written but not commonly used today) and difficult constructions.
- **OR**: A clarification of the meaning of archaic (old) expressions.

22a 1 Pet. 2: 8 (4–8).	28a D&C 52: 11.
23a TC Treasure.	29a HEB hosts.
b TC Celestial Glory; God, Glory of.	b GR posterity.
25a IE Hosea.	30a TC Righteousness.
b Hosea 2: 23; Zech. 13: 9.	31a TC Apostasy, of Israel.
26a GR sons. TC Sons and Daughters of God.	32a GR Why.
27a IE Isaiah.	b Isa. 8: 14 (13–15); Matt. 21: 44 (43–45); Luke 2: 34.
b Isa. 10: 22.	33a TC Cornerstone; Jesus Christ, Prophecies about.
c TC Israel, Blessing of.	
d TC Israel, Remnant of.	

What insight do you gain from knowing the meaning of the Hebrew word for “Sabaoth” in Romans 9:29?

The Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible

The Lord commanded the Prophet Joseph Smith to study the Bible and seek revelation to obtain a more complete and true Biblical translation (see D&C 37:1; 73:3–4). Consequently, the Prophet Joseph Smith restored many important truths and made many important changes to the Bible in places where it was not translated correctly or was incomplete (see Articles of Faith 1:8). This version with the inspired changes is called the “Joseph Smith Translation.” The translation is abbreviated in the footnotes as “JST.” Some Joseph Smith Translation changes are in the footnotes, while others are found in an appendix entitled “Joseph Smith Translation,” which begins on page 797 of the Latter-day Saint edition of the King James Version of the Bible.

2 And when he had *fasted *forty days and forty nights, *he was afterward an *hungred.
 3 And when the *tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made *bread.
 4 But he answered and said, It is written, *Man shall not *live by *bread alone, but by every *word that proceedeth out of the *mouth of God.
 5 *Then the devil taketh him up into the *holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple,
 6 *And saith unto him, *If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in *their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.
 7 Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not *tempt the Lord thy God.
 8 *Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the *kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them:
 9 *And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.
 10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, *Satan: for it is written,

<p>2a Mosiah 3: 7. <i>to Fastings.</i> b Ex. 24: 18. 2c JST Matt. 4: 2 . . . and had communed with God, he was afterwards an hungred, and was left to be tempted of the devil. 3a <i>to Devil.</i> b <i>to Bread.</i> 4a Deut. 8: 3; D&C 84: 44 (43–44). b <i>to Mortality.</i> c <i>to Bread.</i> d <i>to Revelation.</i> e <i>to God, Body of (Corporate Nature).</i> 5a JST Matt. 4: 5 Then Jesus was taken up into the holy city, and the Spirit setteth him on the pinnacle of the temple. b Neh. 11: 1. 6a JST Matt. 4: 6 Then the devil came unto him and said, If . . . b Matt. 27: 40; D&C 20: 22.</p>	<p>7a D&C 10: (13–14). <i>τ</i> Christ, <i>τ</i> Test, <i>τ</i> Try. 8a JST Matt. gain, <i>Jesu Spirit, and him . . .</i> b D&C 10: Earthly. 9a JST Matt. devil came again, and 10a <i>to Devil.</i> b <i>to Worsh</i> 11a JST Matt. now Jesus John was prison, an angel, an they came tered unt</p>
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Read Matthew 4:2–6. What important help does the Joseph Smith Translation provide for these verses?

Bible Maps and Photographs

The Bible maps and photographs found in the appendix of the Latter-day Saint edition of the Bible are helpful in finding places referred to in the scriptures.

Chapter Headings, Section Headings, and Verse Summaries

Chapter and section headings and verse summaries explain or give important background information to help you understand what you read. For example, what helpful information do you get by reading the section heading to Doctrine and Covenants 89?

Having the study helps found in Latter-day Saint editions of the scriptures is like having a small collection of reference books available to you—all in one place!

Scripture Study Tools

Nephi said we ought to “feast upon the words of Christ” (2 Nephi 32:3), and Jesus commanded the Nephites to “search [the scriptures] diligently” (3 Nephi 23:1). This kind of study involves more than just quickly reading through the scriptures. The following ideas and tools will help you learn more when you study. They are divided into three different categories: before reading, during reading, and after reading.

Before Reading

Prayer

The scriptures were written by inspiration. Consequently, they are best understood when we have the companionship of the Holy Ghost. In the Old Testament we learn about the priest Ezra who “prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel” (Ezra 7:10). Prepare your heart to read the scriptures by obeying the commandments and humbly praying each time you read.

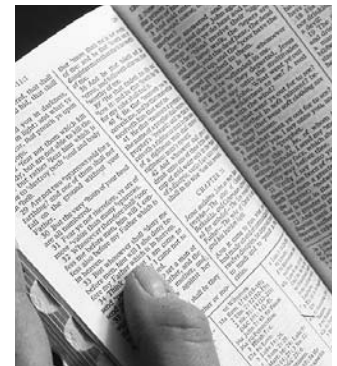


Understand the Setting

Understanding the historical background of the scriptures will help you gain greater insights as you read. The Bible Dictionary provides historical background and a brief overview of each book’s content and main themes. This manual also gives some background for many chapters in the scriptures. If you have time, you may also refer to other Church-approved books and manuals that have background on the scripture you are reading.

Read the Chapter Headings

Chapter headings are simple summaries of the main ideas in a chapter. Reading the chapter heading before you begin a chapter is a good study habit that will help you prepare to ask questions and look for answers as you read.



Ask Questions

Before you read, it is helpful to ask yourself questions like “Who wrote these verses?” “To whom?” “Why is this teaching included in the scriptures?” “What do I want to know or learn as I read today?” and “What would the Lord want me to learn from these scriptures?” As you read the scriptures, look for answers to your questions. Remember that you can also use the study helps in the Latter-day Saint editions of the scriptures or look for answers in Church manuals and publications.

During Reading

Don't Be Afraid to Stop

Most nuggets of gold are not found on the surface of the ground—you must dig for them. Your scripture study will be much more valuable if you will slow down or stop and do some of the activities that follow.

Ask Questions

Continue to ask questions like you were instructed to do in the “Before Reading” section. As you read, you may rephrase questions you asked before reading or you may come up with completely different questions. Seeking answers to questions is one of the most important ways we gain greater understanding from our scripture study. One of the most important questions to ask is “Why might the Lord have inspired the writer to include this in the scriptures?” Look for the obvious clues writers sometimes leave when they say something like “and thus we see.”

Answer Questions Given in the Scriptures

Many times the Lord asks and then answers a question. He asked the Nephite disciples, “What manner of men ought ye to be?” He then answered, “Even as I am” (3 Nephi 27:27).

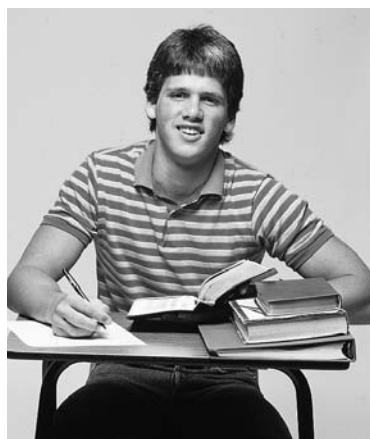
On other occasions questions are asked but no answers are given—generally because the author thinks the answer may be obvious. Sometimes the scriptures do not give an answer because the question asked may require some thinking and the answer may not be immediate. For example, read Mark 4:35–41 and give answers for the four questions in those verses as if you were there.

Use the Study Helps in the Latter-day Saint Editions of the Scriptures

See the section “Study Helps in the Latter-day Saint Editions of the Scriptures” on pages 2–3.

Understand the Words

Use a dictionary. Sometimes looking up a word you think you already know can give you additional insight. The “Understanding



the Scriptures” sections of this manual will help you understand many difficult words and phrases.

Be aware that sometimes the Lord has inspired his prophets to include explanations in their writings that help us know the meaning of words and phrases. For example, read Mosiah 3:19 and find out what King Benjamin said it meant to become like a child.

Insert Your Name

Using your own name in a verse helps make scriptural teachings more personal. For example, what difference does it make to use your own name in place of “Zacchaeus” in Luke 19:2–6?

Visualize

Picture in your mind what is taking place. For example, when reading Acts 3:1–11, imagine how you might have felt if you were the lame man hearing the words, “In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.”



At times the scriptures tell us to visualize. Read Alma 5:15–18 and stop to do as Alma suggests. Take some time to write about how you felt as you visualized those verses.

Look for Connecting Words

Connecting words include *and*, *but*, *because*, *therefore*, *wherefore*, and *nevertheless*. As you read these words, notice what they help you understand about two or more ideas. Sometimes they show how two or more things are similar or different.

For example, if you think about what the word *because* indicates in Mosiah 26:2–3, you can learn an important truth about scripture study.

² They did not believe what had been said concerning the resurrection of the dead, neither did they believe concerning the coming of Christ.

³ And now because of their unbelief they could not understand the word of God; and their hearts were hardened.

Because indicates a cause-and-effect relationship between the people’s disbelief and their ability to understand the scriptures and words of the prophets.

Read Matthew 17:19–21 and note how the word *but* emphasizes what is sometimes required of us to acquire the necessary faith to obtain a powerful spiritual blessing.

Look for Patterns

In 2 Nephi 31:2, Nephi said that he wanted to write a few words about the doctrine of Christ. Then in verse 21 he bore his testimony that he had just explained the doctrine of Christ. Knowing that Nephi taught the doctrine of Christ between verses 2 and 21, review Nephi’s words and discover what the doctrine of Christ is.



Another example of finding patterns is to look for a prophet’s explanation of cause and effect by watching for the use of the words *if* and *then*. For example, read John 8:31–32 and find what Jesus taught a person needed to do to be considered His disciple.

In Romans 8 Paul wrote about our relationship with God. As you read verses

16–17, 25, and 31, notice how Paul used the if-then pattern and how it helps you understand who you are and the blessings that come as you exercise faith in your relationship with God.

The repetition of a word or idea is another pattern to look for. For example, notice how many times in Genesis 39 the writer mentioned that the Lord was with Joseph.

Look for Lists

Lists help you understand more clearly what the Lord and His prophets teach. The Ten Commandments are a list (see Exodus 20). The Beatitudes in Matthew 5 are easily seen as a list. Finding other lists may require a little more effort. For example, read Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21; 21:7 and list blessings that come to those who overcome the spiritual challenges in this world.

Look for Types and Symbols

Prophets often use symbols and imagery (types) to more powerfully communicate their messages. For example, parables are a way of telling a message simply and in a way that has a much deeper meaning. The story in a parable makes the lesson taught more memorable and meaningful.

The following suggestions may help you understand symbols in the scriptures:

1. Look for comparisons between persons, places, and things. Sometimes words such as *like*, *as*, or *likened unto* help identify symbols.
2. Look for an interpretation in the scriptures or the study helps. For example, Jesus taught a multitude the parable of the sower (see Matthew 13:1–9), but He gave the interpretation only to His disciples (see vv. 18–23). Sometimes an interpretation can be found by using a cross-reference in the footnotes (for example, see Matthew 13:25 footnote *a*).
3. Think about the nature or characteristics of the symbol and what the symbol teaches you. You might ask, “Why was this symbol used?” Alma used this skill in explaining the Liahona to his son Helaman (see Alma 37:38–47).
4. See if the symbol teaches you something about the Savior. The Lord told Adam that “all things bear record of [Him]” (Moses 6:63). For example, how do the different elements in the story of Abraham’s sacrifice of his son Isaac testify of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ? (see Genesis 22:1–19; Jacob 4:5).

Look for Contrasts

Stories and examples of good and evil are often placed next to each other in the scriptures to show the differences between the two. As you identify scriptural contrasts, ask, “What am I supposed to learn from contrasting these two stories?” For example, consider what can be learned by contrasting the two brothers in the parable of the prodigal son (see Luke 15:11–32).

Cluster Scriptures

President Boyd K. Packer taught: “Individual doctrines of the gospel are not fully explained in one place in the scriptures, nor presented in order or sequence. They must be assembled from pieces here or there” (*The Great Plan of Happiness* [address to religious educators at a symposium on the Doctrine and Covenants and Church History, Brigham Young University, Aug. 10, 1993], 1). Therefore, as you study the scriptures, look for familiar words, phrases, principles, topics, and events that seem familiar to you from other scriptures you have read. Cross-reference scriptures by writing the reference to another similar scripture in the margin. Doing this in several verses gives you a chain of scriptures on a specific topic that you can

find by going to any of the scriptures in the chain. Look for differences as you compare and contrast these passages. Ask, “What insights do I gain from clustering these scriptures?” For example, cluster the following passages and notice how your understanding of the doctrine is expanded: Mosiah 1:11; 5:7–9; Alma 5:38–41.

Write

Keep a journal, some paper, or a notebook close by to write down ideas you want to remember, such as lists, special insights you get, or your feelings about something you read. To help you remember thoughts or insights the next time you read, you may want to write brief ideas in the margins of your scriptures as well.



Many people like to mark important words and phrases in their scriptures. There is no right or wrong way to do this. (You may not want to do it at all.) Some people circle the verse number or shade or underline important words and phrases that give special meaning to a verse. Marking scriptures can often help you find important verses more quickly.

After Reading

Ponder

To ponder is to think deeply about something, asking questions and evaluating what you know and what you have learned. Sometimes the scriptures call this “meditating” (see Joshua 1:8). There are several good examples in the scriptures where important revelations came as a result of pondering, especially pondering the scriptures (see D&C 76:15–20; 138:1–11).

Liken the Scriptures to Yourself

To liken the scriptures to yourself is to compare them to your own life. To do this most effectively, ask questions like “What principles of the gospel are taught in these scriptures?” and “How do those principles relate to my life?” An important part of likening the scriptures to yourself is listening to promptings of the Holy Ghost, who the Lord promised “will guide you into all truth” (John 16:13).



Jesus likened many of His parables to His disciples and the gospel. For example, as He explained the meaning of the parable of the wheat and the tares He taught that the “good seed,” planted by the Son of Man, represented “the children of the kingdom,” or the righteous. The tares, planted by the devil, represented “the children of the wicked one.” These two would grow up together until the harvest, or “end of the world.” At His Second Coming both the righteous and the wicked will be gathered, the wicked to be burned with fire. (See Matthew 13:36–43.)

Reread

We do not understand everything in a passage of scripture the first time we read it. In fact, it takes a lifetime of study to truly understand the scriptures. Often, we begin to see patterns, visualize better, and more deeply understand the scriptures after two or three readings. You may want to look for new teachings or ask different questions as you reread. Trying to rewrite a story or just a verse or two in your own words may help you discover whether or not you understood what you read and help you better understand the scriptures.

Write

Some people keep a journal in which they write the main idea of what they read, how they feel about what they read, or how they think what they read applies to their life. If you are using this manual for home-study seminary, you are required to keep a notebook to receive credit. This notebook will be like a scripture journal.

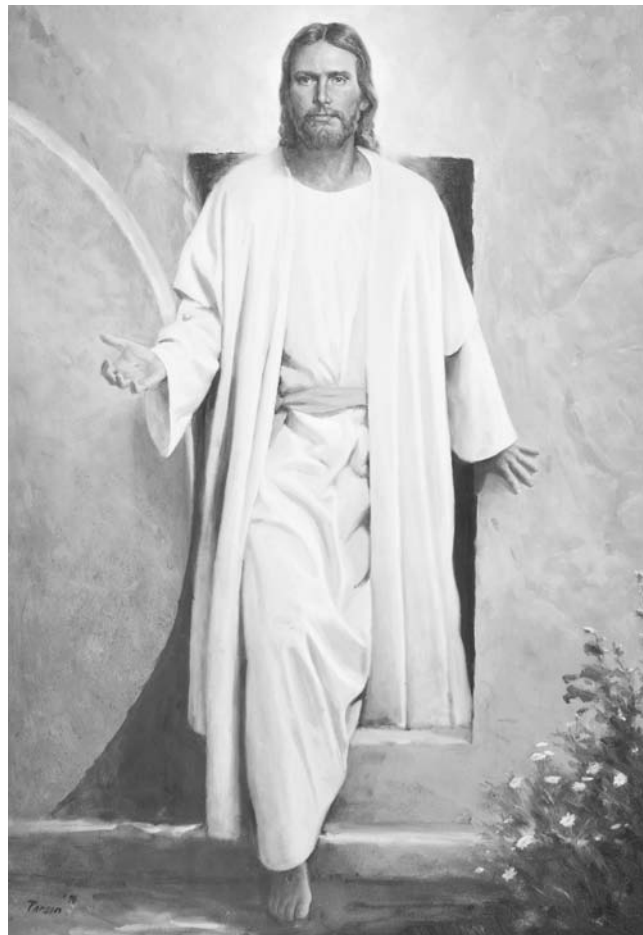


It is also good to talk with others about what you read. Writing down some notes so that you remember what you want to talk about and discussing what you learned will help you understand and remember more of what you read.

Apply

The real value of knowledge you gain from the scriptures comes when you live what you learn. Greater closeness to the Lord and feeling the peace He gives are just some of the blessings that come to those who live the gospel. In addition, the Lord said that those who live what they learn will be given more, while those who will not live what they learn will lose the knowledge they have (see Alma 12:9–11).

“And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 3:15).



Detail from *He Is Risen by Del Parson* © Del Parson

New Testament Reading Chart

Days I Read Ten Minutes or More

Assigned Chapters I Read This Week

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	Week 1 "Studying the Scriptures"
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	Week 2 Matthew 1 2 3 4 5
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	Week 3 Matthew 5 (continued) 6 7 8 9 10
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	Week 4 Matthew 11 12 13 14 15 16
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	Week 5 Matthew 17 18 19 20 21 22 23
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	Week 6 Matthew 24 25 26
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	Week 7 Matthew 27 28 Mark 1 2 3
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	Week 8 Mark 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	Week 9 Mark 11 12 13 14 15 16
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	Week 10 Luke 1 2 3 4 5 6
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	Week 11 Luke 7 8 9
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	Week 12 Luke 10 11 12 13 14 15
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	Week 13 Luke 16 17 18 19 20 21
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	Week 14 Luke 22 23 24
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	Week 15 John 1 2 3 4 5
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	Week 16 John 6 7 8
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	Week 17 John 9 10 11 12
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	Week 18 John 13 14 15 16 17
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	Week 19 John 18 19 20 21
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	Week 20 Acts 1 2 3 4 5
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	Week 21 Acts 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	Week 22 Acts 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	Week 23 Acts 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	Week 24 Romans 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	Week 25 Romans 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	Week 26 1 Corinthians 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	Week 27 1 Corinthians 15 2 Corinthians 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	Week 28 Galatians 1 2 3 4 5 6 Ephesians 1 2 3 4 5 6
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	Week 29 Philippians 1 2 3 4 Colossians 1 2 3 4 1 Thessalonians 1 2 4 5 2 Thessalonians 1 2 3
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	Week 30 1 Timothy 1 2 3 4 5 6 2 Timothy 1 2 3 4 Titus 1 2 3 Philemon 1
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	Week 31 Hebrews 1 2 5 7:1-4 11 12 13
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	Week 32 James 1 2 3 4 5 1 Peter 1 2 3 4 5
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	Week 33 2 Peter 1 2 3 1 John 1 2 3 4 5 2 John 1 3 John 1 Jude 1
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	Week 34 Revelation 1 2 3 5 6 7
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	Week 35 Revelation 10 11 12 14 15
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	Week 36 Revelation 17 18 19 20 21 22

Welcome to the New Testament

The Record of the Savior's Mortal Ministry

The New Testament is a record of the life and teachings of the Savior during His mortal ministry. It also records the travels and teachings of His Apostles after He ascended into heaven. It is called the New Testament because the word *testament* means "covenant." Covenants are sacred promises that God makes with His children. They allow His children, through their obedience to these covenants, to obtain great blessings in this life and eternal life in the world to come.

Elder Bruce R. McConkie, who was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, explained: "As used in the gospel sense, a testament is a covenant which Deity makes with his people. Thus the fulness of the gospel is the new and everlasting testament or covenant [see D&C 22:1], and the preparatory gospel or Mosaic law is the Mosaic or lesser testament or covenant. When the gospel was restored in the meridian of time by Jesus and his apostles, it was a new testament (covenant) as compared with the old testament (covenant) that had been in force since the days of Moses" (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1966–73], 1:63).

The House of Israel When Jesus Was Born

From the days of the ancient prophets Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (whose name was changed to Israel), the Lord chose their descendants, the house of Israel, to be His covenant people. By the time Jesus Christ was born, most of the house of Israel had been scattered throughout the world and lost to history because of their wickedness. The only Israelites who were left were mainly Jews, and they had drifted away from the truth into spiritual darkness. The last prophet of the Old Testament period, Malachi, died about four hundred years before Jesus was born.

By the time of Jesus's birth, the Jews were also in darkness politically. They were not an independent nation but a part of the territories conquered and controlled by the Roman Empire (see Bible map 8, which is in the appendix of your Bible).

Previewing the New Testament— The Table of Contents

Look at "The Names and Order of All the Books of the Old and New Testament" in the front of your Bible. The books of the New Testament are arranged by the type of book rather than in chronological order. Mark your table of contents so you can remember the different kinds of books in the New Testament (see Bible Dictionary, "Bible," pp. 622–24).

1. *The Gospels*. The books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are called the Gospels, and each one is named after its author. The word *gospel* means "good news." The Gospels are the testimonies of these writers about the life and mission of Jesus Christ (see Bible Dictionary, "Gospels," pp. 682–83).
2. *The Acts of the Apostles*. The Acts of the Apostles was written by Luke and is his account of the growth of the Church under the direction of the Apostles (see Bible Dictionary, "Acts of the Apostles," pp. 603–4).

3. *The Pauline Epistles*. The books of Romans through Hebrews are epistles (letters) written by the Apostle Paul. They are named for the branch of the Church or the individual or group to whom the letter was written (see Bible Dictionary, "Pauline Epistles," pp. 743–48).
4. *The General Epistles*. The books of James through Jude are also epistles. They are often called the general epistles and are named for the Church leaders who wrote the letters.
5. *The book of Revelation*. The book of Revelation (sometimes referred to as the Apocalypse) was written by the Apostle John, who also wrote the Gospel and epistles that bear his name. Revelation is John's account of a revelation he received from the Lord (see Bible Dictionary, "Revelation of John," pp. 762–63).

What Can a Study of the New Testament Mean to Me?

The Savior testified: "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3). Is there any better place to learn about the Savior than in the record of His mortal ministry in the New Testament?

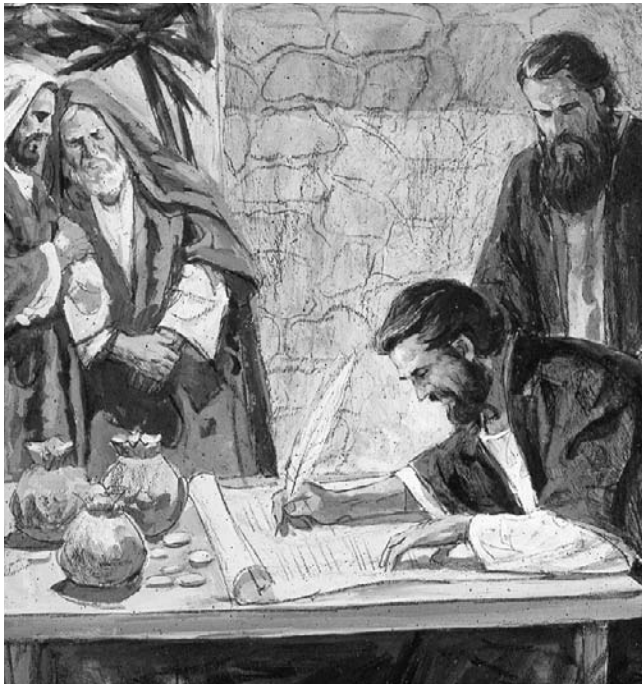
President James E. Faust said: "The New Testament is a better testament because so much is left to the intent of the heart and of the mind. This refinement of the soul is part of the reinforcing steel of a personal testimony. If there is no witness in the heart and in the mind, there can be no testimony. Let us study, learn, and live the hard doctrines the Savior taught, that our Christlike behavior may move us up to a much higher spiritual attainment" (*Finding Light in a Dark World* [1995], 16).

In speaking to the young women of the Church about reading the scriptures, President Gordon B. Hinckley said: "I hope that for you this will become something far more enjoyable than a duty; that, rather, it will become a love affair with the word of God. I promise you that as you read, your minds will be enlightened and your spirits will be lifted. At first it may seem tedious, but that will change into a wondrous experience with thoughts and words of things divine" ("The Light within You," *Ensign*, May 1995, 99).



As you study the New Testament, look for truths that can teach you more about Jesus Christ and how to apply His gospel in your life. As part of your study, you will keep a notebook of insights and assignments. Be sure to write down what you learn about the Savior that particularly impresses you. This will help you learn to hear the whisperings of the Spirit and will fill your heart with a testimony of Jesus Christ.

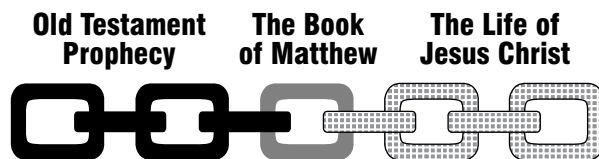
The Gospel According to Saint Matthew



Matthew collected taxes for the Roman government.

Who Was Matthew?

Matthew was a publican, or tax collector, for the Roman government (see Matthew 9:9). He left his profession to follow the Savior and became one of the original Twelve Apostles. He was also known as Levi (see Mark 2:14). For more information about Matthew, see “Matthew” in the Bible Dictionary (p. 729).



Why Did Matthew Write This Book?

If the prophecies of the Old Testament and the events in the life of Jesus Christ were compared to links in two separate chains, Matthew’s testimony could be considered a link that joins the two together. Matthew quoted the Old Testament more than any other New Testament writer. The first verses of Matthew show the coming of Jesus as a continuation of the Old Testament story. As you read, you will find that Matthew continually emphasized that Jesus fulfilled the promises and prophecies of the Old Testament as the following chart shows.

Matthew’s Testimony of Prophecies Fulfilled by Jesus Christ

Prophecy	Fulfillment
He would be born of a virgin (see Isaiah 7:14).	Matthew 1:18–23
He would be born at Bethlehem (see Micah 5:2).	Matthew 2:1–6

He would be a descendant of Abraham and an heir to the throne of David (see Isaiah 9:6–7; Abraham 2:11).	Matthew 1:1–17
Kings of other nations would bring Him gifts at His birth (see Psalm 72:10).	Matthew 2:1–11
God’s Son would come up out of Egypt (see Hosea 11:1).	Matthew 2:13–15
The Messiah would be called a Nazarene (unknown).	Matthew 2:23
Someone would come before the Messiah to prepare the way (see Isaiah 40:3; Malachi 3:1).	Matthew 3:1–3; 11:10
The Messiah would spend time in Galilee (see Isaiah 9:1–2).	Matthew 4:12–23
The Messiah would use parables (see Psalm 78:2; Isaiah 6:9–11).	Matthew 13:10–15, 34–35
Great miracles would be performed (see Isaiah 35:5–6).	Matthew 11:4–5
The Messiah would be rejected by the rulers of the people (see Psalm 118:22; Isaiah 8:14).	Matthew 21:42
The Messiah would be betrayed for thirty pieces of silver (see Zechariah 11:12).	Matthew 27:3
The Messiah would be smitten on the cheek (see Micah 5:1), spat upon (see Isaiah 50:6), and mocked (see Psalm 22:7–8).	Matthew 27:30–31, 39–44
The Messiah would be given vinegar to drink (see Psalm 69:21).	Matthew 27:34
The Messiah would be numbered among transgressors in His death and buried with the rich (see Isaiah 53:9, 12).	Matthew 27:38, 57–60

In addition to showing how Jesus fulfilled Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah, Matthew taught how Jesus Christ gave a law that was greater than the law of Moses practiced by the Jews in the Old Testament (see Matthew 5–7; especially note Matthew 5:21–22, 27–28, 31–32, 38–42). Matthew also told more stories than Mark, Luke, or John about how the leaders of the Jews rejected Jesus in spite of the many testimonies that He was their Messiah. This emphasis on Jesus being the fulfillment of Old Testament law and prophecy seems to indicate that Matthew had a Jewish audience in mind when he wrote and that he wanted them to know that Jesus was their Messiah.

Only in Matthew

Although many of the teachings and stories of Jesus appear in more than one of the Gospels, the following are found only in Matthew:

- Some of the details surrounding Jesus’s birth, such as the story of Joseph’s dream and decision to marry Mary (see Matthew 1:18–20), the visit of the wise men (see Matthew 2:1–13), and going to Egypt to avoid Herod and the killing of the children (see Matthew 2:14–18)
- The complete Sermon on the Mount (see Matthew 5–7)
- Ten parables not in the other Gospels

- The resurrection and appearance of Saints after the Resurrection of the Savior (see Matthew 27:52–53)
- Some often quoted and important sayings of Jesus, such as, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28)

Matthew 1

Jesus Christ Is Born



Matthew began his testimony with an important family history to show that Jesus was a descendent of Abraham and a descendant of king David. To be a descendant of Abraham was important because God had promised Abraham that his descendants would bless and bring salvation to the whole world (see Genesis 12:2–3; Abraham 2:9–11).

To be a descendant of King David was important because the Jews knew that the Messiah would be a literal descendant of David (see Isaiah 11:1–9).

Elder James E. Talmage, who was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, taught that if Judah had been continually ruled by kings since the time of David, Mary’s husband Joseph “would have been her crowned king; and his lawful successor to the throne would have been Jesus” (Jesus the Christ, 3rd ed. [1916], 87).

The story of Christ’s birth is also found in Luke 2. Matthew 1 tells the story of Joseph and the birth of Christ, while Luke 1–2 tells Mary’s story. As you read Matthew 1:18–25, look for qualities in Joseph that would make him a good guardian and father to Jesus.

Other Accounts of What You Read in Matthew 1

Matthew 1:1–17—Luke 3:23–38

Matthew 1:18–24—Luke 2:1–7

Understanding the Scriptures

Matthew 1

Found with child (v. 18)—Going to have a baby, pregnant

Be with child (v. 23)—Going to have a baby, pregnant

Of the Holy Ghost (v. 18)—It happened by the power of the Holy Ghost (but the Holy Ghost is *not* His father)

Just (v. 19)—Righteous

Being interpreted is (v. 23)—Means, is translated

Knew her not (v. 25)—Did not have any sexual relations with her

Matthew 1:18–19—“Espoused”

Espousal was a formal agreement to be married. The agreement was so strong that if a person was unfaithful during the espousal it was considered adultery and punishable by death (see Deuteronomy 22:23–24). This was the reason Joseph was so concerned about Mary’s pregnancy and what he should do about it.

Studying the Scriptures

Do activity A as you study Matthew 1.

A Preparing a Father for Jesus

1. What did Joseph want to do when he found out Mary was expecting a baby? (see Matthew 1:18–19).
2. What did Joseph decide to do after the visit of the angel in his dream? (see Matthew 1:20–25).
3. Although Joseph was not the literal father of Jesus, he must have been the kind of man Heavenly Father trusted to be a father to Jesus in mortality. Notice how Joseph responded to situations in Matthew 1:18–25 and write about at least two qualities he demonstrated that you think you could develop as you prepare to be a parent.

Matthew 2

Wise Men Seek and Find Jesus

At the time of Jesus’s birth the Jews were under Roman rule and the Romans had appointed Herod to be their king. Herod was a Gentile, an Idumean, who converted to the Jewish faith. He tried to gain favor with the Jews by rebuilding their temple at enormous cost. His reign was also famous for his jealousy of all who might threaten his power and for his cruel acts—one of which is recorded in Matthew 2 (see “Herod” in the Bible Dictionary, pp. 700–701, for more information about this king and his family).



The wise men were guided by a star.

In Matthew 2 you will also read about “wise men from the east” who went to Herod in Jerusalem, looking for a newly born “King of the Jews.” Many stories and legends are told about these men from the east. Look for what Matthew said about them that would explain why he made special mention of them in his testimony of the Savior’s birth and early years. You can learn more about these witnesses of the Savior’s birth by looking up “Magi” and “Wise Men of the East” in the Bible Dictionary (pp. 727–28, 789).

Be sure to notice important additions from the Joseph Smith Translation (JST) in this chapter.

Other Accounts of What You Read in Matthew 2
Matthew 2:22–23—Luke 2:39

Understanding the Scriptures

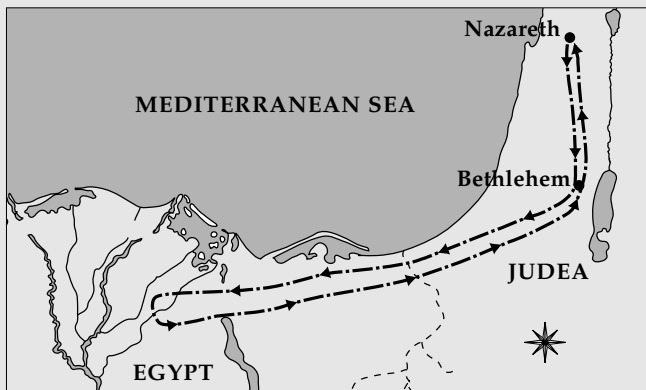


Matthew 2

<p>Scribes (v. 4)—Teachers of Jewish rules and laws</p> <p>Privily (v. 7)—Privately, secretly</p> <p>Enquired (vv. 7, 16)—Asked</p> <p>Frankincense, myrrh (v. 11)—Fragrant (strong smelling) plant saps that were burned as incense and used as perfume</p>	<p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p>Slew (v. 16)—Killed</p> <p>Lamentation, mourning (v. 18)—Crying and sadness</p> <p>Thither (v. 22)—There</p> <p>Turned aside (v. 22)—Went back</p>
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Matthew 2:2—“We Have Seen His Star”

Although a prophecy in the book of Numbers refers to the Messiah as the “Star out of Jacob” (Numbers 24:17), there is no specific prophecy in the Old Testament (as we now have it) about a star as a sign of the birth of the Messiah. The Book of Mormon prophet Samuel, however, prophesied of a “new star” that would arise as a sign of the Savior’s birth (see Helaman 14:5).



The travels of the young child Jesus and His parents.

Studying the Scriptures



Do two of the following activities (A–C) as you study Matthew 2.

A Just the Facts

There are many stories and legends told about the “wise men from the east.” Using information found in Matthew 2:1–13, answer the following questions about these well-known men:

1. How many were there?
2. How did they know where to look for Jesus?
3. Why did they go there?
4. Exactly where did they find Jesus?
5. What did they do when they visited Jesus?
6. What did they do after they visited Jesus?

B Notice a Repeated Idea

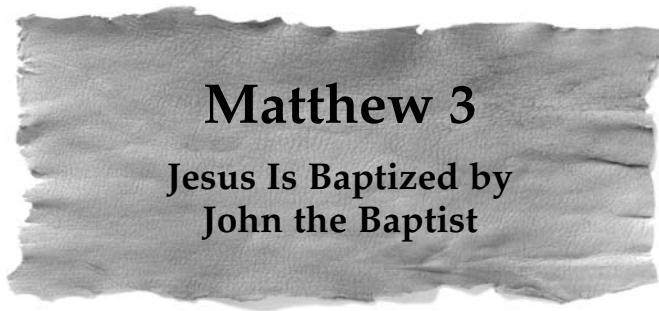
According to Matthew 2, why was Jesus born in Bethlehem, taken to Egypt, then raised in Nazareth? You may want to write the reference Doctrine and Covenants 1:38 next to one or all three of the verses that tell why those things needed to happen.

C What Do I Know about Jesus?

1. Make a chart in your notebook like the one below and fill it in based on what you read in Matthew 2:1–10.

WHO?	WHAT THEY KNEW ABOUT JESUS	WHAT THEY DID WITH WHAT THEY KNEW
The Wise Men		
Herod		
Chief Priests and Scribes		

2. Write a response to the following question: What do I know about Jesus, and what am I doing with what I know?



Matthew 3

Jesus Is Baptized by John the Baptist

The Joseph Smith Translation adds a brief summary of the time between Jesus’s childhood and when He was an adult (see JST, Matthew 3:24–26). Matthew 3 begins when Jesus was about thirty years old. In this chapter we are introduced to a man called John the Baptist, who bore witness of Jesus Christ. The story of John’s birth, which occurred six months before the birth of Jesus, is told in Luke 1:5–25. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that when Herod had the children aged two and younger in the land killed (see Matthew 2:16–18), John’s mother hid him in the wilderness, and John’s father was killed because he would not tell where John was hidden (see Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], p. 261; see also Matthew 23:35).

John the Baptist held the keys of the Aaronic Priesthood (see D&C 13) and had a very important mission that was foretold by prophets hundreds of years before his birth (see Isaiah 40:3; Malachi 3:1; 1 Nephi 10:7–10). In Matthew 3 we read about how he used the keys of the Aaronic Priesthood in some very important ways.

As you read Matthew 3, consider what you learn about the importance of baptism from what John taught, what Jesus did, and what Heavenly Father said.

Other Accounts of What You Read in Matthew 3

Matthew 3:1–12—Mark 1:2–8; Luke 3:1–20

Matthew 3:13–17—Mark 1:9–11; Luke 3:21–22; see also John’s testimony in John 1:29–34

Understanding the Scriptures



Matthew 3

Raiment (v. 4)—Clothes

Leathern girdle about his loins (v. 4)—Leather belt around his waist

Meat (v. 4)—Food

Pharisees and Sadducees (v. 7)—Two different groups of Jewish leaders (see Bible Dictionary, “Pharisees” and “Sadducees,” pp. 750, 767)

Vipers (v. 7)—Poisonous snakes (often symbolic of wickedness)

Wrath (v. 7)—Anger

Fruits (v. 8)—Works, actions

The ax is laid unto the root of the trees (v. 10)—A symbolic way of saying the judgment is near or God is about to cut down the trees that bear no fruit in His land

Bear (v. 11)—Carry (the whole phrase is John’s symbolic way of saying that the Savior’s mission is much greater than his own; see JST, Matthew 3:38)

Fan (v. 12)—A tool or instrument used to separate wheat kernels from their lighter outer shell (called “chaff”), which is not eaten



Winnowing

Purge his floor (v. 12)—Clean his place of harvesting

Forbad him (v. 14)—Told him he would not

Becometh us (v. 15)—Is the right thing to do for us

Descending (v. 16)—Coming down

Lighting (v. 16)—Landing

repentance, and (3) the keys of baptism by immersion for the remission of sins. For each of these three keys, find a verse (or group of verses) in Matthew 3 that describes John using that particular key. (You may want to read Moroni 7:29–32 for help in understanding the key of the ministering of angels. This passage seems to especially apply to what John did.) For each verse you choose, give a brief explanation of how John’s actions demonstrate that priesthood key.

2. Describe ways Aaronic Priesthood holders today are allowed to use these same three Aaronic Priesthood keys.

B The Baptism of Jesus

Answer the following questions:



1. For what purpose did John baptize the Jews? (see Matthew 3:11).

2. For what purposes was Jesus baptized? (see Matthew 3:13–15; 2 Nephi 31:5–9).

3. Why do you think Jesus went to John to be baptized?

4. Why is immersion an important symbol of baptism, and what clues in Matthew 3:13–17 help us understand that Jesus was baptized by immersion?

5. How did Heavenly Father show He approved of the baptism? (see Matthew 3:16–17).

C Be a Missionary

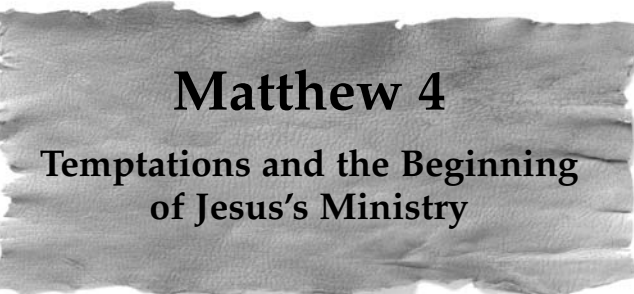
Write how you would use Matthew 3:13–17 to explain to someone who is not a member of the Church that Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost are three separate beings.

Studying the Scriptures

Do activity A and then either B or C as you study Matthew 3.

A Using the Aaronic Priesthood

1. Doctrine and Covenants 13 tells what John the Baptist said when he restored the Aaronic Priesthood to the earth in 1829. He spoke of three keys of the Aaronic Priesthood: (1) the keys of the ministering of angels, (2) the keys of the gospel of



Matthew 4

Temptations and the Beginning of Jesus’s Ministry

It is important for us to know that not only was Jesus without sin, but also that He “was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin” (Hebrews 4:15). He understands temptation because He experienced it and resisted. As you read Matthew 4:1–11, notice the perfect example He set for us in how to overcome temptation. We should also recognize that this testing came as He was preparing to publicly preach His gospel. Satan also seeks to tempt those who will preach the Savior’s gospel today. We must learn to overcome these temptations in order to successfully accomplish our callings to teach and minister in the name of Jesus Christ.

The rest of Matthew 4 tells us what Jesus did and said as He began to preach and minister among His people. Read all of the Joseph Smith Translation references for this chapter. There are some very important changes in the first eleven verses.

Other Accounts of What You Read in Matthew 4

Matthew 4:1–11—Mark 1:12–13; Luke 4:1–13
 Matthew 4:12–17—Mark 1:14–15
 Matthew 4:18–22—Mark 1:16–20; Luke 5:1–11

Understanding the Scriptures



Matthew 4

The tempter (v. 3)—Satan, the devil

Proceedeth (v. 4)—Comes

Holy City (v. 5)—Jerusalem

Pinnacle (v. 5)—Tower

Cast (vv. 6, 12)—Throw

Charge concerning thee (v. 6)—Power to watch over and help you

Lest (v. 6)—Just in case

Dash (v. 6)—Hit

Get thee hence (v. 10)—Go away

Straightway (v. 20)—Immediately

Thence (v. 21)—There

Synagogues (v. 23)—Buildings where those of the Jewish faith met together for religious services

Divers (v. 24)—Different

Torments (v. 24)—Problems, pains

Matthew 4:1—The Wilderness

The wilderness of Judea is a harsh and difficult place to live. It is a very dry desert of sandy, rocky soil with very little vegetation. In the summer it gets as hot as 115 degrees Fahrenheit (46 degrees centigrade).

Matthew 4:1–11—How to Overcome Temptation

Doctrine and Covenants 20:22 gives us additional understanding by telling us that Jesus simply “gave no heed” when temptations came to Him. Elder Neal A. Maxwell, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, said, “Instead of dismissing temptations as Jesus did, it is giving heed to them which gets so many in trouble! My mission president used to say we may not always be able to keep an evil thought from entering our minds, but we don’t have to offer it a chair and invite it to sit down” (“I Will Arise and Go to My Father,” *Ensign*, Sept. 1993, 67).

Studying the Scriptures



Do activities A and B as you study Matthew 4.

A Resisting Temptation

1. Make a chart like the following and fill it in with information you find in Matthew 4:1–10, and with your own ideas and experience.

	First Temptation (vv. 2–4)	Second Temptation (vv. 5–7)	Third Temptation (vv. 8–10)
What was the temptation?			
How did Jesus respond?			
How does Satan tempt us today in similar ways?			

2. Notice what is similar about the ways Jesus dismissed each of those three temptations. Based on what Jesus did, finish the following statement of advice on resisting temptations: One of the most important tools to resist temptation that I have available to me is . . .

B Follow Me



“Come, follow me”

1. List the four men in Matthew 4:18–22 whom Jesus asked to follow Him.
2. What did those men give up to follow Jesus, and why do you think they did it?

3. Choose one of the two following situations: A person who is considering joining the Church or a person who is considering accepting a call to serve a mission. For the situation you chose, list what a person in that situation might have to give up, then write what you would say to that person about why it would be worth the sacrifice.

Matthew 5

The Sermon on the Mount, Part 1

What would you say if you were asked to give an overview of Christ’s teachings to someone who knew very little about Him? Much of what you might say could come from what is known as the Sermon on the Mount, which is found in Matthew 5–7. We realize how important this sermon is when we note that Jesus gave almost the same sermon to the Nephites when He visited them after His resurrection (see 3 Nephi 12–14). The teachings of the Sermon on the Mount help us understand what it means to be a Christian and that

living these teachings is essential to receiving salvation in the kingdom of God (see Matthew 7:21, 24–27; 3 Nephi 15:1). Elder Bruce R. McConkie, who was an Apostle, wrote, “This sermon is a . . . summary . . . of what men must do to gain salvation; and the eternal concepts in it are so stated that hearers (and readers) will get out of it as much as their personal spiritual capacity permits” (The Mortal Messiah: From Bethlehem to Calvary, 4 vols. [1979–81], 2:116).



Matthew 5 begins with a series of teachings known as the Beatitudes. The word beatitude comes from a word that means “to be happy, fortunate, or blessed.” The word blessed is found nine times in verses 1–12. Each time Jesus used this word He explained a way to obtain this true happiness He offers to all who come unto Him. Carefully consider how you can apply these teachings of Jesus into your life.

In much of the rest of Matthew 5 Jesus taught how His laws and commandments required a greater standard of righteousness than the law of Moses. The law of Moses did not have the power to bring people into the presence of God to enjoy eternal life, but Jesus promised that this higher law would help them enter the kingdom of heaven and make them “perfect” like their Father in Heaven (see Matthew 5:20, 48).

Understanding the Scriptures



Matthew 5

Meek (v. 5)—Not prideful, willing to submit to the Lord
Merciful (v. 7)—Kind, forgiving
Reville (v. 11)—To say mean and bad things
Bushel (v. 15)—Basket
Jot or tittle (v. 18)—Tiny things (actually the smallest written symbols in the Hebrew language)
In danger of the council (v. 22)—Be called to answer to the Jewish religious leaders

Ought (v. 23)—Something
Be reconciled (v. 24)—Solve the problem with
Adversary (v. 25)—Enemy, opponent
Adultery (vv. 27–28, 32)—Sexual relations with someone who is not your spouse
Lust after (v. 28)—To think improper sexual thoughts about someone
Profitable (vv. 29–30)—Better
Put away (vv. 31–32)—Divorce

Saving (v. 32)—Except
Fornication (v. 32)—Sexual sin
Forswear thyself (v. 33)—Lie under oath, break your promise
Swear (v. 34)—Make promises in the name of God or sacred things

Compel (v. 41)—Force
Twain (v. 41)—Two
Despitefully (v. 44)—With hate
Publicans (v. 46)—Tax collectors (see Bible Dictionary, “Publicans,” p. 755)

Matthew 5:13—“Ye Are the Salt of the Earth”

Salt was used not only to give added flavor to food, but also to preserve it from spoiling. Consequently, it was used as a symbol in covenant-making, since making and keeping covenants with God preserves us from spiritually “spoiling.” In Doctrine and Covenants 101:39–40 the Lord said that those who received the everlasting gospel and covenant were the salt of the earth. Salt loses its savor, or taste, as well as its purity by being mixed with other elements, such as dirt. It then would be of no use in flavoring or preserving.

Matthew 5:23–24—“Bring Thy Gift to the Altar”

The word *altar* is used in this verse to symbolize any sacrifices we might make for God. The counsel Jesus gave applies to everything we do to draw closer to God, such as paying tithing, attending our church meetings, serving in callings, and so on. The commandment in Matthew 5:23–24 helps us understand that seeking to repair the ways we have offended others is important in seeking to improve our relationship with God. In fact, we cannot really be one with God, no matter how many “offerings” we give to Him, unless we also love others (see also 1 John 4:20–21; Alma 34:26–29).

Matthew 5:29–30—Did Jesus Encourage Removing Part of Our Bodies as a Punishment?

The Joseph Smith Translation helps us understand that this parable was told to emphasize the importance of what Jesus was teaching about eliminating sin from our lives, not removing part of our bodies. We are to take heroic measures of self-control to avoid sin, and are to deny ourselves all ungodliness (see JST, Matthew 5:34).

Matthew 5:33–37—Swearing and Oaths

At the time of Jesus, many Jews believed it was wrong to break an oath or promise sworn in the name of the Lord, but to break an oath sworn in the name of the temple, or the city, or some other thing was not considered to be so serious or wrong. Jesus taught in this sermon that we should not swear by anything or anyone, but should keep our word whether we made an oath or not. If we say yes, or if we say no, that should be good enough.

Studying the Scriptures



Do any two of the following activities (A–C) as you study Matthew 5.

A The Beatitudes: A Handbook for Happiness

In Matthew 5:3–12 Jesus spoke of attitudes or behaviors that lead to true happiness. List each attitude or behavior He mentioned in those verses and tell what you think it means. For each attitude or behavior listed, give an example of how you think it will lead

you to greater happiness. As you give your examples, consider the blessings Jesus promised to a person who has each attitude or behavior. The footnotes may help as you determine the meaning of important ideas.

B Scripture Mastery—Matthew 5:14–16

1. According to 3 Nephi 18:24, how do we let our light shine to others?
2. Write about two specific ways you think you or someone your age could be a “light” without having others feel like you think you are better than they are.
3. According to Matthew 5:16, why would you want others to see your good works?

C The Higher Law of Christ

Notice in Matthew 5:20 that Jesus said the righteousness of His followers must be greater than the scribes and the Pharisees. This is because scribes and Pharisees were noted for their strict obedience to those parts of the law that people could see. They were not so concerned about living the spirit of the law that is not seen. Beginning with verse 21, Jesus spoke about various laws and traditions under the law of Moses. For each, He explained the greater righteousness required of the members of His kingdom.

In your notebook, make a chart like the one below to compare the “old” law of Moses to the “new” law of Christ. In the “New Law or Standard” column, list the ways Jesus said we should apply that particular commandment.

Verses in Matthew 5	Old Law or Standard	New Law or Standard
21–26	“Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time...”	“But I say unto you...”
27–32		
33–37		
38–42		
43–47		

Matthew 6

The Sermon on the Mount, Part 2

Matthew 6 is a continuation of Jesus’s Sermon on the Mount. In this chapter He especially emphasized the blessings that come from putting the Lord first in our lives and worshipping Him because we love Him—not because we want others to think we are righteous. The counsel in verses 25–34 was especially for the newly called Apostles, and although this specific counsel may not be for all of us, each Church member can apply the principles taught in those verses.

Understanding the Scriptures



Matthew 6

- Take heed** (v. 1)—Make sure
- Alms** (vv. 1–4)—Help for the poor
- Synagogues** (vv. 2, 5)—Churches, places of worship and study
- Vain repetitions** (v. 7)—Repeating the same things over and over in a way that does not mean anything
- Heathen** (v. 7)—People who do not believe in the true and living God
- Hallowed** (v. 9)—Holy, sacred
- Debts** (v. 12)—Sins, faults, offenses
- Trespasses** (v. 14)—Sins
- Countenance** (v. 16)—Appearance, especially the expression on the face
- Disfigure** (v. 16)—Make it look bad
- Corrupt** (v. 19)—Ruin
- Despise** (v. 24)—Strongly dislike, hate
- Mammon** (v. 24)—Worldly riches
- Raiment** (v. 25)—Clothing
- Sow** (v. 26)—Plant
- Reap** (v. 26)—To pick or harvest ripe fruits or vegetables
- Add one cubit to his stature** (v. 27)—Increase his height
- Toil** (v. 28)—Work
- Spin** (v. 29)—Make yarn or thread for cloth
- Arrayed** (v. 29)—Clothed (meaning taken care of)
- Wherewithal** (v. 31)—How
- Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof** (v. 34)—Take care of today’s work and don’t let the problems foreseeable in the future rob you of what you can accomplish today.

Studying the Scriptures



Do activity C and one other activity (A or B) as you study Matthew 6.

A Find the Pattern

What was similar in the counsel Jesus gave about giving alms (Matthew 6:1–4), praying (vv. 5–15), and fasting (vv. 16–18)? What do you learn from this repeated idea about what Jesus considers true righteousness?

B The Lord’s Prayer

Matthew 6:5–15 contain some of Jesus’s most basic teachings on prayer. Verses 9–13 have commonly been called the Lord’s Prayer. Consider each verse of the prayer and write in your notebook what you think we are to learn from that specific part of Jesus’s example of prayer. For greater understanding, you may want to look up “Amen” and “Prayer” in the Bible Dictionary (pp. 607, 752–53).

C Scripture Mastery—Matthew 6:24

1. Considering what Jesus said in Matthew 6:24, how is the person in each of the following three examples trying to serve two masters? What might eventually happen in each situation?
 - a. Michael (age 18) chose to have a job that requires him to work every Sunday so he can save money for his mission.
 - b. Donna (age 16) says she is doing missionary work by having a steady boyfriend who is not a member of the Church.

- c. Brother Smith (age 35) pays tithing and extra fast offerings on the money he makes selling products in which he is not entirely honest with his customers.
2. How could Jesus’s counsel in Matthew 6:19–23, 33 help solve the problem spoken of in verse 24?
3. What did Jesus promise to those who chose Him as their Master? (see Matthew 6:20, 22, 33).

Matthew 7

The Sermon on the Mount, Part 3



A hungry person might think about food, talk about food, or even look at pictures of food, but it will do the person no good unless he or she eats the food. In this final chapter of the Sermon on the

Mount, Jesus gave some additional teachings and then emphasized that the blessings of His teachings come not just in believing, studying, or talking about them, but in living them.

Understanding the Scriptures



Matthew 7

Note: Look for help from the Joseph Smith Translation in this chapter.

What measure ye mete

(v. 2)—The way you measure (or judge) things

Rend (v. 6)—Tear or rip

This is the law and the prophets (v. 12)—This is what the scriptures teach (basically the Old Testament)

Strait (vv. 13–14)—Narrow

Ravening (v. 15)—Fierce, hungry

Profess (v. 23)—Say

Work iniquity (v. 23)—Do evil things

Liken (vv. 24, 26)—Compare

Founded (v. 25)—Built

Astonished (v. 28)—Surprised

Studying the Scriptures

Do three of the following activities (A–E) as you study Matthew 7.

A Judging

1. After reading Matthew 7:1–5, summarize in your notebook Jesus’s teachings by completing in your own words the following sentences:
 - a. As you judge others so will God . . .
 - b. Before you criticize others you should . . .

2. We can clearly see in Matthew 7:1 what we *should not* do. Read the Joseph Smith Translation for this verse and write what we *should* do. Explain how you think we can do this (see Matthew 7:15–20 and Moroni 7:12–19 for additional help).

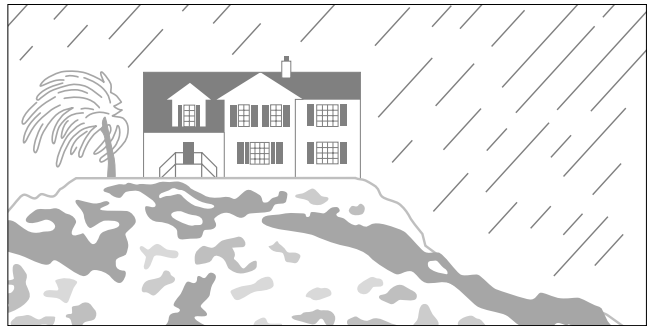
B What Difference Does It Make?

1. What difference should it make in your prayers to know what Jesus taught in Matthew 7:7–11?
2. What additional information about asking God for blessings is found in 3 Nephi 18:20; Doctrine and Covenants 50:28–29; and 88:64–65?

C Draw a Picture

Draw a picture that represents the ideas found in Matthew 7:13–14. Label the parts of your picture.

D An Important Conclusion



The wise man builds upon the rock.

1. The discussions of trees, entering the kingdom, and building houses in Matthew 7:16–27 all have one major idea or theme. What is it?
2. How does the story in Matthew 7:24–27 help you better understand what is meant in Helaman 5:12?
3. In the story of the wise and foolish house builders, the storm “beat upon” both houses, but only one remained standing afterward. Write about how living the gospel has helped you in a “storm” of life.

E What Does This Mean for Me?

Write about at least two areas you want to improve in your life as you strive to follow Jesus Christ because of what you studied in the Sermon on the Mount.

Matthew 8–9

Jesus Performs Many Miracles

After Jesus taught His great Sermon on the Mount, He went among the people, teaching them and also performing many miracles. In Matthew 8–9 is recorded several miracles Jesus performed while He was in the area near the Sea of Galilee.



What might be the importance of these miracles? Elder Bruce R. McConkie, who was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, taught that while most often “our Lord in his ministry is preaching the gospel of the kingdom; . . . announcing to all men what they must do to gain peace in this life and eternal life in the world to come,” the Savior also performed miracles, as “visible evidences in the eyes of all, believers and nonbelievers alike, that he has more than mortal power. They are proof, as it were, that his words are true” (Mortal Messiah, 2:42; see also Matthew 11:3–5). Elder McConkie also taught that “miracles of themselves do not convert men to the truth. . . . But miracles may so impress the sincere investigator as to cause him to take the steps that lead to faith” (Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, 2:81).

As you read the accounts in Matthew 8–9 of miracles Jesus performed, consider what they teach you about Jesus and ways each miracle could strengthen your faith and encourage you to more fully trust in Him.

Other Accounts of What You Read in Matthew 8–9

- Matthew 8:1–4—Mark 1:40–45; Luke 5:12–16
- Matthew 8:5–13—Luke 7:1–10
- Matthew 8:14–15—Mark 1:29–31; Luke 4:38–39
- Matthew 8:18–22—Luke 9:57–62
- Matthew 8:23–27—Mark 4:35–41; Luke 8:22–25
- Matthew 8:28–34—Mark 5:1–20; Luke 8:26–39
- Matthew 9:1–17—Mark 2:1–22; Luke 5:17–39
- Matthew 9:18–26—Mark 5:21–43; Luke 8:40–56
- Matthew 9:35–38—Luke 10:2–3

Understanding the Scriptures



Matthew 8

Leper, leprosy (vv. 2–3)—Leprosy refers to various diseases of the skin, tissues, or nerves (see also Bible Dictionary, “Leper” and “Leprosy,” pp. 723–24)

Centurion (vv. 5, 8, 13)—A leader in the Roman army in charge of one hundred soldiers

Palsy (v. 6)—A disease that left a person disabled

Grievously tormented (v. 6)—In terrible pain

Even (v. 16)—Evening

Infirmities (v. 17)—Weaknesses

Bare (v. 17)—Carried

Perish, perished (vv. 25, 32)—Die

Rebuked (v. 26)—Commanded to quit

Torment (v. 29)—Punish

Swine (vv. 30–32)—Pigs

Besought (vv. 31, 34)—Asked

Befallen (v. 33)—Happened

Matthew 8:4—Why Would Jesus Tell Those He Healed to Not Tell Anyone about It?

See “Understanding the Scriptures” for Matthew 16:20 (p. 24).

Matthew 8:21–22—Why Wouldn’t Jesus Let the Man Bury His Father?

The following statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie helps us understand why Jesus asked the man to follow Him rather than go and bury his father: “When men are called of God by the spirit of revelation, called in the omnipotent wisdom of him who knoweth all things, those calls take precedence over all conflicting interests. Missionaries so sent forth habitually forsake all personal and family obligations. Loved ones may pass away, but missionaries remain at their posts, preaching the kingdom of God” (Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, 1:304).

It is important to remember that no matter the circumstance, we are to follow Christ.

Matthew 9

His own city (v. 1)—Capernaum (see Bible Dictionary, “Capernaum,” p. 631)

Blasphemeth (v. 3)—Speaks irreverently about sacred things

Son of man (v. 6)—Jesus called Himself the Son of Man because He is the Son of God the Father, and one of Heavenly Father’s names is “Man of Holiness” (see Moses 6:57). Therefore, Jesus is “Son of Man of Holiness.”

Thence (vv. 9, 27)—There

Receipt of custom (v. 9)—Place to collect taxes

Sat at meat (v. 10)—Was eating a meal

Publicans (vv. 10–11)—Tax collectors

Of (v. 14)—Many times (short for *often*)

Children of the bridechamber (v. 15)—Wedding guests

Bridegroom (v. 15)—Man who is getting married (often symbolic of Christ, and the woman is the Church)

Garment (vv. 16, 20)—Piece of clothing

Rent (v. 16)—Tear

Minstrels (v. 23)—People who play music

Give place (v. 24)—Move away, make room

Laughed him to scorn (v. 24)—Made fun of him, were disrespectful

Son of David (v. 27)—A special name that shows they believed He was the descendant of King David who was to be their king, or Messiah, or Christ

Dumb (vv. 32–33)—Cannot speak

Moved with compassion (v. 36)—Felt kind, loving feelings; felt sorry

Fainted (v. 36)—Discouraged, weary

Plenteous (v. 37)—Many

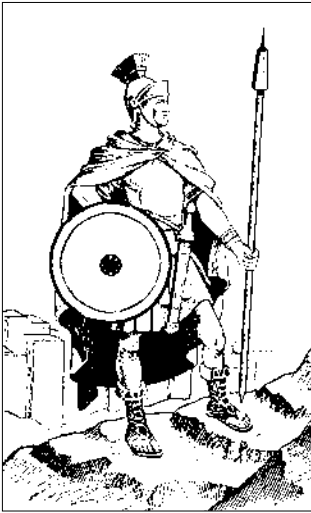
Studying the Scriptures



Do three of the following activities (A–D) as you study Matthew 8–9.

A Great Examples of Faith

1. Matthew 8:5–13 tells the story of a leader in the Roman army—a Gentile, not an Israelite—who sought help from the Savior. What did the Savior say in verse 10 about the centurion’s faith compared to the faith of the Israelites of that day?



- From what you read in Matthew 8:5–9, explain at least two ways the centurion showed remarkable faith.
- What did the woman in Matthew 9:20–22 and the men in Matthew 9:27–29 do to show their faith?
- Choose an area of your life or a teaching of the gospel in which you would like to have more faith. How could the example of the centurion, the woman, or the two men help you increase your faith in that area?

B “Perhaps the Greatest Miracle”

Elder John A. Widtsoe, who was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, said, “I have come to understand that perhaps the greatest miracle in the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is the transformation that comes to a man or a woman who in faith accepts the truth of the gospel and who then lives it in his or her life. . . . As new and greater truths come, as the understanding of them develops within us if we accept and live them, we are transformed from ordinary men into new powers and possibilities” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1952, 34).

Among all the stories found in Matthew 9, which do you think is perhaps the best example of the kind of miracle Elder Widtsoe spoke about? Why?

C When to See the Doctor

- According to Matthew 9:10–12, who needs a doctor?
- How could these verses help you grow spiritually?
- How could they help you as you try to help another person join the Church or come back into activity?

D Laborers Wanted

- According to Matthew 9:36–38, how did Jesus feel? Why did He feel that way?
- Write an imaginary advertisement for a newspaper, asking for people to apply for this “labour” Jesus spoke of in Matthew 9:36–38. Include in the advertisement the qualifications you think Jesus would want of those who serve with Him.

Matthew 10

Instructions for the Twelve Apostles

At the end of Matthew 9, Jesus declared that He needed help in accomplishing the great work He came to do.

Consequently, He called twelve men as Apostles—a title that means “one sent forth.” Unlike other disciples who were sent forth on missions or served in other Church callings, Jesus called these men as special representatives and witnesses of Him, and He gave them special keys and power to act and speak in His name. (For more information, see the Bible Dictionary, “Apostle,” p. 612.) He also gave them a special charge, or instructions, that we read about in Matthew 10. Although this message was originally given to the Twelve Apostles, anyone who is called to serve as a representative of the Lord to teach His gospel may learn from the principles contained in this chapter.



Other Accounts of What You Read in Matthew 10

Matthew 10:1–4—Mark 3:13–19; Luke 6:12–16

Understanding the Scriptures



Matthew 10

Surname (v. 3)—Family name	Salute it (v. 12)—Greet it, say hello
Betrayed (v. 4)—Turned against	It shall be more tolerable (v. 15)—The punishment will be less
House of Israel (v. 6)—Descendants of Israel (Jacob)	Scourge (v. 17)—Beat or whip
Provide neither (v. 9)—Do not take	Endureth (v. 22)—Does not give up
Purse (v. 9)—A cloth belt with pockets for money	Beelzebub (v. 25)—The devil
Staves (v. 10)—Staffs used when walking	Farthing (v. 29)—A small amount of money
Worthy (vv. 11, 13)—Honorable	Variance (v. 35)—Disagreement
Abide (v. 11)—Stay	



Matthew 10:38—“He That Taketh Not His Cross, and Followeth after Me, Is Not Worthy of Me”

Although this verse and the verses immediately before and after seem very harsh and demanding of those who follow Jesus, they are very real to some converts to the Church. President Gordon B. Hinckley told about one such convert. He was a naval officer from a non-Christian nation who received professional training in the United States. While in the United States he was introduced to the Church and decided to be baptized. Before returning to his home he met with President Hinckley, who related their conversation:

“I said: ‘Your people are not Christians. What will happen when you return home a Christian, and, more particularly, a Mormon Christian?’

“His face clouded, and he replied, ‘My family will be disappointed. They may cast me out and regard me as dead. As for my future and my career, all opportunity may be foreclosed against me.’

“I asked, ‘Are you willing to pay so great a price for the gospel?’

“His dark eyes, moistened by tears, shone from his handsome brown face as he answered, ‘It’s true, isn’t it?’

“Ashamed at having asked the question, I responded, ‘Yes, it’s true.’

“To which he replied, ‘Then what else matters?’” (“It’s True, Isn’t It?” *Ensign*, July 1993, 2).

Studying the Scriptures

Do two of the following activities (A–C) as you study Matthew 10.

A The Twelve Apostles

List the names of the Twelve Apostles mentioned in Matthew 10:2–4. Then look up each name in the Bible Dictionary and write at least one thing we know about that Apostle from what is written there.

B Challenges and Promises for Missionaries

1. Review Matthew 10:17–18, 22–25 and list at least three difficult conditions Jesus said His Apostles would face as they went out to preach the gospel.
2. Ask someone who has been on a mission if he or she experienced some of the conditions you listed while serving a mission. Put an “X” next to the ones the person experienced. Have the person tell you about one of the experiences and how he or she felt about it. Write in your notebook a little of what you learned.
3. What did Jesus promise in Matthew 10:19–20, 26–33 that could help make it easier to endure the challenges you listed above?

C How Can This Be?

In Matthew 10:34–39, Jesus made three different statements that seem to go against what we normally think is true. He said He had not come to send peace, but a sword (see v. 34), that He splits families against each other (see vv. 35–37), and that the only way we can find our lives is to lose them (see v. 39).

1. We know that the gospel of Jesus Christ brings peace to those who live it (see John 14:27). Read also Matthew 10:16–18; 24:6–10; Acts 12:1–2; and Doctrine and Covenants 76:28–29 and tell about times when Jesus’s statement in Matthew 10:34 is also true.
2. We know that one purpose of the gospel is to seal families together forever. In what situation is Jesus’s statement in Matthew 10:35–37 true?
3. How can one find his or her life by losing it?

Matthew 11 **“Come unto Me”**

John the Baptist received the important mission to prepare the way for Jesus Christ. He accomplished this mission by (1) preaching the true spirit and meaning of the law of Moses; (2) teaching people to repent, to be baptized, and to prepare to receive further truth and blessings from the coming Messiah; and (3) testifying that Jesus Christ was that promised Messiah. Apparently, some of John’s followers who were very loyal to him were still not sure if Jesus really was the Messiah, or Christ. True prophets always point us toward Christ and encourage us to come unto Him. Look for what John did to help his followers find Jesus and follow Him instead.



John the Baptist—more than a prophet

Matthew 11 also contains one of the great invitations the Savior Himself made to come unto Him.

Other Accounts of What You Read in Matthew 11

Matthew 11:2–19—Luke 7:18–35

Matthew 11:20–24—Luke 10:12–15

Matthew 11:25–27—Luke 10:21–22



Matthew 11

Shew (v. 4)—Show

Offended in me (v. 6)—Ashamed of things I do or say

He that is least in the kingdom of heaven (v. 11)—He whom you (the religious leaders) consider the least important; Jesus was referring to Himself

Suffereth violence (v. 12)—Experiences persecution and opposition

Elias (v. 14)—Elijah (Greek form of the Hebrew name; see Bible Dictionary, “Elias,” p. 663)

Liken (v. 16)—Compare

Lamented (v. 17)—Been sorry

Gluttonous (v. 19)—Someone who eats and drinks too much

Winebibber (v. 19)—One who drinks too much wine

Justified of her children (v. 19)—Proved true by works or deeds

Upbraid (v. 20)—Criticize, scold

Woe (v. 21)—Warning

Sackcloth and ashes (v. 21)—The Jewish people put on clothes made of coarse fabric woven from the hair of camels or goats and put ashes on their head as a sign that they were mourning or repenting.

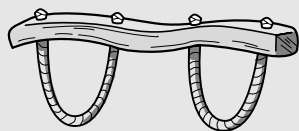
Tolerable (vv. 22, 24)—Better (less punishment)

Exalted unto heaven (v. 23)—Filled with pride

Labour (v. 28)—Work very hard

Heavy laden (v. 28)—Carry heavy loads

Yoke (vv. 29–30)—A wooden frame used by cattle or people to make it easier to carry loads or burdens



Yoke for cattle

Burden (v. 30)—Something a person carries; obligations

Matthew 11:7–11—“Among Them That Are Born of Women There Hath Not Risen a Greater Than John the Baptist”

The Prophet Joseph Smith said:

“How is it that John was considered one of the greatest prophets? His miracles could not have constituted his greatness.

“First. He was entrusted with a divine mission of preparing the way before the face of the Lord. Whoever had such a trust committed to him before or since? No man.

“Secondly. He was entrusted with the important mission, and it was required at his hands, to baptize the Son of Man. Whoever had the honor of doing that? Whoever had so great a privilege or glory? Whoever led the Son of God into the waters of baptism, and had the privilege of beholding the Holy Ghost descend in the form of a dove, or rather in the sign of a dove, in witness of that administration. . . .

“Thirdly. John, at that time, was the only legal administrator in the affairs of the kingdom there was then on the earth, and holding the keys of power. . . . These three reasons constitute him the greatest prophet born of a woman” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 275–76).



Do activities A and B as you study Matthew 11.

A Report Back

Matthew 11:1–19 tells about two disciples of John the Baptist who came to see what Jesus did and taught. Jesus told them to go back to John and tell what they saw and heard. Based on what you read in these nineteen verses, write three things you would have told John when you returned if you had been with those two men. Include the miracles you would have seen and the truths you would have heard Jesus teach.

B “Come unto Me”

1. After telling about the punishments that would come upon the wicked who rejected Him (see Matthew 11:20–24), what did Jesus promise in Matthew 11:28–30 to those who learn of and obey Him?
2. What kinds of labor and heavy burdens do you think Jesus was speaking of in Matthew 11:28?
3. Some people think that what Jesus asks of us is a burden. From the following list, choose three of what some might consider heavy burdens and explain why you think they are light burdens to those who follow Christ.

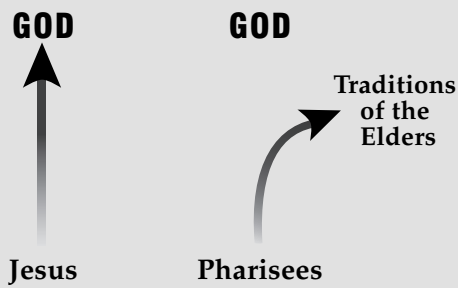
- Paying tithing
- Attending Church for three hours each week
- Attending seminary
- Fasting
- Serving a mission
- Staying morally clean

Matthew 12

Pharisees Oppose Jesus

Before you read Matthew 12, it is helpful to understand that by Jesus’s time Jewish rabbis had added to the law of Moses a complicated set of rules called the traditions of the elders (see Mark 7:5–9). These laws did not come from the Lord, and many appeared ridiculous—such as the rule that healing on the Sabbath was “work” and therefore forbidden. The Pharisees, the most powerful religious group in Jesus’s day, were very strict in their obedience to these traditions and considered them more important than the words of the prophets. As you read Matthew 12, look for what happened when Jesus’s teachings opposed those traditions.

Jesus looked to God; the Pharisees looked to their traditions.



Other Accounts of What You Read in Matthew 12

Matthew 12:1–8—Mark 2:23–28; Luke 6:1–5
 Matthew 12:9–14—Mark 3:1–6; Luke 6:6–11
 Matthew 12:24–32—Mark 3:22–29
 Matthew 12:38–42—Luke 11:29–32
 Matthew 12:43–45—Luke 11:24–26
 Matthew 12:46–50—Mark 3:31–35; Luke 8:19–21

Understanding the Scriptures



Matthew 12

Condemned the guiltless (v. 7)—Said that Jesus had broken the law when He had not

Departed thence (v. 9)—Left that place

Withered (v. 10)—Unable to use, deformed, or shrunk

Restored whole (v. 13)—Healed

Charged (v. 16)—Commanded

The son of David (v. 23)—The Messiah

Spoil (v. 29)—Steal

Blasphemy (v. 31)—To speak evil or make fun of sacred things

Corrupt (v. 33)—Not eatable, rotten

Generation of vipers (v. 34)—Wicked people (a viper is a poisonous serpent)

Every idle word (v. 36)—Even the little or light-minded things a person says

Account (v. 36)—Report

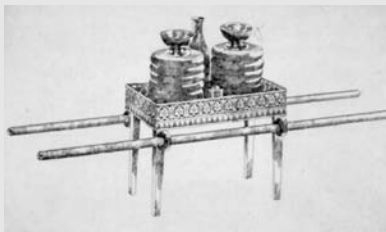
Justified (v. 37)—Judged to be good

Condemned (v. 37)—Judged to be evil

Garnished (v. 44)—Put in proper order

Matthew 12:3–6—Explanations of What Is Right or Wrong on the Sabbath

The Pharisees accused Jesus’s disciples of working on the Sabbath when they picked some grain and ate it while they were walking with Jesus. Jesus used the following two examples to show that His disciples kept the law of Moses even if they did offend the traditions that the Pharisees thought were more important (see the introduction to Matthew 12 above):



- David and his men ate the temple bread but were not guilty because they were on the Lord’s business (see 1 Samuel 21:1–6).

- The temple priests must do many things in the temple on the Sabbath that would be unlawful anywhere else.

Matthew 12:18–20—A Prophecy of Isaiah

The meaning of this prophecy is that the Messiah would not respond in judgment against those who were against Him until He had finished His work. The symbols in verse 20 are of things that anyone could easily do (break an already bruised plant and put out a fire that is nearly out), but the Messiah would not even do what He easily could do (punish His enemies) until His work was finished.

Matthew 12:31–32—What Is “Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost”?

The Prophet Joseph Smith explained, “All sins shall be forgiven, except the sin against the Holy Ghost; for Jesus will save all except the sons of perdition. 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. This is the case with many apostates of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 358).

Studying the Scriptures



Do two of the following activities (A–C) as you study Matthew 12.

A The Sabbath Day

Matthew 12, verses 1–9 and 10–14, tells about two different times when the Pharisees accused Jesus and His disciples of not keeping the Sabbath day holy. Write about one idea from each account that can help you keep the Sabbath day holy. As part of what you write, explain what you will do differently, or better, because of these ideas.

B It Depends on How You Look at It

1. After Jesus performed the miracle recorded in Matthew 12:22, how did the Pharisees respond that was different than the response of the rest of the people? (see vv. 23–24).
2. Why do you think two groups of people who saw the same event could have such a difference in opinion? (see v. 14).
3. How did Jesus respond to what the Pharisees said about Him in verse 24? (see vv. 25–29).

C Follow the Example of Jesus

Since Matthew 12 mostly records how Jesus dealt with those who opposed Him, choose one thing Jesus did or said in this chapter that you think you could use in dealing with people who oppose the Church, and explain how you would use it.

Matthew 13

Parables

In Matthew 13 Jesus taught the people through short stories called parables. Teaching in parables allowed Jesus to reveal great truths to those who were spiritually in tune and, at the same time, conceal or hide those truths from those who were not ready for them. Even the spiritually ready must ponder and pray to fully understand the Savior's parables. This is actually a blessing because when we receive answers through the Spirit we usually remember them better and longer (see also Bible Dictionary, "Parables," pp. 740–41).

As you seek to understand the meaning of parables, consider the following three-step process:

1. **Outline the parable.** List the objects or persons involved, what actions occurred, and the result of those actions.
2. **Look for clues to the interpretation.** Clues might include "like unto" statements Jesus made, cross-references in your scriptures, the situation or question that prompted the parable, and what you know about the people the parable was shared with.
3. **Make a comparison.** It is helpful to write down what you learn as you think about the interpretation of the parable. Ask questions about the relationship of people and objects in the parable and then see if you can write an answer to your questions.

Other Accounts of What You Read in Matthew 13

Matthew 13:1–23—Mark 4:1–20; Luke 8:4–15

Matthew 13:31–32—Mark 4:30–32

Matthew 13:54–58—Mark 6:1–6

Understanding the Scriptures



Matthew 13

Sow (vv. 3, 27)—To plant seeds

Way side (vv. 4, 19)—Hard ground that has been walked on (such as a path or road)

Devoured (v. 4)—Ate

Withered away (v. 6)—Died

Perceive (v. 14)—Notice, be aware of

Waxed gross (v. 15)—Grown hard and insensitive

Anon (v. 20)—Sincerely

Dureth (v. 21)—Continues

Tribulation (v. 21)—Troubles

Deceitfulness (v. 22)—False promises

Tares (vv. 25–30)—Weeds (see also Bible Dictionary, "Tares," p. 780)

Utter (v. 35)—Speak

Iniquity (v. 41)—Sin

Wailing (vv. 42, 50)—Mournful crying

Vessels (v. 48)—Containers (for safekeeping)

Scribe (v. 52)—One who diligently studies the scriptures

Save (v. 57)—Except

Studying the Scriptures



Do activity A or B as you study Matthew 13.

A The Parable of the Sower

1. The parable found in Matthew 13:3–8 has often been called the parable of the sower, but why might it also be called the parable of the soils?
2. From the information given in Matthew 13:3–8, 18–23, draw four pictures in your journal of what happened to the seeds in each type of soil. Beside each picture explain what you drew and what it symbolizes.
3. None of the soils in the parable had to stay in the condition it was in. For each type of soil, describe what would need to be done to make or keep it a place to grow healthy, fruitful plants. Also describe what this soil improvement project could symbolize in your life as you grow spiritually.

B Interpret Another Parable

Choose one of the following parables or groups of parables:

- Parable of the tares (Matthew 13:24–30)
- Parables of the mustard seed and the leaven (Matthew 13:31–33)
- Parables of the treasure and the pearl of great price (Matthew 13:44–46)
- Parable of the gospel net (Matthew 13:47–50)

Read the parable or parables carefully, use the suggestions for interpreting parables in the introduction to this chapter, and then write what you think the Lord was teaching about His kingdom.

Matthew 14

"Be Not Afraid"

Many times in the scriptures the Lord tells us not to fear, but rather to have faith in Him and His purposes (for example, see Isaiah 41:13; Mark 5:36; D&C 6:34–36). When we act in fear we often make mistakes, but when we act in faith we have the strength to accomplish much more than we could on our own. Look for how fear or faith is demonstrated in the stories in Matthew 14 and how fear or faith affected the people involved.

Other Accounts of What You Read in Matthew 14

Matthew 14:1–12—Mark 6:14–29

Matthew 14:13–33—Mark 6:30–52; Luke 9:10–17; John 6:1–21

Matthew 14:34–36—Mark 6:53–56

Understanding the Scriptures

Matthew 14

Compassion (v. 14)—Feelings of love and caring

Fragments that remained (v. 20)—What the people did not eat

Straightway (vv. 22, 27)—Immediately

Constrained (v. 22)—Told, urged

Contrary (v. 24)—Against

Boisterous (v. 30)—Strong

Besought (v. 36)—Begged

Matthew 14:3–4—“It Is Not Lawful for Thee to Have Her”

See “Understanding the Scriptures” for Mark 6:17–19 (p. 44).



Matthew 14:22–33—Peter Walks on the Water

President Howard W. Hunter told the story found in Matthew 14:22–33 and then said:

“It is my firm belief that if as individual people, as families, communities, and nations, we could, like Peter, fix our eyes on Jesus, we too might walk triumphantly over the swelling waves of disbelief and remain unterrified amid the rising winds of doubt. But if we turn away our eyes from him in whom we must believe, as it is so easy to do and the world is so much tempted to do, if we look to the power and fury of those terrible and destructive elements around us rather than to him who can help and save us, then we shall inevitably sink in a sea of conflict and sorrow and despair.

“At such times when we feel the floods are threatening to drown us and the deep is going to swallow up the tossed vessel of our faith, I pray we may always hear amid the storm and the darkness that sweet utterance of the Savior of the world: ‘Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid’ (Matthew 14:27)” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1992, 24; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1992, 19).

Studying the Scriptures

Do activity A as you study Matthew 14.

A Walking on Water

Answer the following questions about Matthew 14:22–33:

1. What was Jesus doing while the disciples were in the ship?
2. How did the disciples first react to Jesus walking on the water toward them?

3. What does Peter’s response say about him?
4. What does Matthew say about why Peter sank?
5. What did Peter do when he began to sink?
6. How can Peter’s experience be symbolic of your attempts to come unto Christ?

Matthew 15

What Is Clean and Unclean?

The traditions of the elders, discussed earlier, was a system of complicated additions to the law of Moses that Jewish leaders developed over the years. Although the leaders’ intentions were good, these additions eventually became more important to the Jews than the law itself—certainly more important than the spirit of the law. One of these additions to the law involved ceremonial washings before eating a meal. It was not simply washing for health reasons, but there were specific ways to wash determined by Jewish leaders. When the disciples of Jesus were accused of breaking this tradition of the elders, Jesus used it as a teaching opportunity. As you read, look for what Jesus said were the true principles the Jews had missed by concentrating on their traditions. Look for other miracles Jesus performed as you read Matthew 15.

Other Accounts of What You Read in Matthew 15

Matthew 15:1–31—Mark 7:1–37

Matthew 15:32–39—Mark 8:1–10

Understanding the Scriptures

Matthew 15

Whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me (v. 5)—Whatever I might have given to you

Hypocrites (v. 7)—People who do not have righteous desires but want others to think they are righteous

Nigh (v. 8)—Near

Vain (v. 9)—For no worthwhile purpose

Doctrines (v. 9)—Spiritual truths

Defileth (vv. 11, 18, 20)—To make sinful or unclean

Draught (v. 17)—Sewer, a place to dispose of waste

Grievously vexed (v. 22)—Very troubled

Besought (v. 23)—Begged

Maimed (vv. 30–31)—Having a handicap that disables the arms or legs

Matthew 15:4–6—“It Is a Gift”

See *corban* in “Understanding the Scriptures” for Mark 7:9–12 (p. 45).

Matthew 15:22–28—Why Did Jesus Refer to a Canaanite Woman As a Dog?

The Greek word that was translated here as “dogs” might better be translated as “little dogs,” referring to household dogs, or pets beloved of their owners. At the time of His

ministry, Jesus had come to focus on the children of the household—the Israelites—and thus compared the Gentile woman to a pet in the household. Exercising her faith in the Lord, the woman built on Jesus’s symbolic reference when she said it would only be right that the household pet “eat of the crumbs” that fall from the meal given to the children of the house.

Studying the Scriptures

Do activity A as you study Matthew 15.

A Explain Key Words and Phrases

Briefly explain what each of the following words or phrases had to do with the events in Matthew 15:

1. “Tradition of the elders” (see vv. 2–9)
2. *Defile*, or *defileth* (see vv. 2–20)
3. *Lips*, *heart*, and *mouth* (see vv. 7–11, 17–20)
4. *Dogs* (see vv. 22–28)
5. *Compassion* (see vv. 32–39)
6. *Loaves* and *fishes* (see vv. 32–39)

Matthew 16

“Thou Art the Christ”

By the time of the events described in Matthew 16, many people had witnessed the Savior’s miraculous power. Those who truly believed in Him, however, were still small in number. Why weren’t more converted? Weren’t His miracles evidence enough that He was the Christ, the promised Messiah? As you read Matthew 16, look for what the Pharisees and Sadducees asked for that Jesus refused to give. Also look for what Jesus taught His disciples that truly brings testimony and converts people.

Other Accounts of What You Read in Matthew 16

Matthew 16:1–12—Mark 8:11–21

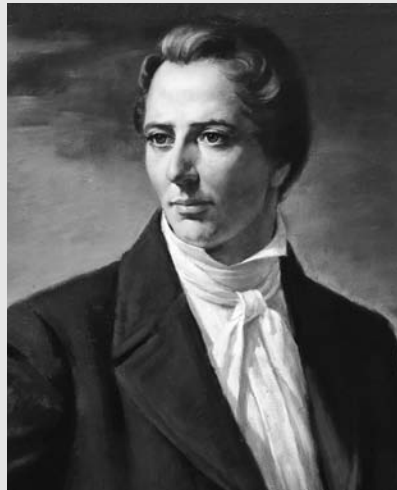
Matthew 16:13–28—Mark 8:27–9:1; Luke 9:18–27

Understanding the Scriptures

Matthew 16

Discern (v. 3)—Decide	Rebuke (v. 22)—To demand someone stop doing something, to correct
Leaven (vv. 6, 11)—Yeast; used to make bread rise	Savourest (v. 23)—Desire
Reason (v. 8)—Examine	Deny himself (v. 24)—Forget one’s self and interests
Prevail (v. 18)—Overcome	
Bind (v. 19)—Tie together (or seal together)	

Matthew 16:18—What Is the “Rock” Jesus Spoke about to Peter?



The Prophet Joseph Smith said: “Jesus in His teaching says, ‘Upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.’ What rock? Revelation” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 274).

President David O. McKay wrote: “By that [Matthew 16:18] He meant that as Simon’s name ‘Peter’ means rock, so this testimony that comes by

revelation shall be the rock upon which Christ’s Church shall be built” (*Ancient Apostles* [1964], 34; see also Matthew 16:18, footnote a).

Jesus taught Peter what Peter and all other prophets and apostles have taught since—that the strength of the Church is the testimony that Jesus is the Christ, which comes by revelation through the power of the Holy Ghost to the individual members.

Matthew 16:19—“The Keys of the Kingdom”

Peter was promised the priesthood keys that would allow him and the other Apostles to direct the Church on earth after the Lord’s death and resurrection, including the right to lawfully administer all of the ordinances necessary for exaltation. Especially notice that Peter was promised that the ordinances he performed on earth would be valid in heaven as well. Thus, among other things, he eventually received the power to seal husbands, wives, and children together forever. We read about how he obtained those keys in Matthew 17.

Matthew 16:20—Why Did Jesus Not Want His Disciples to Tell Anyone He Was the Christ?

Toward the end of Jesus’s three-year ministry, He taught more openly that He was the Christ—the Messiah of the Jews. This angered the Jewish leaders and led directly to His Crucifixion. Asking His disciples not to publicly teach this doctrine at that time allowed Him to continue teaching the gospel message and not anger the Jews before it was His time to be tried and crucified.

Studying the Scriptures

Do activities A and B as you study Matthew 16.

A Scripture Mastery—Matthew 16:15–19

1. Jesus asked a question in Matthew 16:15. After Peter answered, what did Jesus teach him about that answer?
2. According to what Jesus told Peter, how important is it that Church members receive their testimony in this way? (see also the “Understanding the Scriptures” section above).

3. Instead of the kind of testimony Peter had, what did the Pharisees and Sadducees want? What did Jesus say about what they wanted? (see Matthew 16:1–4).
4. Why was the testimony Peter received more powerful and converting than the “testimony” the Pharisees and Sadducees asked for?

B Following Jesus

In Matthew 16:24–28 we read what Jesus taught His disciples about what it means to follow Him. For each of the following situations, tell which phrases or verses you would use to respond to the following situations (do not forget to use the Joseph Smith Translation):

1. You are offered a scholarship to a university to play on a sports team. The only condition is that you agree not to serve a mission, since the coach feels it would hurt your development as an athlete.
2. Fasting gives you a headache and you do not feel that it helps you. No one is home to stop you from eating so you head for the kitchen.
3. You are offered a job that pays a large salary but will keep you from Church every Sunday and will require you to spend a lot of time away from your family. The man who offers it promises you that it will only last about 10–12 years, saying, “If you’ll devote yourself to this, in the end you will gain great wealth for yourself, which you could then use to enjoy whatever you want with your family and to do things for your Church.”
4. A class member at school has obtained a copy (with answers) of a very important upcoming exam. Some class members are meeting together to study it. They have invited you.

Matthew 17

The Mount of Transfiguration

Matthew 16 tells that Jesus promised Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 17 tells about the time when Peter, James, and John received them. These keys include the power to administer the ordinances of salvation in a manner acceptable to God and the power to administer the Church of Jesus Christ on the earth. An event similar to this one in Matthew occurred in our day when the Prophet Joseph Smith received the keys of the kingdom for this dispensation in the Kirtland Temple in 1836 (see D&C 110). Since then the keys have been given by ordination to every Church President.

For more information about what happened in this chapter, look up “Transfiguration, Mount of,” in the Bible Dictionary (p. 786).

Other Accounts of What You Read in Matthew 17

Matthew 17:1–23—Mark 9:2–32; Luke 9:28–45

Understanding the Scriptures



Matthew 17

Apart (v. 1)—Away from everyone else

Transfigured (v. 2)—A condition in which a person’s body is temporarily changed so that he or she can be in the presence and glory of heavenly beings and not die

Raiment (v. 2)—Clothing

Elias (v. 3)—Elijah (the Greek form of the Hebrew name)

Save (v. 8)—Except

Lunatick (v. 15)—A person with a disease or illness

thought to involve uncontrolled shaking and lacking full body control

Sore vexed (v. 15)—Very ill

Perverse (v. 17)—Corrupt

Rebuked (v. 18)—To demand that someone stop doing something; to correct

Tribute (vv. 24–25)—Taxes



Matthew 17:1—Why Were Only Peter, James, and John Invited to Have This Experience?

President Joseph Fielding Smith explained: “Peter, James, and John, acted as the First Presidency of the Church in their day” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. [1954–56], 3:152). Consequently, they went up to the Mount of Transfiguration to receive the keys necessary to perform the work to which they were called.

Matthew 17:10—What Did the Disciples Learn about Elias?

When Peter, James, and John went with Jesus to the mount and saw Moses and Elias (Elijah), they were reminded of a prophecy that Elias would come before the Messiah (see Matthew 17:10). They were confused because what they just witnessed on the mount proved that Jesus was the Messiah, but He came before Elias appeared on the mount, not after. Jesus’s answer, as recorded in the Joseph Smith Translation, explains that Elias is a title that refers to more than one person. John the Baptist was an Elias who had “come already” as a forerunner to “prepare the way” for the Savior’s first coming. Another Elias would come in the last days to “restore all things” (see JST, Matthew 17:10–14). President Joseph Fielding Smith taught: “Joseph Smith is an Elias because he was sent to prepare the way for the second coming of our Lord” (*Answers to Gospel Questions*, comp. Joseph Fielding Smith Jr., 5 vols. [1957–66], 4:194).

Studying the Scriptures

Do activity A and either B or C as you study Matthew 17.

A What Did They Learn?

What did Peter, James, and John learn about Jesus on the mount? (see Matthew 17:1–9; Peter later testified of this event in 2 Peter 1:16–19).

B What Makes the Difference?

Matthew 17:14–21 tells how Jesus healed a young man with an illness. The disciples wondered why they were not able to heal the man with the priesthood they had been given by Jesus.

1. List three things Jesus said could have helped the disciples heal the man. Explain how or why they are necessary.
2. Write about a time when practicing one of these three principles helped you do something that was difficult, or even seemingly impossible. If you have not had an experience like that, talk with someone you think might have. Ask that person about it and briefly write about what you learn.

C What Is the Message?

Write at least two lessons you think we can learn from what Jesus said and did in Matthew 17:24–27, and tell why those lessons are important to you.

Matthew 18

“Offences” and Forgiveness

Generally, the world rewards and honors those who are tough, aggressive, and refuse to be pushed around. To admit mistakes is often seen by the world as a sign of weakness. How did this way of living compare to what Jesus taught His followers in Matthew 18?

Other Accounts of What You Read in Matthew 18

Matthew 18:1–5—Mark 9:33–37; Luke 9:46–48

Matthew 18:6–9—Mark 9:42–48; Luke 17:1–2

Matthew 18:10–14—Luke 15:3–7

Understanding the Scriptures

Matthew 18



Millstone

Millstone (v. 6)—A heavy stone used to grind grain; it was so big that it had to be turned by a donkey

Offences (v. 7)—Activities that would lead the weak or unwary to sin or err

Halt (v. 8)—Unable to walk without great difficulty

Maimed (v. 8)—Limited use of an arm or a leg

Despise (v. 10)—Look down on

Perish (v. 14)—Be lost (or spiritually destroyed)

Trespass (v. 15)—Sin

Neglect (v. 17)—Refuse

Heathen (v. 17)—One who does not believe in God

As touching (v. 19)—About

Take account of his servants (v. 23)—Collect the money each servant owed

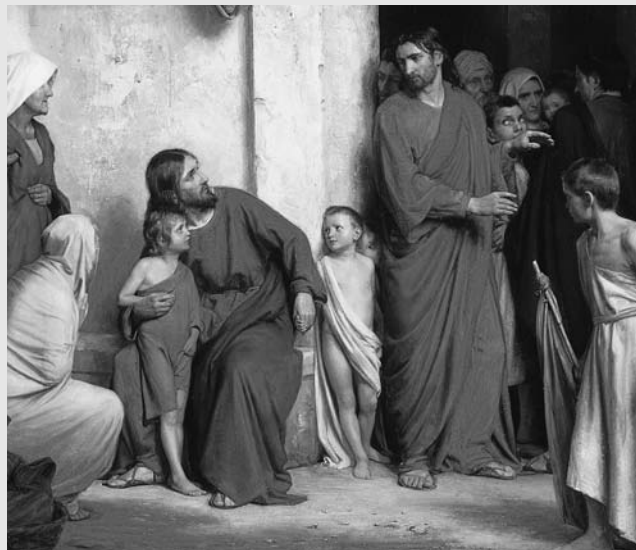
Reckon (v. 24)—Count, add up; figure things out

Ten thousand talents (v. 24)—An incredibly large sum of money, equal to millions of work days; an impossible sum to pay back

Besought (v. 29)—Asked with begging

Wroth (v. 34)—Angry

Tormentors (v. 34)—Those who operate the prison, a place of suffering and mistreatment



Jesus and the Little Children, by Carl Heinrich Bloch, the National Historic Museum at Frederiksborg, in Hillerød

Matthew 18:6—“Whoso Shall Offend One of These Little Ones”

In Matthew 18:3–6 Jesus commanded us not only to become as little children to enter His kingdom but also to make sure we care for little children. This could include not only those who are young in years, but also those who are young in the gospel—having recently made themselves like little children to enter the kingdom.

Speaking to those who abuse children, President Gordon B. Hinckley said, “I urge you with all of the capacity of which I am capable to stop it, to run from it, to get help, to plead with the Lord for forgiveness and make amends to those whom you have offended. God will not be mocked concerning the abuse of his little ones” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1994, 74; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 54).

Matthew 18:8–9—Removing Hands, Feet, and Eyes

See the Joseph Smith Translation for Matthew 18:9. See also “Understanding the Scriptures” for Matthew 5:29–30 (p. 14).

Studying the Scriptures

Do either activity A or B as you study Matthew 18.

A Little Children

1. According to Matthew 18:3–4, in what two ways is there a connection between us, little children, and the kingdom of heaven?
2. Read Mosiah 3:19 and list the ways in which we are to become as little children. You may want to write *Mosiah 3:19* in the margin of your scriptures next to Matthew 18:3–4.
3. From what Jesus said in Matthew 18:5–14, write three statements—in your own words—that would encourage the proper treatment of children.

B Solving Problems with Others

Jesus’s teachings in Matthew 18:15–35 can help us understand some ways to handle times when others offend us.

1. According to Matthew 18:15–17, what are the first three steps we should take when someone has offended us?
2. Verses 21–35 teach what we *must* do whenever someone has offended us. As you read the parable in verses 23–34, consider the explanation for “ten thousand talents” and “tormentors” in the “Understanding the Scriptures” section above. Write who or what in the parable represents the following: you, the Savior, the benefits you receive from the Atonement, someone who has done something offensive to you, suffering for unforgiven sins.
3. Write what Jesus said we should learn from this parable of the unmerciful servant.
4. What further understanding about the principle of forgiveness did the Lord give in Doctrine and Covenants 64:8–10?

Matthew 19

What Shall I Do to Have Eternal Life?

The Jews of Jesus’s day were in a state of apostasy. As a group they had fallen away from the true practice of their religion as revealed by God to Moses. There were many individuals who still lived as righteously as they knew how—such as Mary, Joseph, and John the Baptist. Those who held positions of power and leadership in the Jewish faith, such as the scribes, the Pharisees, and the Sadducees, were especially notable for their apostasy from the truth. They were more concerned with preserving their positions of leadership than with true righteousness. Jesus’s message must have cut straight to their hearts as He condemned their pride and hypocrisy.

As you read Matthew 19 and the next few chapters, notice how the Jewish leaders continued to attack and try to

embarrass Jesus, while Jesus continued to challenge them by defining what true righteousness is.

Other Accounts of What You Read in Matthew 19

Matthew 19:1–9—Mark 10:1–12

Matthew 19:13–30—Mark 10:13–31; Luke 18:15–30

Understanding the Scriptures

Matthew 19

Cleave (v. 5)—Stay with, be closely attached to

Eunuchs (v. 12)—Unmarried men who were physically incapable of fathering children (see Bible Dictionary, “Eunuch,” p. 667)

Forsaken (vv. 27, 29)—Left, given up

Regeneration (v. 28)—Resurrection (see the Joseph Smith Translation for this verse)



“For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh.”

Matthew 19:3–12—Jesus’s Counsel on Marriage and Divorce

The question the Pharisees asked Jesus was a question debated among the different groups of the Jewish faith. The Lord allowed divorce in the law of Moses (see Deuteronomy 24:1–2), which some interpreted to mean that a man could divorce his wife for nearly any reason. Those with impure hearts used this interpretation of the law to divorce and remarry many times to fulfill their lustful desires. Jesus condemned this practice in particular and called it adultery (see Matthew 5:31–32; 19:9).

Elder Bruce R. McConkie wrote, “Divorce is not part of the gospel plan. . . . Under the most perfect conditions there would be no divorce permitted except where sex sin was involved. In this day . . . divorced persons are permitted by the Church to marry again without the stain of immorality which under a higher system [which Jesus taught] would attend such a course” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 1:547).

Because Jesus spoke so strongly against divorce, some disciples apparently wondered if it was better not to marry at all. In answer, Jesus recognized that some will not receive that opportunity, but noted that it was an exception that God would somehow make an allowance for (see Matthew 19:10–12). The Lord has revealed in our day that “marriage is ordained of God” (D&C 49:15; see also “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, p. 102).

Studying the Scriptures

Do either activity A or B as you study Matthew 19.

A Divorce



In Matthew 19:3–9 we read how Jesus responded when the Pharisees asked Him if it was all right for a man to divorce his wife for any reason. With a currently increasing number of divorces, the question seems important for today as well.

Based upon the response Jesus gave and the explanation found in the

“Understanding the Scriptures” section above, write a brief statement that explains the Lord’s views on divorce that you would like someone who was considering divorce to read and think about.

B A Rich Young Man

1. Why did the young man in the story in Matthew 19:16–22 decide not to follow Jesus?
2. What blessings did Jesus promise to those who made the sacrifice to follow Him? (see vv. 23–30).
3. Based on what Jesus and His disciples said after the young man left (see vv. 23–30), write a letter as if you were writing to this young man and try to help him understand why he should reconsider his decision.

Matthew 20

Jesus Again Defines Greatness

Do you like to feel important? What helps you feel important? Recognition? A position of leadership? Money? Success? The Pharisees of Jesus’s day thought they were very important. The reasons why they thought so are similar to the ways people define greatness and who or what is important today. As you read Matthew 20, however, be aware of what Jesus did and said that helps us understand what is important and what greatness is in His kingdom. It may also be helpful to realize that what was said and

done in Matthew 20 was in the last month—perhaps even the last two weeks—before Jesus was crucified.

Other Accounts of What You Read in Matthew 20

Matthew 20:17–34—Mark 10:32–52; Luke 18:31–43

Understanding the Scriptures

Matthew 20

Householder (v. 1)—Home owner

Idle (vv. 3, 6)—Doing nothing, not working

Even (v. 8)—Sundown, evening

Steward (v. 8)—A person who is in charge of things that belong to another

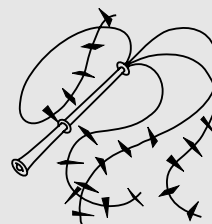
Murmured (v. 11)—Complained

Wrought (v. 12)—Worked

Take that thine is (v. 14)—Take what belongs to you—what you agreed to

Scourge (v. 19)—To beat with a whip that has jagged pieces of bone or stone in the ends

Zebedee’s children (v. 20)—James and John, the Apostles



Whip used in scourging

Indignation (v. 24)—Strong displeasure

Exercise dominion (v. 25)—To be master over

Minister (vv. 26, 28)—Someone who serves and looks after the needs of another

Ransom (v. 28)—Payment (for those who are captive and need to be freed)

Rebuked (v. 31)—Encouraged strongly to stop

Studying the Scriptures

Do either activity A or B as you study Matthew 20.



A The Parable of the Laborers

The parable in Matthew 20:1–16 seems to be in response to the conversation Jesus had with Peter at the end of Matthew 19. Peter had asked about what his reward would be for the sacrifice he felt he made to serve in the kingdom. Notice that the parable ends in much the same way Matthew 19 ends.

1. Make a chart in your notebook like the one below. Fill it in with information you learn in Matthew 20:1–16.

The hour the laborers were hired	How much the man agreed to pay them	Hours worked	How much they were actually paid

2. What do we learn from this parable about serving in the Lord’s kingdom?
3. What message of comfort can this parable have for converts to the Church?

B How You Can Become Great

In Matthew 20:20–28 we read what Jesus said after the mother of James and John asked Him if her sons could have an important place in the kingdom of God.

1. Choose what you think are three of the most important words or phrases in the Savior’s response to her request and explain why you chose each word or phrase.
2. List examples from Matthew 20:17–19, 28–34 of how the Savior showed the kind of greatness He spoke of.

Matthew 21–22

A Final Witness in Jerusalem



Jesus knew that His mortal mission was about to end (see Matthew 20:17–19). Before He died, however, He provided the Jewish leaders of that day with additional witnesses that He truly was the Messiah promised by the holy prophets since the beginning. As you read Matthew 21–22, look for the many different testimonies Jesus gave Jewish leaders. These

included the fulfillment of prophecy, His own teachings and testimony, and the testimony of many others—including those who shouted “Hosanna” to their King as He entered Jerusalem.

Matthew 21 begins the last week of the Savior’s mortal life.

Other Accounts of What You Read in Matthew 21–22

Matthew 21:1–11—Mark 11:1–11; Luke 19:29–44; John 12:12–19
 Matthew 21:12–17—Mark 11:15–19; Luke 19:45–48
 Matthew 21:18–22—Mark 11:12–14, 20–24
 Matthew 21:23–27—Mark 11:27–33; Luke 20:1–8
 Matthew 21:33–46—Mark 12:1–12; Luke 20:9–19
 Matthew 22:15–46—Mark 12:13–37; Luke 20:20–44

Understanding the Scriptures



Matthew 21

Drew nigh (v. 1)—Came near

Ought (v. 3)—Anything

Hosanna (vv. 9, 15)—Save now! (This was a shout of praise the people used to say they knew Jesus was the Messiah and could save them.)

Sucklings (v. 16)—Babies

Withered away (vv. 19–20)—Began dying

Whether of them twain

(v. 31)—Which of the two

Hedged it round about

(v. 33)—Put a fence around it

Let it out (v. 33)—Rented it

Husbandmen (vv. 33–35, 38, 40–41)—Farmers

Seize on his inheritance (v. 38)—Possess what the owner or father owned

Render (v. 41)—Provide

Perceived (v. 45)—

Understood, realized

Matthew 21:1–11—What Is the Significance of Jesus Riding into Jerusalem on an Ass (Donkey)?

The prophet Zechariah taught that the Jews could recognize their Messiah when He rode into Jerusalem on the colt of a donkey (see Zechariah 9:9; Matthew 21:4–5). Israelite royalty traditionally rode on the colt of a donkey (see Judges 5:10; 10:4; 12:14; 2 Samuel 16:1–2; 1 Kings 1:33). Thus when Jesus came into Jerusalem on the colt of a donkey He was coming as the king of Israel, the Messiah, in fulfillment of prophecy.

Matthew 21:12–13—Why Were People Buying, Selling, and Changing Money in the Temple?



The events of Matthew 21 occurred during the week of Passover. During that week, Jews from many nations came to the temple to worship and offer sacrifices. At that time animals to be used for sacrifice could be purchased and foreign money exchanged for the ease of the travelers. The Savior objected to this business for two reasons: It was done in the Lord's house and it was operated as a "den of thieves."

Matthew 21:19–20—The Cursed Fig Tree

See "Understanding the Scriptures" for Mark 11:12–14, 20–21 (p. 48).

Matthew 22

Bidden (vv. 3–4, 8)—Invited

Fatlings (v. 4)—Animals for sacrifice

Remnant (v. 6)—Those remaining

Entreated them spitefully, and slew them (v. 6)—Treated them badly, and killed them

Entangle him in his talk (v. 15)—Get him to say the wrong thing

Lawful (v. 17)—Right

Tribute (vv. 17, 19)—Taxes

Image (v. 20)—Picture or likeness

Superscription (v. 20)—Words inscribed on the coin

Render (v. 21)—Give

Raise up seed (v. 24)—Have children

Issue (v. 25)—Children

Matthew 22:11–14—The Man without a "Wedding Garment"

Understanding one of the customs of Jesus's time helps us understand why the man who did not wear the wedding garment was treated as he was. "It was well known that one had to be suitably dressed to appear before a king. The apparel of the guest was a reflection of respect for the host. It was also commonly understood that the appropriate dress for such an occasion would be white robes. Apparently the people invited from the highways of the earth would have neither time nor means to procure the appropriate wedding clothing, so the king supplied his guests from his own wardrobe, a common practice. Thus all had been invited to clothe themselves in the garments of royalty. The man cast out had chosen to trust his own dress rather than that provided by the king" (Joseph F. McConkie, "Triumphal Entry and a Day of Debate," in *Studies in Scripture: Volume 5, The Gospels*, ed. Kent P. Jackson and Robert L. Millet [1986], 381). The improperly dressed man in this parable was a symbol for the Jewish leaders who felt they could enter God's kingdom without putting on the robes of righteousness that God requires (see Revelation 19:7–8).

Matthew 22:23–32—Marriage in the Resurrection

See "Understanding the Scriptures" for Luke 20:27–38 (p. 70).

Matthew 22:36–38—"The First and Great Commandment"



President Ezra Taft Benson spoke of the importance of putting the Lord first in our lives. He counseled: "When we put God first, all other things fall into their proper place or drop out of our lives. Our love of the Lord will govern the claims for our affection, the demands on our time, the interests we pursue, and the order of our priorities" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1988, 3; or *Ensign*, May 1988, 4).

Studying the Scriptures

Do two of the following activities (A–D) as you study Matthew 21–22.

A Make Comparisons

Most of the stories and parables in Matthew 21–22 were directed toward Jewish leaders in Jerusalem who tried to make Jesus look bad and themselves look good to all the people gathered for the Passover. The way Jesus responded caused the opposite to happen. From what you have learned in the New Testament and the help given in the "Understanding the Scriptures" section above, how were the Jewish leaders like:

1. The fig tree in Matthew 21:17–20?
2. The second son in Matthew 21:28–32?
3. The husbandmen in Matthew 21:33–41?
4. The wedding guests and the man without the wedding garment in Matthew 22:1–14?

B Many Witnesses and Much Evidence

Imagine that you are a believer in Christ at the time of the events in Matthew 21–22. You have a friend who is a Pharisee. Write a letter to him, using the testimonies and evidence given in Matthew 21–22, to try to help him understand that Jesus really is the promised Messiah, the Christ. You should include at least three different events that happened in these chapters as part of your letter. Some of the more helpful passages are Matthew 21:1–11, 12–16, 23–27 and 22:15–33, 41–46.

C Paying Taxes

One of the ways the Pharisees thought they could make Jesus look bad was to ask Him about whether the Jews should pay taxes to the Romans. The account is recorded in Matthew 22:15–22. If Jesus said that it was right to pay taxes, then the Pharisees could accuse Him of being a supporter of the Romans—whom the Jews hated. If Jesus said that the Jews should not pay taxes to Rome, then the Pharisees could report Jesus to the Roman authorities as a rebel against the government.

1. How did Jesus answer their question?
2. The money had Caesar's image on it. What has God's image in it (see Genesis 1:26–27) and what are we to "render" (give) to God?



DENARIUS (penny) OF TIBERIUS

D The Two Great Commandments

1. According to Matthew 22:35–40, what did Jesus say are the two great commandments?
2. List five important teachings of the gospel and tell how each one of them is related to one or both of these two great

commandments or list five other commandments that would be automatically kept if you obeyed these two “great” ones, and explain why.

3. Write a thoughtful answer to one of the following questions:

- How can you show love for God with all of your heart, soul, and mind each day?
- Why do you think the first great commandment must come before the second? What do you think would be wrong if the second commandment came first?
- What does it mean to love your neighbor as yourself?

Matthew 23

Jesus Condemns Hypocrites

The word hypocrite comes from a Greek word that means “play actor.” A hypocrite is someone pretending to be something that he or she is not in order to receive recognition or gain. Hypocrisy is a result of pride. Humble followers of God seek to live according to His laws because they love God and other people—not because they will be recognized or honored for it. When it is pointed out that a humble follower of God is in the wrong, he or she immediately works toward doing what is right. The hypocrite seeks to cover sins and make excuses for them.

Throughout your study of the book of Matthew you have read about the hypocrisy of the Jewish leaders in Jesus’s day and how Jesus taught His believers to live the gospel without hypocrisy. Matthew 23 contains Jesus’s final testimony and condemnation against those who refused His teachings and testimonies of the true gospel and plan of eternal happiness.

As you read, consider what you would think about this speech if you were a Pharisee and heard it in person. How might you have felt if you were a person in those days trying to decide whether to continue following the Pharisees or to follow Jesus?

Other Accounts of What You Read in Matthew 23

Matthew 23—Mark 12:38–40; Luke 20:45–47

Understanding the Scriptures

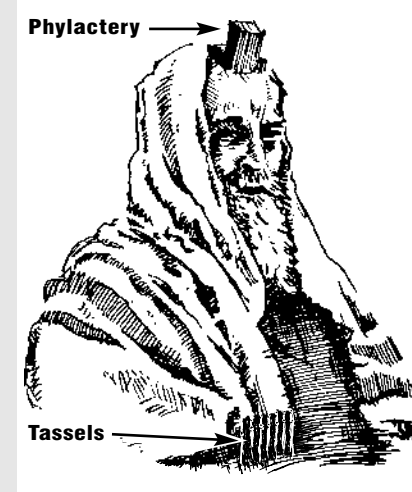
Matthew 23

- | | |
|---|--|
| Bid you observe (v. 3)—Invite you to obey | Suffer (v. 13)—Allow |
| Grievous to be borne (v. 4)—Tasks difficult to achieve | Devour widows’ houses (v. 14)—Take away the homes of widows |
| Exalt (v. 12)—Lift up above others | Pretence (v. 14)—Outward show |
| Abased (v. 12)—Brought down | Compass (v. 15)—Travel |

- Proselyte** (v. 15)—Convert
- Twofold more** (v. 15)—Twice as much
- Sanctifieth** (v. 17)—Makes holy
- Mint, anise, cummin** (v. 23)—Spices

- Garnish** (v. 29)—Decorate
- Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers** (v. 32)—Finish the works begun by your ancestors
- Desolate** (v. 38)—Empty
- Henceforth** (v. 39)—Anymore

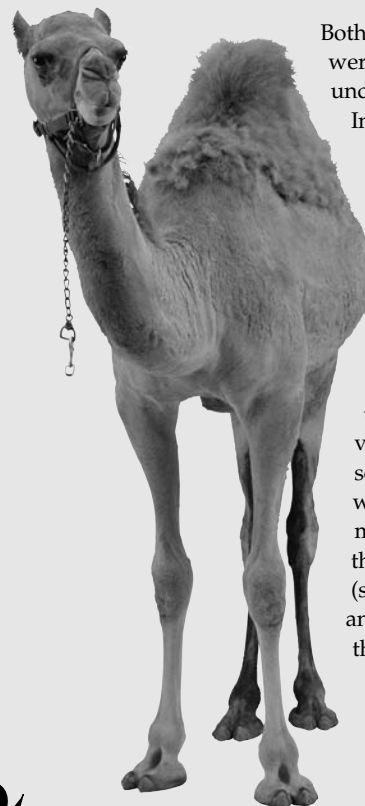
Matthew 23:5—What Are “Phylacteries,” and What Does It Mean to “Enlarge the Borders of Their Garments”?



Phylacteries are small boxes containing written verses from the scriptures, which some Jews wore on their arms or forehead. This tradition was based on counsel given to the prophet Moses in Deuteronomy 6:6–8. The reference to “borders” of their clothing was a tradition of putting tassels on the hem or corners of clothes in remembrance of

God’s laws (see Numbers 15:38–40). Those who wanted to be seen as especially righteous “enlarged” the part of the clothing that had the tassels so they were very noticeable or they wore very noticeable phylacteries.

Matthew 23:24—“Strain at a Gnat, and Swallow a Camel”



Both gnats and camels were forbidden as food under the law of Moses.

In order to prevent swallowing a gnat by accident, some Pharisees would strain all liquids before drinking them. Jesus used the exaggeration of swallowing a camel to say that the Pharisees were very careful about some little things while bigger and more important things were ignored (such as mercy, faith, and the spirit of the law).

Studying the Scriptures

Do either activity A or B as you study Matthew 23.

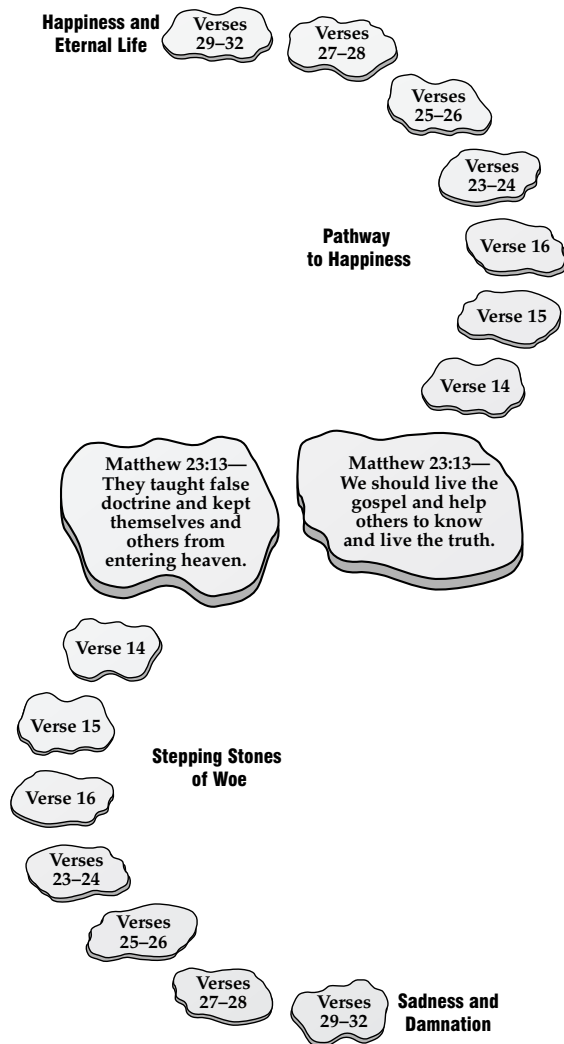
A Make a Comparison

Divide your notebook page in half. From what you read in Matthew 23:1–12, list on one side of the paper what the Pharisees thought made them great. On the other side, list what Jesus said made a person great.

B Stepping Stones of Woe

Woe is a word that refers to sorrow and suffering. Jesus said eight times in Matthew 23:13–16, 23–32 that woe would come to the scribes, Pharisees, and hypocrites. Each time, he described why they would experience this woe.

1. Make two “paths” in your notebook, such as in the accompanying illustration. One path leads to sadness and damnation (see v. 33) and the other leads to happiness and glory. First, fill in the path of woe by describing in your own words the eight things Jesus said the scribes, Pharisees, and hypocrites did. (The first is already written on the chart.) Then fill in the “Pathway to Happiness” by writing what a person who follows Christ would do instead.
2. Although Jesus chastised the Pharisees, He gave them many chances to listen to Him, and many witnesses were given to help them believe His gospel. Read Matthew 23:37 and explain what Jesus hoped He could do for those Jewish leaders.



Matthew 24

The Second Coming

After testifying against the Jewish leaders who had rejected Him, Jesus said that they would not see Him again until He came in glory as prophesied (see Matthew 23:39; Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:1; see also Psalm 118:26, which Jesus quoted in part). Jesus and His disciples went to the Mount of Olives, where one can see the city of Jerusalem—and especially the temple. There He spoke of great destructions that would come to the city and the temple. Because of what Jesus said, His disciples asked Him when the temple would be destroyed, what the signs of His Second Coming would be, and when the end of the world would be (see Matthew 24:3; Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:4), apparently wondering if there was a connection between those three events. The rest of Matthew 24 contains answers Jesus gave to their questions.



The Joseph Smith Translation of Matthew 24 is found in the Pearl of Great Price and is called Joseph Smith—Matthew. Because we have the Prophet’s inspired additions and corrections, the “Understanding the Scriptures” and the “Studying the Scriptures” sections below are based on Joseph Smith—Matthew instead of Matthew 24.

Other Accounts of What You Read in Matthew 24 (and Joseph Smith—Matthew)

Matthew 24 (Joseph Smith—Matthew 1)—Mark 13; Luke 21:5–36

Understanding the Scriptures



Joseph Smith—Matthew 1

Desolate (v. 2)—Empty, destroyed

Afflicted (v. 7)—Put in trouble or pain of some kind

Them that give suck (v. 16)—Women who are still nursing their babies

Tribulation (vv. 18, 21, 33, 36)—Painful troubles

Befallen (v. 19)—Happened

Flesh (v. 20)—Family of people

The elect’s sake (vv. 20, 23, 29)—For the benefit of those chosen by the Lord for special privileges and responsibilities (see Bible Dictionary, “Election,” pp. 662–63)

Carcass (v. 27)—Dead body

Pestilences (v. 29)—Diseases that affect crops as well as diseases that affect people

Divers (v. 29)—Different

Generation (v. 34)—Period of time

Tribes (v. 36)—Groups of people

Treasureth up (v. 37)—Keeps and treats as a very valuable thing

Due (v. 49)—Correct, appropriate

Asunder (v. 54)—In half

Portion (v. 54)—Place



Treasure the word and you will not be deceived.

Matthew 24:15—“The Abomination of Desolation, Spoken of by Daniel the Prophet”



Jesus Christ prophesied of the destruction of Jerusalem.

Matthew 24:15 refers to prophecies made by the Old Testament prophet Daniel in which he foresaw wickedness leading to destruction in Jerusalem. He seemed to indicate that the

destruction would happen in an “abominable” way, suggesting that not only would there be destruction, which is bad enough, but it would be a very distasteful destruction, perhaps even at the hands of those who are despised. There are at least two separate fulfillments of this “abomination of desolation.” One was approximately A.D. 70 when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and the temple, and another will be in the last days before the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. For more information, see “Abomination of Desolation” in the Bible Dictionary (p. 601).

Studying the Scriptures



Do activity A as you study Matthew 24.

A Signs and Promises

Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:4 contains questions Jesus’s disciples asked Him. Verses 5–20 contain the answer Jesus gave to their first question, which concerned the destruction of the temple, and verses 21–55 contain his answer to their other questions concerning His Second Coming and the destruction of the wicked.

1. Make a chart in your notebook like the one below. Fill it in with information you find in Joseph Smith—Matthew. After each item you list, write the verse number where you found that item.

Event	Destruction of the temple in Jerusalem (vv. 5–20)	The Second Coming of Jesus Christ (vv. 21–55)
Signs		
Promises to the Righteous		

2. The Second Coming of Jesus Christ worries and even frightens some people. Based on what you read in Joseph Smith—Matthew, what would you say to give hope to a person who feels this way? Refer to specific verses in what you write.

Matthew 25

Are You Ready?

Matthew 25 continues Jesus’s discussion of His Second Coming. In it He gave three parables. These parables can help us understand what we must do to be ready to meet Him and have that meeting be a pleasing and glorious experience.

Understanding the Scriptures



Matthew 25

Tarried (v. 5)—Did not yet come

Slumbered (v. 5)—Grew tired; fell asleep

Trimmed their lamps (v. 7)—Cut the burned wicks and added oil to their lamps so they would work properly



Lamp

Delivered unto them his goods (v. 14)—Asked them to take care of his possessions

Matthew 25:1–13—Wedding Customs in the Parable of the Ten Virgins

In Jesus's time it was the custom for the groom and his friends to go to the bride's home to escort her to his home, accompanied also by her friends, or attendants. It was a great celebration that many people participated in. It usually happened at night, and torches and lamps were used as the people danced, sang, and rejoiced with the new couple.

Matthew 25:1–13—Additional Help from the Joseph Smith Translation

In addition to the Joseph Smith Translation changes for the parable of the ten virgins (found in the footnotes of the LDS edition of the Bible), Joseph Smith changed "I know you not" in verse 12 to "ye know me not" (JST, Matthew 25:11). This time of judgment is described in Mosiah 26:25–27.

Talents (vv. 15–28)—An amount of money (see Bible Dictionary, "Weights and Measures," pp. 788–89)

His several ability (v. 15)—What he could take care of

Traded (v. 16)—Put the money to work in some kind of business activity

Reckoneth with them (v. 19)—Asked them to report what they had done

Reaping where thou hast not sown (v. 24)—Harvesting where you did not plant

Slothful (v. 26)—Lazy

Strawed (v. 26)—Scattered seeds

Exchangers (v. 27)—Bankers

Usury (v. 27)—Interest

Unprofitable (v. 30)—Worth little or nothing

Studying the Scriptures



Do activity C and then one of the three other activities (A, B, or D) as you study Matthew 25.



A Parable of the Ten Virgins

Elder Harold B. Lee, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, said that the virgins symbolize "those who were professed believers in Christ" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1951, 26).

1. After reading the parable of the ten virgins in Matthew 25:1–13, read Doctrine and Covenants 45:56–57 and explain what the oil in the parable represents.

President Spencer W. Kimball said, "In our lives the oil of preparedness is accumulated drop by drop in righteous living. Attendance at sacrament meetings adds 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" (*Faith Precedes the Miracle* [1972], 256).

2. Knowing what you now know about the symbolic meaning of the oil and how we obtain it, explain why the five who had it could not share with those who did not.

B The Parable of the Talents

Although a talent was an amount of money in the time of Jesus, it can represent all that the Lord has given us.

- As you read Matthew 25:14–30, list the rewards each of the three men received in the parable of the talents and explain why each man received that reward.
- What one word would you use to explain why the third man did not do what the other two did with their talents? Use the Topical Guide and find a scripture that would encourage a person who might lose blessings today because they have a similar problem. Write that scripture in your notebook and explain why you think it would help.

C Scripture Mastery—Matthew 25:40

1. The parable of the sheep and the goats is recorded in Matthew 25:31–46. Perhaps its most important idea is stated in verse 40. Using what you learn from the rest of the verses, from the helps in your scriptures, and what you already know about the gospel, explain what the following specifically refer to in verse 40. Be as complete in your answer as possible.

- "The King"
- "Them" (who the king is speaking to)
- "It" (meaning what "ye have done")
- "The least of these my brethren"

2. List the six things Jesus said the sheep did that allowed them to receive their reward at his right hand. For each of these six ways of helping another in physical need, give a suggestion for how each of them could represent a spiritual need and what you could do to help that spiritual need.

D Putting It Together

Based on what you read in the three parables in Matthew 25, what would be three main ideas you would want to discuss if you were assigned to give a talk in sacrament meeting on preparing for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ? Give a scripture reference in Matthew 25 for each idea.

Matthew 26

“My Time Is at Hand”

As Matthew 26 begins, the mortal ministry of Jesus is nearly over. For three years Jesus traveled among the Jews teaching His gospel, testifying of His mission in both word and action, and setting up His Church on the earth. All He had done up to that time would have been of no use, however, if he did not complete what He prepared Himself to do, as recorded in Matthew 26–28.

For over a thousand years, Israelites remembered how the Lord had saved their lives and delivered them from slavery in Egypt with a special ceremony and meal called *Passover*, or the feast of unleavened bread (see Exodus 12–13). The main element of the *Passover* meal was a young, perfect, male lamb. In the first *Passover*, those who put the blood of a lamb on the doorpost of their house, as commanded, were saved from the destroying angel that killed the firstborn in all the land of Egypt.



This lamb symbolized Jesus Christ and His act of saving us from the slavery of sin and death. Knowing this, consider what it must have been like for Jesus and His disciples as they shared the *Passover* meal as described in Matthew 26. Soon after, Jesus Himself would be the Lamb that every *Passover* lamb was a symbol for. Notice what Jesus did to replace the *Passover* with another ceremony and ordinance that looks back on—rather than forward to—the Lord’s atoning sacrifice. You will likely notice and feel many other things about the Savior as you carefully read Matthew’s testimony of the events leading up to the Crucifixion of the Lamb of God.

Other Accounts of What You Read in Matthew 26

Matthew 26:1–5—Mark 14:1–2; Luke 22:1–2
Matthew 26:6–13—Mark 14:3–9; John 12:1–8
Matthew 26:14–30—Mark 14:10–26; Luke 22:3–23
Matthew 26:31–35—Mark 14:27–31; Luke 22:31–34
Matthew 26:36–46—Mark 14:32–42; Luke 22:39–46
Matthew 26:47–75—Mark 14:43–72; Luke 22:47–71; John 18:1–27

Understanding the Scriptures



Matthew 26

- Subtily** (v. 4)—A quiet and dishonest way
- Alabaster** (v. 7)—A light-colored stone, considered beautiful and valuable
- Precious ointment** (v. 7)—Valuable perfumed oil
- Indignation** (v. 8)—Anger and disgust (a judgmental anger)
- Wrought a good work** (v. 10)—Done a good thing
- Testament** (v. 28)—Covenant
- Yonder** (v. 36)—Over in another place
- Staves** (vv. 47, 55)—Clubs
- Perish** (v. 52)—Be destroyed, die, or be killed
- Presently** (v. 53)—Ready to give
- Legions** (v. 53)—Large groups (a Roman legion was about six thousand men)
- Laid no hold on me** (v. 55)—Did not arrest me
- Forsook** (v. 56)—Left
- Rent** (v. 65)—Tore (a sign of great unhappiness)
- Blasphemy** (v. 65)—Mockery of sacred things
- Buffeted** (v. 67)—Forcefully hit
- Smote** (vv. 67–68)—Slapped
- Without** (v. 69)—Outside
- Bitterly** (v. 75)—With grief

Matthew 26:23—“Dippeth His Hand with Me in the Dish”

See “Understanding the Scriptures” for John 13:25 (p. 86).



Matthew 26:36–46—What Is Gethsemane?

Gethsemane is a garden of olive trees at the base of the Mount of Olives (see Luke 22:39). The name literally means “oil-press”—the place where olive oil was squeezed from raw olives, which are bitter. There is great symbolism in the fact that Jesus chose this place to bear the sins of mankind, where His suffering caused Him “to bleed at every pore” (D&C 19:18), thus making possible forgiveness of sin and, ultimately, eternal life.

Matthew 26:59–60—False Witnesses

The law required two or three witnesses before a man could be put to death (see Deuteronomy 17:6). The false witnesses the chief priests gathered together, however, were unable to get their lies to agree (see Mark 14:55–59). It is ironic that the Jews who wanted to crucify Jesus tried very hard to follow their law of witnesses but apparently did not worry about the law to not bear false witness (see Exodus 20:16).

Matthew 26:69–75—Peter Denies Jesus

See “Understanding the Scriptures” for Luke 22:31–34, 54–62 (p. 71).

Studying the Scriptures

Do two of the following activities (A–C) as you study Matthew 26.

A The Last Supper and the Sacrament

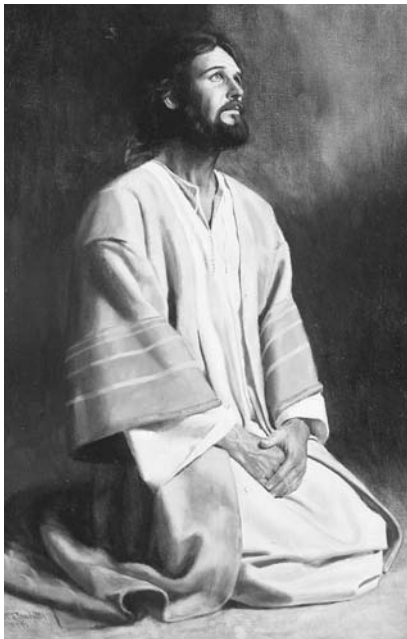
As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, Jesus and His disciples were participating together in a Passover meal (see Matthew 26:17–20), which was also a ceremony or ordinance that the premortal Christ commanded them to participate in when He gave the law of Moses. In the middle of this meal, the mortal Christ introduced a new ordinance of remembrance and worship that we call the sacrament (see vv. 26–29).

1. Carefully look at the additions and corrections in the Joseph Smith Translation of Matthew 26:28 (see JST, Matthew 26:24–25). What important truths do we gain from the Joseph Smith Translation?
2. Imagine that you have been asked to give a presentation about the sacrament to the Primary children in your ward or branch. Make a chart or draw pictures that would help you explain the sacrament as Jesus introduced it in Matthew 26:26–29.

B The Importance of Music

1. According to Matthew 26:30, what did Jesus and His disciples do before Jesus took them to the Garden of Gethsemane?
2. What might have been the value of doing this?
3. Name a hymn that helps you feel how you think that hymn might have helped Jesus and His disciples feel. Explain what it is about the hymn that is so helpful to you.

C “My Will” versus “Thy Will”



1. In Matthew 26:36–46, Matthew recorded at least a part of what Jesus prayed during three different times in the garden of Gethsemane. What is the same or different about each of those prayers?
2. What were Jesus’s disciples doing while Jesus was praying? How could what He said to them in Matthew 26:41 be symbolic of His struggle as He thought and prayed about what He needed to do?
3. Read Mosiah 15:7; 3 Nephi 11:11; and Doctrine and Covenants 19:19. In your notebook, write the phrases from these verses that describe what motivated Jesus to “drink the bitter cup” of suffering He experienced in Gethsemane.

4. Briefly write about a lesson you think we can apply to our own lives from the example of Jesus in Gethsemane. As you do, tell about a situation in which a person your age might need to apply this example of Jesus.

Matthew 27

The Crucifixion of Jesus Christ

Matthew 26 records how Jewish leaders condemned Jesus for blasphemy because He said He was the Son of God. Under the law of Moses, the penalty for blasphemy was death. But the Jews lived under Roman rule and could not execute anyone without Roman permission. Furthermore, blasphemy was not punishable by death under Roman law. Matthew 27 records how the Jews changed their charge when they took Jesus before Pilate. They accused Jesus of claiming to be king of the Jews, which was punishable by death as treason against the Roman government.



Although the Resurrection of Jesus is of greatest importance as a witness that He is the Christ, Elder Gordon B. Hinckley, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, reminded us that “no member of this Church must ever forget the terrible price paid by our Redeemer who gave his life that all men might live—the agony of

Gethsemane, the bitter mockery of his trial, the vicious crown of thorns tearing at his flesh, the blood cry of the mob before Pilate, the lonely burden of his heavy walk along the way to Calvary, the terrifying pain as great nails pierced his hands and feet, the fevered torture of his body as he hung that tragic day. . . .

“ . . . We must never forget it, for here our Savior, our Redeemer, the Son of God, gave himself a vicarious sacrifice for each of us” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1975, 137; or Ensign, May 1975, 93).

While reading Matthew 27 you may want to mark the parts you want always to remember.

Other Accounts of What You Read in Matthew 27

- Matthew 27:1—Luke 23:1; John 18:28
Matthew 27:11–14—Luke 23:2–5; John 18:29–38
Matthew 27:15–26—Mark 15:6–15; Luke 23:13–25; John 18:39–40
Matthew 27:27–31—Mark 15:16–20; John 19:1–16
Matthew 27:32–61—Mark 15:21–47; Luke 23:26–56; John 19:17–42

Understanding the Scriptures



Matthew 27

Took counsel (vv. 1, 7)—Met together to decide

Potter's field (vv. 7, 10)—Place where pottery makers dug for clay

Jeremy (v. 9)—Jeremiah

To never a word (v. 14)—Not a single word

Could prevail nothing (v. 24)—Could not change the people's choice

Scourged (v. 26)—Beat with a whip; in those times the whip usually had pieces of bone, glass, or metal on the ends of it to tear the flesh

Raiment (v. 31)—Clothing

Compelled (v. 32)—Forced

Vinegar . . . mingled with gall (v. 34)—A drug-like mixture that would have helped numb the pain

Vesture (v. 35)—Clothing

Cast lots (v. 35)—Play a game of chance that determines a winner

Reviled (v. 39)—Mockingly spoke evil of and insulted

Wagging (v. 39)—Shaking

Ministering unto him (v. 55)—Taking care of his needs

Hewn (v. 60)—Cut



"Sepulchre"

Sepulchre (vv. 60, 64, 66)—Tomb, or cave to bury the dead

Watch (vv. 65–66)—Guard

Matthew 27:11—What Did Jesus Say to Pilate?

When Pilate asked Jesus, "Art thou the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "Thou sayest." A better translation of this phrase might be "It is as you say." In other words, Jesus said He was indeed a king. See John 18:33–38 for more information about this conversation between Jesus and Pilate.

Studying the Scriptures



Do two of the following activities (A–D) as you study Matthew 27.

A Agency, Sin, and Remorse

It was necessary for Jesus to die, but that does not mean Judas *had* to betray the Savior. President George Q. Cannon, who was a counselor in the First Presidency, said, "It was not foreordained that Judas should be a devil. He chose that part himself, in the exercise of his agency" (in Brian H. Stuy, comp., *Collected Discourses*, 5 vols. [1987–92], 1:236).

1. Look at Matthew 26:14–16, 20–25, 45–56 and describe the times when you think Judas had the opportunity to choose *not* to betray the Savior but instead chose to continue to serve the devil, who was tempting him.
2. Read Alma 30:60 and tell how it relates to Matthew 27:3–5.
3. How can we benefit from understanding the story of Judas?

B Jesus of Nazareth Sentenced to Death

Suppose you were a news reporter and had the chance to follow the events in Matthew 27:11–66. Write a news report of those events. Be sure to include the details your readers will want to know about, such as:

- What did Jesus and Pilate say to each other?
- What did Pilate think of Jesus?
- Who was Barabbas, and what did he have to do with Jesus's trial?
- What happened before and during the Crucifixion?
- What happened after Jesus died?

C The Fulfillment of Prophecy

One of the themes in Matthew was that Jesus fulfilled Old Testament prophecy. Identify and explain the verses in Matthew 27 that fulfill each of the following scriptures:

1. Psalm 22:1
2. Psalm 22:6–8
3. Psalm 22:18
4. Psalm 69:21
5. Psalm 109:25
6. Isaiah 50:6
7. Isaiah 53:4–9
8. Amos 8:9

D Why Did Jesus Do It?

It is difficult to imagine someone going through all that Jesus went through in Matthew 26–27.

1. Read 1 Nephi 19:9. Explain what Nephi said about why Jesus was able to endure what He did.
2. Write about how you feel knowing that Jesus suffered and endured all those things for you. Or write at least seven phrases from hymns that express your feelings about the Savior and what He endured in Matthew 26–27.

Matthew 28

He Is Risen!



President Ezra Taft Benson said, "The greatest events of history are those which affect the greatest number for the longest periods. By this standard, no event could be more important to individuals or nations than the Resurrection of the Master. The eventual resurrection of every soul who has lived and died

on earth is a scriptural certainty" (The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson [1988], 15; see also 1 Corinthians 15:22–23).

While it is true that we could not be saved without Christ's suffering and death, the Atonement was not complete until the Resurrection was accomplished. Furthermore, the reality

of the Resurrection is the proof that Jesus is the Christ, our Savior and Redeemer. That being true, how important is the message of Matthew 28?



Other Accounts of What You Read in Matthew 28

Matthew 28:1–8—Mark 16:1–8; Luke 24:1–12; John 20:1–10

Matthew 28:16–20—Mark 16:14–18

Understanding the Scriptures



Matthew 28

Sabbath (v. 1)—Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath, the seventh day of the week (The Sabbath was changed to Sunday in remembrance of the Resurrection.)

Countenance (v. 3)—Appearance, especially the expression on the face

All hail (v. 9)—Greetings

Persuade (v. 14)—Talk someone into something, convince

Observe (v. 20)—Obey, do

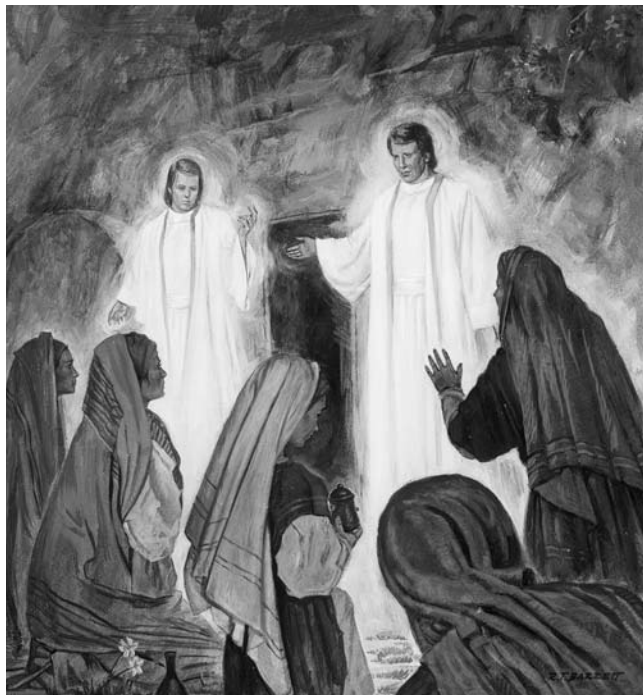
Matthew 28:17—“But Some Doubted”

For an example of one who doubted see John 20:19–29.

Studying the Scriptures

Do activity A as you study Matthew 28.

A Witnesses



1. List all of the witnesses of Jesus’s Resurrection in Matthew 28. For each witness, write the verse or verses where his or her story is told and tell how he or she knew the reality of the Resurrection.
2. What is similar about what the angels told the women to do in Matthew 28:7, what Jesus told the disciples to do in verse 10, and what He told them to do in verses 18–20?
3. How do you know that Jesus is resurrected? (see D&C 46:13–14; 76:22–23). What do you think the Lord expects you to do with your knowledge? (see 2 Nephi 2:8).

The Gospel According to Saint Mark

Who Was Mark?

From Acts 12:12 we learn that Mark's full name was John Mark. Although Mark was not an Apostle, he served as a missionary companion to Paul (see Acts 12:25). He also served with the Apostle Peter, probably at Rome (see 1 Peter 5:13). Mark learned the information he wrote in his Gospel mainly from Peter (see Bible Dictionary, "Mark," p. 728).

Who Was Mark Writing To?

Unlike Matthew, Mark makes very little reference to Old Testament ideas and scriptures. He is also more careful to explain Jewish language and customs (see Mark 5:41; 7:2–4, 34). For these reasons, and because Mark's missionary journeys put him in contact with many Gentiles, or non-Jews, his Gospel seems to be written mainly to the Gentiles.

The Fast-Paced Gospel

Without saying anything about Jesus's parents or birth, "The Testimony of St. Mark" (see the JST footnote on the title) begins with Jesus's baptism, when He was approximately thirty years old. In that first chapter we also read about the ministry of John the Baptist, Satan's tempting of Jesus, the calling of some of the Apostles, three specific miracles, and other great miracles.

This fast pace continues throughout this shortest of the four Gospels. The words *straightway* and *immediately* occur over forty times in the sixteen chapters of Mark and add to the pace and action. The Gospel of Mark shows Jesus as a person of action and power and contains more accounts of miracles than any of the other Gospels. But in addition to the divine and powerful side of Jesus, this Gospel shows Jesus's human side. Mark mentioned more times than any other Gospel writer that Jesus took time to be alone and to rest (see Mark 4:38; 6:31; 7:24; 8:13).

Only in Mark

About ninety percent of the verses in Mark appear in one or more of the other Gospels. There are, however, a few things found only in Mark. These include the following:

- A parable of sowing and harvest (see Mark 4:26–29)
- A reference to Jesus as a carpenter (see Mark 6:3)
- The two-stage healing of a man (see Mark 8:22–26)
- A young disciple who ran away from the soldiers at the time Jesus was arrested (see Mark 14:50–52; the young man may have been Mark, himself)

You may want to keep a place in your notebook where you record new impressions you receive about the Savior as you read Mark's testimony of Him.



Mark 1

The Beginning of Jesus's Ministry

While Matthew recorded many of the words Jesus spoke, Mark emphasized the events in the Savior's life. Mark seems so anxious to write about Jesus's ministry that he gives very little historical background, and in the first chapter he begins with what Jesus began doing among the people. Before you move too quickly to chapter 2, take time to ponder on what we learn about Jesus from the stories in chapter 1.



Other Accounts of What You Read in Mark 1

- Mark 1:1–11—Matthew 3; Luke 3:1–22; John 1:19–34
- Mark 1:12–15—Matthew 4:1–17; Luke 4:1–15
- Mark 1:16–20—Matthew 4:18–22; Luke 5:1–11
- Mark 1:21–28—Luke 4:31–37
- Mark 1:29–34—Matthew 8:14–17; Luke 4:38–41
- Mark 1:35–39—Matthew 4:23–25; Luke 4:42–44
- Mark 1:40–45—Matthew 8:1–4; Luke 5:12–16

Understanding the Scriptures



Mark 1

Remission (v. 4)—
Forgiveness

Girdle . . . loins (v. 6)—
Leather belt around his waist

Straightway (vv. 10, 18,
20–21)—Immediately

Synagogue (vv. 21, 23,
29, 39)—Jewish place of
worship

Astonished (v. 22)—
Amazed; surprised

Rebuked (v. 25)—Demand
that someone stop doing
something; to correct

Hold thy peace (v. 25)—Be
quiet

Torn (v. 26)—Shaken

Divers (v. 34)—Different
kinds

Solitary place (v. 35)—Place
to be alone (wilderness)

For therefore came I forth
(v. 38)—This is the reason I
came

Lepet (v. 40)—Person with a
skin disease (see Bible
Dictionary, "Leprosy," p. 724)

Beseeking (v. 40)—Begging
Quarter (v. 45)—Part of the land

Mark 1:1—“The Beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ”

While it’s true that Jesus Christ began His Church during His mortal ministry, that was not the first time the gospel plan was made known to people on earth. The gospel was actually preached from the time of the first family, Adam and Eve, on this world (see Moses 5:5–12) and even before the world began (see 1 Peter 1:18–20).

Mark 1:2–11—John the Baptist

See the introduction to Matthew 3 (pp. 11–12) for more information about John.

Mark 1:44—Why Did Jesus Ask Those He Healed to Not Tell Anyone What He Had Done?

See “Understanding the Scriptures” for Matthew 16:20 (p. 24).

Studying the Scriptures

Do one of the following activities (A or B) as you study Mark 1.

A Preparing the Way

Mark began his testimony by describing events that prepared the way for the ministry of Jesus Christ. For each of the following four groups of verses, briefly tell what event Mark described and how you think it helped prepare the way for what would follow in Jesus’s mortal ministry: Mark 1:2–8, 9–11, 12–13, 16–20.

B What Can You Learn from a Miracle?

In Mark 1 we read about three different miracles Jesus performed and notes that He also healed “many” (v. 34). In Mark 1:38, Jesus said that a major purpose of His ministry among the people was to preach the gospel. In that context, think about what we learn about Jesus and His gospel from each miracle He performed. For example, as you study the miracle described in Mark 1:40–44, answer the following questions:

1. What can you learn from the leper about how to come to the Savior and receive blessings from Him?
2. What can you learn about the Savior from the way He responded to the leper?
3. To be leprous was considered “unclean” under the law of Moses. To be sinful is to be spiritually unclean. Read Mark 1:40–44 again, changing the word *leper* to *sinner*. What can it teach us about when we have sinned?

Mark 2

“Thy Sins Are Forgiven Thee”

As mentioned in Mark 1:38, Jesus came to preach the gospel more than He came to perform miracles. His miracles

were outward physical symbols of what He could do for us spiritually. In Mark 2 we read of a time when Jesus taught this principle.



Other Accounts of What You Read in Mark 2

Mark 2:1–22—Matthew 9:2–17; Luke 5:17–39

Mark 2:23–27—Matthew 12:1–8; Luke 6:1–5

Understanding the Scriptures

Mark 2

It was noised (v. 1)—The word spread

Palsy (vv. 3–5, 9–10)—Physically disabled

Nigh unto him for the press (v. 4)—Near him because of the crowd

Reasoning; reasoned; reason (vv. 6, 8)—Pondering

Blasphemies (v. 7)—Mockery of sacred things or false claims to divine power

On this fashion (v. 12)—Like this

Resorted (v. 13)—Went

Publicans (vv. 15–16)—Tax collectors

Whole (v. 17)—Healthy

Rent (v. 21)—Tear

Marred (v. 22)—Destroyed

Mark 2:23–28—Rules for the Sabbath

See the introduction for Matthew 12 in this manual (p. 20).

Studying the Scriptures

Do activity A as you study Mark 2.

A Getting the Real Message

As you study Mark 2:1–12, answer the following questions:

1. Why might what Jesus first said to the man with the palsy seem odd?
2. How would you answer Jesus’s question recorded in Mark 2:9? What do you think He meant when He asked the question? (see v. 10).

3. Sin does not cause all disease, but it is more destructive. Unfortunately, it is more difficult to see sin and forgiveness than it is to see the effects and symptoms of physical disease. What lesson do you think Jesus tried to teach those who watched by both forgiving the man of his sins and also healing him of his palsy?

Mark 3

Jesus Attracts Much Attention



We do not know how many people were converted and became members of the Church while Jesus was alive. It seems that the number was quite small, but Mark records that a larger number of people were interested in Jesus—especially when they saw or heard of His miracles. Mark 3 is a record of some of the growing interest in Jesus and shows how, as He became more well known, those in positions of power and leadership began to oppose Him and look for ways to disgrace Him in the eyes of the people.

Other Accounts of What You Read in Mark 3

Mark 3:1–6—Matthew 12:9–14; Luke 6:6–11
 Mark 3:7–12—Matthew 12:15–16
 Mark 3:13–19—Matthew 10:2–4; Luke 6:12–16
 Mark 3:20–30—Matthew 12:22–37
 Mark 3:31–35—Matthew 12:46–50; Luke 8:19–21

Understanding the Scriptures



Mark 3

Withered (v. 1)—Disabled, deformed, or shrunk

Grieved (v. 5)—Sad

Herodians (v. 6)—Jews who supported Rome, and Herod, the local governor, in particular

Wait on him (v. 9)—Be ready and available for him

Throng (v. 9)—Crowd, get uncomfortably close

Plagues (v. 10)—Sicknesses

Straitly charged (v. 12)—Strongly or firmly told

Lay hold on him (v. 21)—Take charge and watch over him

Beelzebub (v. 22)—Satan

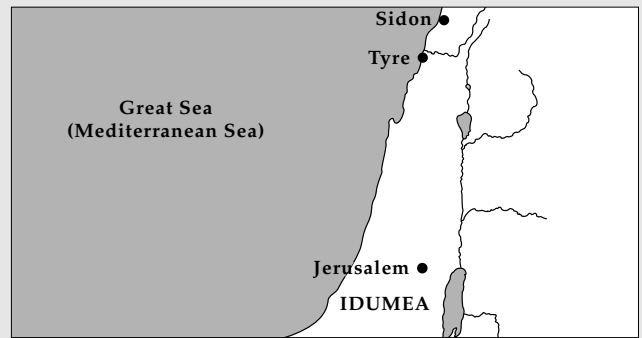
Spoil (v. 27)—Steal

Blaspheme against the Holy Ghost (v. 29)—Wilfully deny Christ (see Bible Dictionary,

“Blasphemy,” second paragraph, p. 626)

Mark 3:8—Idumea, Tyre, and Sidon

See the accompanying map.



Studying the Scriptures



Do either activity A or B as you study Mark 3.

A The Importance of Our Motives

The story told in Mark 3:1–6 gives us interesting insight into the minds of the Pharisees. As you study those verses, answer the following questions:

1. What were the Pharisees looking for when they watched Jesus? (see also the introduction to Matthew 12 in this study guide, p. 20).
2. From whom does the power come to heal?
3. What does this incident tell us about what is important to Jesus and what was important to the Pharisees?
4. What are some examples of things people do today on the Sabbath that follow the traditions of men rather than the inspiration of God?

B The Family of Christ

In Mark 3:31–35 Jesus was not saying that His mother and family were not important. He was again focusing attention on the most important reasons for His coming to earth.

1. According to Mark 3:31–35, what qualifies a person to be a member of Christ’s family?
2. This doctrine was further clarified in the Book of Mormon. In your own words, explain what Mosiah 5:5–9 says about how we become part of the family of Christ.

Mark 4

Jesus Teaches with Parables

The word parable comes from a Greek word that means “to set alongside” or, in other words, to set one thing next to something else in order to compare them. Jesus told parables, or stories, of things the people were very familiar with that could be compared to a spiritual truth. The introduction to Matthew 13 (p. 22) explains why Jesus used parables and gives some ideas for interpreting their meanings.

Other Accounts of What You Read in Mark 4

Mark 4:1–25—Matthew 13:1–23; Luke 8:4–18

Mark 4:30–34—Matthew 13:31–35

Mark 4:35–41—Matthew 8:18–27; Luke 8:22–25

Understanding the Scriptures

Mark 4

Sower (vv. 3, 14)—Someone who plants seeds (to sow means “to plant”)



Sower

Way side (v. 4)—Hard ground that has been walked on (such as a path or road)

Fowls (vv. 4, 32)—Birds

Deceitfulness (v. 19)—Misleading, lying

Lusts of (v. 19)—Longing for bodily or evil desires

Bushel (v. 21)—Large basket

Abroad (v. 22)—Known

What measure ye mete (v. 24)—The way you measure, or judge, the things you are given

Measured (v. 24)—Given

Sickle (v. 29)—Curved knife to cut stalks of grain

Expounded (v. 34)—Explained the meaning of

Hinder (v. 38)—Rear, back part

Rebuked (v. 39)—Commanded to stop

and third. No answers were given for any of the questions, but by carefully reading the story and by analyzing what we know about Jesus and His disciples we can think about possible answers.

1. Write the first question and the answer you think Jesus would give.
2. Write the second and third questions and answer them as if you were the disciples.
3. Write your own answer to the fourth question.
4. What message could this experience have for someone today?



Studying the Scriptures

Do both activity A and B as you study Mark 4.

A Meet the Press

1. Imagine you have been assigned to speak about the Church to a group of newspaper reporters. Tell which parable from Mark 4 you could use to answer each of the following questions:
 - What is the future of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints?
 - Why does the Church send out so many missionaries?
 - How do you explain the remarkable growth of the Church, considering that it is fairly new compared to most world religions and started quite small in the frontier United States?
2. Tell which parable seems to apply to the following statement by President Gordon B. Hinckley: “The Church is growing in a marvelous and wonderful way. . . . It is spreading over the Earth in a miraculous manner” (in Steve Fidel, “Members Living Abroad Outnumber LDS in U.S.,” *Deseret News*, Feb. 26–27, 1996, A2).

B Answers to Important Questions

There are four questions asked in Mark 4:35–41. The disciples asked the first and the fourth questions; Jesus asked the second

Mark 5 More Miracles

Jesus worked miracles to bless the lives of people and to teach important principles. Miracles demonstrated Jesus’s divine power and His understanding of higher laws that govern our earth. This power to work miracles requires the faith of those involved. As you read the accounts of miracles in Mark 5, look for how the people involved showed their faith. Consider what important principles Jesus taught by each miracle and by the way he performed it.

You might want to refer to the information for Matthew 8–9 (pp. 16–17) as you study this chapter.

Other Accounts of What You Read in Mark 5

Mark 5:1–20—Matthew 8:28–34; Luke 8:26–39

Mark 5:22–43—Matthew 9:18–26; Luke 8:41–56

Understanding the Scriptures



Mark 5

Unclean spirit (v. 2)—Spirit of evil or the devil

Fetters (v. 4)—Bands or chains

Adjure (v. 7)—Beg, implore

Legion (vv. 9, 15)—Large group

Besought (vv. 10, 12, 23)—Begged

Swine (vv. 11–12, 16)—Pigs

Gave them leave (v. 13)—Let them go

Befell (v. 16)—Happened

Coasts (v. 17)—Area, borders

Howbeit Jesus suffered him not (v. 19)—But Jesus did not allow him to

Publish (v. 20)—Announce

Thronged (v. 24)—Pushed tightly around, crowded

An issue of blood (v. 25)—Was bleeding

Virtue (v. 30)—Power

Tumult (v. 38)—Disturbance of noisy, upset people

Mark 5:8–13—Unclean Spirits Enter the Swine

This dramatic story helps us understand the great desire of the spirits who followed Satan to have bodies of any kind. We are not told why Jesus allowed those evil spirits to enter the bodies of the swine or why they immediately dove into the Sea of Galilee. Swine were considered unclean animals under the law of Moses. So, if Jews were raising the swine, they were breaking the commandments. It surely would have been a powerful lesson for those who saw or heard about unclean spirits ordered out of a man and entering the bodies of that which was declared unclean. It symbolizes the eventual spiritual destruction of all who serve the devil.

Mark 5:23—“Come and Lay Thy Hands on Her . . . and She Shall Live”

Speaking about this verse, Elder Howard W. Hunter, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, said, “These are not only the words of faith of a father torn with grief but are also a reminder to us that whatever Jesus lays his hands upon lives. If Jesus lays his hands upon a marriage, it lives. If he is allowed to lay his hands upon the family, it lives” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1979, 93; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1979, 65).

Studying the Scriptures



Do either activity A or B as you study Mark 5.

A Look for a Symbolic Meaning

Although the event described in Mark 5:1–20 actually happened, we can also learn from the symbolism of this miracle. Answering the following questions can help you apply this story to yourself and others today.

1. What symbolic meaning could there be to the fact that the man with an unclean spirit lived among “the tombs” (vv. 2, 5)?
2. What kinds of problems are there in our day that people find difficult to “tame” and that seem to continue even after efforts were made to get the problem under control, just as the man was “bound with fetters and chains” (v. 4)?
3. What can we learn about what Jesus can do for our difficult problems by what He did for that man?

B What Did They Do?

1. Mark 5:22–43 tells about two people who sought the Savior for help and blessings. Carefully read those verses and list what each of them did that would be an example of what we might also do as we seek blessings from the Savior.
2. What did you learn about Jesus from those two stories?

Mark 6 Who Is This Man Jesus?



The miracles Jesus performed were remarkable, but most of the people did not understand who Jesus really was. In Mark 6 we read about how He was thought of by the people of His hometown; by the ruler, Herod; and by His own disciples, who still misunderstood Him. Think about your testimony of Jesus as you read this chapter and imagine how you might have tried to help people understand Jesus if you had been there when the events in Mark 6 occurred.

Other Accounts of What You Read in Mark 6

Mark 6:1–6—Matthew 13:54–58

Mark 6:7–13—Matthew 10; Luke 9:1–6

Mark 6:14–15—Matthew 14:1–2; Luke 9:7–9

Mark 6:17–29—Matthew 14:3–12; Luke 3:19–20

Mark 6:30–56—Matthew 14:13–36; Luke 9:10–17; John 6:1–21

Understanding the Scriptures



Mark 6



From whence hath this man these things? (v. 2)—Where did he learn these things?

Kin (v. 4)—Family

Save a staff (v. 8)—Except a walking stick

Scrip (v. 8)—A bag for food or clothing

It shall be more tolerable (v. 11)—The punishment will be less

Abroad (v. 14)—In many different places

Executioner (v. 27)—Person who puts people to death

Leisure (v. 31)—Rest, free time

Ran afoot thither (v. 33)—Traveled on foot there

Companies; ranks (vv. 39–40)—Groups

Fragments (v. 43)—Pieces left over

Constrained (v. 45)—Commanded

Even (v. 47)—Night, evening

Contrary unto (v. 48)—Against

Fourth watch of the night (v. 48)—Just before sunrise

Mark 6:17–19—“It Is Not Lawful for Thee to Have Thy Brother’s Wife”

Herodias, wife of Herod at the time of this story, had been the wife of Herod’s half-brother Philip. She had divorced him in order to marry Herod, and Herod had divorced his first wife and married Herodias. Marrying one’s brother’s wife while he was still alive was forbidden by the law of Moses (see Leviticus 20:21). It was also wrong to divorce a spouse because of an interest in someone else (see Matthew 5:31–32). Herodias’s actions seem to indicate that she felt guilty, and rather than repent, she chose to get rid of the person who reminded her of her guilt—John the Baptist.

Studying the Scriptures



Do two of the following activities (A–C) as you study Mark 6.

A Jesus Returns to His Hometown

1. According to Mark 6:1–6, how was Jesus received when He returned to “his own country,” meaning His home town of Nazareth?
2. What blessings were withheld from those people because of their attitude? (see v. 5).

3. How can this story apply to our dealings with local and general Church leaders today?

B Responding to Guilt

1. In Mark 6:14–28, what did Herod do that might show he felt guilty about something?
2. How did Herodias respond to her guilt?
3. What *should* we do when we experience guilt for our sins?
4. Compare what happens when we try to cover our guilt and sins (see D&C 121:37) to what happens when we humble ourselves and repent (see Enos 1:4–8; Mosiah 4:2–3).

C Learning about the Savior

List two things you learn about the character, nature, or power of Jesus from the story in Mark 6:31–44.

Mark 7

What Defiles a Man?

Traditions can be an important unifying influence in families and other groups. But when traditions become more important than, or replace, or are out of harmony with gospel principles, then those traditions work against the Lord’s plan of happiness. In New Testament times, certain traditions of the Jews were more important in their religion than the laws of God they were based on. Most of Mark 7 tells what Jesus said and did about some of those traditions of the elders. You may also want to read again the introductions to Matthew 12 and 15 in this study guide (pp. 20, 23) before you read Mark 7.

Other Accounts of What You Read in Mark 7

Mark 7—Matthew 15:1–31

Understanding the Scriptures



Mark 7

Howbeit (v. 7)—However

In vain (v. 7)—Pointlessly, with no purpose or value

Suffer (v. 12)—Allow

Ought (v. 12)—Anything

Without (vv. 15, 18)—Outside

Defile (vv. 15, 18, 23)—Make a person spiritually unclean

Perceive (v. 18)—Understand

Goeth out into the draught (v. 19)—What is eaten passes through the body and is disposed of

Covetousness (v. 22)—Greedy desire to have more

Lasciviousness (v. 22)—Uncontrolled lusts

Meet (v. 27)—Right or appropriate

Impediment in his speech (v. 32)—Could not speak clearly

Mark 7:9–12—“It is Corban”

Corban was a term that meant “given to God.” The law of Moses required that children take care of their elderly parents, but a tradition of the elders said that if you had money or other resources you intended to give to God or the temple (*corban*) then those resources could not be used to support your parents. Men with unrighteous intentions used this tradition of *corban* to look like they loved God above all others—even family. But, in truth they kept their riches instead of using them to take care of their elderly parents.

Mark 7:26–29—Why did Jesus Refer to the Greek Woman As a Dog?

See “Understanding the Scriptures” for Matthew 15:22–28 (p. 23).

Studying the Scriptures

Do activity A as you study Mark 7.

A Make a Comparison

1. Using what you read in Mark 7:1–23, explain the difference between what the Pharisees considered unclean and what Jesus considered unclean.
2. Read 3 Nephi 27:19–20 and explain why it is important to understand what Jesus said about being clean or unclean and what we must do if we are unclean.

Mark 8

“How Is It That Ye Do Not Understand?”

Have you ever misunderstood the meaning of what someone said and then felt foolish about it when it was explained to you because it was so obvious? In Mark 8 Jesus’s disciples seem to have had an experience like that. The disciples may not have always understood Jesus, but they had faith in Him. This is an important idea in this chapter. Unlike the Pharisees who demanded a sign to prove to them what they did not understand, the disciples had faith and were receptive to the influence of the Holy Spirit. Consider what you can learn from Mark 8 to strengthen your understanding and testimony of Jesus Christ.

Other Accounts of What You Read in Mark 8

Mark 8:1–10—Matthew 15:32–39

Mark 8:11–21—Matthew 16:1–12

Mark 8:27–38—Matthew 16:13–27; Luke 9:18–26

Understanding the Scriptures

Mark 8

Compassion (v. 2)—Feelings of love and concern

Meat (v. 8)—Food

Generation (vv. 12, 38)—Group of people living about the same time

Charged (vv. 15, 30)—Commanded

Perceive (v. 17)—Understand

Fragments (vv. 19–20)—Pieces

Rebuke him (vv. 32–33)—Disapprove of what was said

Savourest (v. 33)—Enjoy

Mark 8:15—What Is Leaven?

Leaven (yeast) is a fungus. When a little leaven is mixed with bread dough it quickly affects all of the dough, creating bubbles and causing the bread to rise. Bread made with yeast (leavened bread) is lighter than unleavened bread, but it spoils more quickly. For this reason leaven, in scripture, is sometimes a symbol for corruption. That is what Jesus meant when he said, “Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod.” At other times leaven refers to how a small amount of whatever is being spoken about can influence a large amount of something else for good or evil.

Mark 8:29–30—Why Did Jesus Not Want His Disciples to Tell Anyone He Was the Christ?

See “Understanding the Scriptures” for Matthew 16:20 (p. 24).

Studying the Scriptures

Do activity A as you study Mark 8.

A Same and Different

1. List the ways the miracle described in Mark 8:22–26 is either the same as or different from other miracles you have read about in the New Testament (for example, compare Matthew 20:30–34).
2. What spiritual message could you learn from the miracle recorded in Mark 8:22–26?

Mark 9

“Help Thou Mine Unbelief”

We learned in Matthew 16 that when Jesus and His disciples were at Caesarea Philippi He promised them, specifically Peter, the “keys of the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 16:19). In Matthew 17 we read about the fulfillment of that promise on the Mount of Transfiguration. Mark 9:1–13 also contains an account of that experience. After that sacred experience Peter, James, and John still needed to learn many things from the Master. As you read Mark 9, look for ways He taught

them and helped increase their faith and the faith and understanding of others as well. Although the plea in Mark 9:24 to “help thou mine unbelief” was from a father who desired help for his son, it might well be the plea of anyone who believes in the Savior but recognizes the need for more faith and knowledge.



Other Accounts of What You Read in Mark 9

Mark 9:2–32—Matthew 17:1–23; Luke 9:28–45

Mark 9:33–50—Matthew 18:1–9; Luke 9:46–50

Understanding the Scriptures



Mark 9

Transfigured (v. 2)—A condition in which a person’s body is temporarily changed so he or she can endure the presence and glory of heavenly beings

Fuller (v. 3)—A person whose business was making clothes clean and white

Tabernacles (v. 5)—Temporary shelters used for devotion and worship

Wist (v. 6)—Knew

Save (v. 8)—Except

Scribes (vv. 11, 14, 16)—Men who taught the people the meaning of the law of Moses (see Bible Dictionary, “Scribe,” p. 770)

Set at nought (v. 12)—Considered to be worthless or despised

Saluted (v. 15)—Greeted

Hath a dumb spirit (v. 17)—Cannot speak

Pineth away (v. 18)—Body became weak

The spirit tare him (v. 20)—He went into convulsions

Wallowed (v. 20)—Fell down rolling around

Rent him sore (v. 26)—He had severe convulsions

Maimed (v. 43)—Physically handicapped

Quenched (vv. 43–46, 48)—Put out



Building a tabernacle

Mark 9:2–13—Jesus Is Transfigured on a High Mountain

See “Transfiguration, Mount of” in the Bible Dictionary (p. 786).

Mark 9:43–48—Cutting Off Your Hand or Foot, or Plucking Out Your Eye

See “Understanding the Scriptures” for Matthew 5:29–30 (p. 14). The Joseph Smith Translation for Mark 9:40–48 (in the Bible appendix, pp. 804–5) also provides important insights on what Jesus meant in these verses.

Mark 9:49–50—Salt and Fire

Under the law of Moses, sacrifices were salted as a symbol of the lasting covenant between the Lord and His people. It made the sacrifice “good” to the Lord. Followers of Christ offer themselves as a living sacrifice to Him (see Omni 1:26), which sacrifice brings the cleansing power of the Holy Ghost (or the baptism of fire).

Studying the Scriptures



Do activity A or B as you study Mark 9.

A Increasing Your Faith

1. In the story in Mark 9:14–29, what was the problem?
2. What did Jesus say about the problem? (see vv. 19, 23, 29).
3. What do you think the father meant by what he said to Jesus in verse 24?
4. How does this story help increase your faith or teach you how to increase your faith?

B Learn from the Joseph Smith Translation

1. Carefully read the Joseph Smith Translation for Mark 9:40–48. Who does it tell us that “thy hand,” “thy foot,” and “thine eye” symbolize?
2. Keeping in mind the explanations from the Joseph Smith Translation, how do you think this counsel could apply today to people your age?

Mark 10

True Greatness

Many Jews confused Old Testament prophecies about the first coming of the Messiah with prophecies about His Second Coming. They were looking for a Messiah to come with great power and glory as a conquering king to destroy their enemies. Christ did come to destroy their most important enemies—sin and death—but He would conquer those enemies by His own suffering and death was difficult for most to understand. This was foretold in Isaiah 53. Look for ways Jesus tried to teach these principles in Mark 10.

Other Accounts of What You Read in Mark 10

Mark 10:1–31—Matthew 19; Luke 18:15–30

Mark 10:32–52—Matthew 20:17–34; Luke 18:31–43

Understanding the Scriptures



Mark 10

Coasts (v. 1)—Borders

Precept (v. 5)—
Commandment

Cleave (v. 7)—Stay close
together

Twain (v. 8)—Two

Put asunder (v. 9)—Divide or
separate

Adultery (v. 11)—To have
sexual relations with someone
to whom you are not married

Defraud (v. 19)—Cheat

Grieved (v. 22)—Very sad

Scourge (v. 34)—Whip

Exercise lordship (v. 42)—
Rule over, put others under
them to serve and support
them

Minister (v. 43)—Servant

Ransom (v. 45)—Payment to
release someone in bondage

Mark 10:2–12—Jesus’s Teachings on Marriage and Divorce

See “Understanding the Scriptures” for Matthew 19:3–12 (p. 27).

Studying the Scriptures



Do activities A and B as you study Mark 10.

A Becoming Great in the Kingdom

In the story in Mark 10:17–22, a rich young man wanted to know what he could do to inherit eternal life, and in verses 35–45 we read about James and John wanting a place of honor next to the Savior in the eternities.

1. Compare these two stories of people who desired greatness in the kingdom by making the following chart in your notebook and filling it in with information you find in Mark 10.

Who?	What they did not understand	What Jesus taught them
Rich young man (Mark 10:17–22)		
James and John (Mark 10:35–45)		

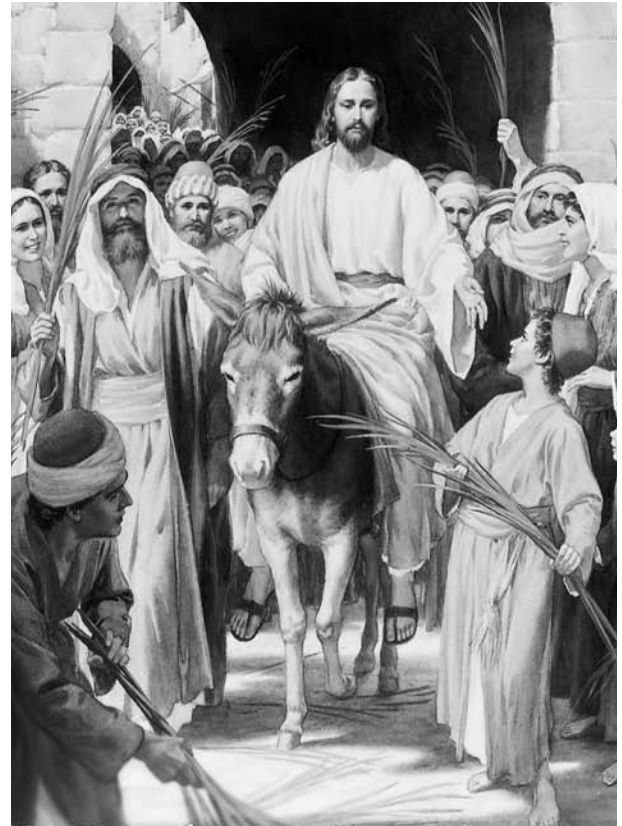
2. What had Jesus taught in Mark 9:33–37 about what it means to be great?
3. According to Mark 10:28–30, how does worldly greatness compare to what Jesus Christ offers those who qualify for eternal life?
4. What does Mark 10:32–34 teach us about the greatness of the Savior?
5. What could you do in your life to become great in the eyes of God?

B Cured of Blindness

1. List what the man in Mark 10:46–52 did to be healed of blindness.
2. What does this story teach us about the Savior and what He can do for us?

Mark 11–12

What Jesus Did and Taught during His Last Week



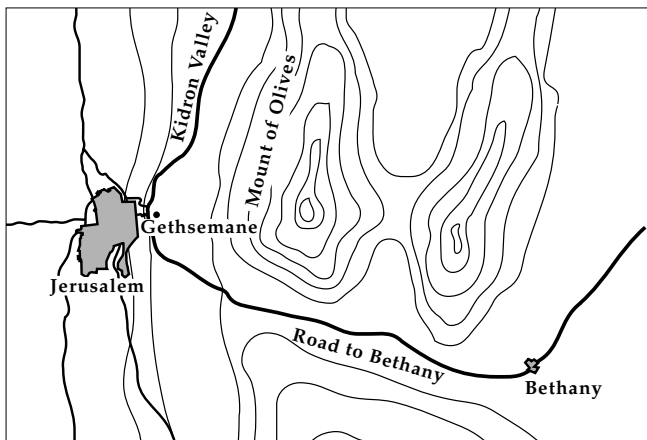
Mark 11 begins about three years after Jesus’s baptism. Within one week He would be crucified. The events in Mark 11–16 occurred during the week of Passover—a time when Jews from all over gathered to Jerusalem to offer sacrifice at the temple. It was a perfect opportunity for Jesus to give His final testimony to a large number of people as He prepared to offer Himself as the Lamb of God for the redemption of all mankind.

Other Accounts of What You Read in Mark 11–12

Mark 11—Matthew 21:1–27; Luke 19:29–48; 20:1–8; John 12:14–19

Mark 12:1–12—Matthew 21:33–46; Luke 20:9–19

Mark 12:13–44—Matthew 22:15–46; Luke 20:20–47; 21:1–4



Topographical map

Understanding the Scriptures

Mark 11

Over against you (v. 2)—
Ahead of you

Garments (vv. 7–8)—Cloaks
or clothes

Strawed (v. 8)—Spread out

Eventide (v. 11)—Night,
evening

Haply (v. 13)—Perhaps

Withered away (v. 21)—Dead

Ought against any (v. 25)—
Any bad feelings toward any
person

Mark 11:1–10—What Is the Significance of Jesus Riding into Town on the Colt?

See “Understanding the Scriptures” for Matthew 21:1–11 (p. 29).

Mark 11:15–18—Why Were There Moneychangers and People Buying and Selling in the Temple?

See “Understanding the Scriptures” for Matthew 21:12–13 (p. 29).

Mark 11:12–14, 20–21—The Cursed Fig Tree

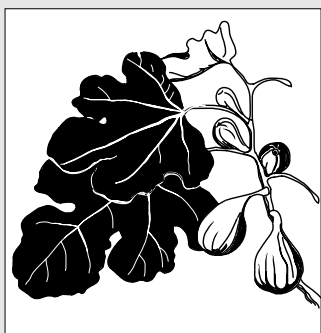


Fig branch with figs

Jesus did not explain why He cursed the fig tree, but a little knowledge about fig trees, combined with the circumstances described in the scriptures, helps us to understand the symbolism of what Jesus did. The kind of a fig tree mentioned in Mark 11 produces an early fig, even before it is full with leaves. The main crop of figs comes later. If a tree

produces no early figs, it will produce no fruit at all that year. A tree with leaves (as both Mark and Matthew described it) should also have fruit, but that tree was barren. We could say that the tree gave the appearance of having fruit but actually had none. That is like the Jewish leaders of Jesus’s day. They appeared righteous, but theirs was a hypocritical and empty righteousness. Consequently, Jesus cursed this tree of hypocrisy that symbolized the condition of the leaders of God’s covenant people.

Mark’s account says the tree did not have fruit because it was not time; the Joseph Smith Translation, however, removes that phrase and indicates that because the leaves were out, the tree should have had fruit.

Mark 11:30–32; 12:12—The Chief Priests, Scribes, and Elders “Feared the People”



Jesus continually condemned these Jewish leaders for their hypocrisy (for example, see Mark 12:38–40). Mark 11–12 implies that the source of their hypocrisy was pride. As President Ezra Taft Benson taught, “The proud stand more in fear of men’s judgment than of God’s judgment (see D&C 3:6–7; 30:1–2; 60:2). ‘What will men think of me?’ weighs

heavier than ‘What will God think of me?’” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1989, 4; or *Ensign*, May 1989, 5).

Mark 12

Hedge (v. 1)—Fence

Winefat (v. 1)—Container to
hold juice from the fruit of a
vineyard

Let it out (v. 1)—Rented it

Husbandmen (vv. 1–2)—
People who take care of crops

Heir (v. 7)—One who has the
right to receive or inherit
something

To catch him (v. 13)—To
deceive him

Carest for no man (v. 14)—
Treat everyone equally

Tribute (v. 14)—Taxes

Hypocrisy (v. 15)—Pretending
to be righteous when one is
not

Image and superscription
(v. 16)—Words inscribed on
the coin

Seed (vv. 20–22)—Children

Discreetly (v. 34)—Wisely

Durst (v. 34)—Dared

Salutation (v. 38)—Greetings
of honor

Devour (v. 40)—Rob her of
what she owned

Pretence (v. 40)—Pretended to
make a show

Two mites; farthing (v. 42)—
Very small amounts of money

Mark 12:18–27—Marriage in the Resurrection

See “Understanding the Scriptures” for Luke 20:27–38 (p. 70).

Mark 12:28–34—“None Other Commandment Greater Than These”

See “Understanding the Scriptures” for Matthew 22:36–38 (p. 30).

Studying the Scriptures

Do two of the following activities (A–D) as you study Mark 11–12.

A How Might They Answer?

Imagine you were able to speak to people in the story in Mark 11:1–11. Write how you think they might have answered the questions directed to them in the following list.

1. To the two disciples: Why did Jesus give specific instructions about how to get the colt? What did you think about the way you got it?



- To the owner of the colt: Why did you let the two disciples of Jesus take your colt?
- To one of the people who spread a garment on the road and shouted Hosanna: Who do you think Jesus is? Why do you honor Him?

B Interpret the Symbolism

Carefully consider the story of the fig tree in Mark 11:12–14, 20–23, and the explanation found in the “Understanding the Scriptures” section for Mark 11. What kind of person do you think the fig tree Jesus cursed could represent in our day? Explain how that kind of a person might act or talk.

C What Not to Do

Choose three actions or attitudes demonstrated by Jewish leaders who opposed or questioned Jesus in the stories and teachings of Mark 11:27–12:40. Explain how those actions or attitudes can keep a person from progressing spiritually.

D What Is the Message?

Much of Mark 11–12 records how Jewish leaders confronted Jesus. In Mark 12:41–44 we read about a woman who was not at all like them.



- How is the widow an example of what Jesus taught in Mark 12:29–34?
- Write the message of Mark 12:44 in your own words and explain what you think Jesus Christ was teaching the people.
- Write about something in your life that you could change to better follow the widow’s example of sacrifice and obedience. (It does not have to involve money.)

Mark 13

Signs of the Second Coming

Less than a week before His Crucifixion, the Savior talked about His Second Coming. Some Jews rejected Jesus during His mortal ministry because they did not believe He fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies concerning the coming of the Messiah—especially those that speak of Him coming in glory

and judgment. Old Testament prophecies about Christ, however, include signs about both His first and second comings. It must have comforted His disciples to know that although He had fulfilled many prophecies, He would come again and fulfill all things that have been spoken of by the prophets concerning the Messiah. Because much of what Jesus Christ said in Mark 13 is about the last days, we who live in the last days should be especially interested in these scriptures.

The Joseph Smith Translation of Mark 13 is the same as the Joseph Smith Translation of Matthew 24, which is Joseph Smith—Matthew.

Other Accounts of What You Read in Mark 13

Mark 13—Matthew 24; Luke 21:5–36; Joseph Smith—Matthew 1

Understanding the Scriptures



Mark 13

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>Over against (v. 3)—In front of; opposite</p> <p>Take heed (vv. 5, 9, 23, 33)—Be aware, pay attention</p> <p>Published (v. 10)—Taught, preached</p> <p>Premeditate (v. 11)—Decide before</p> <p>Betray (v. 12)—Turn over</p> | <p>Them that give suck (v. 17)—Mothers who are nursing their babies</p> <p>The elect (vv. 20, 27)—People of the covenant</p> <p>Seduce (v. 22)—Lead away</p> <p>Tribulation (v. 24)—Trial and trouble</p> <p>Porter (v. 34)—A servant, doorkeeper</p> |
|--|--|

Mark 13:14—“The Abomination of Desolation”

See “Understanding the Scriptures” for Matthew 24:15 (p. 33).

Studying the Scriptures



Do activity A as you study Mark 13.

A Watch!

Jesus told those who follow him to “take heed” or “watch” six times in the sermon recorded in Mark 13 (see vv. 5, 9, 23, 33, 35, 37). List at least three things from this chapter that believers should watch for in order to be prepared to meet the Lord.



Mark 14

The Final Hours of Jesus's Mortal Life

The chief priests, scribes, and elders of the Jews were unable to embarrass Jesus or get Him to make a mistake in front of the people gathered in Jerusalem for the Passover. In reality, the Jewish leaders themselves had been put to shame by Jesus. Some of those corrupt leaders felt that the only way to keep Jesus from becoming an even bigger threat to their position and power was to have Him killed. Jesus knew of their desires and prepared to give His life. Some of the most important events in history are recorded in Mark 14–16. Take your time as you read and ponder the sacred events in these last three chapters of Mark.



Other Accounts of What You Read in Mark 14

- Mark 14:1–2—Matthew 26:1–5; Luke 22:1–2
Mark 14:3–9—Matthew 26:6–13; John 12:1–8
Mark 14:10–16—Matthew 26:14–19; Luke 22:3–13
Mark 14:17–31—Matthew 26:20–35; Luke 22:14–39; John 13
Mark 14:32–42—Matthew 26:36–46; Luke 22:40–46
Mark 14:43–72—Matthew 26:47–75; Luke 22:47–62; John 18:1–27

Understanding the Scriptures



Mark 14

- Unleavened bread** (vv. 1, 12)—Bread made without yeast and part of the Passover meal
- Craft** (v. 1)—Dishonesty
- Alabaster** (v. 3)—A precious and expensive substance
- Ointment of spikenard** (v. 3)—A precious cream that smelled good
- Indignation** (v. 4)—Anger or displeasure over something we think is not right
- Three hundred pence** (v. 5)—A year's wages for a common worker
- Betray** (vv. 10, 18)—To turn against and deliver to the enemy

- Testament** (v. 24)—Covenant
- Vehemently** (v. 31)—With great feeling
- Tarry** (v. 34)—Stay and wait
- Abba** (v. 36)—A word that means "father"
- Wist** (v. 40)—Knew
- Token** (v. 44)—Sign

- Rent** (v. 63)—Tore (as a sign of being upset)
- Buffet** (v. 65)—Hit
- Thy speech agreeth thereto** (v. 70)—You speak with an accent like you are from there
- Swear** (v. 71)—Declare with an oath or promise

Mark 14:3–9—A Woman Anoints Jesus with Ointment

John 12:3 tells us that this woman was Mary, the sister of Martha and of Lazarus, whom Jesus raised from the dead (see John 11). This act of anointing with very expensive cream showed her deep respect for Jesus and was an act of worship. It was also a custom to anoint a body before it was buried. Jesus used this incident as an opportunity to tell His disciples again that He was preparing to give His life—a truth most of the disciples did not seem to understand or want to believe.



Mary Anoints the Feet of Christ, by Robert T. Barrett. © Robert T. Barrett

Mark 14:20—"Dippeth with Me in the Dish"

See "Understanding the Scriptures" for John 13:25 (p. 86).

Mark 14:32–42—Gethsemane

See "Understanding the Scriptures" for Matthew 26:36–46 (p. 35).

Mark 14:33—Why Was Jesus "Sore Amazed" and "Very Heavy"?

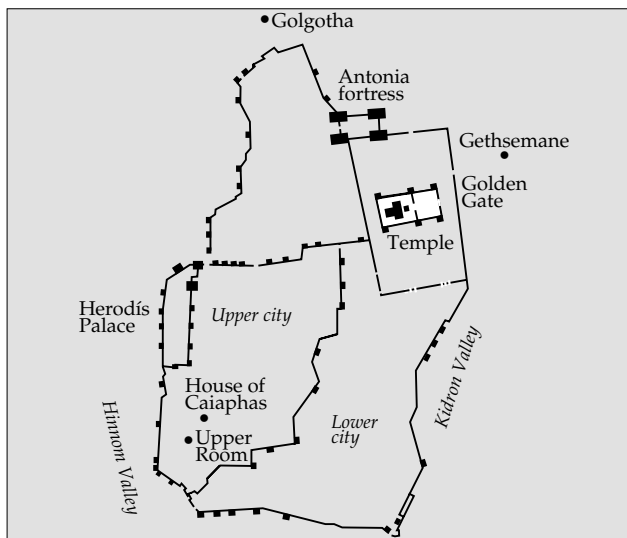
The suffering of the Atonement began in Gethsemane. President Joseph Fielding Smith explained: "There isn't one of us . . . that hasn't done something wrong and then been sorry and wished we hadn't. Our consciences strike us and we have been very, very miserable. . . . But here [in Gethsemane] we have the Son of God carrying the burden of my transgressions and your transgressions and the transgressions of every soul that receives the gospel of Jesus Christ. . . . He carried the burden—our burden. I added something to it; so did you. So did everybody else. He took it upon himself to pay the price that I might escape—that you might escape—the punishment on the conditions that we will receive his gospel and be true and faithful in it" (*Fall—Atonement—Resurrection—Sacrament* [address at the Salt Lake Institute of Religion, Jan. 14, 1961], 8).

Mark 14:54–59—False Witnesses

See "Understanding the Scriptures" for Matthew 26:59–60 (p. 35).

Mark 14:66–72—Peter Denies Jesus

See "Understanding the Scriptures" for Luke 22:31–34, 54–62 (p. 71).



Studying the Scriptures

Do activity A or B as you study Mark 14.

A How Much Do You Value the Savior?

In Mark 14:3–11 we read about two people who demonstrated how much they valued the Savior.

1. How did the woman's actions show that she valued the Savior more than she valued her money?
2. How did Judas's actions show that he valued money more than the Savior?
3. What are some of the ways in which you show that you love the Savior more than you love your worldly things?

B "I Stand All Amazed"

In the hymn "I Stand All Amazed," we sing of how amazed we are at the love Jesus offers us through His Atonement (see *Hymns* [1985], no. 193). From Mark 14, choose two things Jesus did that "amaze" you and help you more fully appreciate Him. Write about those two things, telling why they amaze you and deepen your love, respect, and appreciation for the Savior.

Mark 15

Jesus Is Crucified

The Atonement began in Gethsemane, and Mark 15 records its conclusion on the cross at Golgotha. Elder James E. Talmage, who was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, wrote that "death by crucifixion was at once the most lingering and most painful of all forms of execution. The victim lived in ever increasing torture, generally for many hours, sometimes for days. . . . The welcome relief of death came through the exhaustion caused by intense and unremitting pain" (Jesus the Christ, 655). In Doctrine and

Covenants 19:16–19, Jesus spoke of the pain He felt in Gethsemane, which seems to have been greater and more intense than His suffering on the cross. As one of our hymns declares: "We may not know, we cannot tell, What pains he had to bear, But we believe it was for us He hung and suffered there" ("There Is a Green Hill Far Away," Hymns, no. 194). Keep in mind, as you read this chapter, that "it was for [you] he hung and suffered there."



Other Accounts of What You Read in Mark 15

- Mark 15:1–19—Matthew 27:2, 11–30; Luke 23:1–25; John 18:28–19:16
 Mark 15:20–41—Matthew 27:31–56; Luke 23:26–49; John 19:16–37
 Mark 15:42–47—Matthew 27:57–61; Luke 23:50–56; John 19:38–42

Understanding the Scriptures

Mark 15

- | | |
|---|--|
| Pilate (vv. 1–15)—The Roman governor in Jerusalem | Parted his garments (v. 24)—Divided up his clothes |
| Marvelled (vv. 5, 44)—Wondered | Casting lots upon them (v. 24)—Playing games of chance to see who got them |
| That feast (v. 6)—Passover | The superscription of his accusation (v. 26)—What was written about the crime he was charged with |
| Insurrection (v. 7)—Rebellion against the government | Railed on him (v. 29)—Mocked him |
| Content the people (v. 15)—Satisfy the people | Reviled (v. 32)—Insulted |
| Platted (v. 17)—Twisted together, braided | Even (v. 42)—Evening |
| Compel (v. 21)—Forced | Sepulchre (v. 46)—Tomb, place to bury the dead |
| Wine mingled with myrrh (v. 23)—A mixture that could numb the pain | Hewn (v. 46)—Cut |

Mark 15:34—"My God, My God, Why Hast Thou Forsaken Me?"

These words are also found in the Messianic prophecy of Psalm 22:1. It was apparently necessary for the Father to withdraw from the Son to accomplish a complete and perfect atonement. Truly, Jesus "descended below all things" (D&C 88:6).

Studying the Scriptures

Do activity A as you study Mark 15.

A He Knows and Understands

In Alma 7:11–13 we read that the Savior suffered as He did so He would know how to help people with all kinds of trials and suffering. From what happened in Mark 15, list at least three kinds of difficult experiences people have today that may be like those experiences Jesus suffered. For each experience you list, give the scripture reference showing Jesus also experienced it.

Mark 16

“He Is Not Here”



Mark 15:40–41 tells of a special group of women who were devoted followers of Jesus. It must have been very difficult for them to watch someone they had come to reverence and love suffer so, especially when we do not know how much they understood about the Resurrection. Although Jesus had spoken about resurrection to His followers, they did not seem to have understood (see Mark 9:31–32). Because of their devotion, these women stayed at the cross until Jesus died, and they followed to see where He was buried (see Mark 15:47). They could not do anything for Jesus’s body or His tomb on the Sabbath, but they went there at the earliest moment the day following the Sabbath. As you read Mark 16, try to imagine what they may have thought and felt.

Other Accounts of What You Read in Mark 16

Mark 16:1–8—Matthew 28:1–8; Luke 24:1–12; John 20:1–10

Mark 16:9–11—Matthew 28:9–10; John 20:11–18

Mark 16:12–13—Luke 24:13–35

Mark 16:14–18—Matthew 28:16–20; Luke 24:44–49

Mark 16:19–20—Luke 24:50–53

Understanding the Scriptures

Mark 16

Residue (v. 13)—The others

Meat (v. 14)—A meal

Upbraided (v. 14)—Scolded

Damned (v. 16)—Stopped from progressing

Studying the Scriptures

Do activity A or B as you study Mark 16.

A What Would You Have Said?

Imagine that you saw and did what those faithful women saw and did, as written in in Mark 15:40–41, 47; 16:1–11. Write what you would say to a friend who doubted Jesus Christ’s Resurrection. Explain to this friend how you felt and why you acted as you did over those three days.

B Give Examples

1. Read Mark 16:14–18. When Jesus appeared to His disciples, what did He tell them to do? What did He promise them?



2. Write about at least one example in our day of the fulfillment of the signs Jesus promised. If you do not know of any, speak with your parents, your local Church leaders, or a returned missionary.



The Gospel According to Saint Luke

Who Was Luke?

Luke was a Greek physician, a doctor who wrote this gospel and the book of Acts. Luke was not a Jew, but was well educated in his Greek culture. He was probably not an eyewitness to the Savior's earthly ministry but learned about Jesus from the Apostle Paul and other missionaries. He went on many missionary journeys with Paul (see Acts 16:10; 2 Timothy 4:11) and witnessed the growth of the Church among the Gentiles.

Why Was This Book Written?



Luke wrote this testimony so his friend Theophilus, probably also a Greek convert, would know the truth about Jesus Christ. Evidently there were numerous other accounts of what Jesus said and did, some true and some not true. It seems Luke had a non-Jewish audience in mind, since he gives the meaning of many Hebrew words and tells several stories of Jesus's dealings with non-Jews.

How Is This Book Different from Matthew and Mark?

Matthew's gospel was written to show the Jews that Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies of the promised Messiah (see the introduction to the book of Matthew on p. 9). Mark showed Jesus as the powerful Son of God who performed many miracles, the greatest being the Atonement (see the introduction to the book of Mark on p. 39). As a Gentile, Luke had a unique perspective on the gospel of Jesus Christ. Luke's testimony is the longest of the Gospels. It contains much information not mentioned by the other gospel writers. He understood that the gospel was for all people, not just the Jews, and he emphasized that Jesus suffered and died for all of Heavenly Father's children.

Only in Luke

The following are some of the teachings found only in Luke:

- Gabriel's visits to Zacharias and Mary (see Luke 1:5–20, 26–38)
- Details of the birth of Jesus Christ in Bethlehem (see Luke 2:1–20)
- The testimonies of Simeon and Anna (see Luke 2:21–38)
- The twelve-year-old Jesus at the temple (see Luke 2:40–52)
- The parables found in Luke 10–19
- The calling of the seventy (see Luke 10:1–16)
- Christ bleeding from every pore in Gethsemane (see Luke 22:44)
- Jesus telling the thief on the cross that he would be with Him in paradise (see Luke 23:39–43)

Luke 1

Two Miraculous Births Foretold



In Luke 1, two women who would normally not have children found out that through God's miracle they would each bear a son. One of these women was considered too old to have children and the other was a young woman, a virgin, who had not yet married. As you read this chapter, look to see who those women were, who their children would be, and why special note is made of these births.

Understanding the Scriptures



Luke 1

- Course** (vv. 5, 8)—Descendants of an individual within the family
- Barren** (v. 7)—Not able to have children
- Well stricken in years** (vv. 7, 18)—Very old
- Executed** (v. 8)—Performed
- Lot** (v. 9)—Assignment
- Beckoned** (v. 22)—Motioned or waved
- Days of his ministration were accomplished** (v. 23)—The time of his service was over
- Conceived** (vv. 24, 36)—Became pregnant
- Reproach** (v. 25)—Shame (Elisabeth and other married women with no children felt others looked down on them because they had no children)
- Espoused** (v. 27)—Engaged (see also "Understanding the Scriptures" for Matthew 1:18–19, p. 10)
- Cast in her mind** (v. 29)—Thought
- Salutation** (vv. 29, 41, 44)—Greeting
- Fruit of thy womb** (v. 42)—Your baby
- Low estate** (v. 48)—Humble condition
- Circumcise** (v. 59)—See Bible Dictionary, "Circumcision" (p. 646)
- Horn of salvation** (v. 69)—The altar at the temple was decorated with a bull's horn at each corner to symbolize God's power to save
- Dayspring** (v. 78)—Sunrise

Luke 1:3—Who Was Theophilus?

Theophilus was a friend to whom Luke wrote this Gospel. He was probably a Gentile who was either a member of the Church or was studying about it, and Luke wanted him to have the truth (see Luke 1:3–4).

Luke 1:17—“The Spirit and Power of Elias”

Elias was an Old Testament prophet. The Prophet Joseph Smith explained, “The spirit of Elias is to prepare the way for a greater revelation of God, which is the Priesthood . . . that Aaron was ordained unto” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 335). John the Baptist filled this role in every way. He held the Aaronic Priesthood and he prepared the way for the greater teachings and ordinances that would come from Jesus Christ.

Luke 1:19—Who Was Gabriel?

See “Gabriel” in the Bible Dictionary (p. 676).

Luke 1:31—“Call His Name Jesus”

Jesus is the Greek form of the Hebrew name Joshua or Jeshua. It means “God is help” or “Savior” (see Bible Dictionary, “Jesus,” p. 713).

Studying the Scriptures

Do activity A as you study Luke 1.

A Two Miraculous Births

Make the following chart in your notebook and complete it with information you find in Luke 1.

TWO MIRACULOUS BIRTHS		
Scripture reference for the story	Luke 1:1–25	Luke 1:26–38
What were the names of the parents?		
How did they know they were going to have a baby?		
How did they react to the news that was given them?		
Why was the birth considered a miracle?		
What did they name the baby?		
Where did they get the name?		
What would be the special mission of this baby as he grew older?		

Luke 2

The Savior Is Born



Luke is the only gospel writer to tell us about many of the details of the birth of Jesus Christ. These include the taxing by Caesar, the journey of Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem, the birth in a stable, the shepherds and the angels, Simeon and Anna, and Jesus teaching at the temple. Why do you think

Luke would want his gentile friend Theophilus to know these things?

Other Accounts of What You Read in Luke 2

Luke 2:1–39—Matthew 1:18–25

Understanding the Scriptures

Luke 2

- Be delivered** (v. 6)—Have her baby
- Swaddling clothes** (vv. 7, 12)—Strips of cloth wrapped around the baby
- Manger** (vv. 7, 12)—A feeding place for animals
- Good tidings** (v. 10)—Good news
- Haste** (v. 16)—Speed
- Consolation of Israel** (v. 25)—Comfort or relief of Israel, meaning the Messiah
- From her virginity** (v. 36)—After her marriage
- Fourscore and four years** (v. 37)—Eighty-four years (one score is twenty years)
- Redemption** (v. 38)—Deliverance; to be saved from the consequences of sin
- Fulfilled the days** (v. 43)—Stayed until the celebration was over
- Kinsfolk and acquaintance** (v. 44)—Family and friends
- Subject** (v. 51)—Obedient; followed the advice and counsel of
- Stature** (v. 52)—Size and appearance

Luke 2:21—“When Eight Days Were Accomplished”

As a sign of the covenant the Lord made with Abraham and his descendants, all male children of the house of Israel were to be circumcised when they were eight days old (see Genesis 17:12; Bible Dictionary, “Circumcision,” p. 646).

Luke 2:22—“The Days of Her Purification”

The mother of a newborn son was considered unclean (meaning she was unable to participate in the ordinances of the law of Moses) for forty days. After forty days she could go to the temple and offer sacrifice for her purification.

Luke 2:46–47—Jesus Teaches in the Temple

The Joseph Smith Translation tells us that the teachers were asking the questions, not Jesus (see JST, Luke 2:46). Those teachers were surprised “at his understanding and answers” (Luke 2:47).



Luke 2:52—Jesus’s Development in His Youth

Speaking about Luke 2:52, President Ezra Taft Benson taught: “The most successful program of complete youth fitness ever known to man was described in fourteen words. . . . There is the ideal of any program of youth fitness, to help our youth increase in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man. It covers everything—physical fitness, mental fitness, social fitness, emotional fitness, and spiritual fitness” (*The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson*, 555–56).

Studying the Scriptures

Do activities A and C or only activity B as you study Luke 2.

A The Christmas Story

Luke 2 contains one of the most beautiful and well-known accounts in the Bible. After carefully reading Luke 2:1–16, do the following:

1. Make up a quiz with at least six questions that cover what you think are the most important details of Jesus’s birth. In parentheses after each question, write the correct answer and the verse where the answer can be found.
2. List five phrases from Luke 2:1–16 that you think would be good titles for a talk about Jesus at Christmastime.

B Witnesses of the Christ Child

Read Luke 2 and list everyone mentioned in this chapter who saw Jesus. Next to each name list how they came to know about Jesus.

C A Pattern for Personal Growth

After reading Luke 2:40, 49–52, list the different areas in which Jesus grew and developed. How could you “grow and develop” in those areas?

Luke 3

John Baptizes the Son of God

John the Baptist and Jesus were cousins (see Luke 1:36), and John was just six months older than Jesus. He was sent to prepare the way for the mission of Jesus Christ. As you study Luke 3, look for what John taught the people and the ways it would help them be ready to hear the Savior. Be sure to read the Joseph Smith Translation additions to this chapter, which tell us more about the mission of Jesus Christ.

Other Accounts of What You Read in Luke 3

Luke 3:1–22—Matthew 3; Mark 1:2–11

Luke 3:23–38—Matthew 1:1–17

Understanding the Scriptures

Luke 3

Tetrarch (v. 1)—Ruler or governor

Remission (v. 3)—Forgiveness

The wrath to come (v. 7)—The coming judgments of God

Fruits worthy of repentance (v. 8)—Actions that demonstrate true repentance

Ax is laid unto the root of the trees (v. 9)—See “Understanding the Scriptures” for Matthew 3:10 (p. 12)

Hewn (v. 9)—Cut

Publicans (v. 12)—Tax collectors

Exact (v. 13)—Take, collect

Content (v. 14)—Satisfied

Mused (v. 15)—Thought about

Latchet (v. 16)—Laces or straps

Fan (v. 17)—A tool or instrument used to separate wheat kernels from their lighter outer shell (chaff) that is not eaten



Separating wheat from chaff

Purge his floor (v. 17)—Clean his place of harvesting

Exhortation (v. 18)—A speech to encourage and strengthen

Reproved (v. 19)—Scolded, rebuked

Luke 3:8–9—“We Have Abraham to Our Father”

The Lord made great promises to Abraham because of his faithfulness (see Genesis 13:14–17; Abraham 2:8–11). Many Jews believed that they would be saved simply because they were the descendants of Abraham (see JST, Luke 3:13). John the Baptist told them that if they did not repent, they would be cut down like useless trees. This teaching emphasized that we will be judged by our works, and that only the righteous receive eternal life.

Luke 3:19–20—What Had Herod Done Wrong?

Luke 3:19–20 refers to Herod Antipas, the tetrarch. He was the son of Herod the Great, whom you read about in Matthew 2. Herod Antipas left his first wife to marry his niece Herodias, who had been married to his brother Philip. Such a marriage was

against the law of Moses (see Leviticus 20:21). When John the Baptist called him to repent, Herod had John thrown into prison.

Studying the Scriptures

Do the three following activities (A–C) as you study Luke 3.

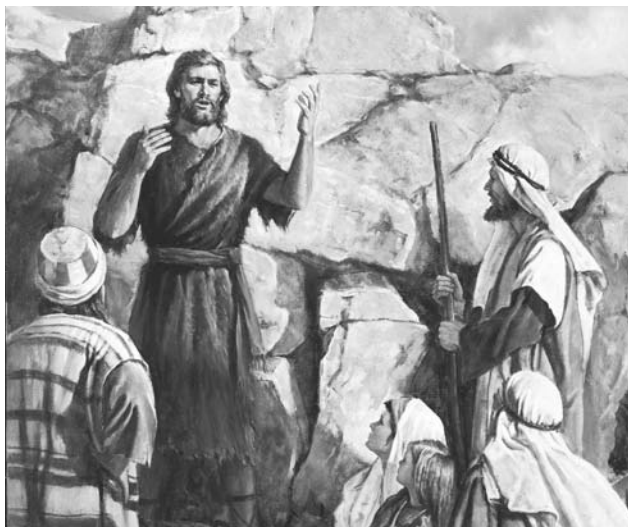
A John Prepares the Way

1. Review Luke 3:7–14 and list the “fruits worthy of repentance” that John told the people to “bring forth” (v. 8).
2. Write about how each of these fruits would help us prepare to meet the Savior.

B What Should We Do?

After John the Baptist taught the people that every tree that would not grow good fruit would be cut down and “cast into the fire” (Luke 3:9), the people asked, “What shall we do then?” (v. 10). John then gave some examples of what it meant to bring forth good fruit.

1. List what John suggested for:
 - a. People with food and clothing
 - b. Publicans
 - c. Soldiers
2. Based on what John taught, write what you think he would suggest today for:
 - a. Teenagers at school
 - b. Children living with their parents
 - c. Parents



C Choose a Symbol

1. Explain what each of the following words found in Luke 3:7–18 could symbolize in the message or mission of John the Baptist: *vipers, stones, fruit, roots, shoes, wheat*.
2. Choose one of the above symbols that people you know would be *least* likely to relate to. Think of a different symbol that people in your area might better understand. Describe how you would use it to teach a principle John taught.

Luke 4

Jesus Overcomes Satan and Begins His Ministry

At the beginning of His ministry, Jesus fasted and prayed for forty days. After that time Satan came to tempt Him. Why? What did the devil hope to gain? Heavenly Father desires that all of His children enjoy “immortality and eternal life” (Moses 1:39). Satan desires that “all men might be miserable like unto himself” (2 Nephi 2:27; see also v. 18). Essential to Heavenly Father’s plan for our salvation is a sinless Savior to pay the price for our sins. Satan was unsuccessful in his attempts to tempt Him to sin.

Satan also opposes God’s servants. For example, he tried to tempt Moses (see Moses 1:12–22) and he attacked Joseph Smith (see Joseph Smith—History 1:15–17). Telling of his experience, the Prophet Joseph wrote, “It seems as though the adversary was aware, at a very early period of my life, that I was destined to prove a disturber and an annoyner of his kingdom; else why should the powers of darkness combine against me?” (Joseph Smith—History 1:20).

Be sure to read the Joseph Smith Translation changes for Luke 4:4–5, 9.

Other Accounts of What You Read in Luke 4

Luke 4:1–13—Matthew 4:1–11; Mark 1:12–13

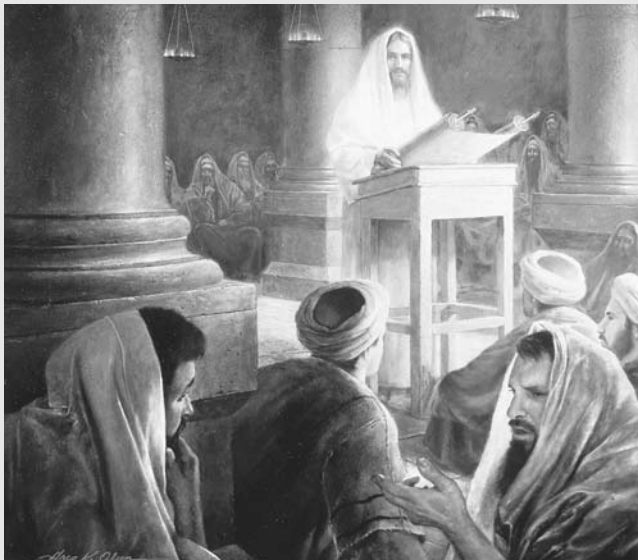
Luke 4:31–37—Mark 1:21–28

Luke 4:38–43—Matthew 8:14–17; Mark 1:29–38

Understanding the Scriptures

Luke 4

Pinnacle (v. 9)—High point	Lepers (v. 27)—People suffering from a terrible skin disease
Dash (v. 11)—Hit	Eliseus (v. 27)—Elisha
As his custom was (v. 16)—As he usually did	Wrath (v. 28)—Anger
Anointed (v. 18)—Chosen	Astonished (v. 32)—Surprised, amazed
Bare him witness (v. 22)—Heard what he said	Besought (v. 38)—Begged
Heaven was shut up (v. 25)—The skies were sealed so that no rain came	Rebuked the fever (v. 39)—Commanded the fever to leave
Famine (v. 25)—Lack of food	Suffered them not (v. 41)—Did not allow them
Elias (v. 26)—Elijah	



Luke 4:16–30—Why Did the People of Jesus’s Hometown Try to Kill Him?

The Jews in the synagogue in Nazareth understood that when Jesus said He fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah that He was saying He was the Messiah. These people, however, knew Jesus when He was growing up. Their false ideas about what the Messiah would be and do made it difficult for them to believe that the person they knew was their Messiah. Even more, to falsely claim that you were the Messiah was blasphemy—which was punishable by death under the law of Moses. The people of Nazareth thought Jesus had committed blasphemy, and so they thought it was right to kill Him.

Studying the Scriptures 

Do either activity A or B as you study Luke 4.

A What Do Temptations Really Offer Us?

In Matthew 4:1–10 you studied how Satan tempted Jesus and identified how he tempts us in similar ways today. Speaking of that event, Elder David O. McKay, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, said, “Nearly every temptation that comes to you and me comes in one of those forms. Classify them, and you will find that under one of those three nearly every given temptation that makes you and me spotted, ever so little maybe, comes to us as (1) *a temptation of the appetite*; (2) *a yielding to the pride and fashion and vanity of those alienated from the things of God*; or (3) *a gratifying of the passion, or a desire for the riches of the world, or power among men*” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1911, 59).

1. What do you think it means to “not live by bread alone, but by every word of God” (Luke 4:4)? We must eat to live, but compare the life of someone who gives in to the temptation of the appetite to that of someone who lives as Jesus suggested.
2. What did Satan offer Jesus if He would worship him? (see Luke 4:5–8). Compare that to what God has promised (see D&C 76:50, 54–59; 84:37–38).
3. Satan tempted Jesus to prove who He was by putting Himself in danger and seeing if He would be saved in a miraculous way. If Jesus had done that, how would He have been tempting God (see Luke 4:12)? Satan knew that Jesus was the

Son of God. Why do you think he tempted Jesus to prove something that he, Satan, already knew?

4. Suppose you have a friend or family member who is struggling with temptation. Using what you learned from Jesus’s temptations, write a paragraph to explain why Satan’s temptations are never as rewarding as our Heavenly Father’s promises are to the obedient.

B Outline Jesus’s Mission

1. Jesus quoted from Isaiah 61:1–2, in which Isaiah prophesied what the Messiah would do as a part of His ministry. From Luke 4:18–19, list the six things that Isaiah prophesied Jesus would do.
2. Give at least two examples of how Jesus continues to fulfill this mission in the lives of individuals today.

Luke 5
“Come, Follow Me”

One important part of the Savior’s mission was to establish the kingdom of God on earth. Jesus Christ called men whom He could trust to lead the Church after His Resurrection and Ascension into heaven. These men became the Twelve Apostles. Jesus spent much time instructing and preparing His Apostles for their important role. Luke 5 tells how some of those men were called to follow Jesus.

Other Accounts of What You Read in Luke 5

- Luke 5:1–11—Matthew 4:18–22; Mark 1:16–20
- Luke 5:12–16—Matthew 8:2–4; Mark 1:40–45
- Luke 5:17–39—Matthew 9:2–17; Mark 2:1–22

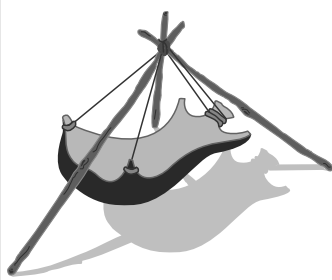
Understanding the Scriptures 

Luke 5

- Lake of Gennesaret** (v. 1)—Sea of Galilee
- Pressed upon** (v. 1)—Crowded around
- Draught** (vv. 4, 9)—Catch
- Toiled** (v. 5)—Worked
- Taken with a palsy** (v. 18)—Paralyzed, physically disabled
- Blasphemies** (v. 21)—Speaking evil of holy and sacred things
- Levi** (v. 27)—Another name for Matthew
- Receipt of custom** (v. 27)—A table where people paid taxes
- Bridegroom** (v. 34)—A man who is being married; it is also a title for Jesus Christ
- Maketh a rent** (v. 36)—Will tear
- Straightway** (v. 39)—Immediately

Luke 5:36–39—Why Not Patch Old Clothes with New Material or Put New Wine in Old Bottles?

Washing and wearing clothes causes them to shrink. Patching old clothes with new material not yet shrunk causes the clothes to tear when the patch material shrinks.



In New Testament times wine was stored in bottles made from animal skins. Those leather bags were often called wineskins. Over time, those skins would become dry and brittle and could crack or spilt easily. New wine underwent a fermenting process, which naturally caused the liquid

to expand. If new wine was put in an old bottle, the fermenting would cause the old wineskin to stretch and burst.

The following questions by Elder Bruce R. McConkie, who was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, help explain these two parables: “What, new baptism in an old church, new revelation in a dying kingdom, new doctrine in an apostate organization! Could Jesus add Christian ordinances, with their spirit and power, to the dead formalism and ritual of the Mosaic procedures?” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 1:186).

Studying the Scriptures

Do one of the following activities (A or B) as you study Luke 5.

A Give Some Advice

Imagine you were one of the people on Peter’s boat in the story in Luke 5:1–11. It is a few years later and a friend has come to you discouraged because a person he or she has been trying to help become active in the Church for almost a year has still not attended any Church meetings. Write how you might encourage your friend by retelling the story in Luke 5:1–11, explaining what you learned from it and applying it to his or her situation.

B If You Were There

Imagine you witnessed the healing of the man in the story in Luke 5:18–26 and then attended the feast described in verses 27–32. Write what you would have written to a friend about those events. Include what you learned about Jesus and His ministry and how your life would be different because of your experience.

Luke 6

Jesus Ordains and Teaches the Twelve Apostles

Jesus had previously called men to follow Him. Luke 6 records the official calling of twelve Apostles. We also read some of what He taught them as they went out to preach in His name. His counsel to them is similar to what you read in the Sermon on the Mount, in Matthew 5–7. Some have called Luke 6:20–49 the Sermon on the Plain.

Other Accounts of What You Read in Luke 6

Luke 6:1–11—Matthew 12:1–21; Mark 2:23–3:12

Luke 6:12–16—Matthew 10:2–4; Mark 3:13–19

Luke 6:17–49—Matthew 5:1–7:29

Understanding the Scriptures

Luke 6

Shewbread (v. 4)—The bread displayed in the tabernacle; it represented Jesus Christ

Accusation (v. 7)—A charge

Restored whole (v. 10)—Healed

Communed (v. 11)—Planned or plotted

Vexed (v. 18)—Troubled

Reproach (v. 22)—Blame

Consolation (v. 24)—Comfort

Mote (v. 41)—A small speck or a piece of straw

Beam (v. 41)—Wooden plank; considerably larger than a mote

Corrupt (v. 43)—Tree that bears no fruit

Beat vehemently (v. 49)—Came with violent force

Luke 6:12–16—The Calling of Apostles

Elder David B. Haight, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, said, “Each Apostle is ordained under the direction of the President of the Church, who holds the keys of all of the kingdom of God. He gives to each new Apostle the priesthood authority necessary for him to hold every position in the Church. We declare that the authority to administer in the name of God is operative in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints today. We further testify that this power or commission was conferred on the first officers of the Church by ordination under the hands of those who held the same power in earlier dispensations. Joseph Smith received the keys of the apostleship from Peter, James, and John, the same who held the authority of the apostleship in the New Testament times. This authority has come down from the Prophet Joseph Smith to [the current prophet]” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1994, 17–18; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 15; see also Articles of Faith 1:5).

Studying the Scriptures

Do three of the following activities (A–D) as you study Luke 6.

A Choosing the Twelve Apostles

Consider what you have read in Luke 5:1–6:16 and respond to the following about the calling of the Twelve Apostles:

1. In what ways did Jesus test some of the men whom He called as Apostles?

Elder Harold B. Lee, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, spoke about such tests of loyalty: “It is my conviction that every man who will be called to a high place in this Church will have to pass these tests not devised by human hands, by which our Father numbers them as a united group of leaders willing to follow the prophets of the Living God and be loyal and true as witnesses and exemplars of the truths they teach” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1950, 101).

2. What did the men have to know about Jesus before their calling?

3. What might be the significance of the event in Luke 6:12 occurring before the events in verses 13–16?

B Who Are the Twelve Apostles?

List in your notebook the names of the men who currently serve in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

C List the Main Ideas

In Luke 6:17–26 Jesus teaches His disciples about blessings and cursings (woes). Make a chart in your notebook similar to the one below, and list the blessings and woes. Use only key words in your list. When you have finished, select one item from your list and explain what application it has today.

BLESSINGS	WOES
(List)	(List)

D You Reap What You Sow

Luke 6:43–49 uses two examples to teach the principle that you can only harvest what you plant (see Galatians 6:7). In other words, you do not harvest corn if you plant peas. Draw a picture of one of the Savior’s examples from either Luke 6:43–47 or 48–49. Explain why that example is effective.

From your reading of Luke 6:27–42, list three principles the Savior taught that we should sow (practice in our lives) and what fruit (blessings) are promised for each.

Luke 7–8
Matters of Faith

Can people who are not members of the Church have faith in Jesus Christ? Can they also pray and receive blessings, even miracles, from God? As you read Luke 7–8 look for who received blessings and who did not, and ponder what that teaches us about receiving blessings from God.

Other Accounts of What You Read in Luke 7–8

- Luke 7:1–10—Matthew 8:1–13
- Luke 7:18–35—Matthew 11:2–19
- Luke 8:4–18—Matthew 13:1–23; Mark 4:1–25
- Luke 8:19–21—Matthew 12:46–50; Mark 3:31–35
- Luke 8:22–56—Matthew 8:18–34; 9:18–26; Mark 4:35–5:43

Understanding the Scriptures



Luke 7

Centurion (v. 2)—Roman military leader

Beseeking, besought (vv. 3–4)—Asking, pleading with

Whole (v. 10)—Healed

Bier (v. 14)—Board on which a dead body is carried to a place of burial

He that is least in the kingdom of God (v. 28)—He whom you consider the least important; Jesus was talking about Himself

Alabaster box of ointment (v. 37)—A flask or jar made of alabaster stone and filled with expensive, sweet smelling cream.

Creditor (v. 41)—Person to whom another owes money

Debtor (v. 41)—Person who owes money to a creditor

Pence (v. 41)—Silver coin that was a typical workman’s daily wage



Luke 7:18–23—Did John Doubt the Divinity of Jesus Christ?

Elder Bruce R. McConkie stated:

“Any inference that the Baptist was uncertain or doubtful in his own mind, as to the identity and mission of the Master, is totally unwarranted. In reality, the imprisoned [John] and forerunner of our Lord was using this means to persuade his disciples to forsake him and follow Jesus.

“John knew who Jesus was; the Baptist was not wavering as a reed in the wind. . . . This act of sending his disciples to Jesus was in effect a final great testimony on John’s part that Jesus was the Lamb of God, for the Baptist knew that his disciples, seeing the Master personally and hearing his teachings, could not help but follow the greater light” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 1:261–62).

Luke 7:31–35—What Were the Men of the Savior’s Generation Like?

Elder Bruce R. McConkie paraphrased the Savior’s message in this way: “What illustration can I choose to show how petty, peevish, and insincere are you unbelieving Jews? You are like fickle children playing games; when you hold a mock wedding, your playmates refuse to dance; when you change the game to a funeral procession, your playmates refuse to mourn. In like manner you are only playing at religion. As cross and capricious [unstable] children you reject John because he came with the strictness of the Nazarites, and ye reject me because I display the warm human demeanor that makes for pleasant social [association]” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 1:263).

Luke 8

Steward (v. 3)—Servant

Sow (v. 5)—Plant

For the press (v. 19)—Because of the crowd

Jeopardy (v. 23)—Danger

Ware (v. 27)—Wore

Fetters (v. 29)—Shackles or chains used to bind prisoners by the wrists or ankles

Thronged (v. 42)—Gathered around

Issue of blood (v. 44)—Unhealed wound or sore that bleeds

Stanch (v. 44)—Stopped; healed

Bewailed (v. 52)—Grieved over

Laughed him to scorn (v. 53)—Mocked or made fun of him

Luke 8:2—Who Was Mary Magdalene?



Elder James E. Talmage, who was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, wrote: “Mary Magdalene became one of the closest friends Christ had among women; her devotion to Him as her Healer and as the One whom she adored as the Christ was unswerving; she stood close by the cross while other women tarried afar off in the time of His mortal agony; she was among the first at the sepulcher on the resurrection morning, and was the first mortal to look upon and recognize a resurrected Being—the Lord whom she had loved with all the fervor of spiritual adoration” (*Jesus the Christ*, 264–65).

Studying the Scriptures

Do activity B and two of the others (A, C, or D) as you study Luke 7–8.

A Describe His Character

Read Luke 7:1–10 and list what you think were the centurion’s five most impressive attributes, or character traits. By each of the five items, write a sentence from the scriptures that shows he possessed that attribute or trait.

B Follow the Savior’s Example

Read the story of the widow of Nain in Luke 7:11–17.

1. Mark verse 13 and ponder what it means to have compassion for someone.
2. Think of someone in your ward or branch who would be blessed if you showed compassion toward him or her (maybe a widow or widower).

3. Decide on one act of service that you could do for that person this week and do it.
4. Write down in your notebook the details of your service and how you felt about it.

C Write a Summary

After carefully reading the story found in Luke 7:36–50:

1. Write a two-paragraph story that summarizes these verses. Write it in such a way that you could read it to a primary class to help them understand the story better.
2. Think of one sentence that describes the main message of this passage of scripture. Use that sentence as the title for your story.

D Consider a Modern Situation

Match the following descriptions (a–d) with the four situations that are listed (1–4). You will need to carefully read Luke 8:5–15 to determine the correct answers. In your notebook, write the numbers with the correct letter by each.

Descriptions:

- a. Seeds eaten by birds
- b. Seeds on rocky soil
- c. Seeds choked by weeds
- d. Seeds on good soil

Situations:

1. Sarah met the missionaries when her bike had a flat tire. They helped her fix it and told her about their missions. She was a busy college student, but she listened to their message, joined the Church, and was an active member. Her roommates began making fun of her, and her boyfriend broke up with her. She felt lonely and stopped going to church so that she could be with her friends.
2. Tom made fun of the missionaries when they knocked on his door, but they did not argue back. Because they were different, Tom grew curious. He listened to what they taught and became friends with them. He liked them, so he joined the Church. He went to church until the missionaries moved to another community, then he lost interest and stopped attending.
3. Ann grew up in the Church. She was always active until she met Brian. She loved him and did not care that he was a member of another church. He was not interested in the teachings of the restored gospel and felt Ann was a little foolish in her beliefs. He told her that they could only stay together if she stopped going to church. Ann was sad, but she did as Brian said because she loved him.
4. Randy’s family joined the Church when he was twelve. He was excited to become a deacon, and his father ordained him. His family did their best to hold family home evenings and never missed having family prayer. They went to church together and often talked about the teachings of the gospel.

Luke 9

The Twelve Apostles Are Sent Out to Preach

Jesus ordained twelve Apostles to assist Him in the work and to carry it forward after His ascension into heaven. In order to accomplish this great task, the Apostles needed power, authority, experience, and knowledge but, as President Thomas S. Monson, a member of the First Presidency, reminded us, “Whom God calls, God qualifies” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1987, 54; or Ensign, May 1987, 44). As you read Luke 9, notice the ways Jesus helped the Twelve to qualify with necessary training and experience. We can feel confident that the Lord will help anyone who receives a calling. He wants us to succeed.

Other Accounts of What You Read in Luke 9

Luke 9:1–6—Matthew 10; Mark 6:7–13
 Luke 9:7–9—Matthew 14:1–2; Mark 6:14–16
 Luke 9:10–17—Matthew 14:13–21; Mark 9:10–17; John 6:1–14
 Luke 9:18–50—Matthew 16:13–18:8; Mark 8:27–9:50
 Luke 9:57–62—Matthew 8:19–22

Understanding the Scriptures

Luke 9

Scrip (v. 3)—Traveling bag
Tetrarch (v. 7)—Ruler or governor of a region
Victuals (v. 12)—Food
His countenance was altered (v. 29)—His face and appearance were changed
Decease (v. 31)—Death
It teareth him (v. 39)—It throws him into convulsions
Suffer (v. 41)—Allow, endure

Luke 9:5—“Shake Off the Very Dust from Your Feet”

When one of the Lord’s servants shakes the dust off his feet it is a testimony that those whom the Lord sent him to teach refused his fellowship and message. It signifies that he is not accountable for the judgments that follow upon those who rejected him. Elder Joseph Fielding Smith, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, said that “the performance of such a responsibility should not be done unless the Spirit of the Lord indicates that it should be done” (*Church History and Modern Revelation*, 4 vols. [1946–49], 1:115).

Studying the Scriptures

Do activity A as you study Luke 9.

A Following Jesus

Based on what you have read in Luke 9:23–27, 57–62, write one or two paragraphs on what it means to truly follow Jesus and why a person would want to do so.

Luke 10

The Seventy Are Sent Out to Preach

As the needs of the work increased, Jesus called and ordained Seventy to go out like the Twelve had done. In Luke 10 we read about some of what they were taught and some of their experiences. The pattern of calling the Seventy to assist the Twelve in “building up the church . . . in all nations” (D&C 107:34) continues in our time. Luke 10 also contains one of the most well known of Jesus’s parables.

Other Accounts of What You Read in Luke 10

Luke 10:1–24—Matthew 10:20–27

Understanding the Scriptures

Luke 10

Cleaveth on us (v. 11)—Sticks to our feet
Despiseth (v. 16)—Rejects, refuses
Prudent (v. 21)—Learned
Stripped him of his raiment (v. 30)—Robbed him of his clothes
Cumbered about much serving (v. 40)—Distracted by all the preparations that had to be made

Luke 10:30–33—A Priest, a Levite, and a Samaritan

Priests and Levites were religious leaders who should have provided help to anyone in need. Jesus made it a point to show that it was a Samaritan who offered assistance in this parable. Samaritans were hated (see John 4:9). Jews viewed Samaritans as below them, both physically (see 2 Kings 17:24–34) and spiritually (see John 4:20–22). Samaritans and Jews were usually openly hostile to one another, but through this parable the Savior taught that love should not be restricted by nationality or race.

Luke 10:38–42—The Devotion of Mary and Martha



Elder James E. Talmage wrote: “There was no reproof of Martha’s desire to provide well; nor any sanction of possible neglect on Mary’s part. We must suppose that Mary had been a willing helper before the master’s arrival; but now that He had come, she chose to remain with Him. Had she been culpably neglectful of her duty, Jesus would not have commended her course. He desired not well-served meals and material comforts only, but the company of the sisters, and above all their receptive

attention to what He had to say. He had more to give them than they could possibly provide for Him. Jesus loved the two sisters and their brother as well. Both these women were devoted to Jesus, and each expressed herself in her own way. Martha was of a practical turn, concerned in material service; she was by nature hospitable and self-denying. Mary, contemplative and more spiritually inclined, showed her devotion through the service of companionship and appreciation" (*Jesus the Christ*, 433).

Studying the Scriptures

Do two of the following activities (A–C) as you study Luke 10.

A The Mission of the Seventy

1. Read Luke 10:1–24 and list ways the mission of the Seventy was similar to the mission of the Twelve Apostles, as recorded in Luke 9:1–6, 10. (You may also want to compare it with the mission of the Twelve as recorded in Matthew 10.)
2. Read Doctrine and Covenants 107:23, 25, 33–35, 38 and write about the similarities and differences of the responsibilities of a member of the Seventy and a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles today.

B Be a Reporter

Read the parable of the good Samaritan in Luke 10:30–37 and list the three main characters in the story. Imagine that you are a newspaper reporter and are going to report on this event.

1. Next to the names of each of the three main characters write three questions you would ask him for your newspaper article and the answers you think he might give.
2. Write a concluding paragraph for the newspaper article to teach the main ideas of this parable and encourage those in your school to be like the good Samaritan.

C Read between the Lines

Carefully read Luke 10:38–42 (see also the “Understanding the Scriptures” section for these verses). Write in your notebook a paragraph explaining what the Savior taught in this story.

Luke 11

Be Full of Light

What does the word sincere mean to you? How does sincerity compare with hypocrisy? The Savior’s teachings can have power in our lives if we will apply them. For example, if we pray with faith and real intent, the Lord will answer our prayers. However, if our prayers are offered just to impress others, they will have little effect.

As you read Luke 11 consider how the Savior’s teachings could bless those who sincerely apply them in their lives. What did Jesus teach about hypocrisy? Why do you think it is important not to just pretend to be righteous?

Other Accounts of What You Read in Luke 11

Luke 11:1–4—Matthew 6:9–13

Understanding the Scriptures

Luke 11

Hallowed (v. 2)—Holy or sacred

Importunity (v. 8)—Bold persistence

Dumb (v. 14)—One who cannot speak

Beelzebub (v. 15)—Satan

Goods (v. 21)—Belongings or possessions

Spoils (v. 22)—Captured goods

Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked (v. 27)—Blessed is your mother who gave birth to and nursed you

Jonas (v. 29)—Jonah (the Old Testament prophet who was swallowed by a great fish)

Ravening (v. 39)—Robbery

Mint and rue (v. 42)—Two types of garden herbs

Reproachest (v. 45)—Insult, rebuke

Lade (v. 46)—Burden

Sepulchres (vv. 47–48)—Tombs or graves

Urge him vehemently (v. 53)—Be filled with resentment

Luke 11:5–13—The Parable of the Friend at Midnight

The Lord taught that if man, with all his selfishness, will nevertheless give to his neighbor who continues to ask in spite of objection and temporary refusal, then God will certainly grant what is persistently asked in faith and with righteous intent.

Luke 11:29–32—What Is the “Sign of Jonas the Prophet”?



Elder Bruce R. McConkie wrote: “Jonah’s burial in and coming forth from the ‘great fish’ (Jonah 1:15–17; 2) symbolizes the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ” (*Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. [1966], 711–12).

Luke 11:52—What Did Jesus Mean by the “Key to Knowledge”?

The Joseph Smith Translation of Luke 11:53 explains that the key to knowledge refers to the scriptures. Elder Bruce R. McConkie explained:

“The devil wages war against the scriptures. He hates them, perverts their plain meanings, and destroys them when he can. He entices those who heed his temptations to delete and discard, to change and corrupt, to alter and amend, thus taking away the key which will aid in making men ‘wise unto salvation.’ (2 Tim. 3:15–17.)

“Accordingly, Jesus is here heaping wo[e] upon those who have contaminated and destroyed scriptures which would have guided and enlightened the Jews” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 1:624–25).

Studying the Scriptures

Do activities A and B as you study Luke 11.

A Explain the Parable

After teaching the disciples how to pray (see Luke 11:1–4), Jesus gave them two short parables to help them understand how prayer works. Read the parables (verses 5–13) and then explain in your own words what they teach us about our prayers.

B Woe, Woe, Woe

“Woe” is an exclamation of grief or anger and is given to condemn the wicked. Make a chart like the following in your notebook, look for the listed five phrases from Luke 11:37–53, and explain why Jesus condemned each action, how you think Jesus would have wanted the people to change, and what people do today that is similar:

Phrase from Luke 11	Why did Jesus condemn the action?	What changes do you think Jesus wanted the people to make?	What do people do today that is similar?
“Make clean the outside of the cup” (v. 39)			
“Ye tithe mint and rue” (v. 42)			
“Love the uppermost [best] seats” (v. 43)			
“Lade men with burdens grievous to be borne” (v. 46)			
“Ye build the sepulchres of the prophets” (v. 47)			

Luke 12

“Seek Ye the Kingdom of God”

To follow the Savior we must leave behind the wickedness of the world. Because of the many distractions and temptations, this can be difficult. However, Jesus promises great blessings to those who follow Him. As you read Luke 12 look for what Jesus requires of His disciples and what promises He gives.

Understanding the Scriptures

Luke 12

Trode (v. 1)—Trampled

Leaven (v. 1)—Yeast

Confess (v. 8)—Acknowledge

Magistrates (v. 11)—Rulers, leaders, or authorities

Covetousness (v. 15)—Greed

Bestow (vv. 17–18)—Place or store

Stature (v. 25)—Height

One cubit (v. 25)—About 18 inches or .5 meters

Toil (v. 27)—Work

Spin (v. 27)—Make yarn or thread for cloth

Arrayed (v. 27)—Dressed

Studying the Scriptures

Do two of the following activities (A–C) as you study Luke 12.

A Pick a Favorite

As you read Luke 12, pick out three verses that most impress you and then answer or do the following:

1. Why did you select each of the verses?
2. What do you think each of the verses is trying to teach?
3. Memorize one of the verses, and recite it to a family member, teacher, or friend.

B What’s in a Number?

Read Luke 12:15 and look for what Jesus warned against. Read verses 16–21 and answer the following questions:

1. How many times is the word *I* or *my* used to describe how the rich man felt about the things the Lord had blessed him with?
2. What does that show about his attitude?
3. How did the Savior’s parable help teach to “beware of covetousness”?
4. What can you learn about worldly treasures from this parable?



C Finish the Sentence

Read Luke 12:35–48. Complete the following sentences with information you find there:

1. Be watchful and prepared for . . .
2. If we knew when, then we would . . .
3. When the master returns, the servants should be . . .
4. The master will return at a time when . . .
5. The master will punish those servants who . . .
6. Much is expected of . . .

Luke 13

Repent or Perish

Imagine a beautiful tree with branches full of your favorite fruit. The fruit is plump, ripe, and smells delicious. Now, imagine a fruit tree with large branches and lush green leaves. However, even though it is the right season and you look closely, you cannot find even one piece of fruit on the tree. Jesus used a story like this to teach about righteousness and repentance.

As you read Luke 13 also look for other teachings about repentance and how those teachings apply in your life.

Understanding the Scriptures

Luke 13

Dresser (v. 7)—Caretaker (one who prunes, nourishes, and harvests)

Why cumbereth it the ground (v. 7)—Why should it use up the soil

Dung it (v. 8)—Fertilize it

Bowed together (v. 11)—Hunched or bent over

Three measures of meal (v. 21)—Large amount of flour

Brood (v. 34)—Chicks

Desolate (v. 35)—Empty

Luke 13:1–5—“Except Ye Repent, Ye Shall All Likewise Perish”

Commenting on these verses, Elder Bruce R. McConkie wrote:

“Does God send accidents, violent death, and other calamities upon [individuals] to punish them for their sins? Apparently there were those among Jesus’ hearers who thought so.

Accordingly, we find the Master expressly saying that those subject to the misfortunes here involved were not greater sinners than their fellows whose lives were spared.

“True it is, as a general principle, that God sends disasters, calamities, plagues, and suffering upon the rebellious, and that he preserves and protects those who love and serve him. . . .

“But to say that particular individuals slain in war, killed in accidents, smitten with disease, stricken by plagues, or shorn of their property by natural calamities, have been singled out from among their fellows as especially deserving of such supposed

retribution is wholly unwarranted. It is not man’s prerogative to conclude in individual cases of suffering or accident that such has befallen a person as a just retribution for an ungodly course.

“. . . For that matter, the Lord brings difficulties upon the most righteous of his saints to test and try them. . . .

“The real lesson to be learned from Jesus’ conclusion, ‘Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish,’ is that there was no difference in righteousness between the slain and the living, and that unless the living repent they would perish with the dead” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 1:475–76).

Studying the Scriptures

Do two of the following activities (A–C) as you study Luke 13.

A Interpret a Parable

Read the parable in Luke 13:6–9 and draw a picture of what Jesus described. Label each item with a word or sentence that you think is an appropriate interpretation of that item. (For example, the husbandman refers to God and the fig tree represents the Jews among whom Jesus lived.)

B Liken the Scriptures

Luke 13:10–17 tells of a woman who was healed on the Sabbath in the synagogue. Answer the following questions to help you liken that story to yourself and learn about how the Savior can bless you with His miraculous power:

1. What could cause a person to be spiritually “bowed together” (bent over as if carrying a burden)?
2. Read Luke 13:12–13. When might Jesus call to us so that we might be “loosed” from our problem and “made straight”?
3. According to verse 16, what does Jesus especially want us to be loosed from?



C Write a Parable

Jesus gave two parables in Luke 13:18–20 that teach about the growth and development of the Church. Read these two parables, and then write a parable of your own (using familiar examples or items from your life) to illustrate the growth of the Church. (For more information on leaven, see “Understanding the Scriptures” for Mark 8:15, p. 45.)

Luke 14

The Cost of Discipleship

President Marion G. Romney, then Second Counselor in the First Presidency, said, “Christ’s invitation to become his disciple is universal. He extends it to everyone. His call and promise is ‘Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest’ (Matthew 11:28). . . . Jesus put no money price tag on his invitation. Nephi quotes him as saying, ‘Come unto me all ye ends of the earth, buy milk and honey, without money and without price’ (2 Nephi 26:25). This does not mean, however, that because he put no money price on it that there is no cost involved. There is a cost to be paid in becoming a disciple of Christ, a very real cost. But the cost is a performance cost, not a money price” (in Conference Report, Sept.–Oct. 1978, 53–54; or Ensign, Nov. 1978, 38).

Look for some of the costs associated with becoming a disciple of Jesus Christ as you read Luke 14. Also pay attention to the Joseph Smith Translation changes in this chapter.

Understanding the Scriptures



Luke 14

Dropsy (v. 2)—Swelling, or an accumulation of fluid that indicates an illness
Bidden (vv. 7–8, 10)—Invited
Marked (v. 7)—Noticed
Abased (v. 11)—Humbled or made low
Recompense (vv. 12, 14)—Be repaid

Luke 14:26–27—Should We Hate Our Family?

Elder Bruce R. McConkie explained: “[Jesus did not mean] *hate* in the sense of intense aversion or abhorrence; such is contrary to the whole spirit and tenor of the gospel. Men are to love even their enemies, to say nothing of their own flesh and blood. (Matt. 5:43–48.) Rather, the sense and meaning of Jesus’ present instruction is that true disciples have a duty toward God which takes precedence over any family or personal obligation [see also Matthew 10:37; 19:27, 29; D&C 103:28]” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 1:503).

Luke 14:28–33—“Which of You, Intending to Build a Tower, Sitteth Not Down First, and Counteth the Cost?”

Those who join the Church should be prepared to make the sacrifices required in the gospel. Converts should consider these costs even before baptism and commit themselves to fully follow the teachings of Jesus. Facing the challenges of a new calling, President John Taylor once said: “When I first entered

upon Mormonism, I did it with my eyes open, I counted the cost. I looked upon it as a life-long labor, and I considered that I was not only enlisted for time, but for eternity also, and did not wish to shrink now, although I felt my incompetency” (in B. H. Roberts, *The Life of John Taylor* [1963], 48).

Studying the Scriptures



Do two of the following activities (A–C) as you study Luke 14.

A What Is the Principle?

As you read the scriptures, it is often helpful to stop and ask yourself “What question or problem is answered or resolved by the teachings in these verses?” As you read Luke 14:7–14 write at least one important question that is answered by what is taught there, and then in your own words write the answer to the question.

B List the Excuses

The parable in Luke 14:15–24 tells of many people being invited to a great supper.

1. Draw the following chart in your notebook. List the excuses made by those who were invited in the parable, and then list modern excuses that are similar to those in the parable.

	Parable Excuse	Modern Excuse
Luke 14:18		
Luke 14:19		
Luke 14:20		

2. Summarize the main principle of the parable.

C Consider the Cost

Luke 14:25–34 tells of some expectations Christ has for His disciples.

1. Read those verses and list as many expectations as you can find.
2. Why do you think the Savior wants us to sacrifice so much to follow Him?
3. What are some specific things you could do to follow these teachings?
4. What blessings do you believe will come to those who are disciples of Christ?

Luke 15

A Time of Parables



A parable is a short story that teaches an eternal truth. The parables of Jesus were about ordinary things, but they taught important religious truths. Parables help people understand truth by the power of the Spirit rather than by the power of intellect. Many of the parables in Luke 15–16 teach about the worth of souls, and the responsibility we have to help and bless others.

Parable	Verses Where Found	Main Idea	Modern Example of Parable	How Were They Helped in the Parable?	How Could You Help This Type of Lost One Today?
Lost Sheep		People wander from the Church and are lost.		The shepherd left the ninety and nine and rescued the lost sheep.	
	Luke 15:8–10		A careless or rude remark hurts someone's feelings and that person stops coming to church.		
Prodigal Son		People rebel and leave the Church.			

Understanding the Scriptures



Luke 15

Riotous (v. 13)—Uncontrolled
Fell on his neck (v. 20)—
 Embraced or hugged him

Intreated (v. 28)—Pleaded with

Luke 15:3–32—The Sheep, the Coin, and the Prodigal Son Were Each Lost for Different Reasons

President David O. McKay compared the things lost in these three parables to the ways some of God's children become lost today:

The Lost Sheep: "How did that sheep get lost? He was not rebellious. If you follow the comparison, the lamb was seeking its livelihood in a perfectly legitimate manner, but either stupidly, perhaps unconsciously, it followed the enticement of the field, the prospect of better grass until it got out beyond the fold and was lost."

The Lost Coin: "In this case the thing lost was not in itself responsible. The one who had been trusted with that coin had, through carelessness or neglect, mislaid it or dropped it."

The Lost, or Prodigal, Son: "Here is a case of volition, here is choice, deliberate choice. Here is, in a way, rebellion against authority" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1945, 120–21, 123).

Studying the Scriptures



Do one of the following activities (A or B) as you study Luke 15.

A Complete the Chart

Copy the following chart in your notebook. Fill it in from the information you find in Luke 15.

B Write a Letter

After reading Luke 15, write one of the following types of letters in your notebook. (You may want to mail it to the person you wrote it to after the assignment is returned.) As part of the letter, include at least five verses of scripture you think will help the person who will receive the letter.

1. A letter to a missionary you know. Express your encouragement and gratitude for the missionary's service in trying to find those of Heavenly Father's children who are lost.
2. A letter to someone you know who is preparing for a mission. Tell what you learned from Luke 15 and how it can help prepare him or her for missionary service.
3. A letter to yourself that you will seal and not open until you are missionary age. Record the feelings you had from studying Luke 15 and your goals concerning missionary work.

Luke 16

Preparing to Meet God

The parables in Luke 15 emphasized how much the Lord loves the sinner and rejoices when someone who is "lost" decides to repent. The parables and teachings in Luke 16 add to those ideas by reminding us why it is important to turn to the Lord before the judgment.

Understanding the Scriptures



Luke 16

Steward (vv. 1–3)—Servant

Stewardship (vv. 2–4)—Responsibility

Mammon (vv. 9, 11, 13)—Worldly wealth and riches

Abomination (v. 15)—Wickedness

Fared sumptuously (v. 19)—Lived in luxury

Abraham’s bosom (v. 22)—The spirit world, more specifically, paradise

Hell (v. 23)—Spirit prison

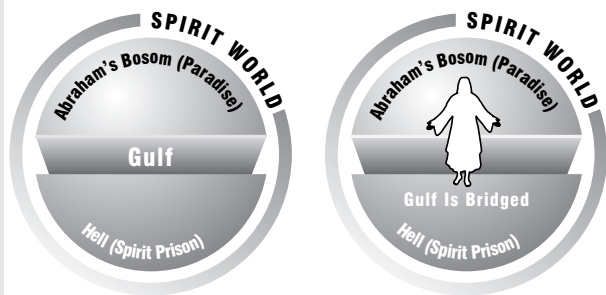
Luke 16:1–15—Why Did the Lord Use the Unjust Steward as an Example in This Parable?

Jesus was not saying that we should be dishonest like the steward. Instead He taught that even a man whose life is centered around money knows enough to plan for the future. How much more should those who understand the things of God plan for the future—the next life. Those covetous Pharisees were pretending to be followers of God but paid more attention to obtaining what the world offered.

Luke 16:14–23—“The Pharisees . . . Derided Him”

The Prophet Joseph Smith made several inspired changes to this text, as found in JST, Luke 16:16–23. These changes enhance our understanding of (1) the blatant wickedness of the Pharisees, (2) the direct manner in which the Savior rebuked them, and (3) the specific sins the Pharisees were guilty of, which in turn led to the teachings and parable directed to them in Luke 16:18–31.

Jesus Christ bridged the gulf between paradise and spirit prison.



Studying the Scriptures



Do activity A as you study Luke 16.

A Rewrite a Parable in Your Own Words

Choose either the parable of the unjust steward (see Luke 16:1–14) or the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (see Luke 16:19–31) and do the following:

1. Read the first verse of the parable.
2. Rewrite that verse in your own words.
3. Continue this pattern for each verse of the parable.

Luke 17

When Will the Kingdom of God Come?

Jesus taught His disciples about the Second Coming. He did not tell them the exact date of His coming. Instead He spoke to them about preparing for that day, which will take many people by surprise. The teachings found in Luke 17, which include faith, obedience, service, gratitude, and avoiding wickedness, are important for those who are striving to be ready for the coming of Christ. As you read this chapter, consider how each of these teachings might prepare and protect you in the last days.

Understanding the Scriptures



Luke 17

Offences (v. 1)—Actions that cause people to stumble or sin

Millstone (v. 2)—Large round stone used to grind grain

Sup (v. 8)—Eat

Gird (v. 8)—Prepare (refers to tying up one’s long robes around the waist to get ready to work)

Noe (vv. 26, 27)—Noah

Thither (v. 37)—There

Luke 17:11–19—Only One of the Ten Healed Lepers Showed Gratitude to Jesus

President Spencer W. Kimball wrote: “Ingratitude is a distressing sin which kindles the Lord’s anger. (See D&C 59:21.) . . . When the Savior healed the ten lepers and only one thanked him, he pointed out the nine ingrates as a lesson to all when he said, ‘Were there not ten cleansed?’ (Luke 17:17.) Adults as well as youth are often guilty, being disobedient and unthankful to their Heavenly Father who gives them all. Many fail to show their gratitude through service, through family prayers, through the payment of their tithes, and in numerous other ways God has a right to expect” (*The Miracle of Forgiveness*, 58–59).



Studying the Scriptures

Do activity B and one of the other two activities (A or C) as you study Luke 17.

A Compare a Similar Scripture

Read Luke 17:5–10 and Mosiah 2:18–22.

1. What similarities do you see in these verses?
2. What is the main message being taught by the phrase “unprofitable servants”?

B Look Closer

Re-read the story of the healing of the ten lepers in Luke 17:11–19.

1. What blessing came to all ten lepers? (see v. 14).
2. What additional blessing came to the leper who expressed gratitude? (see v. 19).
3. What do you think is significant about the difference between being healed and being whole?
4. The leper who gave thanks was a Samaritan. With what you know about Samaritans, why do you think that is an important part of the story?

C The Second Coming

Read Luke 17:22–33 and think about what the world will be like at the Second Coming and what the people will be doing then. Write down the most important advice you feel is given in those verses and tell why you think people today need that advice.

Luke 18

Treasure in Heaven

Do you want to enter the celestial kingdom? Why? What blessings do you believe await you there? What kind of person do you believe you need to become in order to enter therein?

Jesus taught: “Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein” (Luke 18:17). Each of the stories and parables in Luke 18 centers around the promise that the faithful who follow Jesus’s teachings will enter into heaven. As you read this chapter, look for how each of Jesus’s teachings could help you become childlike and qualify to receive His greatest treasures.



Other Accounts of What You Read in Luke 18

Luke 18:15–30—Matthew 19:13–29; Mark 10:13–30
Luke 18:31–34—Matthew 20:17–19; Mark 10:31–34
Luke 18:35–43—Matthew 20:29–34; Mark 10:46–52

Understanding the Scriptures

Luke 18

Avenge me (vv. 3, 5, 7–8)—
Provide justice or fairness

Bear long (v. 7)—Endure

Extortioners, unjust (v. 11)—
Robbers, evildoers

Abased (v. 14)—Humbled

Manifold (v. 30)—Many times
as much

Spitefully entreated (v. 32)—
Insulted

Luke 18:1–8—Why Did the Lord Give the Parable of the Unjust Judge?

Elder James E. Talmage wrote: “Jesus did not indicate that as the wicked judge finally yielded to supplication so would God do; but He pointed out that if even such a being as this judge, who ‘feared not God, neither regarded man,’ would at last hear and grant the widow’s plea, no one should doubt that God, the Just and Merciful, will hear and answer [our prayers]” (*Jesus the Christ*, 436; see also D&C 101:81–92).

Studying the Scriptures

Do activities A and B as you study Luke 18.

A Use Your Own Words

Read the parable of the unjust judge in Luke 18:1–8 and write in your own words what you think is the main message (see also “Understanding the Scriptures” for Luke 18:1–8).

B Make a Comparison

In Luke 18:1 Jesus taught that we should pray always. In addition, the parable in Luke 18:9–14 teaches us that we should have a certain attitude as we pray. Compare the Pharisee and the tax collector in the parable by duplicating and completing the following chart in your notebook:

	Pharisee	Tax Collector
What did people think of him?		
What did he think of himself?		
What did he pray for?		
What did Jesus say about each man?		
Read Alma 31:13–20 and 33:3–11. Which do you think best matches each man’s prayer?		

Luke 19

Jesus Comes to Jerusalem

Imagine finding out that Jesus was coming to your city, school, or home. How would you feel? What might you do to welcome Him? What would you change in order to be ready to receive Him? Imagine what Jesus might say about what He observed there. What would He ask you to do differently? What would He be pleased with? What would disappoint Him?

As you read Luke 19, which tells of Jesus passing through Jericho and entering Jerusalem, consider how differently people responded to His coming. Also consider how Jesus’s actions showed how He felt about the people in those cities.

Other Accounts of What You Read in Luke 19

Luke 19:29–48—Matthew 21:1–16; Mark 11:1–18

Understanding the Scriptures



Luke 19

Little of stature (v. 3)—Short
Make haste (vv. 5–6)—Hurry
By false accusation (v. 8)—By cheating them
Pounds (v. 13)—One talent was one hundred pounds; a measurement of money
Kept laid up (v. 20)—Saved
Usury (v. 23)—Interest, or earnings from an investment

Luke 19:12–27—An Interpretation of This Parable

Elder Bruce R. McConkie explained:

“Christ is the nobleman; the far off country is heaven; the kingdom there to be given him is ‘all power . . . in heaven and

in earth’ (Matt. 28:18); and his promised return is the glorious Second Coming, when the literal and visible kingdom shall be set up on earth. The ten servants are the members of the Church to whom he has given physical, mental, and spiritual capacities (pounds) to be used in his service. Those designated as ‘citizens’ are the other people in the world, those who are subject to him because he is the God of the whole earth, but who have not accepted his gospel and come into his fold as servants. The servants are commanded to labor in the vineyard on their Lord’s errand until he returns. . . .

“When the nobleman returns to judge the world, he will reward his servants in accordance with their works. All shall not receive the same status in the mansions which are prepared; there are degrees of glory. Some will rule ten cities, others five, and those who were slothful shall be disinherited entirely.

“Unused faculties are lost; rightly used abilities can be increased until perfection is attained. ‘Unto every servant who is diligent shall be given great reward; and from him who is slothful shall be taken away even the light, abilities, and faculties which he had’ ” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 1:572–73).

Studying the Scriptures



Do either activity A or B as you study Luke 19.

A Journal Entries



As you read Luke 19 you will see that several people came into contact with Jesus while he traveled toward Jerusalem and entered triumphantly. (Remember that Jesus’s triumphal entry began the last week of His life). Imagine being each of the following people. Imagine what their experience with Jesus may have been like from the clues you find in the scriptures, and think about how they may

have perceived the Savior. Write a day’s journal entry for each of these people (as if you were them) concerning their experiences with Jesus during this time.

1. Zacchaeus
2. A member of the crowd in Jerusalem who watched Jesus ride in on a colt.
3. A person who was in the temple when Jesus cleansed it.

B Write a Modern Version

The parable in Luke 19:11–27 uses the word *pound* to refer to a unit of money. The money symbolizes the skills and abilities we are given and expected to develop during this life. Read this parable and then write a modern version of this parable that teaches the same lesson. For example, instead of using a nobleman you might use an employer or a parent.

Luke 20

They Sought to Destroy Him

The events in Luke 20 took place during the last week of the Savior's mortal life. As you read it, consider the following questions: Why did the Jewish leaders want to destroy Jesus? What claims did Jesus make that angered them? Why might those people have felt that way, especially considering the love, compassion, and joy Jesus offered during His ministry? What can I learn from the Savior's example about how to handle those who oppose the kingdom of God?

Other Accounts of What You Read in Luke 20

Luke 20:1–8—Matthew 21:23–27; Mark 11:27–33

Luke 20:9–19—Matthew 21:33–46; Mark 12:1–12

Luke 20:20–39—Matthew 22:15–33; Mark 12:13–27

Luke 20:40–47—Matthew 22:41–23:15; Mark 12:34–40

Understanding the Scriptures



Luke 20

Entreated (v. 11)—Insulted

Feign themselves just men (v. 20)—Pretend to be faithful and righteous men

Neither acceptest thou the person of any (v. 21)—Be impartial, do not play favorites

Image and superscription (v. 24)—Words inscribed on the coin

Render (v. 25)—Give

Raise up seed (v. 28)—Have children

Till I make thine enemies thy footstool (v. 43)—Until I conquer all of your enemies

Luke 20:9–18—The Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen

The servants in this parable represent ancient prophets who were rejected. The heir refers to Jesus Christ, who should have been respected by the people, but was rejected and killed.

Luke 20:27–38—“They . . . Neither Marry, Nor Are Given in Marriage”

The scriptures and the words of modern prophets make it clear that marriages and family relationships can continue after death (see D&C 132:19–22; Matthew 19:6). The blessings of eternal family relationships come to those who are sealed in holy temples and keep the covenants they make there. Jesus was speaking to the Sadducees, who did not believe in the resurrection. Knowing that will help you better understand why Jesus answered them the way He did. (See “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.)

Elder James E. Talmage taught: “The woman would and could be the wife of but one in the eternal world, and that one the man to whom she was given by the authority of the Holy Priesthood on earth, as a consort for time and eternity. In short, the woman would be the wife of the man with whom she entered into covenant for eternity under the seal of Divine authority; and no contract or agreement for time only would be effective in the resurrection” (*The House of the Lord* [1968], 90).

Studying the Scriptures



Do activities A and B as you study Luke 20.

A Be a News Reporter

Imagine that you are a news reporter assigned to follow Jesus during the events of Luke 20. You are not one of His followers, but you are not His enemy either. Write a story about the events you would have witnessed as if it were for the next day's paper. Include a headline you think would get your readers' attention.

B Do a Scripture Search

Read Luke 20:9–18 and the “Understanding the Scriptures” section for those verses. It may help to use the Topical Guide or Bible Dictionary as you complete this activity.

1. From the Old Testament, look for and list the names of any three prophets who were treated like the three servants in the parable.
2. Find a New Testament verse that shows Jesus was treated like the heir in this parable was treated.

Luke 21

“The Time Draweth Nigh”

Near the end of His ministry, the Savior revealed what would happen before His Second Coming. We often call these events the signs of the times. As you read Luke 21, think about how blessed you are to live in the days when some of those prophesied signs are coming to pass. Also ponder how privileged you are to be led by a living prophet who can help you know and understand the signs.

Other Accounts of What You Read in Luke 21

Luke 21:1–4—Mark 12:41–44

Luke 21:5–38—Matthew 24:1–42; Mark 13; Joseph Smith—Matthew

Understanding the Scriptures



Luke 21

Mites (v. 2)—Small coins of very little value

Abundance (v. 4)—Wealth

Penury (v. 4)—Poverty

Pestilences (v. 11)—Plagues

Give you a mouth (v. 15)—Give you inspiration so you know what to say

Compassed (v. 20)—Surrounded



Them that give suck (v. 23)—
Mothers who are nursing
children
Perplexity (v. 25)—Confusion

Nigh (vv. 30–31)—Near
Surfeiting (v. 34)—Excesses
from drinking

Luke 21:5–38—Important Joseph Smith Translation Helps

Pay close attention to the Joseph Smith Translation as you study this chapter. You can also find many helps by referring to the “Understanding the Scriptures” section for Matthew 24 (p. 33). Joseph Smith also made many inspired changes for Matthew 24 (see Joseph Smith—Matthew), and you will find many helps there.

Luke 21:24—“The Times of the Gentiles”

Elder Joseph Fielding Smith, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, explained: “The times of the Gentiles commenced shortly after the death of our Redeemer. The Jews soon rejected the Gospel and it was then taken to the Gentiles. The times of the Gentiles have continued from that time until now” (*Church History and Modern Revelation*, 1:179).

Studying the Scriptures

Do activities A and B as you study Luke 21.

A “Signs of the Times”

In Luke 21:5–36 Jesus answered the disciples’ questions concerning the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem and the events that would precede that destruction. This passage not only tells of what would happen before the temple was destroyed, but also what would happen before the Lord returned in glory.

As you read this account, describe the signs given in Luke 21:8, 11–12, 26–27.



B Make a Preparation Checklist

The Second Coming will be “great and dreadful” (Malachi 4:5) for the wicked, but “if ye are prepared ye shall not fear” (D&C 38:30). Read Luke 21:32–38 and list at least seven ways you can prepare for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

Luke 22

The Symbolism of the Sacrament

According to Heavenly Father’s will and in preparation for the Atonement, Jesus Christ instituted the sacrament in an upper room in Jerusalem. This symbolized the infinite and eternal sacrifice that was carried out because of the Savior’s love for us. As you read Luke’s testimony of what happened in that upper room and in Gethsemane, consider how important the Atonement is in your life. How blessed are you because of Jesus’s sacrifice? How does partaking of the sacrament help you build faith in the Atonement of Jesus Christ and increase your testimony of Him as your Savior and Redeemer?

Other Accounts of What You Read in Luke 22

Luke 22:1–65—Matthew 26; Mark 14

Luke 22:66–71—Matthew 27:1; Mark 15:1

Understanding the Scriptures

Luke 22

Strife (v. 24)—Argument

Exercise lordship over them (v. 25)—Rule over them

Benefactors (v. 25)—Virtuous, upright, the best of persons

Thrice (v. 34)—Three times

Purse and scrip (vv. 35–36)—
Money bag or sack to put
possessions in

Suffer ye thus far (v. 51)—
Stop this, there will be no
more of this

Things blasphemously
(v. 65)—Insulting things

Luke 22:31–34, 54–62—Peter Denies Jesus



In a talk entitled *Peter, My Brother*, Elder Spencer W. Kimball, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, said that

we should be careful about harshly judging Peter for his actions the night of Jesus's arrest. He reminded us that Peter had forsaken everything to follow Jesus (see Matthew 19:27–28). Furthermore, on different occasions, Jesus had commanded the Twelve to not tell what they knew “until the Son of man be risen again from the dead” (Matthew 17:9; see also Matthew 16:20).

Elder Kimball then said: “I do not pretend to know what Peter’s mental reactions were nor what compelled him to say what he did that terrible night. But in light of his proven bravery, courage, great devotion, and limitless love for the Master, could we not give him the benefit of the doubt and at least forgive him as his Savior seems to have done so fully. Almost immediately Christ elevated him to the highest position in his church and endowed him with the complete keys of that kingdom” (*Brigham Young University Speeches of the Year*, July 13, 1971, 5).

Luke 22:39–44—Jesus Bled from Every Pore in Gethsemane

Elder Russell M. Nelson taught: “The ordeal of the Atonement centered about the city of Jerusalem. There the greatest single act of love of all recorded history took place. Leaving the upper room, Jesus and His friends crossed the deep ravine east of the city and came to a garden of olive trees on the lower slopes of the Mount of Olives. There in the garden bearing the Hebrew name of *Gethsemane*—meaning ‘oilpress’—olives had been beaten and pressed to provide oil and food. There at Gethsemane, the Lord ‘suffered the pain of all men, that all . . . might repent and come unto him.’ He took upon Himself the weight of the sins of all mankind, bearing its massive load that caused Him to bleed from every pore” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1996, 46–47; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 35).

Studying the Scriptures 

Do activity B and one of the other three activities (A, C, or D) as you study Luke 22.

A Explain It to a Child



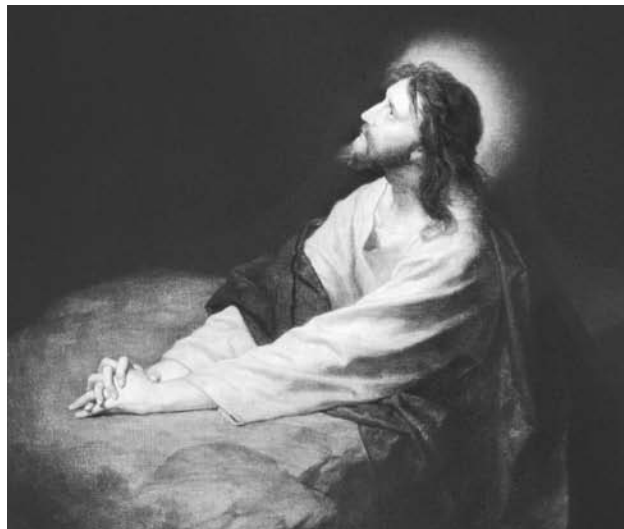
Read Luke 22:7–20 and look for reasons why these verses might be describing the first sacrament meeting. Imagine being asked to explain to a primary class what Jesus meant in verses 19–20. Write what you would say to those children.

B What Does It Mean to You?

After reading Luke 22:39–53, consider the following testimony by President Joseph Fielding Smith: “Here we have the Son of God carrying the burden of my transgressions and your transgressions and the transgressions of every soul that receives the gospel of Jesus Christ. . . . He carried the burden—our burden. I added something to it; so did you. So did everybody

else. He took it upon himself to pay the price that I might escape—that you might escape—the punishment on the conditions that we will receive his gospel and be true and faithful in it” (*Fall—Atonement—Resurrection—Sacrament* [address at the Salt Lake Institute of Religion, 14 Jan. 1961], 8).

Picture in your mind those events and Jesus alone in His suffering. Explain what Jesus’s suffering means to you.



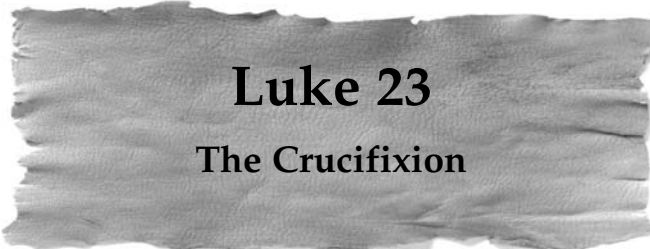
C Compare Two Men

Read about Judas in Luke 22:1–6, 46–48 and about Peter in Luke 22:31–34, 54–62. Answer the following questions:

1. Why do you think Judas did what he did?
2. Why do you think Peter did what he did?
3. Judas hanged himself; Peter was later called to lead the Church. What does that show about the differences between those two men?

D Report the Facts

Reporters today who cover trials record and report the facts. If you were a reporter assigned to the trial described in Luke 22:66–71, what would you write? Write a report and include a headline that could be used in a newspaper.



Consider the words of the hymn “I Stand All Amazed” as you read of the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ:

*I stand all amazed at the love Jesus offers me,
 Confused at the grace that so fully he proffers me.
 I tremble to know that for me he was crucified,
 That for me, a sinner, he suffered, he bled and died.*

*I think of his hands pierced and bleeding to pay the debt!
Such mercy, such love, and devotion can I forget?
No, no, I will praise and adore at the mercy seat,
Until at the glorified throne I kneel at his feet.*

*Oh, it is wonderful that he should care for me
Enough to die for me!*

*Oh, it is wonderful, wonderful to me!
(Hymns, no. 193).*

Other Accounts of What You Read in Luke 23

Luke 23—Matthew 27:2–61; Mark 15; John 18:28–19:42

Understanding the Scriptures



Luke 23

<p>Perverting the nation (v. 2)—Leading the people away from Caesar</p> <p>Vehemently (v. 10)—Forcibly</p> <p>Set him at nought (v. 11)—They despised him; treated him as if he were nothing</p>	<p>At enmity between themselves (v. 12)—Enemies</p> <p>Sedition (v. 25)—Rebellion</p> <p>In the same condemnation (v. 40)—Have the same sentence or punishment</p> <p>Amiss (v. 41)—Wrong</p> <p>Commend (v. 46)—Commit</p>
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Luke 23:7—Herod

Herod was not a personal name but a family name referring to all those who were descendants of Herod the Great. This particular ruler was Herod Antipus (see also Bible Dictionary, “Herod,” pp. 700–701).



Luke 23:18—Barabbas

Barabbas was a criminal in confinement at Jerusalem for rebellion and murder. His name represents a cruel irony. Literally translated, *Barabbas* means “son of the father” (see Bible Dictionary, “Barabbas,” p. 619). When Pilate offered to release a prisoner as part of the Passover celebration, Jewish leaders requested Barabbas instead of Jesus, the Only Begotten Son of the Father (see Luke 23:18).

Luke 23:31—The Dry and the Green tree

Elder Bruce R. McConkie wrote: “To this expression relative to the green tree and the dry tree, Luke says: ‘This he spake,

signifying the scattering of Israel, and the desolation of the heathen, or in other words, the Gentiles,’ meaning the Israelitish scattering that took place at the destruction of Jerusalem, and meaning the desolations that would fall upon all men in the latter days, the days of wickedness and vengeance that should precede his Second Coming” (*The Mortal Messiah*, 4:208).



Luke 23:39–43—“Today Shalt Thou Be with Me in Paradise”

The Prophet Joseph Smith explained that the phrase “Today shalt thou be with me in paradise” meant “This day thou shalt be with me in the world of spirits: then I will teach you all about it and answer your inquiries” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 309). Jesus did not support the idea of a deathbed repentance.

Studying the Scriptures



Do activity A as you study Luke 23.

A From Another’s Point of View

Carefully read Luke 23 and imagine being in the place of each of the following five people: Pilate, Barabbas, the humble malefactor (thief; see Matthew 27:38) on the cross, Simon the Cyrenian, and Joseph of Arimathea. Using the clues you find in the scriptures, write what you think each of them thought of the Savior.

Luke 24

“I Know That My Redeemer Lives”

Elder Robert L. Backman, formerly of the Presidency of the Seventy, gave the following challenge: “Imagine yourself in the company of the disciples and other believers on the day of the Resurrection. Mere hours have passed since you witnessed the horrifying crucifixion of the gentle Nazarene. You have shared hopeless moments of profound sorrow.

Confused, knowing not where to turn, how to act, your minds are clouded with mists of despair. Then two disciples join you with word that they have conversed with the Lord on the road to Emmaus. Dare you believe those who report, 'The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon'? (Luke 24:34)" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1991, 9; or Ensign, Nov. 1991, 9).

As you read Luke 24, think about your testimony of the Lord's Resurrection and what you might do to strengthen it.

Other Accounts of What You Read in Luke 24

Luke 24:1–11—Matthew 28:1–15; Mark 16:1–11; John 20:1–18
 Luke 24:36–48—Mark 16:14; John 20:19–23
 Luke 24:49–53—Mark 16:19–20

Understanding the Scriptures



Luke 24

Threescore furlongs (v. 13)—
 Sixty furlongs; 5–7 miles

Constrained (v. 29)—
 Persuaded

Expounded (v. 27)—Declared,
 made plain, or explained more
 fully

Luke 24:1—"The First Day of the Week"

The first day of the week on the Jewish calendar was Sunday. Jesus was resurrected on this day. After His Ascension the members of the Church, whether Jews or Gentiles, kept this day holy and called it the Lord's day (see Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2).

Studying the Scriptures



Do two of the following activities (A–C) as you study Luke 24.

A Find and Expound the Scriptures

In Luke 24:13–35 we read of Jesus appearing to two men who did not clearly understand what had happened to Him or what His mission was. Verse 27 tells us that He expounded, or explained in detail, how the Old Testament prophesied of His life and mission. Using the Topical Guide, find and list three scriptures from the Old Testament that prophesy of His life and mission and explain what they each mean.



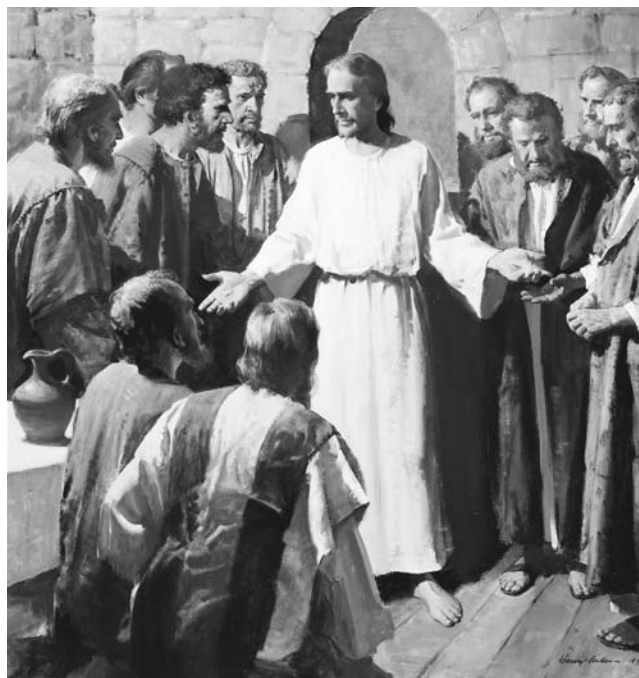
B How Does the Lord Communicate with Us?

The Lord communicates with His children in many different ways. Some of those ways are identified in Luke 24:13–45. Read the following scripture references and list at least six ways the Lord communicates with us.

1. Luke 24:13–16, 33–52
2. Luke 24:23
3. Luke 24:32; see also Doctrine and Covenants 9:8
4. Luke 24:27, 32, 44–45
5. Luke 24:36; see also Doctrine and Covenants 6:23

C Scripture Mastery—Luke 24:36–39

Read Luke 24:36–39 and write what you think is the most important doctrine taught about a resurrected body. Also read Luke 24:40–44; Alma 11:42–46; and 40:19–24. List at least five other important doctrines you learn about the Resurrection or resurrected bodies.



The Gospel According to Saint John

Who Was John?

John was one of Jesus's Twelve Apostles. His brother James was also one of the Twelve Apostles. John and James were fishermen until Jesus called them to be His disciples and, later, Apostles. John was one of the three Apostles with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration and one of the three Apostles Jesus asked to be with Him in the Garden of Gethsemane. He is often called John the Beloved because he referred to himself as "the disciple whom Jesus loved" (John 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20).

John is also known as John the Revelator because he wrote the book of Revelation. He also wrote three short epistles (letters) found in the New Testament. When Peter was the head of the Church after Jesus's death and resurrection, John was one of his counselors (see John W. Taylor, in *Collected Discourses*, Brian H. Stuy, comp., 5 vols. [1987–92], 4:256). John did not die, but was translated and allowed to remain on the earth as one of the Lord's servants until the time of the Lord's Second Coming (see D&C 7). John, with Peter and James, came to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery and restored the Melchizedek Priesthood in 1829. (For more information on John, see Bible Dictionary, "John," p. 715).



John as a fisherman



The Mount of Transfiguration



John writing



John ordaining Joseph and Oliver

Why Did John Write This Gospel?

John was with Jesus and knew and loved Him. He wrote about the Savior so that people throughout the world could come to know about Him and love Him, too. He was a witness of what Jesus said and did. His book is not a history of Jesus, but a testimony of Him (as it is called in the Joseph Smith Translation). He said that he wrote his gospel so that the reader "might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God" (John 20:31). The gospel of John is sometimes called the "gospel of love" because John speaks of God's love so many times in his book. He also emphasized that Jesus was the promised Messiah.

John, the Unique Gospel

The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke tell many of the same stories and follow the same basic order and pattern. They mostly tell about what Jesus did in Galilee, but the Gospel of John includes some different stories and tells more about what Jesus did in Judea and Jerusalem. The following are some of Jesus's teachings and experiences unique to John:

- The premortal Jesus (see John 1)
- Times when Jesus testified to individuals about who He really is (see John 3–4, 8)
- Jesus is the Bread of Life and the Living Water (see John 6–7)
- Raising Lazarus from the dead (see John 11)
- Washing the Apostles' feet (see John 13)
- Teachings about the Holy Ghost (see John 14–15)
- Jesus's prayer for His Apostles (see John 17)
- Jesus's charge to Peter to "feed my sheep" (see John 21)

For more information on this book, see the Bible Dictionary, "John, Gospel of" (pp. 715–16).

John 1 Jesus Is the Premortal Christ and Creator

Matthew, Mark, and Luke began their accounts by telling about Jesus's birth or baptism. John began his Gospel differently. In the first chapter John combined his testimony with that of John the Baptist to tell about who Jesus was even before He came to earth.

The Lord revealed many changes for John 1 to the Prophet Joseph Smith. Those changes are in the Joseph Smith Translation appendix at the back of the Bible (pp. 807–8). It is helpful to read the first part of this chapter from the Joseph Smith Translation.

Other Accounts of What You Read in John 1

John 1:32–34—Matthew 3:13–17

Understanding the Scriptures



Note: Most of these scripture understanding helps are for JST, John 1:1–34.

JST, John 1

The same (v. 2)—Jesus Christ, the Son of God

Perceiveth (v. 5)—Sees, understands

John (v. 6)—This is speaking of John the Baptist, not John the Apostle

Preferred before me (vv. 15, 30)—Greater than myself

Immortality and eternal life (v. 16)—*Immortality* means to live forever; *eternal life* means to be exalted—to live with God and to become like Him

Grace (v. 16)—Power from God that helps the faithful be better than they could be on their own (see also Bible Dictionary, "Grace," p. 697)

In the bosom of (v. 18)—Next to

Esaias (v. 24)—Isaiah

Manifest (v. 30)—Known

John 1

Master (v. 38)—Leader, teacher

Abode (v. 39)—Stayed

Tenth hour (v. 39)—Late afternoon, about 4:00 P.M.

Guile (v. 47)—Deceit

JST, John 1:1, 14—Why Did John Call Jesus “the Word”?

Elder James E. Talmage taught that Jesus was the one “through whom the will, commandment, or word of the Father was put into effect” (*Jesus the Christ*, 33). He represents Heavenly Father the way a word represents an idea. Just as a word could be considered the messenger of a thing or an idea, Christ was the messenger of the Father and of His gospel, which is a plan of salvation for all mankind.

John 1:18—“No Man Hath Seen God at Any Time”

In the King James Version, without the help of the Joseph Smith Translation, this verse seems to say that no one has seen God. The Joseph Smith Translation restores the meaning of the verse and helps us understand that when the Father has appeared or is present on occasion He has borne record that Jesus is the Christ and is His Only Begotten Son (see Matthew 3:17; 17:5; 3 Nephi 11:6–7; D&C 76:23; Joseph Smith—History 1:17). The scriptures teach that some have been permitted to see God the Father, although such appearances are rare. For examples see Acts 7:55–56; D&C 76:23; Joseph Smith—History 1:17. The Apostle John himself saw the resurrected Lord (see Revelation 1:12–18).

John 1:41—“The Messiah”

The Hebrew word *Messiah* means “the Chosen One” or “the Anointed One.” The translation of *Messiah*, or “the Chosen One” into Greek is *Christ*. “Jesus the Christ” means “Jesus the Chosen One.” In the New Testament, the Hebrew word *Messiah* was written *Messias*. Jesus is the Messiah. Jesus is the Christ. Jesus is the Chosen One.

Studying the Scriptures

Do two of the following activities (A–D) as you study John 1.

A Learn from the Joseph Smith Translation

Compare each verse of John 1:1–34 with JST, John 1:1–34. Write down what you think are three of the most important teachings the Lord revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith to help us understand this first chapter of the Gospel of John.

B John’s Testimony of Jesus

The Joseph Smith Translation changes the title of this book from “The Gospel According to St. John” to “The Testimony of Saint John.” List what you learn about Jesus from JST, John 1:1–19. You may want to highlight the listed items in your scriptures.

C Can Anyone See God?

Suppose a friend of yours who is not a member of the Church said that he or she could not believe Joseph Smith’s story of seeing God the Father and Jesus because it says in the Bible that “no man hath seen God at any time” (John 1:18). Based on what is written in JST,

John 1 and the information in the “Understanding the Scriptures” section above, write what you would say to your friend.

D “Come and See”

1. Make a chart like the one below and fill it in with information you find in John 1:35–51.

Name	How did he learn about Jesus?	What did he do or say?	What did Jesus say to him?
Andrew			
Simon Peter			
Philip			
Nathanael			

2. How are those men examples of ways people find Christ and His gospel today?

John 2

Jesus Begins His Work

Jesus was thirty years old when He began His ministry going among the people teaching, blessing, and performing many miracles. In John 2 you will read about Jesus’s first recorded miracle at a wedding in Cana, a town about ten miles north of Nazareth. Jesus then went to Jerusalem to attend the Passover. The cleansing of the temple John wrote about in this chapter is the first time Jesus did this. He cleansed the temple again in the last week before He was crucified (see Matthew 21; Mark 11; Luke 19).



Understanding the Scriptures



John 2

Firkins (v. 6)—A firkin was about nine gallons, so each pot contained 18–27 gallons
Bare (v. 8)—Carried

Manifested forth (v. 11)—
Showed
Scourge (v. 15)—Whip
Hence (v. 16)—Out of here

John 2:4—“Mine Hour Is Not Yet Come”

From John 2:4 we might think that Jesus did not want to fulfill His mother’s request, but JST, John 2:4 shows that He *wanted* to help her in whatever way He could—and He did.

John 2:14–16—Why Were People Buying and Selling Things in the Temple?

See “Understanding the Scriptures” for Matthew 21:12–13 (p. 29).

Studying the Scriptures



Do two of the following activities (A–C) as you study John 2.

A Water into Wine

Elder Bruce R. McConkie wrote that the wine spoken of in John 2:1–11 was a drink made from the “‘fruit of the vine’ (Matt. 26:29), a light, sweet wine (normally unfermented); eaten with bread it was one of the staple foods of the day” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 1:136).

1. What effect did this miracle have on Jesus’s followers? (see v. 11).
2. What did they (and you) learn about Jesus from what He did in this story?



B Cleansing the Temple

1. According to John 2:13–17, what did Jesus do that upset so many people? Why?
2. What does this account teach us about how Jesus wants us to treat God’s sacred buildings?
3. List three things you could do to show more reverence for a house of God.

C A Temple Raised in Three Days?

What “temple” was Jesus referring to in John 2:19 (see Matthew 27:62–64 for additional help).

John 3

“Ye Must Be Born Again”

Some of the most basic questions in religion are: Is there a God? Does He know or care about me? What would He have me do? Is there a heaven? If so, how do I qualify to go there? A Pharisee named Nicodemus had some of those same questions. He went to Jesus by night, we presume, so that other Pharisees would not see him. As you read John 3, look for what Jesus taught him.

Understanding the Scriptures



John 3

Listeth (v. 8)—Wants, chooses
Master (v. 10)—Teacher
Lest (v. 20)—For fear that, because they are afraid that
Reproved (v. 20)—Punished, be told they are wrong
Tarried (v. 22)—Stayed
Purifying (v. 25)—Baptism and other ceremonial cleansings



Qumran purification font.

By measure (v. 34)—In smaller amounts

John 3:8—“The Wind Bloweth Where It Listeth”

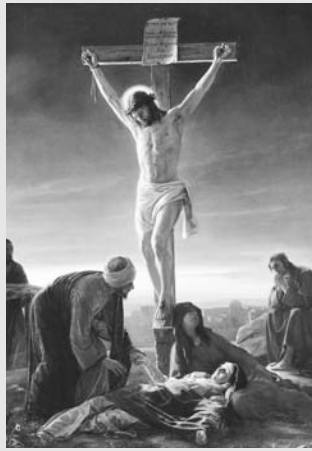
It is difficult to explain how it feels to feel the Spirit. Jesus compared it to trying to tell someone about the wind, as the accompanying illustration shows.

It is not seen by the eye,
yet we perceive its operation.
We feel it; we sense it.
We know it exists by the effects it produces.
It can be gentle or very powerful.

The Holy Ghost



The Wind



The serpent Moses put on a pole was a symbol for the Savior. Just as looking upon the serpent saved the Israelites from physical death, looking to Christ can save us from physical and spiritual death.

He must increase,
but I must decrease."

D Lessons from a Great Prophet

From John 3:25–33, list the lessons you think leaders, teachers, and missionaries could learn from what John the Baptist said and did. Include the verses where you found each idea.

Studying the Scriptures

Do activity A and one other activity (B–D) as you study John 3.

A Scripture Mastery—John 3:5

1. According to John 3:2, how did Nicodemus know that Jesus was “from God”?
2. What did Jesus say was a more sure way of “seeing”? (see v. 3).
3. What did Nicodemus say that indicates he was not thinking spiritually when he began speaking with Jesus?
4. Find at least two scriptures that explain the two kinds of baptism Jesus said we must receive (use the helps available in the LDS editions of the scriptures to find them).
5. Why do you think Nicodemus went to Jesus “by night” (v. 2)?
6. Read John 19:38–40. Do you think Nicodemus believed what Jesus taught him? Explain your answer.

B For God So Loved the World

1. According to John 3:16–17, what is one way we know how much God loves us?
2. What do those verses teach us about what Heavenly Father and Jesus want to do for all people?
3. Explain how you think people would perish if Jesus had not come into the world.

C Light versus Dark

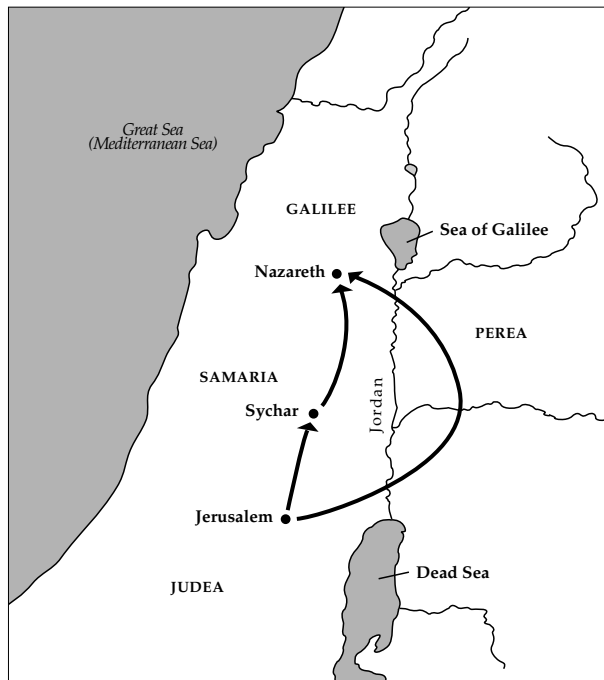
1. In your own words, write at least two statements of truth that explain principles Jesus taught in John 3:19–21.
2. Give an example from your life, or from things you have seen, of how each of the statements are true. (You do not have to use people’s names in your examples.)

John 4

The Woman at the Well



Jesus and His disciples had been in Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover. When it was time to return to Galilee they went through a part of the country called Samaria (see accompanying map). The Samaritans and the Jews were not friendly toward one another. The Jews considered the Samaritans “unclean” (see Bible Dictionary, “Samaritans,” p. 768). Sometimes a Jew would even travel a day or two out of his way to avoid Samaria. As you read John 4, consider what Jesus taught about those traditions, both by what He said and by what He did. Be sure to note the important Joseph Smith Translation changes for this chapter.



Understanding the Scriptures

John 4

Sixth hour (v. 6)—About noon	Meat (v. 32)—Food (in the scriptures, the word <i>meat</i> almost always means “food”; the word for what we call meat is usually <i>flesh</i>)
Draw water (v. 7)—Get water out of the well	Ought (v. 33)—Anything
Perceive (v. 19)—See, understand	Reapeth (v. 36)—Harvests
Messias (v. 25)—Messiah (see “Understanding the Scriptures” for John 1:41, p. 76)	Besought (vv. 40, 47)—Asked
Upon this (v. 27)—At this time	Ere (v. 49)—Before
	Amend (v. 52)—Get well
	Seventh hour (v. 52)—About 1:00 P.M.

John 4:12—“Our Father Jacob”

The Samaritans and the Jews were both descendants of Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel. *Father* means “forefather,” or ancestor.

John 4:22—“Salvation Is of the Jews”

Jesus did not mean that the religion of the Jews, as practiced by the Pharisees and Sadducees, would bring people salvation. At one time it contained the saving ordinances, doctrines, and practices but men had changed them. Jesus was a Jew by His mother, and it was He who brought salvation. The name *Jesus* means “salvation.”

John 4:24—“God Is a Spirit”

We know from other passages of scripture, and especially from modern revelation, that God’s spirit is clothed in a resurrected and glorified body of flesh and bones (see Genesis 1:26–27; Luke 24:39; D&C 130:22). Notice how the Joseph Smith Translation clarifies the meaning of this verse (see JST, John 4:26).

Studying the Scriptures

Do two of the following activities (A–C) as you study John 4.

A A Gradual Conversion

As you read John 4:5–42 you can learn how one woman came to gain a testimony that Jesus is the Messiah, or Christ.

1. List what the Samaritan woman called Jesus in verses 9, 11, 15, 19, and 29.
2. What do you notice about what she called Jesus the more she talked with Him and the more she came to know about Him?
3. What did she do after she understood who He really was? What was the result? (see especially vv. 28–30, 39–42).
4. Write about ways your testimony has grown. Include something about why you think it has grown.

B Be a Missionary

What would you say to an investigator who asked you to explain why we teach that God has a physical body when John 4:24 says that “God is a Spirit.” Use at least two scriptures in your response. (You may want to use the Topical Guide for help.)

C A Journal Entry

Imagine you were one of the disciples with Jesus during the events told in John 4. Write what might be part of your journal entry telling what you learned by being with Jesus that day. Include something about what Jesus directly taught in verses 31–38. Also try to include some less obvious lessons.

John 5

“I Am Come in My Father’s Name”

About a year after Jesus met the woman at the well in Samaria (see John 4), He went back to Jerusalem because it was the time of the Passover again. What Jesus did in the year between those two visits to Jerusalem is recorded in Matthew 5–11 and Luke 6–8. John 5 begins the account of what Jesus said and did during that second Passover at Jerusalem.

Understanding the Scriptures

John 5

Impotent folk (v. 3)—People without strength, powerless	Whole (vv. 6, 9, 11, 14–15)—Healthy, well
Halt (v. 3)—Lame	Conveyed himself away (v. 13)—Gone to a different place secretly
Withered (v. 3)—Difficulty using arms or legs	Committed (v. 22)—Given authority for
Infirmary (v. 5)—Disease or handicap	

John 5:4—“An Angel Went Down . . . and Troubled the Water”

It appears that the pool of Bethesda came from a spring that occasionally bubbled up. The tradition was that unseen angels caused the water to bubble and whoever was first to get in the pool after the water was “troubled,” or rippled, would be healed. This was just a superstition, but many seemed eager to try it, perhaps because they were hoping for an easy solution to their problem, or perhaps because they had tried everything else they knew of.

John 5:25, 28—“The Dead Shall Hear the Voice of the Son of God”

There are many prophecies in the Old Testament about the spirits in spirit prison who would be visited by the Son of God (see Psalm 88:10; Isaiah 24:22; 61:1). As recorded in John 5:25, 28, Jesus announced that He would soon fulfill those prophecies. He fulfilled them when He went to the spirit world after His crucifixion (see D&C 138:11–22, 29–35).

John 5:29—“They That Have Done Good, unto the Resurrection of Life”

While working on his inspired revision of the Bible, the Prophet Joseph Smith asked Heavenly Father about the meaning of John 5:29. In response, he received the vision now recorded in Doctrine and Covenants 76.

Studying the Scriptures

Do one of the following activities (A–B) as you study John 5.

A Lessons from a Miracle

As is true for most of the miracles recorded in the New Testament, we can learn spiritual truths from what Jesus and people who participated in the miracle did or said. The following questions should help you focus on some of the truths that could be learned from the story in John 5:1–16.



1. What seems to be the reason why Jesus chose that man to be healed? (see vv. 5–6).
2. What does that teach us about Jesus?
3. How is the man like all who sin?

4. How is what Jesus said and did for the man similar to what He can and will do for all who sin and repent?
5. What did Jesus say could cause something worse than the handicap the man in the story had? (see v. 14).
6. Write the kinds of things you think the man said when he spoke to the Jews (see v. 15).

B Like Father, Like Son

1. List the truths Jesus taught in John 5:17–47 about Himself and about Heavenly Father.
2. What impresses you most about what Jesus taught? Why?
3. How do these teachings show how Jesus and His Father in Heaven could not logically be the same Being?

John 6

Jesus Is the Bread of Life

Why does the spirit, as well as the body, need nourishment? In the previous Gospels you read how Jesus fed five thousand people with just a few loaves of bread. In John 6 we learn more of that story, particularly about the attitudes of the people toward the physical food they received from Jesus compared to the spiritual food He desired to give them. Jesus testified of the importance of feeding our spirits as well as our bodies. Notice how the people responded.

Other Accounts of What You Read in John 6

John 6:1–14—Matthew 14:13–21; Mark 6:30–44; Luke 9:10–17
John 6:5–21—Matthew 14:22–33; Mark 6:52

Understanding the Scriptures

John 6

Pennyworth (v. 7)—A laborer’s wages for a day	Murmured, murmur (vv. 41, 43, 61)—Complained, complain
Even (v. 16)—Evening	Strove (v. 52)—Argued, quarreled
Five and twenty or thirty furlongs (v. 19)—3 to 4 miles	Quickeneth (v. 63)—Gives life into boats

Studying the Scriptures

Do two of the following activities (A–D) as you study John 6.

A Choose a King

1. A large crowd of followers wanted the Savior to be their king (see John 6:15). According to John 6:5–14, 24–26, why did the people want Jesus to be their king?



2. Why should we want Him to be our king?
3. What difference do our motives for following Jesus make in the way we live?

B Make a Comparison

Draw a chart like the one below. Fill it in with things Jesus referred to in John 6:22–27.

“Meat” That Perishes	“Meat” That Endures

C The Bread of Life

If you have ever eaten a hot slice of homemade bread, think about how it tastes and what it provides for you. Read John 6:48–59 and think about how Jesus provides spiritual food for us. Answer the following questions:

1. According to verses 51–58, what two things did Jesus say we need to do in order to have eternal life?
2. How can those teachings help make the ordinance of the sacrament more meaningful to you?

D “The Inconvenient Messiah”

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, then president of Brigham Young University, said, “Life was very inconvenient for [Jesus], and, unless I miss my guess, it will often be so for you and for me when we take upon us his name” (“The Inconvenient Messiah,” *Brigham Young University 1981–82 Fireside and Devotional Speeches*, 77). Read John 6:60–71 and explain the following:

1. How was Jesus’s doctrine “inconvenient” for many of His disciples?
2. What gave Peter, despite the “inconvenience,” the strength to continue following Jesus?
3. What can you do to ensure your obedience when the Lord asks you to do difficult things?

John 7

Jesus Testifies in Jerusalem

The events in John 7 occurred in Jerusalem during the Feast of the Tabernacles. This feast, which the Lord had

*commanded the children of Israel to observe since the time of Moses, included several important symbolic rituals or rites. At the time of Jesus, one of these was the priests drawing water from the pool of Siloam and pouring it out in the holy place of the temple—symbolic of God pouring out His Holy Spirit among the people (see Bruce R. McConkie, *The Mortal Messiah*, 3:123). As you read John 7, notice what Jesus taught that related to this symbolic activity, along with the many other testimonies He bore to the people.*

Understanding the Scriptures

John 7

Jewry (v. 1)—Judea	Dispersed (v. 35)—Scattered Israelites
Every whit (v. 23)—Completely	Thither (v. 36)—There
Whence (vv. 27–28)—Where	

John 7:1, 13, 15, 35, 45–48—Who Were the Jews Who Sought to Kill the Lord?

Jesus had many followers among the Jews (see John 6:2). Those Jews who sought to kill Him were the religious leaders of the Jews, mainly the scribes and Pharisees. Jesus had angered them by performing miracles on the Sabbath day and by claiming that He was literally the Son of God (see John 5:16–18).

John 7:6–9, 30, 33; 8:20—“My Time Is Not Yet Come”

Jesus knew that He was living the last months of His mortal life. He also knew that His mission was not yet complete. His Father in Heaven would sustain His life until He finished all that He had been sent to do. According to the Joseph Smith Translation of John 9:4, the Savior testified, “The time cometh when I shall have finished my work, then I go unto the Father.”

Studying the Scriptures

Do one of the following activities (A or B) as you study John 7.

A Underline the Phrases

Have you ever felt alone or as if everyone were against you? Read John 7:1–13 and look for ways in which Jesus might have felt that kind of loneliness.

1. List the verses that contain phrases showing that Jewish leaders were openly seeking to kill Jesus.
2. Tell how the situation in John 7:5 might affect how Jesus felt. How might it affect you?

B Scripture Mastery—John 7:17

Elder Richard G. Scott, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, testified, “Your agency, the right to make choices, is not given so that you can get what you want. This divine gift is provided so that you will choose what your Father in Heaven wants for you. That way He can lead you to become all that He intends you to be” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1996, 33; or *Ensign*, May 1996, 25).

Explain how Elder Scott's statement helps you understand the meaning of John 7:17.

John 8

"I Am"

The events in John 8 occurred during the same Feast of the Tabernacles we read about in John 7. Another symbolic activity of that feast was the lighting of many candles in the temple. This was to remind Israel to be a light to the world. Jesus used this as an opportunity to testify again of who He is. As you read this chapter, think about how Jesus and His teachings are like light and how darkness is an appropriate symbol for sin and unbelief.

Understanding the Scriptures

John 8

Whence I came (v. 14)—
Where I came from

Whither (vv. 14, 21–22)—
Where

Treasury (v. 20)—Place where offerings are deposited

Abraham's seed (vv. 33, 37)—
Abraham's descendants

Born of fornication (v. 41)—
Children born out of wedlock

John 8:11—Did Jesus Forgive the Adulterous Woman?



President Spencer W. Kimball taught: "His command to her was, 'Go, and sin no more.' He was directing the sinful woman to go her way, *abandon her evil life, commit no more sin, transform her life*" (*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball [1982], 89).

It is encouraging to note that the Joseph Smith Translation tells us, "And the woman glorified God from that hour, and believed on his name" (JST, John 8:11).

John 8:58—"Before Abraham Was, I Am"

"I Am" is the name of the God who revealed to Moses that he was called to be a prophet (see Exodus 3:14). In saying that, the Lord proclaimed that He (Jehovah) was the God of the Old Testament and the promised Messiah. The Jews considered such a declaration as blasphemy and "took they up stones to cast at him" (John 8:59).

Studying the Scriptures

Do three of the following activities (A–D) as you study John 8.

A Is Life Fair?

Read John 8:1–11 and list what seems unfair to you about this story. Make another list of what seems fair to you. Write your feelings about how Jesus Christ has power to make things "fair" in your life.

B Hold Up the Light



Think about what happens when you hold up a burning candle in a dark room. What happens when you cup the flame with your hand? Mark and cross-reference John 8:12 with 3 Nephi 18:24. Explain what the light is and how you can "hold it up."

C Give Examples

Jesus made two very important statements about freedom and bondage in John 8:32–34. Sometimes others want us to believe that the opposite of what Jesus said is true. We only have to look around, however, to see the truth of what He taught. We especially know it is true if we have lived His teachings (see John 7:17).

1. Give an example of how what Jesus said in John 8:32 is true in regards to the Word of Wisdom, the law of chastity, or one of the other commandments.
2. Give an example of how what He said in John 8:34 is true in regards to the same commandment.

D Write a Story

As you read John 8:48–59, look for who the Jewish leaders accused Jesus of being and who Jesus testified that He was. President Thomas S. Monson, then Second Counselor in the First Presidency, said to "be loyal to the royal within you" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1991, 65; or *Ensign*, May 1991, 48). Think about who you really are and write a brief paragraph about how knowing who He really was gave Jesus courage to face severe persecution.

John 9

Jesus and the Man Born Blind

Have you ever been lost and without light in the middle of the night? How would you describe your feelings? The Lord's mission was to bring light to a darkened world. He literally

opened the eyes of a man born blind, symbolizing the power of His mission. As you read John 9, look for ways in which people saw only darkness even though “the light of the world” shone upon them.



Understanding the Scriptures



John 9

Reviled (v. 28)—Scolded

John 9:1–3, 34—“Who Did Sin?”

It was common in that day, as it is somewhat today, to believe people experienced trials because they had sinned (see Luke 13:1–5). The Jews seem to have believed in some form of a pre-mortal life because they asked if his blindness was the result of his own sin. Since he was born blind, they must have wondered if he sinned before his birth. Jesus said, however, that the blindness was not the result of sin.

John 9:22, 34—“Put out of the Synagogue”

People who were cast out of the synagogue lost many rights, privileges, and associations. They were denied schooling for their children, social associations, and religious teaching.

Studying the Scriptures



Do activities A and B as you study John 9.

A A Purpose of Trials

1. According to what Jesus said in John 9:1–3, why had the man been born blind?
2. What does His answer teach us about some people’s disabilities?

B Who Was Really Blind?

1. Create three categories on a sheet of paper and label them “Pharisees,” “Parents,” and “Blind Man.” Record words or phrases from John 9:13–38 under each category that show their spiritual blindness or spiritual sight.
2. Physical blindness is often thought of as a difficult handicap in this life. Similarly, how can spiritual blindness be a handicap?

John 10

The Good Shepherd



There were many shepherds in Palestine during Jesus’s time. Good shepherds were known by the faithful way they cared for and protected their sheep. A true shepherd would walk ahead of the sheep and lead them rather than drive them from behind, and many shepherds even had individual names for their sheep. Unlike someone who was simply hired to take care of the sheep, a shepherd owned his sheep, and he would risk his life for the safety of any one of them. Because sheep trusted those good shepherds, they came when they were called, but they would not follow a stranger. In John 10 you will read about how Jesus used these well-known ideas about sheep and shepherds to teach about His relationship to His followers.

John 10 also tells what Jesus said to and about those who refused to accept His teachings and who tried to condemn Him.

Understanding the Scriptures



John 10



Sheepfold

- **Sheepfold** (v. 1)—An enclosed area where sheep are kept
- **Porter** (v. 3)—Servant who guards and opens the door
- **Putteth forth** (v. 4)—Takes out of the sheepfold
- **Parable** (v. 6)—Story with a meaning (see the introduction to Matthew 13, p. 22)

Pasture (v. 9)—Fields of grass (in this context the Savior was talking about the pasture of spiritual food for those who follow Him)

More abundantly (v. 10)—More fully

Hireling (vv. 12–13)—Someone who is hired to watch the sheep

Division (v. 19)—Argument, dissension

Pluck (vv. 28–29)—Steal, take

Blasphemy (v. 33)—To speak lightly, to make fun of, or to otherwise be very irreverent about sacred things

John 10:22—Feast of the Dedication

This feast was celebrated for eight days during our month of December to remember a time in 167 B.C. when a group of Jews regained their temple from the Greeks in a war. It had been conquered and then defiled (made unholy) by the Greeks. The Jews cleansed and rededicated it. Today this feast is known as the Feast of Lights, or Hanukkah.

Studying the Scriptures

Do two of the following activities (A–C) as you study John 10.

A Deepen Your Understanding of the Symbols

In John 10:6–18, 25–29, Jesus explained some of what He meant in the parable in verses 1–5. In His explanation, Jesus said that two different things in the parable represented Him (see vv. 7, 11). This is because they both symbolized some part of His mission.

1. What additional information do you learn from 2 Nephi 9:41–42 that helps you understand the symbol of Jesus as the door in the parable?
2. Based on what is written in John 10, how is what a good shepherd does for his sheep similar to what Jesus does for us?
3. Using John 10, mark each verse that teaches about and lists the identity of Jesus’s sheep.
4. Although Mosiah 5:10–13 does not specifically say anything about sheep, what could we learn from those verses about how those who are Jesus’s sheep compare to those who are not?

B Scripture Mastery—John 10:16

Read 3 Nephi 15:11–24 and 16:1–3 to learn who the “other sheep” are that are referred to in John 10:16. Record it in your notebook. You may also want to write who they are in the margin of your Bible next to John 10:16.

C “Are You the Christ?”

In John 10:22–39 we read that some of the Jews asked Jesus to specifically tell them if He was the Christ. He did not answer them directly, but they understood what He meant and wanted to kill Him for it. Perhaps that was why He did not answer them plainly.

1. What did Jesus say bore witness of who He is? (see vv. 25, 37–38).

2. What did Jesus say that provoked some of the people to want to stone Him?
3. How could you use this story and Jesus’s example in dealing with someone who criticizes the Church or attacks your testimony?

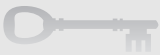
John 11

Lazarus Is Raised from the Dead



In John 10 Jesus said to those who did not believe His words that His works testified of who He was (see vv. 25, 32, 37–38). The raising of Lazarus from the dead, as recorded in John 11, was perhaps the greatest opportunity for unbelievers to receive a witness that Jesus was, in fact, their Messiah. This miracle, coming near the end of His mortal ministry, was a great testimony of His identity and power. John’s story not only testifies of Jesus’s power but also shows His love and compassion. As you read John 11, note the effect this miracle had on the Jewish leaders.

Understanding the Scriptures



John 11

Fifteen furlongs off (v. 18)—About 2,800 meters away (1 3/4 miles) : **Expedient** (v. 50)—Necessary, proper : **Abroad** (v. 52)—Outside of Israel

John 11:55—“To Purify Themselves”

Before participating in the sacred Passover meal and sacrifices, men and women would follow certain practices to make themselves ceremonially clean. This included washing in a specific way, not touching anything dead or unclean according to the law of Moses, and following other rules put in place by Jewish leaders over the years. Some demonstrated their hypocrisy when they were trying to have Jesus crucified. They were careful not to become “unclean” even as they thirsted for His innocent blood (see John 18:28).

Studying the Scriptures



Do either activity A or B as you study John 11.

A Finish the Sentences

Write in your notebook the following sentences that tell the story of Lazarus, and complete them the best you can using the information you read in John 11.

1. When Jesus heard that Lazarus was sick . . .
2. Jesus waited two days before going to Bethany because . . .
3. When Jesus got to Bethany, Lazarus . . .
4. Martha believed that . . .
5. Jesus wept because . . .
6. Jesus prayed aloud to the Father because . . .
7. After Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, many Jews . . . , but some Jews . . .
8. What impresses me most about this story is . . .

B Write a News Release

The reaction of Jewish leaders to Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead is found in John 11:47–54. Imagine that newspapers existed at that time and use those verses to help you respond to the following:

1. Write what you think Caiaphas would have said if asked by a Roman newspaper to give his thoughts about Jesus and His ministry.
2. What do you think Caiaphas would have stated for a local Jewish language newspaper he thought the Romans would not read.
3. What do you think Caiaphas was most worried about?
4. Give a modern example of how someone your age might be kept from a closer relationship with God for the same basic reason that Caiaphas was kept from having a strong testimony and relationship with God.

John 12

Jesus’s Final Public Testimony

If you had lived at the time of Jesus and had seen the things you read about in John 1–11, how strong do you think your testimony would have been? Nearly every chapter in John includes not only powerful reasons to have an increased testimony of Jesus but usually also includes an account of those who refused to accept that testimony. John 12 is no exception. As you read, notice what it says about those who believe in Jesus and what they do and what it says about those who do not believe in Him and what they do.

Other Accounts of What You Read in John 12

John 12:1–7—Matthew 26:6–13; Mark 14:3–9

John 12:12–19—Matthew 21:1–11; Mark 11:1–11; Luke 19:28–40

Understanding the Scriptures



John 12

Ointment of spikenard (v. 3)—Perfumed cream : **Hosanna** (v. 13)—A shout of praise that means “Save now”
Odour (v. 3)—Smell, scent : **Perceive** (v. 19)—Understand
Three hundred pence (v. 5)—About a year’s wages for a common laborer : **Prevail** (v. 19)—Accomplish as it is
Consulted (v. 10)—Counseled : **Esaias** (vv. 38–39)—Isaiah together

John 12:14–19—What Was the Significance of Jesus Riding into Jerusalem on a Donkey?

See “Understanding the Scriptures” for Matthew 21:1–11 (p. 29).

John 12:25–26—Are We Really Supposed to Hate Our Own Lives?

The counsel in these verses is much like the counsel Jesus gave on other occasions to “lose” your life for His sake (for example, see Matthew 16:24–26). In Mosiah 3:19 we learn that “the natural man is an enemy to God.” It should not be hard to understand that we must hate the kind of life that makes us enemies to God in order to obtain the eternal life Jesus promised in John 12:25–26.

John 12:31—“The Prince of This World”

This phrase refers to Satan, the devil. He is “the prince of this world” in the sense that he has great power and influence in this fallen world and rules over the many who have given him power over them. John 12:31 tells us that he will be removed from his position of power at the time of judgment, which will first occur at Christ’s Second Coming.

Studying the Scriptures

Do activities A and B as you study John 12.

A Different Attitudes about Jesus

1. List the following people and groups of people in your notebook: Mary (see John 12:1–8), Judas (see vv. 1–8), people who came with branches (see vv. 12–18), Greeks (see vv. 20–22), chief priests and chief rulers (vv. 10–11, 42–43). After each, tell how you think they felt about Jesus, based on what you read in John 12.
2. Describe two or three righteous principles you are now following in your life that show your love for Jesus Christ.

B I Am

As explained in John 8, the phrase “I am” had special meaning to the Jewish people (see “Understanding the Scriptures” for John 8:58, p. 82). John recorded many of the special occasions when Jesus chose to testify of who He is and of His mission with an “I am” statement. List and read John 6:35, 41, 48, 51; 8:12 (and 12:46); 10:7, 9, 11, 14; 11:25; 14:6; and 15:1, 5. After each scripture reference, briefly explain what it teaches us about the mission of Jesus Christ.

John 13

“Love One Another”



The events in John 13 occurred the evening before Jesus was crucified. John’s testimony of what Jesus did and said that evening is recorded in this chapter and continues through John 17. Because Jesus knew what was about to happen, He gave His disciples teachings He thought they should have before He died. What He said to and about His disciples in those days also applies to His disciples today.

Other Accounts of What You Read in John 13

John 13:18–30—Matthew 26:21–25; Mark 14:18–21; Luke 22:21–23
John 13:36–38—Matthew 26:33–35; Mark 14:29–31; Luke 22:31–34

Understanding the Scriptures

John 13

Girded himself (v. 4)—Tied it around himself
Needeth not save to (v. 10)—Only needs to
Clean every whit (v. 10)—Is completely clean
Lifted up his heel against me (v. 18)—A symbolic way of saying betrayed or turned against
Beckoned (v. 24)—Nodded his head

John 13:25—“Lying on Jesus’ Breast”

At the time of Jesus, the people ate meals on the ground, leaning on their elbow or on a pillow of some kind with their feet away from the table (see accompanying illustration). It was customary to lean on the left side so one could eat with the right hand. So whoever was on the right side of Jesus would only have had to lean back to have his head on Jesus’s breast.



John 13:34–35—A New Commandment

In the Old Testament Jesus taught His people to love others (see Leviticus 19:18), but this new commandment was to love “as I have loved you” (John 13:34). As He demonstrated by His Atonement, the way Jesus has and does love us is a deep, self-sacrificing love that has the eternal welfare of another as a highest priority. President Howard W. Hunter taught: “We need to be kinder with one another, more gentle and more forgiving. We need to be slower to anger and more prompt to help. We need to extend the hand of friendship and resist the hand of retribution [revenge]. In short, we need to love one another with the pure love of Christ, with genuine charity and compassion and, if necessary, shared suffering, for that is the way God loves us” (“Come to the God of All Truth,” *Ensign*, Sept. 1994, 72).

Studying the Scriptures

Do activities A and B as you study John 13.

A How Is It Different? How Can It Make a Difference?

1. Consider what Jesus did in John 13:1–17 and write about the ways Jesus taught the disciples about leadership that are different from what the world usually describes as leadership.

- Write about a time when one of your Church leaders or someone in the scriptures acted in the way Jesus taught His disciples to act.

B The True Test

- According to John 13:34–35, how can others know if we are disciples of Jesus Christ?
- Suggest some *specific* ways a person who is trying to be a true disciple of Christ (according to what Jesus said in John 13:34–35) might respond in the following situations:
 - There is a person at your school no one really likes because this student says and does things that keep him or her from fitting in and being accepted by other students and dresses in ways that are the object of jokes and teasing.
 - You see a new person at Church.

John 14

“If Ye Love Me, Keep My Commandments”

What might your thoughts be if you knew you would die in just a few days or hours? Would you worry about how painful death might be or worry about those who would be left behind? John 14–16 includes some of Jesus’s last teachings to His Apostles before His suffering and death.

If you were one of Jesus’s disciples at that time, what would you have been concerned about if you knew Jesus was going to die and leave you? As you read the next several chapters, think about how Jesus’s teachings would have brought comfort and calmed the fears of the Apostles.

Understanding the Scriptures



John 14

Whither (v. 4–5)—Where
Sufficeth (v. 8)—Will satisfy
Abode (v. 23)—Home

Prince of this world (v. 30)—
Satan (see “Understanding the
Scriptures” for John 12:31,
p. 85)

John 14:2—“In My Father’s House Are Many Mansions”

The Prophet Joseph Smith said this passage should read “In my Father’s kingdom are many kingdoms” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 366).

John 14:4–6—“I Am the Way”

Jesus Christ *died* for us so that we might be redeemed from the grave. He also *lived* for us, “leaving us an example, that [we] should follow his steps” (1 Peter 2:21). The way to eternal life is to follow the Lord’s perfect example. Those who were followers of Jesus Christ were said to follow in His “way” (see Acts 9:2; 16:17; 18:25–26).



“The road to the celestial kingdom is one way. When we fail to search the scriptures, we may find ourselves going the wrong way on a one-way highway” (L. Lionel Kendrick, in Conference Report, Apr. 1993, 13; or Ensign, May 1993, 13).

John 14:16–26—Who Are the Two Comforters?

The Prophet Joseph Smith said, “After a person has faith in Christ, repents of his sins, and is baptized for the remission of his sins and receives the Holy Ghost, (by the laying on of hands), which is the first Comforter, then let him continue to humble himself before God, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and living by every word of God . . . then it will be his privilege to receive the other Comforter, which the Lord hath promised the Saints. . . . Now what is this other Comforter? It is no more nor less than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 150–51).

Studying the Scriptures



Do activity B and one of the other activities (A or C) as you study John 14.

A Which Way Do I Go?

- According to John 14:1–6, where were the Apostles supposed to go? How were they to get there? (see also 3 Nephi 18:24).
- Ponder what you have done to travel the Lord’s way. Write two or three principles you must live to continue along that way.

B Scripture Mastery—John 14:15

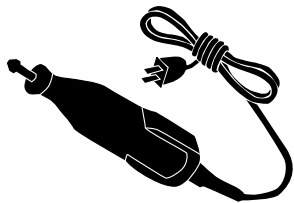
- Identify two commandments you are now striving to keep that show your love for the Savior.
- What promise did Jesus give to those who showed their love by keeping the commandments? (see John 14:16–21).

C A Prescription for Heart Trouble?

- According to John 14:1, 27, what condition did Jesus counsel His Apostles against?
- Write about at least three things Jesus taught in John 14 that would help them avoid that condition.

John 15

Jesus Is the True Vine



An electric appliance or tool is worthless unless it is plugged into a power source. Jesus Christ told His disciples a parable that taught a similar concept. As you read John 15, ponder why you must—and how you can—“plug into” the Savior’s life, light, and power.

Understanding the Scriptures



John 15

Husbandman (v. 1)—Gardener

⋮ **Abide** (vv. 4–7, 10)—Continue

⋮ **Cast forth** (v. 6)—Cut off

John 15:3—How Can “the Word” Make You Clean?

The “word” of the Lord is His gospel, which includes His commandments. Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin, an Apostle, said, “Through the marvelous power of the Atonement of Jesus Christ, a power activated by our obedience to His commandments, we can be washed clean of our sins” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1996, 98; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 72).

John 15:22–24—“No Cloke for Their Sin”

Would it be right to condemn a person for breaking a law he or she had no idea even existed? The Book of Mormon prophet Jacob taught, “Where there is no law given there is no punishment” (2 Nephi 9:25). But those whom the Savior had taught had no “cloke” or excuse for their sins and would be held accountable for living what they had received (see D&C 82:3–4).

Studying the Scriptures



Do two of the following activities (A–D) as you study John 15.

A Draw a Picture

1. Draw a tree with a branch missing. Draw the branch as if it had been cut from the tree.
2. What would happen in time to the branch cut from the tree?
3. What would happen to the fruit on that branch?
4. On the branches of the healthy side of the tree, write the ways Jesus taught we can have life and be fruitful branches of the Lord (see John 15:2–8, 16).

B If . . .

In John 15:6–20 is recorded eight “if” clauses given by the Savior. “If” clauses are cause and effect statements. For example, if you keep the commandments, you will be blessed. List each of the eight “if” clauses, along with its effect.

C Are You a Friend of the Lord or of the World?

Compare John 15:9–14 with John 15:18–19, 23–25 and answer the following questions:

1. What is that greater love, and how does it apply to true friendship?
2. Why do you think the world, or those who are “of the world,” hate the things of God?
3. What can you do to be a friend to the Lord?

D Missionary Journal

Imagine you are a missionary and that earlier in the day you and your companion taught a family about baptism. One of them explained that they had already been baptized by immersion by their minister. Some ministers claim they have authority simply because they teach the Bible. Write a journal entry about how you used John 15:16 to teach the family the truth about the proper authority to baptize.

John 16

The Mission of the Holy Ghost

Have you ever been separated from your parents and lost in a crowd? How did you feel? Jesus knew He would soon be gone, leaving His disciples to carry on the work without Him there giving His direction and strength. He told them He would not leave them alone and promised to send the Holy Ghost to be with them. As you read John 16, look especially for what Jesus taught about how the Holy Ghost can give strength in time of need.

Understanding the Scriptures



John 16

Prince of this world (v. 11)—Satan (see “Understanding the Scriptures” for John 12:31, p. 85)

⋮ **Travail** (v. 21)—The pain of childbirth

Spirit of truth (v. 13)—The Holy Ghost

⋮ **Hitherto** (v. 24)—Until now

John 16:1–3—“Whosoever Killeth You Will Think That He Doeth God Service”

Elder Bruce R. McConkie wrote, “Sincerity has almost nothing to do with gaining salvation. Men who slay the saints can be just as sincere as those who thus become martyrs. Men can believe so devoutly in falsehood that they will even lay down their own lives for it. What does it matter that those who killed the prophets, either ancient or modern, thought they did God service? The thing that counts is truth, pure God-given truth” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 1:752).

John 16:33—“I Have Overcome the World”

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, an Apostle, taught, “Christ has overcome the world—our world—and His gift to us is peace now and exaltation in the world to come. Our fundamental requirement is to have faith in Him and follow Him—always. When He bids us to walk in His way and by His light, it is because He has walked this way before us, and He has made it safe for our own travel here” (in *Conference Report*, Oct. 1997, 89; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 66).

If we are faithful to the teachings of Jesus Christ and endure to the end, we shall also overcome the world (see D&C 63:47).

Studying the Scriptures

Do either activity A or B as you study John 16.

A Get the Antidote!

An antidote is something that relieves or counteracts the effects of something bad. For example, there are antidotes that can be taken to counteract the effects of some poisons. President George Albert Smith once taught: “The companionship of the spirit of the Lord is an antidote for weariness, for hunger, for fear, and all those things that sometimes overtake us in life” (in *Conference Report*, Oct. 1945, 115–16).

1. What did the Lord warn His disciples about in John 16:1–4?
2. How can the Holy Ghost be a spiritual antidote to those spiritual challenges?
3. How can the Holy Ghost be an antidote to some of the bad things that overtake you in life?

B Interview a Mother



1. Invite your mother (or any mother) to answer the following questions:
 - a. What sacrifices, struggles, and pain did you experience bringing a child into the world?
 - b. What feelings did you experience after the birth of the child?
 - c. How did your feelings affect your attitude about the sacrifices, struggles, and pains?

2. Describe what Jesus compared the struggles of birth to in John 16:19–22 and how the promised joy would be received.
3. Describe how you hope to feel when you see the Savior again.

John 17

“This Is Life Eternal”

Just before He went to Gethsemane for the last time, Jesus gave what is known as the great Intercessory Prayer. It is given this name because in it the Savior prayed to His Father on behalf of His disciples and all those who believe in their words. President David O. McKay testified, “I know of no more important chapter in the Bible” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1967, 5). Read John 17 and ponder why it might have been so important to President McKay.

Understanding the Scriptures

John 17

Before the world was, before the foundation of the world (v. 5, 24)—Before the earth was created

Manifested (v. 6)—Made known

Sanctify them (v. 17, 19)—Make them holy

John 17:11–17—How Can You Be “in the World” but Not “of the World”?

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin, an Apostle, said, “Perhaps all of us sometimes would like to withdraw and isolate ourselves from the storms of life and from the fiery darts of Satan. However, we must be in the world but not of the world, meaning to go forward in the midst of the sin, evil, and corruption that are in the world but resisting and rejecting them” (in *Conference Report*, Apr. 1993, 84; or *Ensign*, May 1993, 68).

John 17:12—Who Is the “Son of Perdition”?

The Lord was referring to Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Him. *Perdition* is another name for Satan (see D&C 76:25–27). A person who chooses to do evil “becometh a child of the devil” (Alma 5:38–41).

Studying the Scriptures

Do two of the following activities (A–C) as you study John 17.

A Scripture Mastery—John 17:3

It is the intention of most Latter-day Saints to obtain eternal life, which is the kind of life that God lives.

1. Explain the difference between “knowing” the only true God and just “knowing about” Him.

- You may want to cross-reference John 17:3 with 1 John 2:3–6. From 1 John 2:3–6 and from other scriptures you may find, list some ways we can become *like* Heavenly Father and His Son.
- Explain how becoming *like* Them can help us to *know* Them better.

B “That They All May Be One”

Read and compare John 17:9–11 with John 17:20–23 and do the following:

- For each reference, identify *who* Jesus was praying for and *what* He desired for them.
- Read Doctrine and Covenants 38:27 and share what it adds to the importance of the Lord’s prayer.
- Read Doctrine and Covenants 88:67–68, explain what having “an eye single” might have to do with the Lord’s prayer, and describe the blessings that would come into your life because of it.

C A Prayer for a Friend

Imagine that you have moved to a new city. After several months you receive a letter from one of your closest friends. This person has new friends and is participating in inappropriate activities. List at least two ideas from the Savior’s prayer in John 17:11–17 that you could include in your own prayers for your friend. Explain how they could help your friend.

Though it might appear that freedom and life were taken from Jesus, John testified that He knew “all things that should come upon him” (John 18:4). As you read the last chapters of John’s testimony, try to picture the events in your mind. Imagine you were there, and think about how you might have felt as you watched.

Other Accounts of What You Read in John 18

John 18:1–16—Matthew 26:47–58; Mark 14:43–54; Luke 22:47–55
 John 18:17–18, 25–27—Matthew 26:69–75; Mark 14:66–72; Luke 22:56–62

John 18:28–38—Matthew 27:2, 11–14; Mark 15:1–5; Luke 23:1–7
 John 18:39–40—Matthew 27:15–23; Mark 15:6–14; Luke 23:13–22

Understanding the Scriptures



John 18

Resorted, resort (v. 2, 20)—Met, meet
Expedit (v. 14)—Necessary
Kinsman (v. 26)—Relative
Cock (v. 27)—Rooster
Malefactor (v. 30)—Criminal

John 18:2–13—Judas Leads a Band of Armed Men to Capture Jesus

While the other writers of the Gospels indicated that a “multitude” followed Judas to Gethsemane to capture Jesus, only John recorded that it was “a band of men.” Elder Bruce R. McConkie suggested that “a band consisted of some six hundred Roman soldiers with a tribune at their head. The Roman overlords were taking no chance on an uproar during the week of the Passover” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 1:781).

John 18:39–40—Barabbas

See “Understanding the Scriptures” for Luke 23:18 (p. 73).

Studying the Scriptures



Do activity A as you study John 18.

A Write a Newspaper Report

Read John 18:1–13 as if you were a reporter for a local newspaper. Write a news article using the following questions as a guideline:

- What headline would you use to catch the eye of readers?
- In what way was the Savior in control of the situation?
- What do you want your readers to know about this event?

John 19

Jesus Christ Lays Down His Life

Roman soldiers made a crown by twisting thorned branches together and putting it upon the Savior’s head. In mockery

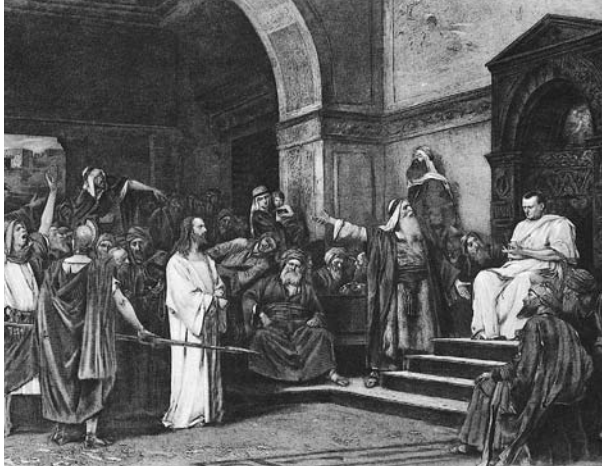
John 18

Jesus Is Betrayed and Arrested



John’s record is silent about Jesus’s suffering in Gethsemane. But it does provide important insights into Jesus’s arrest, His trial before Pilate, and Peter’s denial. It is also the only gospel that records Jesus’s trial before Annas (see John 18:19–24).

they proclaimed, “Hail, King of the Jews.” When Pilate presented the scourged figure of the Master to Jewish leaders as their king they cried out, “Away with him, . . . crucify him.” Yet, Jesus Christ will come again as “King of Kings and Lord of Lords” (Revelation 19:16) and will wipe away death, sorrow, and pain (see Revelation 21:4). As you read the dramatic and touching events recorded in John 19, ask yourself: Why did the Son of God allow such insult and injustice? What does this teach us about His love?



Other Accounts of What You Read in John 19

John 19:1–24—Matthew 27:27–36; Mark 15:16–24; Luke 23:23–34
 John 19:28–30—Matthew 27:46–49; Mark 15:34–37; Luke 23:46
 John 19:38–42—Matthew 27:57–61; Mark 15:42–47; Luke 23:50–56

Understanding the Scriptures



John 19

Platted (v. 2)—Twisted, braided

Sixth hour (v. 14)—About noon

Coat (v. 23)—A garment that extended from the neck to the knees

Rend (v. 24)—Tear

Cast lots (v. 24)—A game of chance that determines a winner

Hyssop (v. 29)—A long stalk or branch of a hyssop bush

Myrrh and aloes (v. 39)—Spices used by the Jews in preparing bodies for burial

Sepulchre (vv. 41–42)—Tomb or grave

John 19:1—Pilate Orders the Scourging of Jesus

Elder James E. Talmage wrote, “Scourging was a frightful preliminary to death on the cross. The instrument of punishment was a whip of many thongs, loaded with metal and edged with jagged pieces of bone” (*Jesus the Christ*, 638).

John 19:6–30—“Crucify Him, Crucify Him”

Elder James E. Talmage explained, “Death by crucifixion was at once the most lingering and most painful of all forms of execution. The victim lived in ever increasing torture, generally for many hours, sometimes for days. The spikes so cruelly driven through hands and feet penetrated and crushed sensitive nerves and quivering tendons, yet inflicted no mortal wound. The welcome relief of death came through the exhaustion caused by intense and unremitting pain, through localized inflammation

and congestion of organs incident to the strained and unnatural posture of the body” (*Jesus the Christ*, 655).

John 19:31–37—“That Their Legs Might Be Broken”

The Jewish Sabbath—which began at sundown—was nearing. Jewish law did not allow the bodies to be removed from the crosses on the Sabbath, nor for them to hang on the crosses over the Sabbath. At the request of Jewish leaders, Roman soldiers broke the legs of the thieves to hasten their deaths. Jesus had already died, thus fulfilling the scripture that “a bone of him shall not be broken” (John 19:36; see also Exodus 12:46; Psalm 34:20).

Studying the Scriptures



Do two of the following activities (A–C) as you study John 19.

A What Would He Say? What Would You Say?

Imagine you had the opportunity to meet Pilate several years after the events in John 18:28–19:22.

1. Based on what you read in the scriptures, what do you think he might say about Jesus and His Crucifixion after he had some time to look back on it?
2. If he asked you the same question he asked Jesus in John 18:38, what would you reply?

B Learning to Love Others at All Times

1. Read John 19:25–27 and describe one of the Savior’s concerns while He hung on the cross.
2. How does this act characterize the life He lived?



C Being Disciples of Jesus Christ

Joseph of Arimathaea and Nicodemus were Jewish leaders and members of the ruling body known as the Sanhedrin (see Bible Dictionary, “Joseph [of Arimathaea],” p. 717). Both were secretly disciples of Jesus.

1. Read Luke 23:50–51 and John 7:45–53 and describe how each man showed evidence of his discipleship.

- Who did the new sepulchre belong to? (see Matthew 27:59–60).
- What can you learn about discipleship from Joseph and Nicodemus?

John 20

Believing in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ

The Savior’s mortal ministry ended on the cross, but the empty tomb testified of His divinity and gave hope of a resurrection for all of us. What evidence is there that Jesus Christ was resurrected? Why do you not need to see Him to believe that He has risen from the dead? Ponder John’s testimony in John 20:31 before you read and study this chapter.



Other Accounts of What You Read in John 20

John 20:1–2—Matthew 28:1–8; Mark 16:1–8; Luke 24:1–9

John 20:3–10—Luke 24:12

John 20:19–23—Mark 16:14; Luke 24:36–48

Understanding the Scriptures

John 20

Napkin (v. 7)—Cloth covering the face of a dead person

Remit, remitted (v. 23)—
Forgive, forgiven

First day of the week (vv. 1, 19)—Sunday

John 20:17—Where Was the Lord’s Spirit While His Body Lay in the Tomb?

When the resurrected Savior appeared to Mary Magdalene, He said, “I am not yet ascended to my Father.” Where had His spirit

gone then while His body lay in the tomb? Peter taught that “he went and preached unto the spirits in prison” (1 Peter 3:18–20). On 3 October 1918, President Joseph F. Smith was pondering that account by Peter. He received in vision a more extensive view of the Savior’s three-day mission (see D&C 138).

Studying the Scriptures

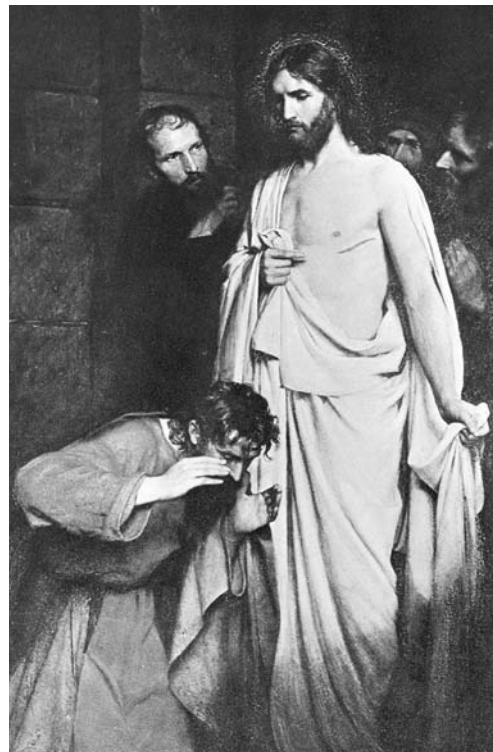
Do activity A as you study John 20.

A Christ the Lord Is Risen

How can we know that Jesus Christ was resurrected? John 20 records three levels of knowledge concerning the Resurrection. Discover these levels by reading the references below and answering the accompanying questions:

- Read John 20:1–10. What evidence do these verses give of the Resurrection? How is an empty tomb evidence? How did the empty tomb affect what Mary Magdalene, Peter, and “that other disciple” (John) believed?
- What new evidence was given to Mary Magdalene? (see vv. 11–18). How did this experience affect Mary’s belief regarding the Resurrection of the Savior?
- According to John 20:19–20, after the Lord had appeared to ten of the Apostles, what did Thomas require before he would believe their story of seeing the Lord? What new evidence did Thomas receive about the Resurrection? What important principle did the Lord teach Thomas about believing in the Resurrection?

How can you know that Jesus was resurrected? Write your testimony of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

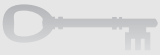


John 21

Carry On the Lord's Work

As John concluded his Gospel he testified that what he had written was true and indicated that if all that Jesus had done were written "the world itself could not contain the books that should be written" (John 21:25). As you read John 21, think about why John chose these stories to conclude his testimony of Jesus Christ.

Understanding the Scriptures



John 21

Shewed (vv. 1, 14)—Showed
Sea of Tiberias (v. 1)—Sea of Galilee (see Bible Dictionary, "Tiberias, Sea of," p. 785)
Have ye any meat? (v. 5)—Have you anything to eat?
Girt (v. 7)—Put on

Naked (v. 7)—Wearing only an undergarment
Two hundred cubits (v. 8)—Approximately one hundred yards
Girdest (v. 18)—Dressed
Tarry (vv. 22–23)—Remain

John 21:18–19—The Lord Prophesies the Manner of Peter's Death

Jesus Christ invited Peter to follow Him in life (see Matthew 4:18–20). According to tradition, Peter was later crucified upside down in Rome for his unwavering testimony of the Savior.

John 21:20–23—What Happened to John the Beloved?

We know by revelation that John the Beloved asked the Lord if he could remain on earth to bring souls unto Him until the Second Coming (see D&C 7). John was translated so that he could remain on earth to fulfill his desire. You can learn more about the nature of translated beings by reading 3 Nephi 28:7–22.

Studying the Scriptures



Do activities A and B as you study John 21.

A Let's Go Fishing



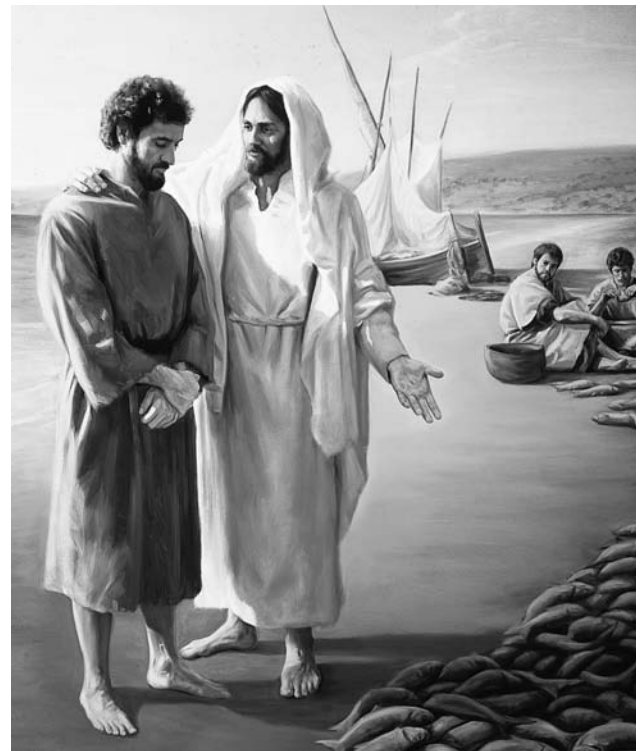
Peter and some of the other Apostles were fishermen by profession. While they fished on the Sea of Galilee the resurrected Lord visited them. Compare John 21:3–11 with Luke 5:4–11 and answer the following questions:

1. How much did they catch all night by themselves?

- How much did they catch when they followed Jesus's direction?
- What blessings can come into your life as you do what the Lord asks of you?
- What do you learn about Peter when he chose to swim to shore?

B From Fisherman to Shepherd

- What was Jesus referring to with the word *these* in John 21:15?
- Who were the lambs and the sheep Peter was to feed? (see vv. 15–17).
- Why might Jesus have asked Peter the same question three times? (see Matthew 26:69–75).
- How well did Peter learn this important lesson from the Savior? (see 1 Peter 5:1–4).
- Earlier in His ministry the Master taught Peter and the Twelve Apostles about being true shepherds. He said, "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep. . . . I lay down my life for the sheep" (John 10:14–15). Read John 21:18–19 and tell how Peter would follow the example of the True Shepherd. In what ways can you symbolically lay down your life to be a shepherd to the Lord's lambs and sheep?



The Acts of the Apostles

Who Wrote the Book of Acts?

The book of Acts was written by Luke, a disciple who traveled with Paul on his missionary journeys.

How Is This Book Different from the Gospels?

The book of Acts is a continuation of the record Luke began in the Gospel of Luke. Luke's Gospel is his account of the life of Jesus Christ; the book of Acts is his description of the fulfillment of the command Jesus gave His Apostles to preach the gospel "in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:47). Both books were addressed to Luke's friend Theophilus (see Luke 1:1-3; Acts 1:1-3).

Acts is not a complete record of everything that happened in the Church after the Savior's Ascension. Luke wrote mainly about the ministry of the Apostle Paul and included a few records about Peter and the other Apostles. Acts is the last book in the New Testament that tells a story; the rest of the books are letters and visions from that time.

When Was Paul's Ministry?

The book of Acts tells mainly about the ministry of Paul, beginning just after the Resurrection of Jesus Christ and ending about A.D. 60 when Paul was a prisoner in Rome. You can learn more about the book of Acts in the Bible Dictionary, "Acts of the Apostles" (pp. 603-4).

Where Did Paul Travel?

A map of the missionary journeys of the Apostle Paul is in the map section in the back of your Bible (see Bible map 13). The accompanying map gives some interesting facts about Paul's time. Compare this with a modern map and find out what these countries are called today.



Have you ever written to someone to tell them some exciting news? Luke wanted his friend Theophilus to know that Jesus

Christ rose from the dead and ascended (returned) into heaven—the greatest news the world has ever known. Luke described how the Savior had extended the call to the Apostles to carry the gospel into all the world before His Second Coming. After He ascended into Heaven, angels promised the Apostles that He would return in a future day in glory. The Apostles accepted the Lord's call to spread the gospel and ordained Matthias as a new Apostle to replace Judas Iscariot. Imagine how Theophilus might have felt receiving such news from Luke.



Understanding the Scriptures



Acts 1

Treatise (v. 1)—Writing

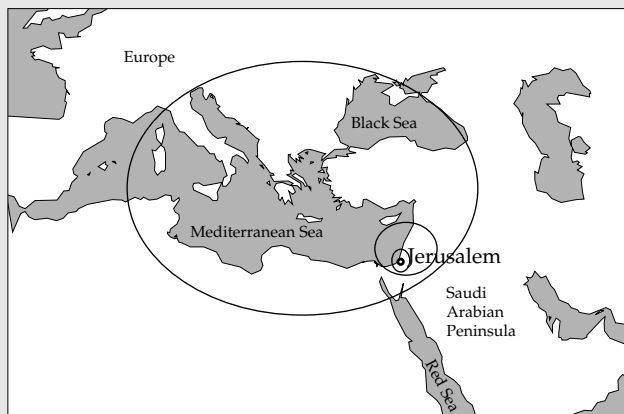
Infallible (v. 3)—Cannot be wrong

With one accord (v. 14)—In unity

Supplication (v. 14)—Asking

Acts 1:8—An Outline for the Book of Acts

The command Jesus gave His Apostles to be witnesses for Him "in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" forms a pattern or outline for the book of Acts: Acts 1-7 records the preaching in Jerusalem, Acts 8-9 reports the spreading of the gospel to Judea and Samaria, and Acts 10-28 tells how the gospel began to be taken to the "uttermost part of the earth." Remember this pattern as you read Acts.



Acts 1:18—How Did Judas Die?

Matthew 27:5 and Acts 1:18 give the impression that Matthew and Luke disagreed about how Judas died. The Joseph Smith Translation shows how both are correct (see JST, Matthew 27:6).

Acts 1:26—What Are Lots?

Giving forth or casting lots was a process similar to drawing straws today. The Apostles were not, however, using a random method to choose a new Apostle. This was a method the Lord had commanded them to use in the past as a way for Him to reveal His will to them (see Leviticus 16:7–8).

Studying the Scriptures

Do activities A and B as you study Acts 1.

A An Assignment for the Apostles

Review Acts 1:1–8 and answer the following questions in your notebook:

1. How long did Jesus visit with His disciples after His Resurrection?
2. What did He teach them?
3. Why were they to remain in Jerusalem? How long?
4. What did they learn about the restoration of Israel at the Second Coming?
5. What did Jesus command them to do after they received the Holy Ghost?

Using the information in “An Outline for the Book of Acts” in the “Understanding the Scriptures” section above, write an outline for the book of Acts next to verse 8 in the margin of your scriptures.

B A New Apostle Is Chosen

Review the account in Acts 1:13–26 of the Apostles calling a new Apostle to replace Judas, noting how they “appointed,” “prayed,” and “gave forth their lots.” Write a sentence or two about each of these key ideas to summarize what happened.

Acts 2

A Day of Testimony

Is there a holiday that brings back special memories for you? For the Apostles, the Jewish Feast of Pentecost (see Bible Dictionary, “Feasts,” p. 673) became a memorable one. During the Feast of Pentecost following the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Apostles experienced a marvelous manifestation of the Holy Ghost. Those watching “were all amazed and marvelled” (Acts 2:7) at what they saw. Through the Spirit, the Apostles were able to preach the gospel to the Jews who had come to Jerusalem from many

different countries, even though the people spoke many different languages. Peter explained that it fulfilled the prophecy in Joel 2:28–32 regarding the Spirit coming as a blessing to all. That day he testified to the people that Jesus is the Christ and invited those listening to accept baptism. About three thousand accepted the invitation and were baptized into the Church.



Understanding the Scriptures

Acts 2

Pentecost (v. 1)—Summer feast of harvest

Cloven (v. 3)—Split, forked

Utterance (v. 4)—Ability to speak

Confounded (v. 6)—Puzzled, confused

Proselytes (v. 10)—Converts

Determinate counsel (v. 23)—Appointed purpose

Corruption (v. 27)—Decay, decomposition of the body

Pricked (v. 37)—Touched, felt guilty

Acts 2:1–4—What Happened on the Day of Pentecost?

The Feast of Pentecost, fifty days after the Passover, celebrated the harvest of early summer. This holiday attracted large crowds to Jerusalem for a time of feasting and celebration. When the believers gathered together on this day, the Lord sent the power of the Holy Ghost as He had promised before He ascended into heaven (see Acts 1:4–8).

After receiving this power, the Apostles did not hesitate to speak to the crowds about Jesus Christ. The miracle of Pentecost was that the Holy Ghost gave the Apostles the gift of tongues (see D&C 46:11, 24). All who listened were able to understand what was being preached because the Spirit helped them hear it in their native tongue. This great event brought about three thousand new members into the Church.

Acts 2:44—“All Things Common”

To have all things common is to have such love and unity in the Church that all Saints share what they have with the poor among them. This is a principle of the gospel called “consecration” (see D&C 42:30–39). Elder Bruce R. McConkie described consecration: “The law of consecration is that we consecrate [set apart or devote] our time, our talents, and our money and property to the cause of the Church; such are to be available to the extent they are needed to further the Lord’s interests on earth” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1975, 74; or *Ensign*, May 1975, 50).

Consecration is one of the principles the Saints must learn to live in order to be worthy of the celestial kingdom (see D&C 105:3–5).

Today we are preparing to live the law of consecration as we willingly pay tithing and make other offerings that help people in need.

Studying the Scriptures

Do two of the following activities (A–D) as you study Acts 2.

A Be a News Reporter

The events of that day of Pentecost were remarkable. Imagine you are watching the events described in Acts 2:1–16 as a news reporter. Write an article for the evening paper describing who was involved and what happened.

B A Fulfillment of Prophecy

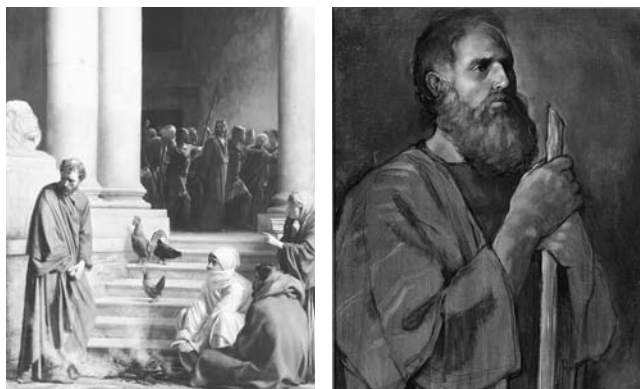
Review Acts 2:6–21 and answer the following questions:

1. Why do you think some who heard the Apostles thought they were drunk?
2. What explanation did Peter give about their behavior?
3. What did the Apostles do that fulfilled the prophecy in Joel 2:28–32?
4. When will Joel’s prophecy again be fulfilled? (see Joseph Smith–History 1:41).

Write about a time when you felt an outpouring of the Spirit in your life.

C A Change in Peter

1. Compare Peter’s actions in Acts 2:22–36 with those in John 18:25–27. Describe how he changed and tell what you think caused the change.



2. How did the events of that Pentecost begin to fulfill the Lord’s promise in Acts 1:4–5, 8?
3. Read Peter’s bold testimony of Jesus Christ. Choose two ideas from his testimony that are most important to you and explain why.

D “What Should We Do?”

Many who heard Peter believed his testimony of Christ and asked what they should do. Peter told them to repent and be baptized. About three thousand people joined the Church that day.

Suppose you had a friend who expressed an interest in the Church. Write a letter to your friend to help him or her understand how and why we should follow Jesus Christ and how we become a member of His Church. In it use what Peter said in Acts 2:37–40 and put it into your own words.

Acts 3

Peter Boldly Preaches Repentance

Acts 3 tells of a miracle Peter and John performed that demonstrated the power Jesus had given them. Peter stopped to help a handicapped man begging at the gate of the temple, using the priesthood to heal the man. Notice what Peter boldly declared to the people who gathered to see the man who was healed.

Understanding the Scriptures

Acts 3

Ninth hour (v. 1)—About 3:00 P.M.

Lame from his mother’s womb (v. 2)—Unable to walk since birth

Alms (v. 2)—Donations to help the poor

Ignorance (v. 17)—Not knowing the truth

Times of refreshing (v. 19)—Second Coming of Christ

Blotted out (v. 19)—Removed, forgiven

Restitution of all things (v. 21)—Latter-day restoration of the gospel

Acts 3:19–21—Peter Testifies of the Restoration

President Joseph Fielding Smith said: “The Lord indicated to the apostles, before his ascension, that the restoration of all things was not for their day or time, and that it was not for them ‘to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power’ [Acts 1:7]. Peter and Paul made it very clear in their teachings that there should come another dispensation of the gospel to succeed that in which they lived, and this final dispensation should be given shortly before the second coming of the Son of God, to prepare mankind and the earth for the restoration of all things spoken of by all the holy prophets [see Acts 3:21]” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 1:164).

Studying the Scriptures

Do activity A or B as you study Acts 3.

A Peter Heals a Lame Beggar

Review the story of Peter healing the lame beggar in Acts 3:1–11 and answer the following questions:

1. How did the lame man get to the temple?
2. What did he want from Peter and John?
3. How did he feel about the gift Peter gave him instead?



4. The lame man asked for money and instead was given strength. How is that like the way the Lord sometimes answers your requests?

B Peter Testifies of a Higher Power

Search Acts 3:12–26 and choose what you think are five of the most important phrases in Peter’s testimony to the Jews. Explain why you chose each one.

Acts 4

Peter and John Are Arrested

Do you remember how angry the Jewish rulers were when Jesus performed miracles? Imagine how they felt when the Apostles started performing miracles in Jesus’s name. As you read Acts 4, look for how bold Peter had become. Also think about why the Jewish rulers were so determined to stop Peter and the other Apostles from bearing witness of Jesus Christ.



Understanding the Scriptures

Acts 4

Grieved (v. 2)—Upset, offended

Kindred (v. 6)—Family

Impotent (v. 9)—Lame

Conferred (v. 15)—Talked, discussed

Straitly (v. 17)—Directly, plainly

Great grace (v. 33)—Power from heaven (see Bible Dictionary, “Grace,” p. 697)

Acts 4:1–3—Why Were the Priests and the Sadducees So Upset?



Pharisee



Sadducee

Men such as Annas and Caiaphas were Sadducees, a group that controlled the temple. They did not believe in the Resurrection and did not like Peter teaching about the Resurrection of Christ. They, with other Jewish leaders and the Romans, crucified Christ for His teachings and thought that would be the end of Christianity. The priests, the Sadducees, and many other groups of people were very upset when the Apostles continued teaching the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Studying the Scriptures

Do one of the following activities (A–C) as you study Acts 4.

A Apostles Arrested for Healing and Teaching

Imagine you were with Peter and John when they healed the lame man (see Acts 3:1–11) and when they were arrested (see Acts 4:1–30). Suppose you had a friend in another city who had not heard about what happened. Write a letter to that friend and try to explain it. Be sure to include the following details:

- The age of the lame man who was healed
- Why the priests and Sadducees were so upset
- The question the high priest asked Peter
- How Peter handled the trial
- What they told Peter and John to do and how the Apostles responded
- How you feel about what happened

B In Your Own Words

Peter bore powerful testimony of Jesus Christ even though he knew it might mean he would be put to death. Rewrite Acts 4:8–12, being careful to keep Peter’s original meaning.

C They Had “All Things Common” among Them

Acts 4:31–37 is a look at life in the early Church. The members were “of one heart and of one soul: . . . they had all things common” (Acts 4:32; see also Acts 2:42–47; “Understanding the Scriptures” section for Acts 2:44, p. 95). Read Acts 4:31–37 and answer the following questions in your notebook:

1. What qualities did those early Saints possess that made it possible for them to share all that they had with one another?
2. What blessings did those people enjoy because of their dedication and faith?
3. Who was in charge of passing out the money and property the Saints contributed?

4. What do we do in the Church today that can help us prepare to live the law of consecration?
5. How would you feel if the members of the Church in your area were called to live this way?

Acts 5 Delivered from Prison

Have you noticed that life is full of trials? It comes as no surprise when the wicked have troubles, but the righteous have been told that they too must endure trials and temptation (see Acts 14:22; James 1:12). Overcoming these trials results in exaltation for the righteous (see Alma 36:3).

Acts 5 contains a good illustration of this principle. The Apostles knew that if they continued to uphold truth they would face great difficulty. But compare what happened to them with what happened to Ananias and Sapphira, who chose not to do what was right.

Understanding the Scriptures



Acts 5

Being privy to (v. 2)—
Knowing about

Conceived (v. 4)—Thought

Wound him up (v. 6)—
Wrapped his dead body in
cloth

Indignation (v. 17)—Self-
righteous anger, jealousy

Keepers standing without
(v. 23)—Guards standing
outside

**Doubted of them whereunto
this would grow** (v. 24)—
Wondered how this would
turn out

Take heed to yourselves
(v. 35)—Think carefully

**Brought to nought, come to
nought** (vv. 36, 38)—Not
amount to anything

Studying the Scriptures



Do activities A and B as you study Acts 5.

A Apostles in Prison Again!

Below you will find possible newspaper headlines for the story in Acts 5:12–32 about the Apostles going to prison again. Compare each headline to the story and write a sentence or two explaining what the headline means.

1. Crowds Gather for Healings (see v. 16)
2. Innocent Men in Prison (see v. 18)
3. Miraculous Jailbreak (see v. 22)
4. Christians Defy the High Priest (see v. 29)

B What Was He Thinking?

Review Acts 5:34–42. Write an entry in your notebook as if you had been there with Peter. Report the actions of the council, especially of Gamaliel, and explain what you think Gamaliel meant.

Acts 6–7 The Death of Stephen

In Acts 5 you read about the disciples “rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for [Jesus’s] name” (Acts 5:41). In Acts 6–7 you will read about one of those early disciples who was not afraid to die for his faith. Stephen testified of the truth so boldly that wicked men stoned him to death. As you read these chapters, look for who Stephen was and what he said that angered the people enough to kill him.



You may not be called upon to die for your testimony as Stephen did. However, you may be called upon to face other challenges as you strive to do what you know is right. Are you ready?

Understanding the Scriptures



Acts 6

Daily ministration (v. 1)—
Daily caring for the poor and
needy

Suborned (v. 11)—Bribed to
lie

Blasphemous (v. 11)—
Disrespectful of God, abusive

Acts 6:1–6—Seven New Leaders Chosen

When the Church grew from a handful of people to thousands of members, the Apostles needed more leaders to help them do

their work. They called and set apart seven men who lived by the Spirit. Today seven men also assist the Apostles. They are the seven Presidents of the Seventy. These men direct the work of the Seventy and help oversee the work of the kingdom of God throughout the world. The organization and assignments of the Seventy have undergone numerous changes as the Church organization has developed.

Acts 7

Sojourn (v. 6)—Live

Host of heaven (v. 42)—Sun, moon, stars

Drave out (v. 45)—Drove out, forced out

Uncircumcised in heart (v. 51)—Wicked

Acts 7:19–25—Did Moses Know Who He Was?



The first chapters of the book of Exodus tell us that Moses knew he was a Hebrew, not an Egyptian. Exodus does not tell us, however, that Moses knew anything of his calling and destiny. Stephen must have had more information than we currently have in our Old Testament, however, because he testified that Moses knew and “supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver

them” from Egyptian bondage (Acts 7:25). Likewise, the Apostle Paul said that Moses “refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God” (Hebrews 11:24–25).

If Moses knew of his calling, how might he have learned about it? Perhaps he learned about it from a prophecy. The Joseph Smith Translation contains a speech given by Joseph (who was sold into Egypt) to his people just before he died. In that speech he prophesied that the Lord would send a deliverer to take Israel out of Egypt and that his name would be Moses (see JST, Genesis 50:24–38). The prophet Lehi also quoted parts of that speech in 2 Nephi 3:6–10.

Studying the Scriptures

Do either activity A or activities B and C as you study Acts 7.

A Stephen, Role Model for Faithful Servants

In Acts 6:3–8 Stephen, one of the seven men chosen to help the Apostles, is described as being honest and full of the Holy Ghost, wisdom, faith, and the power of prayer. Review the story of Stephen in Acts 6–7 and give examples of how Stephen demonstrated each of those qualities.

B Moses, Man of Prophecy and Destiny

Review Stephen’s description of Moses in Acts 7:19–29 and Paul’s description in Hebrews 11:24–25. Write in your notebook what you learned about Moses that you did not know before.

C Scripture Mastery—Acts 7:55–56

Before Stephen was stoned to death for his testimony of the Savior, he testified that he saw Him in a wonderful vision.

Read Acts 7:55–60 and mark his words in your scriptures. Write a summary of his last words and what impressed you about them.

Acts 8–9

The Conversion of Saul



Have you ever done something boldly and enthusiastically because you thought you were doing the right thing, only to find out later that what you were doing was wrong? Acts 8–9 introduces us to Saul of Tarsus, a Pharisee. Saul was one of those who, just as the Savior predicted, thought persecuting the followers of Jesus of Nazareth was doing service to God

(see John 16:2). But Saul’s greatest desire was to do what was right. In these chapters you will read about how Saul the Pharisee became Paul the Apostle and changed from persecutor to prophet.

Understanding the Scriptures

Acts 8

Consenting (v. 1)—Agreeing to

Made havock (v. 3)—Caused disorder or ruin

Bewitched (v. 9)—Amazed

Gall of bitterness (v. 23)—Extreme wickedness

Bond of iniquity (v. 23)—Slavery of sin

Eunuch (v. 27)—Trusted servant

Acts 8:14–17—The Power to Give the Gift of the Holy Ghost

We learn from modern revelation that there is a difference in authority between the Aaronic Priesthood and the Melchizedek Priesthood. The Aaronic Priesthood holds the authority to baptize (see D&C 20:46), but additional authority is needed to confer the gift of the Holy Ghost. The Melchizedek Priesthood is this higher authority. With it, one can confer all the spiritual blessings of the Church, including the gift of the Holy Ghost (see D&C 20:38–41). Philip’s missionary work in Samaria illustrated this difference in authority. Because he held the Aaronic Priesthood he had the authority to teach and baptize the people, but the Apostles had to come to give the new members the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Acts 9

Any of this way (v. 2)—Any who believe in Jesus Christ
Kick against the pricks (v. 5)—Fight against the promptings of the Spirit

Chosen vessel (v. 15)—Person foreordained for special service

Assayed (v. 26)—Attempted

Acts 9:7—What Did the Men See or Hear?

The Joseph Smith Translation clears up differences in the accounts of what the men saw and heard during Paul's experience in Acts 9:7 and 22:9 (see JST, Acts 9:7).

Studying the Scriptures

Do activities A–C as you study Acts 8–9.

A Simon the Sorcerer

The Church members faced great persecution because of persecutors like Saul and had to flee from Jerusalem. Phillip fled to Samaria where he met Simon, a sorcerer. Review Acts 8:1–24 and answer the following questions:

1. What did the people think of Simon before Philip came?
2. Where did they think Simon's power came from?
3. What did Simon think of Philip's message?
4. Why did Peter and John go to Samaria? (see the "Understanding the Scriptures" section for Acts 8:14–17).
5. What did Simon want from Peter?
6. What did Peter teach Simon about the priesthood?

B Philip and the Ethiopian

Philip took many opportunities to use his priesthood as he traveled. When he saw an Ethiopian man struggling to understand the scriptures, he ran and preached the gospel of repentance to him. In Doctrine and Covenants 13 we learn that the Aaronic Priesthood holds the keys, or power, to (1) receive the ministering of angels, (2) teach the gospel of repentance, and (3) baptize by immersion for the remission of sins. Read Acts 8:26–40 and describe in your notebook how Philip used each of those powers.

C "Saul, Why Persecutest Thou Me?"



Acts 9:1–31 contains an account of Saul's miraculous conversion on the road to Damascus and the beginning of his missionary career. Several events help us understand why Saul (who became known as Paul) was so dedicated to the gospel after this experience.

1. From your reading of Acts 9, write an explanation of each event illustrated.
2. Write a paragraph summarizing what this chapter teaches about Saul and about the Lord's patience with His children, especially those who want to do what is right.

Acts 10

The Gospel Is for Everyone

Since the time of Moses there had been a very careful distinction made between God's covenant people and everyone else. The Jews believed that the only way a Gentile (non-Israelite) could be acceptable to God was for that person to first become a Jew by submitting to all of the ordinances and requirements of the law of Moses.

Peter had two experiences that dramatically changed the practice of the Church and a thousand years of Jewish tradition. Through a vision, he learned that God is truly "no respecter of persons" (Acts 10:34). Peter then had a remarkable meeting with some devout Gentiles. Until then it appears that all who had joined the Church were either Jews or were Gentiles who had previously been converted to Judaism. Peter was able to teach the people that the law of Moses had been completely fulfilled and that Gentiles could come directly into the Church without first becoming Jews.

Understanding the Scriptures

Acts 10

Centurion (v. 1)—Roman military commander

Ninth hour (v. 3)—About 3:00 P.M.

Alms (v. 4)—Donations to the poor

Sixth hour (v. 9)—About noon

Fell into a trance (v. 10)—The Holy Spirit came upon him

Common or unclean (v. 14)—Forbidden by Mosaic law

Accompanied (v. 23)—Went with

Gainsaying (v. 29)—Objecting

Perceive (v. 34)—Understand

They of the circumcision (v. 45)—Jewish converts to Christianity



Telling time in Jesus's day

Acts 10—A Modern Parallel

Peter's vision, teaching him that God is "no respecter of persons" (Acts 10:34), brought a major change in the Church. For the first time, Gentiles were baptized into the Church without regard to the requirements of the law of Moses. This helped the Church grow rapidly among all people, not only among Jews.

A similar situation existed in the Church in our day. Since Old Testament times, Heavenly Father had restricted the right to hold the priesthood. At the time of Abraham the right to the priesthood was patriarchal, meaning that it was passed from father to son (see D&C 107:40; Abraham 1:2–4, 26–27). In the days of Moses the Melchizedek Priesthood was taken from Israel and the Aaronic Priesthood was held only by the tribe of Levi (see Numbers 18:6–8). When the gospel was restored in the latter days, the Melchizedek Priesthood was also restored and the right to bear that priesthood was given to many outside of the house of Israel.

In June of 1978 the Lord revealed to President Spencer W. Kimball that the time had come that "all worthy male members of the Church may be ordained to the priesthood without regard for race or color" (Official Declaration 2). Again the Lord acted to help the Church take the gospel to all of Heavenly Father's children throughout the world.

Studying the Scriptures

Do activity A or B as you study Acts 10.

A A Thousand Years of Law and Tradition Ended by Revelation

After reading Acts 10, write a diary entry about Peter's experience as if you were he. Imagine what it would have been like to receive a revelation that ended a practice of the law of Moses that was observed for many generations. Be sure to tell about the following events and how Peter might have felt about them:

- Peter's vision on the housetop (see vv. 9–16)
- Cornelius's vision (see vv. 1–8)
- Peter's meeting with the Gentiles (see vv. 17–48)

Explain why this was such an amazing event (see the introduction for Acts 10).

B Peter's Vision of a Great Sheet

Draw a picture of Peter's vision of the great sheet or list the unclean animals Peter may have seen. See Leviticus 11 for a list of unclean animals.

Acts 11–12 Being a Christian

As members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, we are Christians. We know that Jesus Christ is the

head of this Church. We know that He is our Savior and Redeemer. As Christians, we try to follow His example in all things.

Acts 11–12 shows how Jesus Christ guided His early Church by revelation and blessed the Saints in difficult times.

Understanding the Scriptures

Acts 11

Contended (v. 2)—Argued
Rehearsed . . . and expounded (v. 4)—Explained the way it happened
Cleave unto (v. 23)—Stay, remain
Signified by the Spirit (v. 28)—Shown the truth by the Spirit

Acts 12

Vex (v. 1)—Trouble, persecute
Smote (v. 7)—Hit, struck
Gird thyself (v. 8)—Fasten your clothes with your belt
First and the second ward (v. 10)—First and second guard
Constantly affirmed (v. 15)—Insisted
Beckoning (v. 17)—Making a sign with the hand
No small stir (v. 18)—Great disturbance

Acts 12:1–3, 21–23—Which Wicked King Herod?

There are several Herods mentioned in the New Testament. The King Herod at the time of Christ's birth was the father and grandfather of the others (see Bible Dictionary, "Herod," pp. 700–701). He was a king because of his political friendship with the Romans. He was not a Jew, and the Jews hated him for his cruelty. The Herod that killed James was Herod Agrippa I, the grandson of the first Herod. He persecuted the Christians because he was eager to please the Jewish leaders. His son, Herod Agrippa II, listened to Paul teach the gospel and found no fault in him (see Acts 25:13–26:32).

Studying the Scriptures

Do activity A or B as you study Acts 12.

A The Prophet Announces a Major Policy Change

1. Review Acts 11:1–18 and answer the following questions:
 - a. How did the Saints in Jerusalem react when they heard that Peter had met with and eaten with Gentiles?
 - b. What did Peter say to defend himself (see Acts 11:4–17)?
 - c. What did the Saints do when they heard Peter's explanation?
2. Read Doctrine and Covenants 21:4–6 and explain why it is essential to follow the revelations of the Lord given through His prophet.

B An Angel Helps Peter Escape



The story in Acts 12:1–19 is a remarkable one. List what you think are three or four significant events in these verses and explain why they impressed you.

Acts 13–14

Paul's First Mission

In what countries have missionaries from your family or area served? Missionaries today are sent almost everywhere in the world. Paul played an important part in starting this worldwide missionary effort.

Acts 13 tells about Paul's being called on his first missionary journey. He left Antioch with Barnabas and traveled to Cyprus and what is now known as Turkey. Many people accepted his message, but others considered him an enemy and tried to stop the work he was doing. In spite of this opposition, he was able to begin many new branches of the Church wherever he went. Like the missionaries you know, Paul served with all his heart to bring the gospel to the people of the world.



Understanding the Scriptures



Acts 13

Separate (v. 2)—Set apart for a mission

Subtilty (v. 10)—Lying, deceit

Corruption (vv. 35–37)—Decay of the body

Justified (v. 39)—Forgiven, declared not guilty

Proselytes (v. 43)—Converts

Expelled (v. 50)—Forced to leave

Acts 14

Made their minds evil affected (v. 2)—Turned their minds against

Jupiter . . . Mercurius (v. 12)—Two false gods of Roman mythology

Scarce restrained (v. 18)—Barely stopped or held back

Studying the Scriptures



Do two of the following activities (A–D) as you study Acts 13–14.

A Paul's Mission Begins



Read Acts 13:1–5 and answer the following questions:

1. How was Paul (Saul) called on a mission?
2. Who was called to serve with Paul?
3. How does the fifth article of faith apply to that situation?

B Teaching in the Synagogue

Paul used the same approach to teach the gospel in Antioch that he used in most of the places on his first mission. As you read Acts 13:14–52, answer the following questions in your notebook:

1. Where did Paul go first when he wanted to teach the gospel in Antioch?
2. Why did Paul remind the people about Israelite history? (see Acts 13:16–22).



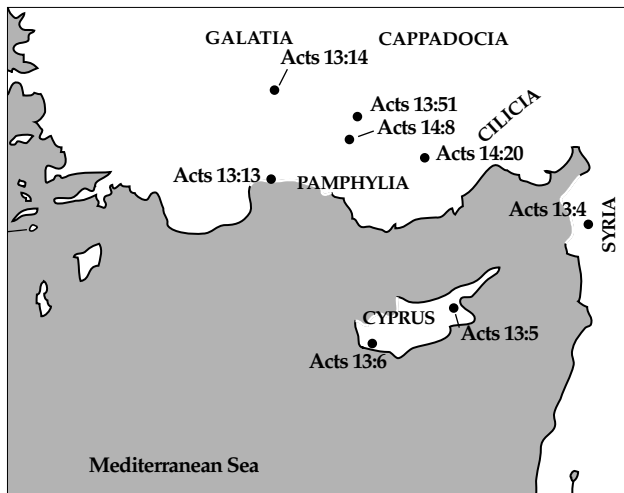
3. How does the reaction of the people in Antioch compare with the way people respond to the missionaries today?

C Tribulation and the Kingdom of God

Paul said that we enter the kingdom of God only through much tribulation (see Acts 14:22). Compare what happened to Paul in Acts 14:6–18 to what happened in verses 19–21. How was each experience an example of what Paul said in verse 22?

D Take a Trip with Paul

In your notebook, draw a map like the one shown below. Label the places Paul went on his first mission and use arrows to show his travels. See Bible map 13 if you need help.



Acts 15

The Jerusalem Conference

Are members of the Church ever confused about what is correct Church doctrine? In Acts 15 we read about a situation like that in the early Church. Many of the Jews who had joined the Church felt that the law of Moses and the ordinance of circumcision were still necessary. They even expected the Gentiles who wanted to become Christians to follow those Jewish customs. As you read this chapter, notice how disputes over doctrine were settled in the Church. Are you aware of any modern examples of this process of settling doctrinal disputes?

Understanding the Scriptures



Acts 15

Disputation (v. 2)—Argument
Residue (v. 17)—Part of, remains
Abstain from pollutions of idols (v. 20)—Refuse to participate in idol worship
Tarried (v. 33)—Stayed
Contention (v. 39)—Arguing, fighting with words

Acts 15:1–5—Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians

As you learned in the Gospels, the Pharisees were Jews who strictly observed the law of Moses and the traditions of the elders (see the introduction to Matthew 12 in this study guide, p. 20). When some of those Pharisees were converted to the gospel of Jesus Christ, they wanted to keep their traditions and believed that everyone who joined the Church, including the Gentiles, should do the same.

Paul understood that that was not right because the law of Moses, including the requirement of circumcision, had been fulfilled in Jesus Christ (see Luke 24:44; 3 Nephi 15:4–5). Neither Jewish Christians nor gentile Christians were required to live by the lesser law anymore. The disagreement between Paul and the Jewish Christians caused dissension in the Church that could only be settled by the Apostles in a Church conference.

At the conference, Peter explained that the Lord had revealed to him that gentile believers were acceptable to God without the regulations of the law of Moses (see Acts 10). The council decided to require obedience to only a portion of the old law, including that which kept the people from idolatry. Notice the process by which the problem was solved:

- The leaders of the Church met in council to consider the problem (see Acts 15:1–6).
- The prophet and President of the Church explained what the Lord had revealed on the subject (see vv. 7–11).
- Other Church leaders spoke to sustain the counsel of the President and confirm that the answer was from God (see vv. 12–20).
- The decision of the council was sent out to the rest of the members (see vv. 22–31).

The two Official Declarations (following D&C 138) are modern examples of this process in the Church.

Studying the Scriptures



Do activity A or B as you study Acts 15.

A Resolving Doctrinal Disputes

In Acts 15 is an example of how doctrinal disputes are resolved in the Lord's Church (see the "Understanding the Scriptures" section for Acts 15:1–5). Review the following questions about settling disputes and write the answers in your notebook:

1. What was the dispute about in Acts 15? To whom did the people go to get an answer?
2. Who stood up first to answer the question? What was his calling in the Church? (see Matthew 16:16–19). How did he know that God accepted the Gentiles who believed and

repented and did not require them to live the law of Moses? (see Acts 10).

3. Which other Church leaders spoke? Did they agree or disagree? (see Acts 15:12–22).
4. How did the rest of the Church learn the answer to the dispute? (see Acts 15:22–31).
5. What examples do we have of this process in the Church today?

B Cultural Differences in a Worldwide Church

The dispute over circumcision and the law of Moses in Acts 15 was not just a dispute over doctrine but a clash of cultures and traditions as well. The Gentiles Paul had converted came from many different countries and their traditions were very different from those of the Jews. Elder Richard G. Scott, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, said:

“Appreciation for ethnic, cultural, or national heritage can be very wholesome and beneficial, but it can also perpetuate patterns of life that should be set aside by a devoted Latter-day Saint. . . .

“[President Howard W. Hunter said]: ‘I suggest that you place the highest priority on your membership in the Church of Jesus Christ. Measure whatever anyone else asks you to do, whether it be from your family, loved ones, your cultural heritage, or traditions you have inherited—measure everything against the teachings of the Savior. Where you find a variance from those teachings, set that matter aside and do not pursue it. It will not bring you happiness’ (*Prepare Yourself* [pamphlet, 1996], 1–2)” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1998, 112; or *Ensign*, May 1998, 85).

Think of a custom that may be important to members of the Church from one country and not another. Write your example and explain what you think a person should do about that custom according to President Hunter and Elder Scott.



Acts 16

Paul Begins His Second Mission

What difficulties might people encounter when they visit another country? We have many modern conveniences today that make travel much easier than it was only fifty years ago.

Imagine the hardships a traveler faced back in A.D. 50. In Acts 15:40–18:22 we read about the travels of Paul on his second missionary journey. He willingly endured the perils of traveling, persecution, and many other obstacles as he spread the gospel. Bible map 13 shows where Paul went on that second mission. As you read Acts 16, think about how Paul’s experiences compare to those of missionaries in our day.



Understanding the Scriptures



Acts 16

Assayed (v. 7)—Tried, attempted

Constrained (v. 15)—Urged

Spirit of divination (v. 16)—Evil fortunetelling

Soothsaying (v. 16)—Fortunetelling, predicting the future by evil means

Magistrates (v. 20)—Judges

Studying the Scriptures



Do activity A or B as you study Acts 16.

A Paul’s Mission to Philippi

Review Acts 16:6–15 and arrange the following events in the order they occurred in the passage:

- Paul traveled to Philippi.
- Paul met Timothy.
- The Spirit would not allow Paul to preach in certain areas.
- Paul saw a vision of a man from Macedonia.
- Paul met Lydia.

B Tell the Story of Paul and the Soothsayer

Acts 16 tells the story of Paul’s missionary visit to Philippi. Tell the story in your own words by answering the following questions:

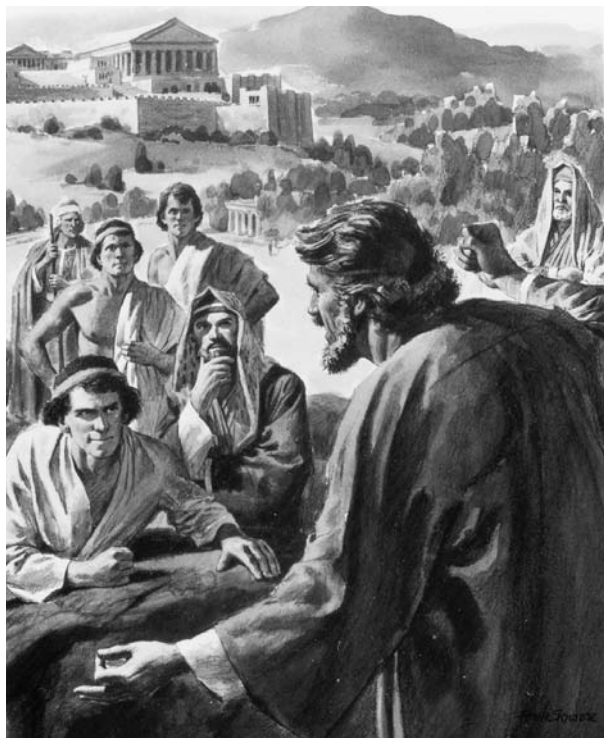
1. Why did Paul go to the city of Philippi in Macedonia?
2. Who was Lydia?
3. Why didn’t Paul want the soothsayer to testify that he and Silas were the “servants of the most high God”?



4. Why were Paul and Silas put in prison? What did they do about it?
5. Why did their jailor get baptized?

Acts 17–18

“We Are the Offspring of God”



Have you ever tried to share your testimony of Heavenly Father with someone who did not believe in Him at all? Was it difficult to express what you know in terms that person could understand? Paul had a similar experience in ancient Greece when he tried to teach the people that we are the offspring of God. The people there believed in many gods, but they had no idea of a Father in Heaven. Notice how Paul used what they understood to teach them about what they did not understand.

Understanding the Scriptures



Acts 17

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>Opening and alleging (v. 3)—Explaining and showing, teaching</p> <p>Consorted (v. 4)—Joined</p> <p>Lewd . . . baser sort (v. 5)—Wicked, filthy-minded</p> <p>Taken security (v. 9)—Paid money to guarantee peace</p> | <p>Disputed (v. 17)—Discussed, reasoned</p> <p>A setter forth (v. 18)—One who teaches</p> <p>Clave unto him (v. 34)—They joined with him</p> |
|---|---|

Acts 17:18—“Philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoicks”

The Epicureans and Stoicks were two groups of philosophers in ancient Greece. The Epicureans believed that the world came into existence by chance and that if gods did exist they were not concerned nor involved with man. To them life’s highest goal was to pursue pleasure and avoid sorrow and pain. (See Bible Dictionary, “Epicureans,” p. 666.)

The Stoicks believed in a divine power that had created and ordered the universe and then had established fixed laws to govern life. They taught that man’s individual needs were of no importance and it was his duty to accept his lot in life. Stoicks also believed that only things that could be perceived by the physical senses were real. (See Bible Dictionary, “Stoicks,” p. 777.)

Acts 17:22–31—Paul Testifies of the God of Heaven

Paul testified of several ways that God differs from idols:

- God created all things in heaven and earth.
- He cannot be confined to a manmade statue or building.
- He is the Creator of all men, and all men are brothers.
- He decides when and where men will live.
- He is not an image of stone or metal; He is our Father and we are literally His children.
- He has commanded us to seek Him, repent, and keep His commandments.
- There will be a day when He will judge all mankind.

Acts 18

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>Wrought (v. 3)—Worked</p> <p>Opposed themselves (v. 6)—Set themselves in opposition to Paul</p> | <p>Made insurrection (v. 12)—Attacked</p> <p>Fervent (v. 25)—Zealous</p> <p>Was disposed (v. 27)—Desired</p> |
|--|---|

Studying the Scriptures



Do the following activity as you study Acts 17–18.

A Paul Teaches of the Unknown God

When Paul went to Athens he found the Greeks—particularly the Epicureans and Stoicks—open to new ideas. Paul preached a sermon about their unknown god and taught them about the one true God of heaven (see Acts 17:16–31).

1. After reading the “Understanding the Scriptures” section for Acts 17, describe how the truths Paul taught in his sermon corrected some of the false ideas described.
2. What are some of the false ideas that some people have today that could be corrected by a proper understanding of what God is really like?

Acts 19–20

Priesthood Authority and Paul’s Third Missionary Journey

Have you ever wondered how Heavenly Father feels about those who baptize and perform other ordinances in His name without having the proper priesthood authority? Is there a difference between those whom God has called and those who call themselves? Acts 18:23–21:17 shows how the differences were apparent in Paul’s third missionary journey, when he traveled to Ephesus, Greece, Miletus, and other places.



Understanding the Scriptures

Acts 19

Divers (v. 9)—Some, several
Vagabond Jews, exorcists (v. 13)—Jews who traveled around claiming to have the power to cast out evil spirits
Adjure (v. 13)—Command

Curious arts (v. 19)—Sorcery, witchcraft, magic
That way (v. 23)—Christianity
Implead one another (v. 38)—Make a formal complaint, press charges

Acts 20

Exhortation (v. 2)—Strong encouragement
Laid wait (vv. 3, 19)—Plotted against
Minding (v. 13)—Deciding

Shunned (v. 27)—Refused, rejected
Grievous (v. 29)—Cruel, wicked
Perverse (v. 30)—False, evil

Acts 19:23–41—The Riot of the Silversmiths

Notice the effect Paul’s preaching had in Ephesus. As certain Gentiles heard and accepted Paul’s message, they gave up their idolatry. Because they no longer worshiped at the temple of Diana, the people also stopped purchasing the little statues of the goddess by which Demetrius and the other silversmiths made their living. The silversmiths began a riot against the Christians, claiming to be fighting for the honor of their false goddess but really hoping to regain the source of their wealth.

Acts 20:28–30—Paul Prophecies of the Apostasy

Paul saw that an apostasy would occur because of the unrighteousness of the people. Elder James E. Talmage wrote: “Not only would outsiders ingratiate themselves with the saints for purposes of selfish gain—wolves entering in, and not sparing the flock,—but schisms and divisions were imminent; and these dissensions were to come through some then present—men who would aspire to leadership, and who would set up their own doctrines, thus drawing disciples away from the Church and unto themselves” (*The Great Apostasy* [1953], 28). For other descriptions of the Apostasy, see Matthew 24:23–24; Galatians 1:6–8; 2 Thessalonians 2:1–3; and 2 Peter 2:1–3.

Studying the Scriptures

Do one of the following activities (A–D) as you study Acts 19–20.

A Be a Detective

Paul met some disciples who said they had already been baptized (see Acts 19:1–7). After he had questioned them, however, he determined that they needed to be baptized again. Study those verses and figure out which of the options below is the best explanation for why Paul baptized them again (see also D&C 22):

1. Paul did not believe that John the Baptist had the authority to baptize.
2. Those disciples were baptized in the manner that John the Baptist baptized, but by someone who did not have the proper authority.
3. When John baptized them he forgot to tell them about Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost, so Paul baptized them again.

B How Essential Is Priesthood Authority?



Review the events Luke recorded in Acts 19:1–17. Explain how Paul’s actions showed that priesthood authority is required to perform all priesthood ordinances.

C Sleeping in Church

In Acts 20:1–12 we read about what happened to a young man who fell asleep while Paul was speaking. If you were a local news reporter, what would you write about that event for the paper? Consider how that event must have shocked the congregation. Be sure your article is based on the facts in this passage.

D Paul's Farewell Speech

When missionaries leave the area in which they have served on their mission, they say farewell to people they have labored with, taught the gospel to, and grown to love. Paul's farewell speech to the people he was leaving was somewhat different from a regular farewell.

1. Read Acts 20:17–38 and describe how Paul's farewell speech was different from other missionary farewells.
2. Choose at least two principles that Paul taught in these verses that impressed you and explain why.
3. Select an appropriate Church hymn for that kind of a farewell and tell why you chose it.

Acts 21–23

Paul Is Arrested in Jerusalem

One of the most difficult lessons to learn in mortality is that service in the kingdom of God is not always easy. Even the most faithful of God's servants must endure hardship and trials. Paul suffered a great deal for the cause of Jesus Christ. After his return to Jerusalem after his third missionary journey, he was arrested and imprisoned for several years by Roman authorities. Through all of this the Lord sustained and protected him and gave him the opportunity to preach the gospel before kings and rulers.

Understanding the Scriptures

Acts 21

Girdle (v. 11)—Sash or cloth to wrap around the waist

Zealous (v. 20)—Eager, devoted

Vow (v. 23)—Special promise to demonstrate dedication to God

Tumult (v. 34)—Uproar, riot

Acts 22

This way (v. 4)—Followers of Christ, Christians

In a trance (v. 17)—Carried away in the Spirit

Martyr (v. 20)—Person killed for his beliefs

Cast off their clothes (v. 23)—Tore off their coats to demonstrate anger

Acts 23

Whited wall (v. 3)—Wall painted to look clean; symbol for those who pretended to be good but were inwardly evil

Dissension (vv. 7, 10)—Disagreement, argument

Conspiracy (v. 13)—Plot or scheme to do evil

Acts 23:24–35—Who Was Felix?

Antonius Felix was a Roman who was appointed governor of the province of Judea. His headquarters were at Caesarea. His wife, Drusilla (see Acts 24:24), was the daughter of Herod Agrippa I. Felix was replaced by Porcius Festus (see Acts 24:27). For more information, see the Bible Dictionary, "Felix" (p. 674).



Ruins of Caesarea

Studying the Scriptures

Do activities B and D and then one other activity (A, C, or E) as you study Acts 21–23.

A Paul's Return Trip to Jerusalem



The Roman conquest of the land where Paul traveled was, in some ways, a blessing. The Roman Empire brought an enforced peace that made travel safer, and the construction of better roads made travel easier. Still, travel in Paul's day was much more difficult than it is today. Whether Paul

traveled on foot or by sea, his journeys usually took weeks or even months, and his return trip to Jerusalem was no exception.

On his way to Jerusalem, Paul stopped to visit branches of the Church. Below is a list of places mentioned in Acts 21. Keeping his mode of travel in mind, list in your notebook about how many miles Paul had to travel from each city to get to the next (see Bible map 13).

1. Coos (Cos)
2. Rhodes
3. Patara
4. Cyprus
5. Tyre
6. Ptolemais
7. Caesarea
8. Jerusalem

B Agabus Prophecies about Paul

A Church member named Agabus had the spirit of prophecy and foretold what would happen to Paul in Jerusalem.

1. Review Acts 21:10–13 and write what Agabus prophesied.
2. Summarize how Paul responded and tell why you think Paul felt that way.
3. What passages of scripture would bring you courage and comfort if the Savior were to ask you to give your life in His service?

C Paul Is Arrested in Jerusalem

The Lord often has an interesting way of accomplishing His purposes. Paul knew by revelation that he would yet testify in Rome (see Acts 19:21; 23:11), but his journey to Rome actually began with his arrest in Jerusalem. As you review Acts 21:27–40, consider the statements below and determine which are true:

1. Paul took a Gentile to the temple with him (see Acts 21:29).
2. Paul taught the people that the gospel replaced the law of Moses (see v. 28).
3. A Roman soldier saved Paul's life (see v. 32).
4. Paul and an Egyptian created an uproar in the city (see v. 38).



D Paul Testifies before Kings and Rulers

The Roman captain let Paul speak to the Jews who had attacked him. Paul took the opportunity to share his conversion story and testimony. Most of what he said is similar to what we read in Acts 9:1–18. What new information do we learn in Acts 22:17–21 that was not a part of the story in Acts 9?

E The Benefits of Being a Roman Citizen

Roman citizens received special benefits that were not available to citizens of the countries they conquered. For example, Roman citizens could not be punished without a trial (see Acts 16:37). They could also appeal to Rome for a hearing before Caesar (see Acts 25:11). A person could become a citizen by birth (if one's parents were Romans) or buy citizenship, but that was very expensive. Paul was a Roman citizen by birth, but we do not know the details why.

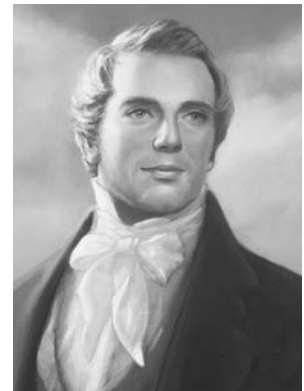
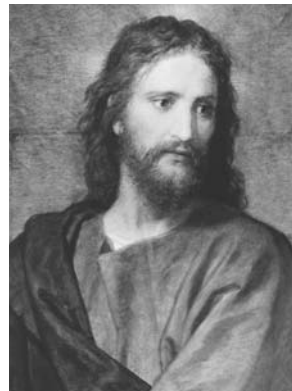
1. Read Acts 22:24–23:35 (see also JST, Acts 22:29–30). Record the ways Paul was treated differently because he was a Roman citizen.
2. What does it cost to be a citizen or member of God's kingdom? What benefits does such membership bring?

Acts 24–26

Paul Spreads the Gospel

When the Jewish leaders succeeded in getting the Romans to crucify Jesus Christ they thought that would be the end of Christianity. To their dismay, the “good news” of the gospel not only survived but continued to spread faster than before. The Christians reached out to the hated Gentiles and promised them salvation through Jesus Christ on equal footing with the Jews—without the law of Moses. As you read Acts 24–26, look for what the Jewish leaders tried to do to Paul so they could stop the spread of the gospel. Did they succeed?

A similar situation arose when Jesus Christ restored His gospel in the latter days. The mobs thought they had put an end to the restored Church when they killed the Prophet Joseph Smith but, as he had prophesied, “no unhallowed hand can stop the work from progressing; . . . 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).



Understanding the Scriptures



Acts 24

Tedious (v. 4)—Bothersome
Clemency (v. 4)—Fairness,
mercy

Sedition (v. 5)—Rebellion,
treason

Profane (v. 6)—Defile, make unclean

Heresy (v. 14)—False doctrine

Deferred them (v. 22)—Made them wait

Acts 24:27—Who Was Festus?

Porcius Festus was a Roman who was appointed to replace Felix as governor of Judea (see Bible Dictionary, “Festus,” p. 674).

Acts 25

Ascended (v. 1)—Went up

Grievous (v. 7)—Serious

Appeal unto Caesar (vv. 11, 21, 25)—It was the right of a Roman citizen to ask to be judged before Caesar Augustus

Licence (v. 16)—Right, permission

Pomp (v. 23)—Show of importance

Acts 25:13—Who Were King Agrippa and Bernice?

The King Agrippa mentioned here is Herod Agrippa II, the son of Herod Agrippa I. Bernice was his sister (see Bible Dictionary, “Herod,” pp. 700–701).

Acts 26

Beseech (v. 3)—Ask, plead

Straightest sect (v. 5)—Strict religious group; the Pharisees

Pricks (v. 14)—Fight against the promptings of the Spirit

Mad (v. 24)—Insane

Studying the Scriptures

Do one of the following activities (A–B) as you study Acts 24–26.

A Be a Courtroom Observer

Acts 24 tells of Paul’s two appearances before Felix. Review what the following people said and did in those two trials and answer the questions in your notebook as if you had been there watching:



1. What did Tertullus say about Felix and Paul? How much of it was true?
2. What did Paul say was the real reason for his arrest?
3. What did Paul say that caused Felix to tremble?
4. Why didn’t Felix let Paul go?
5. Who do you know who has the courage to stand up for what he or she believes, even in difficult situations? What could you do to develop that kind of courage?

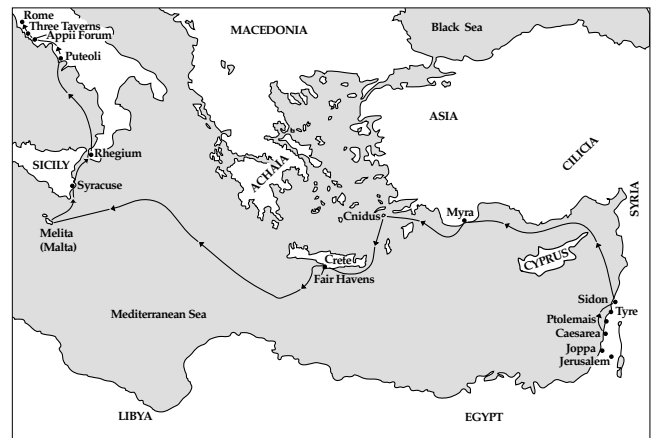
B “Almost Thou Persuadest Me to Be a Christian”

1. Review Acts 26 and compare the differences in the reactions of Festus, the Roman, and Agrippa, the Jew, to Paul’s testimony. Which of them said, “Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian”? Why do you think each man reacted the way he did?
2. What might prevent people today from fully accepting the truth when they hear it?

Acts 27–28

Paul Testifies All the Way to Rome

The Roman authorities in Judea realized that Paul had done nothing wrong and were in favor of letting him go free. But Paul had requested to be tried before Caesar, so he was sent to Rome (see Acts 26:31–32). That might seem unfortunate to us, but it was actually a blessing for Paul. Had he been freed in Judea, the Jews would have continued to try to kill him. Also, the Lord had told Paul that he would “bear witness also at Rome” (Acts 23:11). Sending Paul to Rome as a prisoner of the empire was the safest way to get him there even though the journey was difficult. Paul faced many challenges while on the Lord’s errand, but he was also able to testify all the way to Rome. Notice the opportunities that came to Paul that he would not have had if the journey had been easier.



Paul’s journey to Rome

Understanding the Scriptures



Acts 27

Contrary (v. 4)—Blowing in the wrong direction

The fast (v. 9)—The day of Atonement (Yom Kippur)

Admonished (v. 9)—Warned

Commodious (v. 12)—Comfortable, suitable

Undergirding the ship (v. 17)—Tying ropes under the ship

Long abstinence (v. 21)—Long time without food

Sounded (v. 28)—Dropped a rope to measure the depth of water

Twenty fathoms (v. 28)—100–120 feet (36.5 meters); one fathom is six feet (1.8 meters)

Under colour (v. 30)—Pretending

Threescore (v. 37)—Sixty; one score is twenty



Acts 28

Melita (v. 1)—Malta

Barbarous people, barbarians (vv. 2, 4)—Those people were called barbarous because they spoke neither Greek nor Latin, not because they were uncivilized.

Viper (v. 3)—Poisonous snake

Vengeance (v. 4)—God's justice

Laded (v. 10)—Supplied

Suffered (v. 16)—Allowed, permitted

Constrained (v. 19)—Forced by circumstances, of necessity

This sect (v. 22)—Christianity, the Church of Jesus Christ

Acts 28:30—The Final Years of Paul's Life

We learn from other sources that Paul was tried and released after two years in Rome. He visited several more places in his missionary efforts, perhaps traveling as far as Spain. After about four years he was arrested again and taken to Rome. He was martyred there, probably in the spring of A.D. 65. (See Bible Dictionary, "Paul," pp. 742–43.)

Studying the Scriptures



Do the following activity as you study Acts 27–28.

A Paul, a Tireless Missionary

Paul's journey to Rome was full of challenges but he turned them into opportunities.

1. Acts 27–28 tells how Paul took many opportunities to teach and bless others. Describe each opportunity in your notebook and list the blessings that came to Paul and to others because of his faith and courage.
2. Think back over all you have learned about the Apostle Paul and describe one characteristic or quality he had that impressed you. Give at least one example from Paul's life that illustrates that quality.
3. What could you do to better develop that quality in your own life?

The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans



The book of Romans begins the section of the New Testament called the Pauline Epistles. An epistle is “more than a letter; it is a formal teaching instrument” (Bible Dictionary, “Epistles,” 667). Paul wrote his epistles to Saints in faraway places to counsel and comfort them as the Church grew. For more information about the Pauline Epistles, see “Previewing the

New Testament—The Table of Contents” in this manual (p. 8) and “Pauline Epistles” in the Bible Dictionary (pp. 743–48).

When Was Romans Written?

The Apostle Paul wrote his epistle to the Romans before the end of his third missionary journey (around A.D. 57–59; approximately twenty-five years after the Resurrection of Jesus Christ). He was in Corinth at the time and had not yet made his last trip to Jerusalem. For more information and an outline of Romans, see the section on the epistle to the Romans in “Pauline Epistles” in the Bible Dictionary (p. 745).

Who Were the Romans Paul Wrote To?

Rome was the largest city and the capital of the Roman Empire (see Bible map 8). Paul was not writing to all Romans but to the members of the Church in Rome, who were baptized, given the gift of the Holy Ghost, and had an understanding of basic gospel principles. The subjects Paul wrote about would have been difficult and confusing to people outside the Church. The book of Romans is still a source of doctrinal misunderstanding among Christian churches today. Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, however, recognize Romans as a treasure of gospel teachings and wise counsel because they have the gift of the Holy Ghost and the inspired guidance of ancient and modern prophets.



Some Important Teachings from Romans

Romans contains some of Paul’s finest doctrinal teachings. Much of it is Paul’s persuasive argument against Jewish Christians who believed that it was necessary to live the law of Moses. He taught that the law of the gospel replaced the law of Moses and explained that if it were required that everyone keep the full law in order to receive God’s blessings, then everyone would fall short. No one, except Jesus Christ, has lived or will live a sinless life.

Paul pointed out that the only way to become right with the law (he used the word *justified*) is to exercise faith in the Lord, repent of our sins, and strive to keep the commandments. Paul included his testimony that through the power and grace of Jesus Christ, each of us can become clean and worthy and become joint-heirs with the Savior, receiving all that Heavenly Father has.

Romans 1

“I Am Not Ashamed of the Gospel of Christ”

The gospel of Jesus Christ provides the path that leads us to peace and happiness in this life and eternal life with our Heavenly Father. Satan, on the other hand, tempts us to follow a path that leads to misery and destruction. Paul described these different paths in vivid detail in Romans 1. Then he boldly declared which path he had chosen to follow: “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth” (Romans 1:16).

Understanding the Scriptures



Romans 1

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| Made of the seed (v. 3)—
Descendant | • | Maliciousness (v. 29)—Desire
to hurt another |
| Fruit (v. 13)—Converts to the
gospel | • | Malignity (v. 29)—
Hatefulness |
| Barbarians (v. 14)—Foreigners | • | Whisperers (v. 29)—
Gossipers, slanderers |
| Wrath (v. 18)—Punishment,
anger | • | Without natural affection
(v. 31)—Unloving toward
family and friends |

Romans 1:24–32—“God Also Gave Them Up”

When people reject God, He “gives them up,” or delivers them to suffer the punishment for their sins. This abandonment does not mean that God does not love His children, but shows that they who are wicked abandon Him so He cannot help them. As Paul said, they choose to worship and serve the creature of sin, rather than the Creator (see Romans 1:25). The “uncleanness” and “vile affections” Paul referred to in verses 24–27 are sins of homosexuality and other sexual sins.

Studying the Scriptures



Do activities A and B as you study Romans 1.



Scripture Mastery—Romans 1:16

Actions speak louder than words. Paul said he was not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and his actions proved it. Elder David B. Haight, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve

Apostles, said: “The Apostle Paul was fearless and never wavered in his testimony of Jesus. His faith and determination lifted him from being a tentmaker to become a teacher, a missionary, leader, and organizer of Christian branches. He most certainly wasn’t a sissy nor weak. People of great faith know what is right and do it. They have uncompromised determination and commitment and are capable of enduring pressure or hardship. Paul knew what was right, and you know what is right. When you take courage like Paul and do what you know is right, nothing will stop your progress but yourself” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1991, 50; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1991, 36–37).



Turn to “Paul” in your Bible Dictionary (pp. 742–43). There you will find a list of scriptures that overview Paul’s life. Select several of these scriptures to read. After reading your selections, list at least five specific things Paul did that you believe demonstrate he was not ashamed of the gospel.

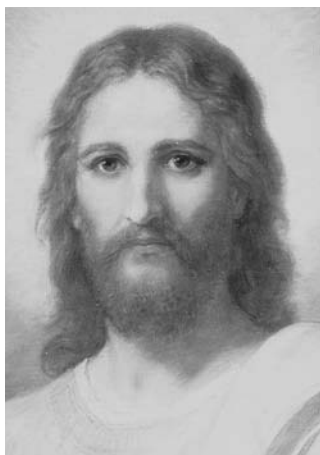
B In Your Own Words

Read the “Understanding the Scriptures” section for Romans 1:24–32.

1. Read Romans 1:24–32.
2. List each verse that contains a phrase like “God gave them up.”
3. In your own words, explain what the phrase means (see Mosiah 2:36–37 for help).

Romans 2

God Shall Reward Each of Us According to Our Works



Jesus Christ, the Righteous Judge

Have you ever criticized someone for doing something wrong and later caught yourself doing the same thing? That was a common fault among Church members in Paul’s day. Notice Paul’s teachings on the difference between the way we often judge and the way God judges.

Understanding the Scriptures



Romans 2

Impenitent (v. 5)—
Unrepentant

∴ **Indignation and wrath**
∴ (v. 8)—Fury and anger

Romans 2:14–29—“For He Is Not a Jew, Which Is One Outwardly”

Paul taught the Jewish Christians that having the outward signs of righteousness (such as circumcision) meant nothing if a spirit of faith and obedience did not dwell in them. The same is true today. Outward signs of righteousness (such as Church attendance) are not enough. A spirit of faith, love, and obedience must also dwell in our hearts.

Studying the Scriptures



Do the following activity as you study Romans 2.

A In Your Own Words

As you consider what Paul taught about judging others and about the Lord judging each of us, read Romans 2:1–2, 5–11 and write the main ideas.

Romans 3

All Have Need of Christ

Paul warned the Roman Saints that God’s judgment awaits all men. Because of wickedness and disobedience, everyone falls short of perfection and needs a Savior and Redeemer. Jesus Christ is our Savior. He redeemed all mankind so that we may, through faith in Him and true repentance, escape the condemnation of a just and loving God. As you read Romans 3, pay special attention to the changes made by the Joseph Smith Translation.



Because no one keeps the law perfectly, we all need a Savior

Understanding the Scriptures



Romans 3

Oracles (v. 2)—Words of God
Abounded (v. 7)—Increased
Slanderosly (v. 8)—Falsely;
revile

Propitiation (v. 25)—Sacrifice
or payment for our sins
Forebearance (v. 25)—
Patience

Romans 3:12–20—“Their Throat Is an Open Sepulchre”

Paul used familiar objects to explain how our speech reveals who we are inside. A sepulchre is a grave or tomb, and the phrase “their throat is an open sepulchre” means that their words show the corruption of their hearts. Asps are snakes, and the phrase “the poison of asps is under their lips” means that their language can be poisonous and do themselves and others spiritual harm.

Romans 3:23—We Have All “Come Short of the Glory of God”

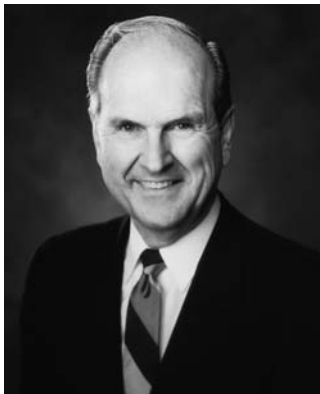
We have all broken God’s laws, so we cannot be declared clean and innocent (justified) by the law (see 1 John 1:8). The law can only show us where we have gone wrong. Having “come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23), we have no hope of salvation except through the grace and mercy of Jesus Christ, who atoned for our sins (see Romans 3:24–25; 2 Nephi 2:8).

Studying the Scriptures



Do the following activity as you study Romans 3.

A Relate Scripture to Modern-Day Counsel



Read Romans 3 and describe how verses 10–12 and 20–25 support the following statement from Elder Russell M. Nelson, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “We should try to comprehend the meaning of the Atonement. Before we can comprehend it, though, we must understand the fall of Adam” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1993, 45; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, 33).

It may help to read the “Understanding the Scriptures” section above.

Romans 4–5

Faith in Jesus Christ Is the Key to Overcoming Sin

Consider for a moment your personal weaknesses. Have you ever wondered how you could better overcome the temptations you face? What might you do to improve your relationship with the Lord and have more power to live righteously?

Paul reminded the Jewish Christians that Abraham did not have the law of Moses, yet he was an example of faith and lived a righteous life. The law of Moses was added later because of disobedience. The children of Israel needed to learn to obey that law before they could be trusted with a higher law. Paul taught the people that in every dispensation faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, not the law of Moses, was the key to overcoming sin and living righteously.

Understanding the Scriptures



Romans 4

Justified by works (v. 2)—
False idea that one’s good acts
alone are sufficient to overcome
sin and obtain salvation

Impute, imputed, imputeth
(vv. 6, 8, 11, 22, 23–24)—
Count, counted, counts

Romans 4:2–5—Additional Insight from the Joseph Smith Translation

The Joseph Smith Translation helps us understand that if we depend on our obedience to the law to save us, we will only get what we have earned by ourselves and no more. But if we have faith in God and try to be obedient, our faith will be counted as righteousness and our sins will be forgiven.

Romans 4:9–12—What Did Paul Mean by This Discussion on Circumcision?

The word *circumcision* is used here as a symbol of the law of Moses. Many Jews felt they were the only ones who could be called righteous because only they observed the law of Moses. Paul reminded them that God called Abraham righteous because of his faith long before the law was given to Moses.

Romans 5

Commendeth (v. 8)—Shows,
exhibits

Reconciled to God (v. 10)—
Returned to God’s favor

Sin is not imputed (v. 13)—
Are not charged with sin

Similitude (v. 14)—Likeness

Abounded (vv. 15, 20)—
Overflowed

Romans 5:12–21—“By the Offence of One . . . by the Righteousness of One”

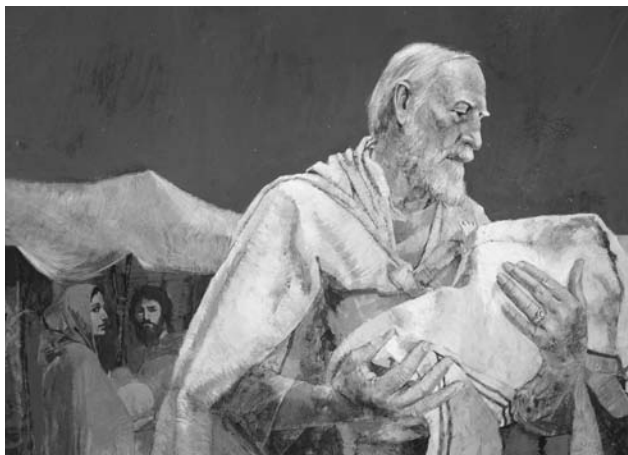
Through the transgression of one (Adam), sin and death entered the world. By the mission of another (Jesus Christ) we can receive the gift of God and be saved from sin and death (see also 1 Corinthians 15:21–22).

Studying the Scriptures

Do activities A and B as you study Romans 4–5.

A Abraham, an Example of Faith

Paul used the example of Abraham to show that faith in God is the beginning of righteousness. Abraham was called righteous even before the law of Moses was given. Write the following sentences in your notebook and complete them as you read Romans 4:9–25:



1. Abraham was _____ as a _____ of his faith (see v. 11).
2. The promises to Abraham came as a result of his _____, not because of the _____ (see v. 13).
3. God's promise comes as a _____ because of _____. This makes it available to _____ (see v. 16).
4. Jesus Christ died for our _____, and through His Resurrection we are _____ (see v. 25).

B Write Your Testimony

After reading Romans 5:12–21, write your testimony of Jesus Christ and of His role as your Savior.



Romans 6

“Let Not Sin . . . Reign in Your Mortal Body”

Picture in your mind a new convert dressed in white and standing in a baptismal font. What words might you use to describe a person in this situation?

The Apostle Paul encouraged the Saints to put away their sins, yield their souls unto God, and come unto Christ. We can follow Paul's counsel by exercising faith, repenting, and making and keeping sacred covenants with the Lord.

Understanding the Scriptures

Romans 6

Abound (v. 1)—Increase

Infirmity of your flesh
(v. 19)—Weakness of your
body

Romans 6:4—“Buried with Him by Baptism”

What does it mean that we are “buried with him by baptism” (Romans 6:4)? Elder Russell M. Nelson, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, taught: “The Savior’s gift of *immortality* comes to all who have ever lived. But His gift of *eternal life* requires repentance and obedience to specific ordinances and covenants. Essential ordinances of the gospel symbolize the Atonement. Baptism by immersion is symbolic of the death, burial, and Resurrection of the Redeemer” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1996, 47; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 35).

Studying the Scriptures

Do the following activity as you study Romans 6.

A Write a Five-Minute Talk

Imagine being asked to speak at a baptismal service for a younger brother or sister. You have been assigned to speak about the symbolism of baptism. Write a five-minute talk to give at the service, using the information you find in Romans 6. (Include at least three verses of scripture as part of your talk.)

Romans 7

Jesus Christ Fulfilled the Law of Moses

Romans 7 contains Paul's teachings that the law of Moses became unnecessary after Jesus Christ fulfilled the law of

Moses and brought the gospel. Joseph Smith made changes in twenty-one of the twenty-five verses in this chapter. Read the Joseph Smith Translation of Romans 7:5–27 in the Bible appendix (pp. 809–10). Notice verses 13–24, which are unclear in the King James Version because they were improperly translated.

Understanding the Scriptures

JST, Romans 7

Concupiscence (v. 8)—Desires for the forbidden

Carnal (v. 14)—Governed by human nature, natural man

Subdue (vv. 18, 26)—Control

Wretched (v. 26)—Afflicted

Studying the Scriptures

Do the following activity as you study the Joseph Smith Translation of Romans 7.

A Use the Joseph Smith Translation

From your study of the Joseph Smith Translation of Romans 7, answer the following questions:

1. What do you think is the main message of Romans 7?
2. What does this chapter teach you about how the Spirit helps us overcome temptation?

Romans 8

“Joint-Heirs with Christ”



The promises found in Romans 8 are impressive and inspiring. Before reading these words of Paul, consider the following statement from the Prophet Joseph Smith: “[You] shall be heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. What is it? To inherit the same power, the same glory and the

same exaltation, until you arrive at the station of a God, and ascend the throne of eternal power, the same as those who have gone before” (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, 347).

Understanding the Scriptures



Romans 8

Carnally minded, carnal mind (vv. 6, 7)—Sinfully minded, having their minds set on natural and evil desires

Enmity (v. 7)—Hatred, bitterness

Received the spirit of adoption (v. 15)—Became spiritual children of God

Heirs (v. 17)—Those who have the right to receive or inherit something

Travaileth in pain (v. 22)—Suffers the pains of childbirth

Maketh intercession (vv. 26, 34)—Pleads in behalf of, mediates

Romans 8:15—Abba

Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught: “*Abba* is the Aramaic term for Father; and the adopted sons in the family of the Eternal Father are privileged to address him who is the Ruler of the universe in this intimate way” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 2:261).

Studying the Scriptures

Do the following activity as you study Romans 8.

A Inheriting All That the Father Has

Read Romans 8:13–18; Doctrine and Covenants 84:33–42; and 132:19–21 and ponder the extent of the blessings promised to those who inherit the celestial kingdom and all that Heavenly Father has.

1. What is required to receive the blessings provided by Christ’s Atonement?
2. What blessing stands out in your mind as the most important?
3. Why would you like to receive that promised blessing?

Romans 9–10

Living According to the Law of Christ

Only those members of the Church who live worthy will receive the full blessings of the gospel when this life is over. Paul used the story of Jacob and Esau to illustrate that covenant sons and daughters who do not live by faith in Christ and keep the commandments lose their gospel blessings. Is simply being a member of the Church enough? How can your faith in Jesus Christ help you to live more righteously?

Understanding the Scriptures



Romans 9

Children of the flesh (v. 8)— Worldly or carnal people	•••	Vessels of wrath (v. 22)— Disobedient people
Election (v. 11)—Selection made in the premortal existence	•••	Fitted (v. 22)—Prepared

Romans 9:3—Why Would Paul Wish to Be “Accursed from Christ”?

Did Paul wish to be “accursed from Christ” (Romans 9:3)? The Joseph Smith Translation indicates that Paul actually wrote, “For *once* I could *have wished* that myself were accursed from Christ” (JST, Romans 9:3). He was probably referring to the time when he persecuted the Church of Jesus Christ.

Romans 9:4–5—“To Whom Pertaineth the Adoption”

Paul used the image of adoption to represent conversion to the gospel. “To whom pertaineth the adoption” (Romans 9:4) referred to those not of the house of Israel who accepted the gospel and lived its teachings. They were adopted into the family of Abraham and literally became Israelites. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that “the effect of the Holy Ghost upon a Gentile, is to purge out the old blood, and make him actually of the seed of Abraham” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 150).

Romans 9:30–33—What Was the Stumblingstone?

Jesus Christ is the rock or stone upon which the Jews stumbled (see Romans 9:32). He fulfilled the law of Moses and restored the gospel in its fulness, but the Jews rejected Him and continued to believe that they could be saved “by the works of the law” without His help (Romans 9:32).

Romans 10

Zeal (v. 2)—Enthusiasm	•••	Provoke (v. 19)—Stir
End of the law (v. 4)— Purpose of the law	•••	Stretched forth my hands (v. 21)—Reached out to help

Studying the Scriptures



Do two of the following activities (A–C) as you study Romans 9–10.

A Who Is Truly a Member of the Church?

President Ezra Taft Benson said, “To Him whose Church this is, membership involves far more than simply being a member of record” (*The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson* [1988], 165).

1. Read Romans 9:6–8 and Doctrine and Covenants 10:67. What must a person do to be more than a “member of record” of the Church of Jesus Christ?
2. What can you do to strengthen your membership in the Church?

B Who Are God’s Chosen People?

Read Romans 9:18–24 and notice how Paul described people as “vessels” (containers). Those who reject the gospel are “vessels of wrath” and those who follow Jesus Christ are “vessels of mercy.” Gentiles who accept the gospel and become these “vessels of

mercy” through righteousness will receive the same blessings as the house of Israel.

1. Read Romans 9:25–26 and list the words and phrases that indicate the Gentiles were not of God’s chosen lineage but could become part of it.
2. Read Romans 9:30–33 and explain why many of the Jews lost their place in God’s chosen lineage and the Gentiles were given a place in it.



Gathering of Israel from throughout the world.

C Find the Scripture Lists

1. What did Paul ask for in his “prayer to God for Israel” (Romans 10:1)?
2. Read Romans 10:9–13 and list three things we must do to fulfill Paul’s prayer.
3. In Romans 10:14–15 Paul listed four “how” questions that tell us how a person gains the faith to be saved. Rewrite each question in your own words and then explain what Paul was telling the people.

Romans 11

The Gospel Is for All of God’s Children

Many people, because of their righteousness in the premortal life, receive the blessing of being born into the house of Israel. If they choose not to live the gospel, however, they lose their blessings. The Gentiles, who are not originally of the house of Israel, can receive the full blessings of the gospel by making and keeping covenants with the Lord (see 2 Nephi 30:2). Heavenly Father wants all of His children to enjoy the blessings the gospel brings.

Understanding the Scriptures



Romans 11

Remnant (v. 5)—Some remaining who believe	•••	Provoke (vv. 11, 14)—Stir
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Emulation (v. 14)—To follow another’s example

Reconciling (v. 15)—Saving

Boast not against the branches (v. 18)—Appreciate the value of your heritage

Highminded (v. 20)—Proud

Severity (v. 22)—Sternness

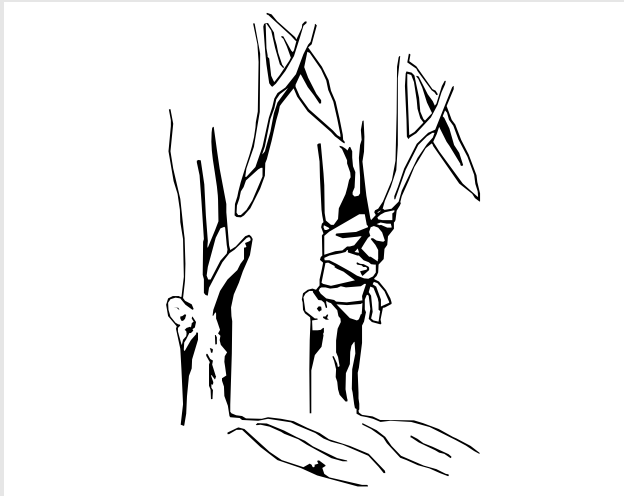
Romans 11:25—“The Fulness of the Gentiles”

Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught the following about the “fulness of the Gentiles”: “For the nearly two thousand years between Abraham and Christ, the statutes and judgments of God were reserved almost exclusively for the seed of Abraham and for the house of Israel. During the mortal ministry of our Lord, the message was limited to Israel, to the Jews, and it was not then offered to the Gentiles. After Jesus’ resurrection, Peter opened the door to the preaching of the gospel of the Gentiles, and Paul became their chief apostolic advocate and teacher. Thus there was a period or time appointed for the Jews to hear the word, and then a period of time for the Gentiles to take precedence. The times of the Gentiles is the period during which the gospel goes to them on a preferential basis, and this will continue until they have had a full opportunity to accept the truth, or in other words until the fulness of the Gentiles. Then the message will go again to the Jews, meaning to the Jews as a nation and as a people” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 2:290).

Romans 11:1–5—The Election of Grace

Heavenly Father’s plan requires that all of His children have an opportunity to accept or reject the gospel. To ensure this, spirits were chosen to come to earth through the lineage of Abraham with the responsibility to teach the gospel to their brothers and sisters (see Abraham 2:9–11). Heavenly Father “elected” these spirits according to His “foreknowledge” of them in the premortal life and trained them to be His ministers in mortality (see D&C 138:55–56). This “election of grace” gives members of the Church the assignment to fulfill this responsibility in our day (see Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 2:273–75).

Romans 11:16–25—“Grafted in among Them”



When branches on fruit trees begin to die, a gardener can cut them off and graft in new branches from a healthy tree. If done correctly, the new branches will grow and become part of the old tree. Paul used the example of grafting to explain how the Gentiles can receive all of the blessings of Israel. Since the Lord’s covenant people of the house of Israel are not always faithful,

like dead branches on a fruit tree, the Lord may cut them off and replace them with new branches from another tree. Paul taught that converted Gentiles are new branches “grafted [grafted] in among” the tree of Israel (Romans 11:17).

Studying the Scriptures

Do activities A and B as you study Romans 11.

A Chosen to Teach the Gospel

Read about the election of grace in the “Understanding the Scriptures” section for Romans 11:1–5. Then write a brief paragraph about what this doctrine means to you personally.

B The Parable of the Olive Tree

Paul taught that the natural branches of the olive tree represent the Jews and the wild branches represent the Gentiles. Make two columns and write *Natural Branches* at the top of one and *Wild Branches* on the other. As you read Romans 11:17–24, list in the appropriate column what you learn about each. The following questions might be helpful:

1. Why did the natural branches break off?
2. Why was it necessary to graft wild branches into the olive tree?
3. What warning did Paul give the wild branches?
4. What did you learn about how the Lord treats all of His children?



Romans 12–13 **Counsel for the Saints**

Saints should be doers of the word. Paul wanted the Saints to live so that the Holy Ghost could influence them and help them serve others. One of the basic commandments Heavenly Father has given us is to love our neighbor, and our willingness to live this principle will affect our salvation. In what ways can you show that you love your neighbor? How have others shown their love for you?

Understanding the Scriptures



Romans 12

Beseech (v. 1)—Plead with	Abhor (v. 9)—Hate, despise
Many members in one body (v. 4)—Many members in one Church	Cleave (v. 9)—Join, fasten together
Exhorteth (v. 8)—Encourages, admonishes	Recompense (v. 17)—Pay off, restore
	Coals of fire (v. 20)—Feelings of guilt

Romans 12:1–2—What Does It Mean to “Present Your Bodies a Living Sacrifice”?

Paul used the phrase “present your bodies a living sacrifice” (Romans 12:1) to emphasize the importance of living the gospel with all your heart. In Old Testament times people sacrificed their animals to God to demonstrate their faith. Jesus Christ sacrificed His life to fulfill the Old Testament law and show us a new way. Paul invited the Saints to sacrifice the things in their lives that were not in keeping with their faith in Jesus Christ.

Romans 13

Bearth not the sword in vain (v. 4)—Will certainly execute judgment	Make not provision (v. 14)—Do not focus on or provide for
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Studying the Scriptures



Do two of the following activities (A–C) as you study Romans 12–13.

A Finding the Real Meaning

To receive all of the blessings of the gospel, it is not enough to simply be a member of the Church. For each of the following phrases from Romans 12:1–3, select the definition that you think best fits the phrase. Then write a sentence that summarizes Paul’s message.

- “Present your bodies” (v. 1)
 - Change
 - Sacrifice all you enjoy
- “Conformed to this world” (v. 2)
 - Wicked
 - Copying worldly ways
- “Transformed” (v. 2)
 - Living a life of service
 - Improved
- “Think soberly” (v. 3)
 - Don’t have pride
 - Avoid humor

B In Your Own Words

Dissimulation means to pretend or be insincere. Sincerity is essential to living the gospel. Read Romans 12:9–21 and write the main ideas of verses 12, 13, 16, 17, and 20 in your own words. Remember that Paul wanted the Saints to be true and to avoid pretending.

C Love Fulfills the Law

Paul asked the Saints to wake up and live the gospel. It is easy to be casual about religion. To learn how to be more valiant, write the verse in Romans 13:8–14 that you think best matches each of the situations below:

- Tom sleeps in and misses family scripture reading. He tells his mom he is just too tired.
- Sarah tells her nonmember boyfriend that they must break up because they are getting too serious.
- Dennis does not think of the teachings of the Church seriously. Everything is a joke to him. He distracts his Sunday School class by joking and getting everyone to laugh and goof off.
- Amy met with the missionaries for her baptismal interview. She told them she was determined to live the gospel and wanted to leave her past mistakes behind.

Romans 14–16

True Saints Fellowship One Another

All should be welcomed into the Church as they accept the gospel and express a desire to live it. Doers of the word do not sit back and judge others; they reach out as friends and help people find a new home in the Church and the kingdom of God. Do you know of any new members living in your ward or branch? How can you help them feel more like a part of the Church?

Understanding the Scriptures



Romans 14

Doubtful disputations (v. 1)—Disagreements over personal opinions	Set at nought thy brother (v. 10)—Treat your brother as nothing
Holden (v. 4)—Held	Esteemeth (v. 14)—Appreciate, consider of worth, care about

Romans 14—Conflicting Customs of the Jews and Gentiles

Paul faced constant pressure to admonish the Saints to live by the customs and traditions of the Jews. Keeping certain Sabbath day traditions, abstaining from certain foods, and following other customs were important activities to the Jewish converts but not to the Gentiles. Often one group would harshly judge the other according to its religious beliefs and cultural traditions. Paul wanted all to understand that customs are unimportant compared to having faith in Jesus Christ and following His

example. Even today we experience similar challenges as a worldwide church. President Gordon B. Hinckley taught:



“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.

“With the ever increasing number of converts, we must make an increasingly substantial effort to assist them as they find their way.

Every one of them needs three things: a friend, a responsibility, and nurturing with ‘the good word of God’ (Moroni 6:4). It is our duty and opportunity to provide these things” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1997, 66; or *Ensign*, May 1997, 47).

Romans 15

Infirmities (v. 1)—Weaknesses caused by not knowing the truth

Edification (v. 2)—Improvement, uplift

Laud (v. 11)—Praise

Thitherward by you (v. 24)—Toward you

Romans 16

Succourer (v. 2)—One who helps and comforts

Chamberlain (v. 23)—Trusted servant

Romans 16:17–19—“Mark Them Which Cause Divisions”

Paul lived in a day of increasing apostasy from the true religion. There were some individuals who posed as good members but taught false doctrines (see Acts 20:28–32). Paul warned the Romans to “mark them which cause divisions” and beware of such self-serving people (Romans 16:17).

Romans 16:20—What Does It Mean to “Bruise Satan under Your Feet”?

Elder Bruce R. McConkie explained what it means to “bruise Satan under your feet” (Romans 16:20): “Those who overcome the world trample Satan under their feet by rejecting his enticings” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 2:308).

Studying the Scriptures

Do one of the following activities (A–C) as you study Romans 14–16.

A Interview a New Member

People from many different cultures are joining the Church. Read President Hinckley’s statement in the “Understanding the Scriptures” section for Romans 14. Then interview someone who joined the Church within the last year and write a summary of his or her responses to the following questions:

1. What changes did you have to make as a new member of the Church?
2. What did Church members do that helped you succeed?
3. What else could members do that would better help new members make the transition into the Church?

B What Is Your Judgment on Judging?

Paul taught the Saints not to judge one another. Read Romans 14:4–13 and write answers to each of the following questions:

1. If we are all servants of God, why shouldn’t we judge each other? (see Romans 14:4).
2. People may have different opinions and practices, but what is most important to remember? (see vv. 5–6).
3. How does belonging to the Lord reduce differences among the Saints? (see vv. 7–9).
4. In the end, what will we all have in common? (see vv. 10–11).
5. If we judge one another, how does it harm us and those we judge? (see v. 13).

C The Church Is a Community

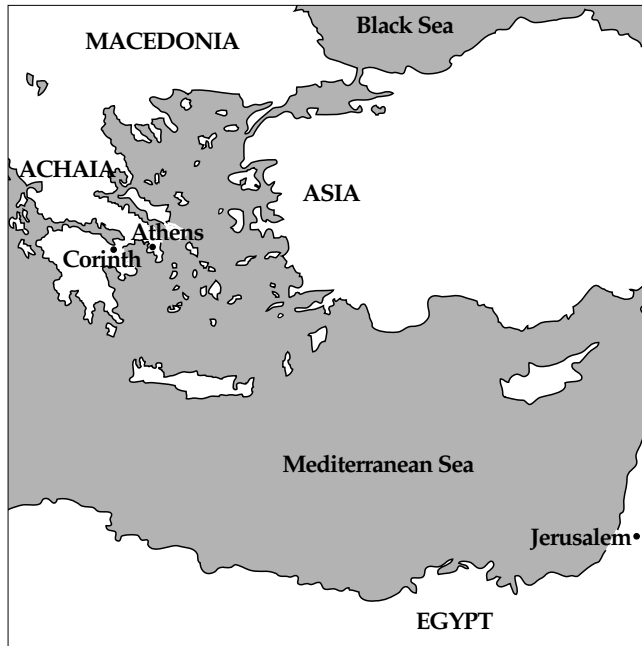
Jesus Christ invites all to come unto Him. In a community of Saints with a variety of talents and strengths, we need to help each other so that we can all become more like Christ. Read Romans 15:1–7. Then write what Paul counseled us to do in verses 1–2, 5, and 7 to try to overcome the differences among us.



The First Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians

Who Were the Corinthians?

During Paul's second missionary journey he taught the gospel in Corinth and established a branch of the Church there (see Acts 18:1–17). Corinth was a city famous for idolatry and immorality, so Paul was concerned about the Church members there being able to remain true to the gospel.



Corresponding with the Corinthians

Paul wrote at least three letters to the Corinthians (see 1 Corinthians 1:1–2; 5:9; 2 Corinthians 1:1). The Corinthian Saints had written to him to ask for help with matters of Church doctrine and practice. The book of 1 Corinthians is Paul's answer to one of their letters. It was written around A.D. 54, when he lived in Ephesus.

Some Things Do Not Change

Being a Saint today has many of the same challenges that the Saints in Corinth faced. Notice how useful the following counsel is today:

- The only way to know God is through the Spirit (see 1 Corinthians 2:9–16).
- Our bodies are temples of God and must be clean (see 1 Corinthians 3:16–17; 6:19–20).
- God will not allow us to be tempted more than we can withstand (see 1 Corinthians 10:13).
- Marriage is important in God's plan of happiness (see 1 Corinthians 11:11).
- If we partake of the sacrament unworthily, we mock what Jesus Christ did for us (see 1 Corinthians 11:27).
- As members of the Church we are to be found together in the same mind and judgment (see 1 Corinthians 12:20–26).

1 Corinthians 1–4 Unity through the Spirit

Sometimes members of the Church place their own wisdom above God's wisdom. They fail to see how the Spirit can help them find solutions to life's challenges. In Corinth, some Saints argued that their personal opinions were part of the gospel of Christ, and that caused divisions among the members. In 1 Corinthians 1–4, How does the Spirit provide solutions to this problem and how can it help you face similar difficulties?

Understanding the Scriptures



1 Corinthians 1

Utterance (v. 5)—Words spoken

Fellowship of his Son (v. 9)—Closeness to or fellowship with Christ as members of His Church

Beseech (v. 10)—Plead

Cephas (v. 12)—Peter

Prudent (v. 19)—Sensible, learned

Disputer (v. 20)—Philosopher

Foolish, weak, base things (vv. 27–28)—Humble followers of Jesus Christ

1 Corinthians 1:26–28—“God Hath Chosen the Foolish . . . to Confound the Wise”

Who are the “foolish things of the world” who will “confound the wise” (1 Corinthians 1:27)? Paul was referring to missionaries who go out into the world and teach people from all walks of life. Did he mean that missionaries are foolish? President Gordon B. Hinckley noted how our missionaries are often seen by the world:

“I had been interviewed by a representative of the BBC Radio Worldwide Service. He had seen the missionaries and noted their youthful appearance. He asked me, ‘How do you expect people to listen to these callow youth?’

“In case some of you do not know the meaning of *callow*, it means immature, inexperienced, lacking sophistication.

“I replied to the reporter with a smile, ‘Callow youth? It is with these missionaries today as it was with Timothy in the days of Paul [see 1 Timothy 4:12]. . . .

“‘The remarkable thing is that people do receive them and listen to them. They are wholesome. They are bright, they are alert, they are upstanding. They are clean looking, and people quickly develop confidence in them.’ . . .

“‘Callow youth?’ Yes, they are lacking in sophistication. What a great blessing this is. They carry no element of deception. They

speak with no element of sophistry. They speak out of their hearts with personal conviction. Each is a servant of the living God, an ambassador of the Lord Jesus Christ. Their power comes not of their learning in the things of the world. Their power comes of faith and prayer and humility” (in Conference Report, Sept.–Oct. 1995, 69; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 51).



1 Corinthians 2

Howbeit (v. 6)—However
Princes (vv. 6, 8)—Rulers
Spiritually discerned (v. 14)—
 Understood through the Holy
 Ghost

1 Corinthians 2:14—What Is a “Natural Man”?

After the Fall of Adam, mankind became “carnal, sensual, and devilish, by nature” (Alma 42:10). This nature is contrary to the divine nature of God (see Mosiah 3:19). Those who live as “natural” men and women do not understand spiritual knowledge; it is foolishness to them. The natural man acquires spiritual knowledge when he “yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and putteth off the natural man” (Mosiah 3:19).

1 Corinthians 3

Stubble (v. 12)—Short, dry stalks of grain left in the field after the harvest
Abide (v. 14)—Endures

1 Corinthians 3:1–3—“I Have Fed You with Milk”

The Corinthians were recent converts to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Many of them were still plagued with carnal (worldly) weaknesses. Paul compared them to “babes in Christ,” telling them that he had fed them with milk because they were not ready for meat (1 Corinthians 3:1–2). Milk refers to the simple teachings of the gospel that must be understood before the meat, or more complex doctrines, can be taught. Such doctrines can only be understood by those who have acquired spiritual maturity by living according to the light they have already received (see D&C 50:24; Alma 12:9–11).

1 Corinthians 4

Counsels of the hearts (v. 5)—Secrets or motives of the heart
I have in a figure (v. 6)—I have, figuratively
Transferred (v. 6)—Applied
Being defamed, we intreat (v. 13)—When we are lied about, we seek to settle differences
Offscouring (v. 13)—Waste, garbage

A Tell about Your Family

When people join the Church they become members of the family of Christ (see Mosiah 15:11). Read 1 Corinthians 1:9–13.

1. List what was wrong with the “family of Christ” in Corinth.
2. Describe an event or a time when your own family was together that brought you great joy.
3. List the elements that existed in your family experience that would also be necessary in the family of Christ.

B The Unnatural Man

If you were feeling pain because of an unusual sickness, who would you go to for help—the police, a taxi driver, or your doctor? Why? Read 1 Corinthians 2:10–14.

1. Write where you must go to obtain spiritual answers.
2. Explain why the “natural man” has difficulty gaining spiritual knowledge.
3. Read Mosiah 3:19 and list what helps us overcome the natural man.

C Holy Temple, Holy Me

Read 1 Corinthians 3:16–17 and think about ways in which your body is like a holy temple. Explain how the following situations affect such a temple and limit the ability to receive the Spirit:

1. Tom and Susan are dating and have become physically involved.
2. Joe likes chewing tobacco with his friends.
3. Katrina avoids Church because her friends aren’t there.

D Write a Note to a Church Leader

Paul told the leaders of the Church that they were required to be faithful and reminded them that they would be persecuted because of their faithfulness (see 1 Corinthians 4). After reading 1 Corinthians 4:9–16, write a note of appreciation to one of your Church leaders. List what you appreciate most about that person and how he or she has helped you. (You could share the note with your teacher before you send it.)

1 Corinthians 5–7

Instructions to the Church

In 1 Corinthians 5–7 Paul continued to give counsel to the Saints in Corinth. He dealt with important questions like: What kind of association should Saints have with sinners? When is it all right for Saints to sue one another? Why is it better for marriage to come after a mission? Look for Paul’s counsel on these issues and think about how they relate to you.

Studying the Scriptures

Do two of the following activities (A–D) as you study 1 Corinthians 1–4.

Understanding the Scriptures



1 Corinthians 5

Fornication (v. 1)—Sexual relations between unmarried persons

to rise; a little sin affects the whole person or congregation

A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump (v. 6)—A little yeast causes the loaf of bread

Purge out (v. 7)—Remove, repent of

Malice (v. 8)—Desire to harm others

1 Corinthians 5:5—“Deliver Such an One unto Satan”

Members who have more knowledge and experience in the Church are subject to more serious penalties. To “deliver such an one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh” (1 Corinthians 5:5) was to cut them off from the blessings of the gospel. Included in this was the loss of the Holy Ghost, leaving them without the healing and protective power of God. In this state individuals were left to themselves to endure the full destructive power of the adversary.

1 Corinthians 6

Go to law (vv. 1, 6–7)—To bring charges against, sue

Defrauded (v. 7)—Cheated

Utterly a fault (v. 7)—Complete failure

Effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind (v. 9)—Those involved in various sins of homosexuality

1 Corinthians 6:9–12—Were These Deadly Sins Lawful in Paul’s Mind?

The Joseph Smith Translation provides a significant change in 1 Corinthians 6:12: “All *these* things are not lawful unto me, and all *these* things are not expedient” (JST, 1 Corinthians 6:12; italics added).

1 Corinthians 6:19–20—“Ye Are Not Your Own”



Elder LeGrand Richards, who was an Apostle, said, “There are many who think their bodies are their own and that they can do with them what they will, but Paul makes it plain that they are not their own, for they are bought with a price” (*A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*, rev. ed. [1973], 380).

1 Corinthians 7

Due benevolence (v. 3)—Proper acts of kindness

Circumcision (vv. 18–19)—See Bible Dictionary, “Circumcision” (p. 646).

Incontinency (v. 5)—Lack of self-control

Cast a snare upon you (v. 35)—Restrict you

Bondage, bound (vv. 15, 27)—Under covenant

Comely (v. 35)—Proper, honorable

1 Corinthians 7:29–33—“They That Have Wives Be as Though They Had None”

The Joseph Smith Translation clarifies that when Paul counseled “they that have wives be as though they had none” (1 Corinthians 7:29) he was speaking to “you who are called unto the ministry . . . for ye are called and chosen to do the Lord’s work” (JST, 1 Corinthians 7:29). In other words, those who were married would be without their wives during their missions.

Studying the Scriptures



Do two of the following activities (A–D) as you study 1 Corinthians 5–7.

A Interview Your Bishop

Ask your bishop to explain how a bishop’s disciplinary council helps the Church and helps the person involved to repent and come back to full fellowship. Read 1 Corinthians 5 and write about the similarities you find between those verses and what your bishop explained.

B List the Effects of Sin

Paul chastized the Saints in Corinth for rationalizing their sins. He reminded them that the Spirit could not dwell in them if they were unrighteous. As you read 1 Corinthians 6:9–20, list at least five sins that Paul mentioned and explain how those sins affect the sinner, the sinner’s family, and the Church.

C Summarize What Paul Taught

As you read 1 Corinthians 7:10–11, substitute the word *divorce* for “depart” (“put away” also means divorce), and in verses 12–13 substitute *nonmember* for the phrase “that believeth not.” After reading these verses with the substitutions, write a paragraph describing what you think Paul was teaching.

D Write a Lesson

Read 1 Corinthians 7:8–9, 29–35 as if Paul were speaking to missionaries (notice the Joseph Smith Translation changes) and answer the following questions:

1. How would these teachings be helpful for full-time missionaries?
2. How might a girlfriend or boyfriend at home distract a missionary from their calling?

1 Corinthians 8–11 Counsel for New Members

The Corinthian Saints had written to Paul and asked him many questions. We learn what those questions were by his answers to them. Paul counseled them to guard against offending others through personal actions, to recognize that God will not allow us to be unfairly overwhelmed by temptation, and to remember the importance of being worthy to partake of the sacrament.

Understanding the Scriptures



1 Corinthians 8

Puffeth up (v. 1)—Makes proud

Commendeth us not (v. 8)—Does not bring us

Emboldened (v. 10)—Encouraged

1 Corinthians 8:4, 8–13—Eating the Meat of Idols

The law of Moses did not allow Jews to eat meat that was sacrificed to false idols. Paul taught them that the meat itself did not make a person unclean, but the Jewish converts were still offended when they saw gentile converts eating pagan meat. Paul counseled that it was better not to eat the meat than to offend a fellow Saint.

1 Corinthians 9

Charges (v. 7)—Expense

Hinder (v. 12)—Slow the progress of

A dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me (v. 17)—I will be held responsible for my stewardship

Temperate (v. 25)—Moderate, self-controlled

Corruptible (v. 25)—Earthly, temporal

Beateth the air (v. 26)—Swings fists in the air as if pretending to fight

1 Corinthians 10

Idolaters (v. 7)—Idol worshippers

The Lord's table (v. 21)—The ways of God, such as the sacrament

The table of devils (v. 21)—The ways of evil, such as a pagan feast

Provoke (v. 22)—Anger

1 Corinthians 11

Shorn, shaven (v. 6)—To have all one's hair cut short or off (considered a disgrace in Paul's time)

Heresies (v. 19)—Untruths, lies about Christ and His doctrine

Chastened (v. 32)—Corrected by punishment

1 Corinthians 11:2–12—Do Men Rule over Women?

Paul taught that God placed Jesus Christ at the "head of every man" and the man at "the head of the woman" (1 Corinthians 11:3). This pattern does not suggest dominance and subservience, but establishes order and peace through righteous priesthood leadership. Men and women are dependent upon each other, and wise men listen carefully to the opinions of faithful women.

Studying the Scriptures



Do two of the following activities (A–D) as you study 1 Corinthians 8–11.

A Give a Modern Example

Read 1 Corinthians 8:9–13 and give a modern example of how we need to be careful to avoid even the appearance of evil. It might be helpful to review the "Understanding the Scriptures" section for 1 Corinthians 8:4, 8–13.

B Design a Training Program

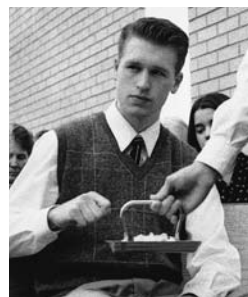
Read 1 Corinthians 9:24–27 and look for what Paul compared his mission to. Draw the following chart in your notebook. Imagine you are a coach and list steps in a physical training program you would design to help an athlete excel in his or her field. Then make a comparison to the spiritual training needed to prepare for a mission or temple marriage.

Physical Training Program	Spiritual Training Program
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

C Scripture Mastery—1 Corinthians 10:13

Paul stated clearly in 1 Corinthians 10:13–14 that temptation cannot defeat us if we are determined to obey God's commandments. Read Alma 13:28 and list the three principles Alma said we need to obey so that we might obtain God's help in overcoming temptation. Write a paragraph about how they can help you not to "be tempted above that ye are able" (1 Corinthians 10:13).

D How to Partake of the Sacrament



The most important part of attending Church is partaking of the sacrament. After reading 1 Corinthians 11:20–34, write a set of directions that would help others partake of the sacrament in the manner the Lord intended. Keep your directions brief enough to fit on a card that could be given to people.

1 Corinthians 12–14

Gifts of the Spirit

When asked by a president of the United States what made our religion unique from others, the Prophet Joseph Smith explained that it was the gift of the Holy Ghost (see History of the Church, 4:42). Through the Holy Ghost, God bestows upon His children special blessings known as gifts of the Spirit so we can know the truth and bless one another. As you read 1 Corinthians 12–14, look for the gifts of the Spirit that you have been blessed with.

Understanding the Scriptures



1 Corinthians 12

Diversities, divers (vv. 4, 6, 10)—Many different

Diversities of operations (v. 6)—Different ways these gifts work

Body is not one member (v. 14)—The Church is one organization with many different members
Schism (v. 25)—Division

1 Corinthians 12:21–28—Why Is Every Member of the Church Important?



Each individual is important and brings special gifts and talents to the Church. The Church needs every one of its members. Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin, an Apostle, said: “No matter who we are—no matter our talents, abilities, financial resources, education, or experience—we all can serve in the kingdom. He who calls us will qualify us for the work if we will serve with humility, prayer, diligence,

and faith. Perhaps we feel inadequate. Maybe we doubt ourselves, thinking that what we have to offer the Lord personally is too slight to even be noticed. The Lord is well aware of our mortality. He knows our weaknesses. He understands the challenges of our everyday lives” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1996, 46; or *Ensign*, May 1996, 34).

1 Corinthians 13

Charity (v. 1)—“The pure love of Christ” (Moroni 7:47)

Vaunteth not itself (v. 4)—Does not brag or boast

Provoked (v. 5)—Bothered, made angry

That which is in part (v. 10)—Imperfections

See through a glass, darkly (v. 12)—See an obscure reflection in a mirror

1 Corinthians 14

Edification (v. 3)—Spiritual improvement

Exhortation (v. 3)—Encouragement

Signification (v. 10)—Meaning
Course (v. 27)—In an orderly manner

1 Corinthians 14:2, 4, 13–14, 19, 27—“An Unknown Tongue”

Each time the phrase “an unknown tongue” is used in 1 Corinthians 14, the Joseph Smith Translation changes it to “another tongue.”

1 Corinthians 14:4–11, 19—When Should We Seek the Gift of Tongues?

President Joseph F. Smith said: “I believe in the gifts of the Holy Spirit unto men, but I do not want the gift of tongues, except when I need it. I needed the gift of tongues once, and the Lord gave it to me. I was in a foreign land, sent to preach the gospel to a people whose language I could not understand. . . . There was a purpose in it. There was something in it to strengthen my faith, to encourage me and to help me in my ministry. If you have

need of this gift of tongues, seek for it and God will help you in it” (*Gospel Doctrine*, 5th ed. [1939], 251).

1 Corinthians 14:34–35—Can Women Speak in Church?

The Joseph Smith Translation changes *speak* to *rule*. It is certainly acceptable for women to speak in church.

Studying the Scriptures



Do two of the following activities (A–D) as you study 1 Corinthians 12–14.

A Write an Encyclopedia Entry

Paul taught that there are many different gifts of the Spirit and then gave several examples. Read 1 Corinthians 12:4–11 and write an entry for an encyclopedia that explains the perspective of the Church on the gifts of the Spirit. The encyclopedia has space limitations, so limit your comments to one paragraph of fifty words or less.

B Charity

Draw two columns and label one *Charity Is* and the other *Charity Is Not*. As you read 1 Corinthians 13:1–7, 13, list each phrase under the appropriate heading. Conclude by describing a time when someone showed charity toward you.

C Why Do I Have to Grow Up?

Read 1 Corinthians 13:9–12 and describe what you think it teaches about maturing spiritually. Suggest several qualities of people your age that show they still have a few childish ways. Then identify other qualities of people your age that demonstrate their increasing maturity in the gospel.

D Order in the Church

Paul wanted to teach the Saints about the importance of order in the Church (see 1 Corinthians 14:26–40). For each statement below, write how you think it relates to order in the Church:

- “Let all things be done unto edifying” (1 Corinthians 14:26).
- “Prophecy one by one, that all may learn” (v. 31).
- “God is not the author of confusion, but of peace” (v. 33).
- “It is not permitted unto them [women] to rule” (JST, v. 34).
- “Let all things be done decently and in order” (v. 40).

1 Corinthians 15–16

The Doctrine of Resurrection

Has someone you love died? How did you feel when it happened? Jesus Christ overcame death through His atoning sacrifice. Because of His gift, death is temporary. All mankind will be resurrected and enjoy immortality.

In Paul's time, some questioned the reality of Christ's Resurrection. As you read 1 Corinthians 15–16, look for Paul's powerful testimony of the reality of the Resurrection, as well as doctrinal truths about the three degrees of glory and ordinance work performed in temples in behalf of those who have died.

Understanding the Scriptures



1 Corinthians 15

Vain (vv. 2, 14, 17)—Without reason, empty

Fallen asleep (v. 6)—Dead

Firstfruits (vv. 20, 23)—First to be resurrected

Subdued (v. 28)—Made subject

Quickened (v. 36)—Given life

Quickening spirit (v. 45)—

Immortal person with a glorified, perfected body

1 Corinthians 15:29—Baptism for the Dead

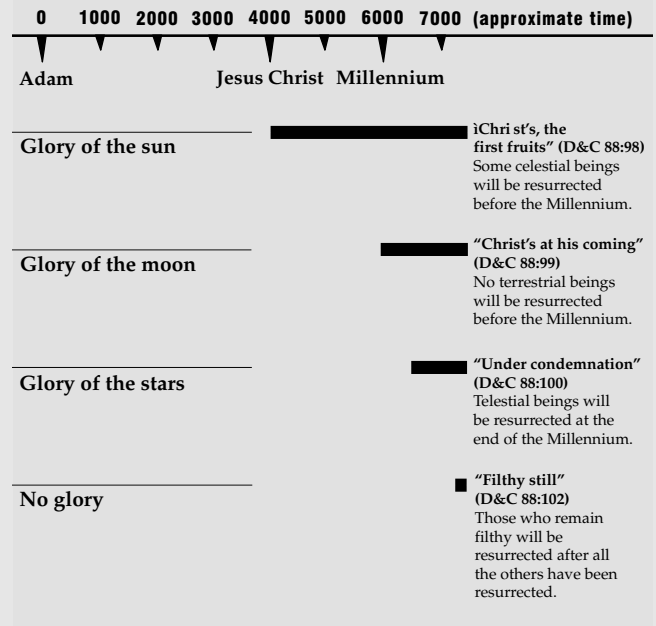


Paul explained that there would have been no reason for the Saints to do baptisms for the dead if there were no resurrection. He then testified that the Resurrection is a reality and that ordinance work in behalf of the dead provides great blessings for them as well as for those who perform the ordinances.

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught: "The Saints have the privilege of being baptized for those of their relatives who are dead, . . . and who have received the Gospel in the spirit, through the instrumentality of those who have been commissioned to preach to them" (*History of the Church*, 4:231). He also taught that "those Saints who neglect it in behalf of their deceased relatives, do it at the peril of their own salvation" (*History of the Church*, 4:426; see also D&C 128:15–18).

1 Corinthians 15:40–42—Celestial, Terrestrial, and Telesial Bodies

Everyone will be resurrected, but we will not all rise from the dead at the same moment or with the same glory. The most righteous will be resurrected first and will serve with Jesus Christ during His millennial reign. The least righteous will be resurrected last. The following chart will help you better understand the order of the Resurrection (see also D&C 88:98–102):



1 Corinthians 15:42–54—"Corruption . . . Incorruption"

Several times Paul used the word *corruption* to refer to death and the word *incorruption* to refer to immortality (see 1 Corinthians 15:42–54). Even though we will receive our same bodies in the Resurrection, they will not be subject to disease, decay, and imperfection, but will instead be glorified, perfected, and immortal (see Alma 11:42–45).

Studying the Scriptures



Do two of the following activities (A–C) as you study 1 Corinthians 15.

A Scripture Mastery—1 Corinthians 15:20–22

List a scripture chain that starts at 1 Corinthians 15:20–22. Use your Bible Dictionary, Topical Guide, and the index in your triple combination to find at least five additional scriptures that explain that everyone will be resurrected. You may want to write these cross-references in the margin of your scriptures.

B Scripture Mastery—1 Corinthians 15:29

Interview someone who has been to the temple to do baptisms for the dead. (If you have had this opportunity you can write about your own experience.) Write answers to the following questions:

1. What did you enjoy the most about doing baptisms for the dead?

- How will your service benefit the dead?
- Why do you think baptism for the dead is such an important doctrine?

C Scripture Mastery—1 Corinthians 15:40–42

Write three questions that you think a nonmember might ask a missionary about the Resurrection or the three degrees of glory. Then write answers to the questions, using verses from 1 Corinthians 15 in your answers.



The Second Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians

Why Did Paul Write Another Letter to Corinth?

Problems in the Corinthian branch of the Church continued. Paul's prior epistle had helped the Saints make progress, but further instruction was needed. This second epistle reassured the Saints of Paul's love and encouraged them to continue to be faithful in all their duties.



principles of the gospel and the standards and practices that are unique to members of the Church. Baptism does not automatically make new converts forget false teachings and practices they once followed.

The Corinthian Saints were no different. In 2 Corinthians 1–3 you will read how they had to be reminded of basic gospel principles that are vital to spiritual well-being. How did Paul's loving way of teaching strengthen those Saints in the faith?

Understanding the Scriptures

2 Corinthians 1

Abound, aboundeth (v. 5)—Plentifully supplied

Consolation (vv. 5–7)—Comfort

Pressed out of measure (v. 8)—Burdened beyond measure

Bestowed (v. 11)—Granted, given

Fleshly (v. 12)—Worldly

Was thus minded (v. 17)—Had made a plan

Yea and nay (vv. 17–19)—Yes and no

Earnest (v. 22)—Promise

2 Corinthians 2

Lest (vv. 3, 7)—For fear that

Overmuch (v. 7)—Excessive

Savour (vv. 14–16)—Sweet smell, odor

2 Corinthians 3

Commend, commendation (v. 1)—Recommend, recommendation

Ministration of death, ministration of condemnation (vv. 7–9)—Law of Moses

2 Corinthians 1–3 The Spirit Giveth Life

Many people who join the Church go through a time of transition when they are still learning about the basic

Ministration of the spirit, ministration of righteousness (vv. 8–9)—Fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ
Abolished (v. 13)—Removed, rendered idle

Vail (vv. 14–16)—That which blocks or limits vision and understanding
Glass (v. 18)—Mirror

2 Corinthians 3:2–4—“Ye Are Our Epistle Written in Our Hearts”

Elder Bruce R. McConkie said: “In the ultimate sense, the gospel is not written on tablets of stone or in books of scripture, but in the bodies of faithful and obedient persons; the saints are, thus, living epistles of the truth, the books of whose lives are open for all to read” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 2:414).

2 Corinthians 3:6—“The Letter Killeth, but the Spirit Giveth Life”

President James E. Faust, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, taught: “Paul said, ‘The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.’ We are not only to avoid evil, not only to do good but, most important, to do the things of greatest worth. We are to focus on the inward things of the heart, which we know and value intuitively but often neglect for that which is trivial, superficial, or prideful” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1997, 75; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 53).



President Ezra Taft Benson counseled: “In this work it is the Spirit that counts” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1986, 98; or *Ensign*, May 1986, 77).

Studying the Scriptures

Do two of the following activities (A–C) as you study 2 Corinthians 1–3.

A Write a Summary

Mortality brings difficulties. Even Jesus Christ had to suffer as part of His mortal experience. In 2 Corinthians 1:3–7 we learn about some of the blessings that can come as a result of our trials. As you read this passage, summarize each verse with a sentence in your own words.

B What Would You Teach?

Study 2 Corinthians 2:1–11 and Doctrine and Covenants 64:10. Using the information from these scriptures, tell what you would teach if you had a friend who encountered the following situations:

1. Your friend Roberta has become bitter toward her father, who was excommunicated from the Church. She asks you why she should forgive him.

2. Richard borrowed a car from your friend without asking. He wrecked it and does not have the money to make the repairs. He said he was sorry.



C Complete the Sentences

As you read 2 Corinthians 3:2–18 and the “Understanding the Scriptures” section, look for ideas that complete the following sentences:

1. Saying that our epistles are written “in fleshly tables of the heart” means that . . .
2. The Spirit gives life to the gospel because . . .
3. Moses asked the people to cover their faces so they would not see God, but Jesus Christ . . .
4. When we follow Jesus Christ, our faces . . .

2 Corinthians 4–6

Walk by Faith

Have you ever wondered why life does not always turn out the way you want it to, even when you are doing what is right? Paul recognized that bad things happen to good people and that life is sometimes unfair. He testified that Jesus Christ has the power to comfort us in our trials and can make all things right in the eternities. We learn in 2 Corinthians 4–6 how important it is to walk by faith in the Savior’s power.

Understanding the Scriptures

2 Corinthians 4

Renounced (v. 2)—Refused
The god of this world (v. 4)—Satan
Earthen vessels (v. 7)—Our mortal bodies
Redound (v. 15)—Overflow

2 Corinthians 4:17—Great Eternal Blessings Come to Those Who Endure Affliction



Elder Angel Abrea, a member of the Seventy, testified: “I know that even in times of affliction and tribulation, if we patiently endure in faith, blessings of comfort and hope will come into our lives, and we will be able to partake of that ‘incomprehensible joy’ of which Ammon and his brothers received (see Alma 27:17–18; 28:8). Therefore, in the words of Joseph Smith, ‘Stand fast, ye Saints of God, hold

on a little while longer, and the storm of life will be past, and you will be rewarded by that God whose servants you are, and who will duly appreciate all your toils and afflictions for Christ’s sake and the Gospel’s’ (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 185)” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1992, 37; or *Ensign*, May 1992, 27).

2 Corinthians 5

Earthly house of this tabernacle (v. 1)—Our mortal bodies

Building of God (v. 1)—Glorified, resurrected body

Clothed upon (vv. 2–4)—Resurrected

Earnest (v. 5)—Pledge, guarantee

Sober (v. 13)—Serious minded

Constraineth (v. 14)—Compels, motivates

2 Corinthians 5:18–20—Reconciliation

The Book of Mormon prophet Jacob taught: “Wherefore, my beloved brethren, reconcile yourselves to the will of God, and not to the will of the devil and the flesh; and remember, after ye are reconciled unto God, that it is only in and through the grace of God that ye are saved” (2 Nephi 10:24).

2 Corinthians 6

Succoured (v. 2)—Comforted, helped

Stripes (v. 5)—Beatings with a whip

Love unfeigned (v. 6)—Genuine love

Straightened (v. 12)—Restricted, distressed

Bowels (v. 12)—Affections

Belial (v. 15)—Wickedness (see Bible Dictionary, “Belial,” p. 620)

Infidel (v. 15)—Unbeliever

2 Corinthians 6:14–17—Be Wise in Your Choice of Friends

“Choose your friends carefully. They will greatly influence how you think and act, and even help determine the person you will become. Choose friends who share your values so you can strengthen and encourage each other in living high standards. A true friend will encourage you to be your best self.

“To have good friends, be a good friend yourself. Show interest in others and let them know you care about them. Treat everyone with kindness and respect. Go out of your way to be a friend to those who are shy or do not feel included” (*For the Strength of Youth* [pamphlet, 2001], 12).

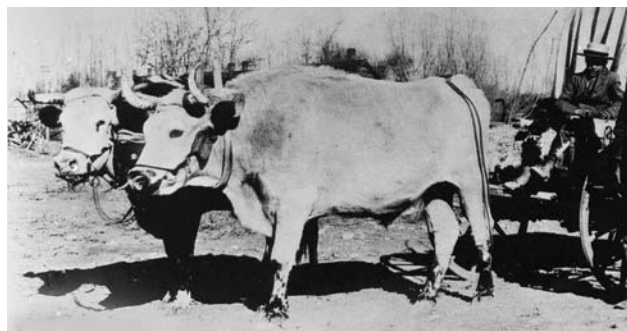
Studying the Scriptures

Do activity A or B as you study 2 Corinthians 4–6.

A Trials in Perspective

Life can be unpleasant and difficult. Often we are disappointed and frustrated that things do not turn out the way we hope. During these times the Spirit witnesses that the difficulties of this life are nothing when compared with the promises associated with eternal life. As you read 2 Corinthians 4:8–18 list the phrases Paul used to testify that mortal trials are nothing compared to eternal glory.

B “Be Ye Not Unequally Yoked Together with Unbelievers”



Be ye not unequally yoked

Read 2 Corinthians 6:11–18 and explain what you think each of the following statements means, including an example of what you could do to follow it:

1. “Be ye not unequally yoked with unbelievers.” (A yoke is a wooden harness that ties oxen together when they are working.)
2. “Come out from among them, and be ye separate.”
3. “Touch not the unclean thing.”

2 Corinthians 7

Godly Sorrow

Paul taught that “godly sorrow” is required if true repentance is to take place (2 Corinthians 7:10). As you study 2 Corinthians 7, consider the following words of President Ezra Taft Benson: “It is not uncommon to find men and women in the world who feel remorse for the things they do wrong. Sometimes this is because their actions cause them or loved ones great sorrow and misery. Sometimes their sorrow is caused because they are caught and punished for their actions. Such worldly feelings do not constitute ‘godly sorrow’ (2 Corinthians 7:10). Godly sorrow is a gift of the Spirit. It is a deep realization that our actions have offended our Father and our God. It is the sharp and keen awareness that our behavior caused the Savior, He who knew no sin,

even the greatest of all, to endure agony and suffering. Our sins caused Him to bleed at every pore. This very real mental and spiritual anguish is what the scriptures refer to as having ‘a broken heart and contrite spirit’ (D&C 20:37). Such a spirit is the absolute prerequisite for true repentance” (The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson, 72).



Understanding the Scriptures



2 Corinthians 7

Vehement (v. 11)—Earnest desire

Studying the Scriptures



Do the following activity as you study 2 Corinthians 7.

A Give Your Advice

Study 2 Corinthians 7:8–11 and the quote from President Ezra Taft Benson in the preceding introduction. Imagine working for the *New Era* magazine and being asked to write a column that answers teenagers’ questions. Write the advice you would give about repentance if the following three statements were submitted to you:

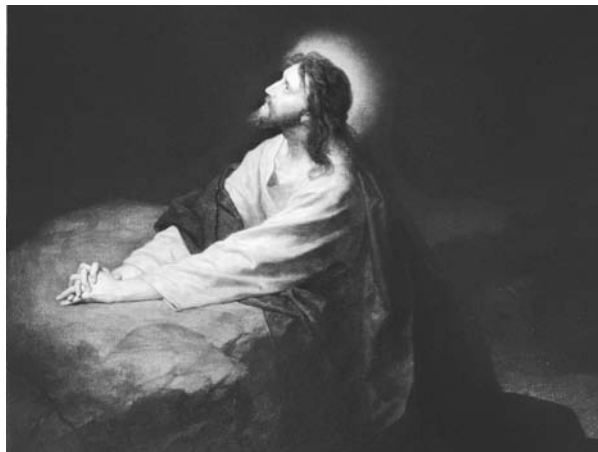
1. Okay, I got caught shoplifting, but everybody does it. It’s no big deal and easy to repent of, right?
2. I talked to the bishop. I just told him what I did, and now everything is okay.
3. I don’t have to tell the bishop. If I just pray about it, that will be enough to repent.

2 Corinthians 8–10

Gifts and Giving

As Paul continued to counsel the Saints in Corinth, he wrote of the special gift Jesus Christ gave to each of us (see 2 Corinthians 8:9). He also explained that as we strive to follow the Savior’s example and give of ourselves, we should do it cheerfully (see 2 Corinthians 9:7). Paul’s teachings help us understand that we ought to give glory to the Lord for the

gifts that we receive and recognize that all things come from Him (see 2 Corinthians 10:16–18).



Jesus Christ in Gethsemane

2 Corinthians 11

Paul’s Sacrifice for the Gospel

Paul, like other missionaries, paid a price for preaching the gospel. Have you ever heard a returned missionary talk about the trials he or she faced while serving a mission? In 2 Corinthians 11 you will read about some of what Paul suffered as a missionary. Consider what he may have learned from his trials and how he was able to endure them.

Understanding the Scriptures



2 Corinthians 11

Forty stripes save one (v. 24)—Thirty-nine lashes or beatings (usually with a scourge or whip)

Perils (v. 26)—Danger
With a garrison (v. 32)—Guarded



Studying the Scriptures

Do the following activity as you study 2 Corinthians 11.

A Interview a Missionary



Read 2 Corinthians 11:24–33 with a returned missionary you know. Ask him or her to tell you about the following:

1. A trial he or she faced while serving a mission
2. How that trial compares with what Paul experienced
3. What he or she did to overcome that trial

Write a short paragraph about how trials can strengthen our testimonies.

2 Corinthians 12–13

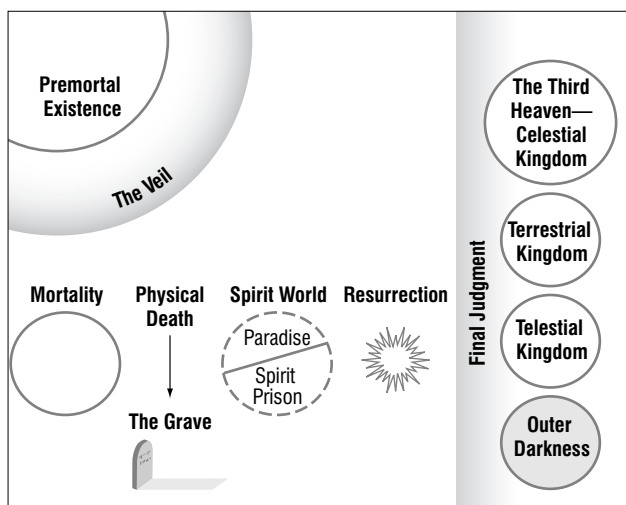
Paul Is Caught Up into the Third Heaven

Paul wrote that he was “caught up to the third heaven” (2 Corinthians 12:2)—the celestial kingdom. In 1836 the Prophet Joseph Smith also had a vision of the celestial kingdom. He wrote:

“I saw the transcendent beauty of the gate through which the heirs of that kingdom will enter, which was like unto circling flames of fire;

“Also the blazing throne of God, whereon was seated the Father and the Son.

“I saw the beautiful streets of that kingdom, which had the appearance of being paved with gold” (D&C 137:2–4).



Understanding the Scriptures

2 Corinthians 12

Unspeakable (v. 4)—Indescribable, perhaps too holy to be talked about
Buffet (v. 7)—Mistreat

Bewail (v. 21)—Mourn for
Lasciviousness (v. 21)—Unbridled lust

2 Corinthians 12:2—Paul Sees the Celestial Kingdom

Elder Bruce R. McConkie said: “Speaking of himself, Paul says he was ‘caught up to the third heaven,’ which is the celestial kingdom” (*The Mortal Messiah*, 4:394).

2 Corinthians 12:7—“A Thorn in the Flesh”

Neither the scriptures nor modern revelation tells us what “thorn in the flesh” afflicted or tormented Paul. Many believe Paul was afflicted with a physical disability that hindered his missionary labors.

2 Corinthians 13

Reprobates (v. 5)—Those who are unworthy or fail the test

To edification, and not to destruction (v. 10)—To strengthen you, and not to condemn you

2 Corinthians 13:1—“Two or Three Witnesses”

God always provides more than one witness to support His words. This is called the law of witnesses (see 2 Nephi 11:3–4; D&C 6:28). Even today priesthood ordinances must be performed with more than one witness present.

2 Corinthians 13:12—“Greet One Another with an Holy Kiss”

The Joseph Smith Translation changes the word *kiss* to *salutation*, meaning a warm greeting.

Studying the Scriptures

Do activities A and B as you study 2 Corinthians 12–13.

A Unlock the Scriptures

Read the following pairs of scriptures and explain how the first scripture helps you better understand Paul’s teachings in the second scripture:

1. Doctrine and Covenants 137:1–5 and 2 Corinthians 12:1–4
2. Ether 12:27 and 2 Corinthians 12:5–10

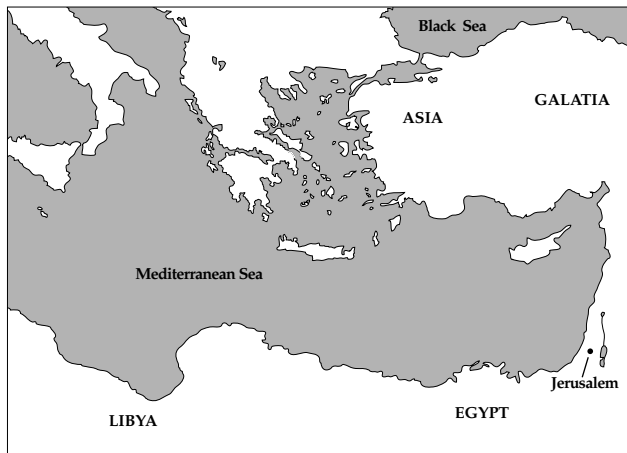
B Choose a Favorite Verse

As you read 2 Corinthians 13, choose a verse that stands out to you as being very important. Write that verse in your notebook and tell why you chose it.

The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Galatians

Who Were the Galatians?

Paul's epistle was addressed to "the churches of Galatia" (Galatians 1:2), or to the members living in several different branches of the Church in that area. Galatia was located in what is now central Turkey.



Why Did Paul Write This Letter?

The Galatian Saints were struggling with a common problem in those early years. Many Jewish converts to Christianity still practiced certain parts of the law of Moses and insisted that gentile converts live them also in order to be members of the Church. In reality, the law of Moses had not always been part of the gospel. God had given the gospel to Adam in the beginning. God then gave it to Abraham because of his faith and desire to do what was right. The law of Moses was later added to the gospel on a temporary basis because the people were disobedient. The lesser law was intended to train the people and prepare them to accept the full gospel that Abraham had. Paul wrote to the Galatians to encourage them to fully live the gospel and not be tied to the law of Moses and Jewish traditions.

What to Look For

In this epistle Paul taught several principles to those early Saints that are important for Latter-day Saints to learn:

- Obedience to the law cannot save us because no one can live the law perfectly (see Galatians 2:16). Are there people in the Church today who make a similar mistake, thinking they can earn their way to heaven by keeping all of the commandments?
- Righteousness comes only through faith in Jesus Christ. He helps us to conquer sin; we cannot be righteous on our own (see Galatians 2:16–21).
- As we become the sons and daughters of God, we also become heirs of God through Jesus Christ (see Galatians 3).
- Living close to the Spirit can help us better resist the sins of the flesh (see Galatians 5).

Galatians 1–2

False Teachers Pervert the True Gospel

Not long after Paul delivered the gospel of Jesus Christ to the people of Galatia, Jewish Christians among them began teaching that even the Gentiles had to live the law of Moses, particularly the rule about circumcision (see "Why Did Paul Write This Letter?" above). Notice how Paul defended the gospel he taught by testifying where it came from.

Understanding the Scriptures

Galatians 1

Pervert (v. 7)—Change, corrupt

Accursed (v. 8)—Cursed, damned

Separated me (v. 15)—Set me apart

I conferred not with flesh and blood (v. 16)—I did not discuss it with anyone else on earth

Galatians 1:14—"Traditions of My Fathers"

The "traditions of my fathers" Paul wrote about were the religious traditions of his family. He had been trained in his youth as a Pharisee (see Acts 26:5). The Pharisees believed that the rules and personal opinions that Jewish teachers had written about the scriptures were as important as the scriptures themselves. The Pharisees were very zealous (strict) in their obedience to these uninspired rules (see Mark 7:10–13; Bible Dictionary, "Pharisees," p. 750).

Galatians 2

To whom we gave . . . not for an hour (v. 5)—We did not yield to them for even an hour

Contrariwise (v. 7)—On the other hand, on the contrary

Wrought effectually (v. 8)—Worked effectively
Cephas (v. 9)—The Apostle Peter

Galatians 2:7–9—"Gospel of the Uncircumcision . . . Gospel of the Circumcision"

The Apostle Paul was called to take the gospel to the Gentiles (the "uncircumcised") and Peter was directed to minister among the Jews (the "circumcised").

Galatians 2:11–16—"When Peter Was Come . . . I Withstood Him to the Face"

Paul did not reveal everything about his disagreement with Peter. It appears that Peter, for fear of offending Jewish converts, had stopped eating with gentile converts, as required by Jewish

tradition. Paul publicly confronted Peter about yielding to tradition rather than fully living the gospel of Jesus Christ. Elder Bruce R. McConkie wrote, "Without question, if we had the full account, we would find Peter reversing himself and doing all in his power to get the Jewish saints to believe that the law of Moses was fulfilled in Christ and no longer applied to anyone either Jew or Gentile" (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 2:464).

Studying the Scriptures

Do the following activity as you study Galatians 1–2.

A Summarize Paul's Message

In Galatians 1–2 Paul expressed his concern for the Galatian Saints. He also defended his calling as an Apostle and the gospel message he taught.

- Summarize the main points of Galatians 1–2 by answering the following questions. (For help, see the introduction to Galatians in this manual and the "Understanding the Scriptures" section for Galatians 1–2.)
 - What seemed to be Paul's main concern for the Saints in Galatia?
 - What was the "other gospel" (see Galatians 1:8–9) that some Jewish members of the Church were trying to teach the people? Why wouldn't it last?
 - What do we know about what happened between Peter and Paul?
- In your notebook, describe some of the "other gospels" (false doctrines that people offer instead of the gospel of Jesus Christ) that people may be tempted with today.

Galatians 3–6

The Gospel of Faith Came before the Law of Moses



Paul reminded the Galatian Saints that Abraham became righteous by having faith in Jesus Christ and through obedience to His gospel long before the law of Moses was given. He taught that when the children of Israel (the ancestors of the Galatian Saints) were brought out of

Egypt they were not ready to live the fulness of the gospel, so the law of Moses was given to prepare them for the higher law that Abraham had lived.

By making and keeping the gospel covenants of this higher law, we can become the children of God and be spiritually born again. Notice how God helps us be born again as we seek to "walk in the Spirit" (Galatians 5:16).

Understanding the Scriptures

Galatians 3

Before whose eyes . . . crucified among you (v. 1)—Since the Atonement of Jesus Christ was clearly taught among you

Heathen (v. 8)—Those not of the lineage or family of Abraham

Though it be but a man's covenant . . . no man disannulleth (v. 15)—Even covenants or contracts between men cannot legally be canceled or changed

Mediator (vv. 19, 20)—One who stands between two people to help solve problems

Galatians 3:2–5—Faith and the Spirit

Paul reminded the Galatian Saints that they had received the Spirit by "the hearing of faith" (Galatians 3:2, 5). They received a testimony of Jesus Christ because they heard and accepted the gospel, not because they obeyed the law of Moses. The Prophet Joseph Smith said, "Faith comes by hearing the word of God, through the testimony of the servants of God; that testimony is always attended by the Spirit of prophecy and revelation" (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 148).

Galatians 3:8–11, 24—How Do We Become Justified?

To be "just" or "justified" is to be declared not guilty of sin, to be clean and acceptable to God. Paul taught the Galatian Saints that living the law of Moses could not justify them. Since no one can live either the lesser law of Moses or the higher law of the gospel perfectly, Heavenly Father promised to send a Redeemer. Through faith in the Atonement of Jesus Christ and obedience to the law of the gospel even Gentiles, who never knew the law of Moses, can be saved.

Galatians 3:16–19—The Abrahamic Covenant and the Law of Moses

Paul explained that the Lord covenanted with Abraham that the gospel and the Savior would come through his family line (see also Bible Dictionary, "Abraham, Covenant of," p. 602). Because the Israelites were disobedient, the Lord temporarily added the law of Moses to prepare them for the coming of Jesus Christ. However, the addition of the law of Moses did not cancel the promise that the Savior would come and bring the gospel again (see also JST, Galatians 3:19–20).

Galatians 4

Tutors and governors (v. 2)—Teachers and guardians

Ye observe days (v. 10)—Paul is referring to the holy days and festivals that were part of the Mosaic law and were no longer necessary.

Zealously affect you (v. 17)—Eagerly want to change you

Travail (v. 19)—Suffer pain
Allegory (v. 24)—Story that uses symbols to teach truths about life

Gendereth (v. 24)—Gives birth to

Galatians 4:5—"That We Might Receive the Adoption of Sons"

Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught: "Those who receive the gospel and join The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have power given them to become the sons of God. (D. & C. 11:30; 35:2; 39:1–6; 45:8; John 1:12.) Sonship does not come from church membership alone, but admission into the Church opens the

door to such high status, if it is followed by continued faith and devotion. (Rom. 8:14–18; Gal. 3:26–29; 4:1–7.) The sons of God are members of his family and, hence, are joint-heirs with Christ, inheriting with him the fulness of the Father. (D. & C. 93:17–23.)” (*Mormon Doctrine*, 745).

Galatians 4:22–31—The Allegory of the Two Covenants

To help the Galatian Saints understand why they should not tie themselves to the law of Moses and its rituals, Paul used an allegory of two covenants to compare the law of Moses and the gospel of Jesus Christ to Abraham’s two wives and their sons.



Abraham’s Wives: Symbols of the Old and New Covenants

Hagar (Agar), the bondwoman, bore a son (Ishmael) naturally after the flesh.

Sarah, the freewoman, bore a son (Isaac) miraculously, a son of promise.

Paul used Hagar and Ishmael as symbols for the bondage of the law of Moses, received on Mount Sinai, and also the earthly city of Jerusalem, which was in bondage to the Romans.

Paul used Sarah and Isaac as symbols for the freedom Jesus Christ brings with His gospel and the heavenly Jerusalem that is free from bondage.

Jews who cling to the law of Moses are children of bondage. They continually persecute the Christians, just as Hagar and Ishmael persecuted Sarah and Isaac.

Christians who embrace the gospel of Jesus Christ are freed from the bondage of Mosaic rituals and are heirs to the promises made to Abraham.



Paul compared the law of Moses and the traditions of the elders to a “yoke of bondage” (Galatians 5:1).

Galatians 5

Persuasion (v. 8)—Belief

Leaven, leaveneth (v. 9)—Leaven is yeast, which causes bread to rise; Paul meant that a little false doctrine can influence the whole person, or the whole group.

An occasion to the flesh (v. 13)—An excuse to act wickedly

Lasciviousness (v. 19)—Wicked desires and acts

Variance (v. 20)—Contention, fighting

Emulations (v. 20)—Jealousy

Galatians 5:2–6—Trusting in the Law

Paul used the word *circumcised* in these verses as a symbol of the law of Moses. He said that those who believed that Jewish traditions and the law of Moses could save them would be judged by the whole law and condemned if they were not perfectly obedient. Those who accepted the higher law of the gospel would be forgiven of their sins if they repented and had faith in Jesus Christ.

Galatians 6

Overtaken in a fault (v. 1)—Found to be committing sin

Communicate unto (v. 6)—Share with

Corruption (v. 8)—

Destruction, spiritual death

Galatians 6:17—“I Bear in My Body the Marks of the Lord Jesus”

In this verse Paul was referring to his sufferings in the service of Jesus Christ (see also 2 Corinthians 11:23–25; Philippians 3:10).

Studying the Scriptures

Do activity A and then either activity B or C as you study Galatians 3–6.

A The Purpose of the Law of Moses

Review Galatians 3. If Abraham was able to live righteously without even knowing about the law of Moses, what was the purpose of the law? (see the “Understanding the Scriptures” section for Galatians 3, p. 132, if you need help).

B Write Your Own Test Questions

Using the question in activity A as an example, review Galatians 4–6 and write six more questions (two for each chapter) that you think would be good test questions for those chapters. Be sure to include the correct answer after each question.

C How Is Your Spiritual Battle Going?

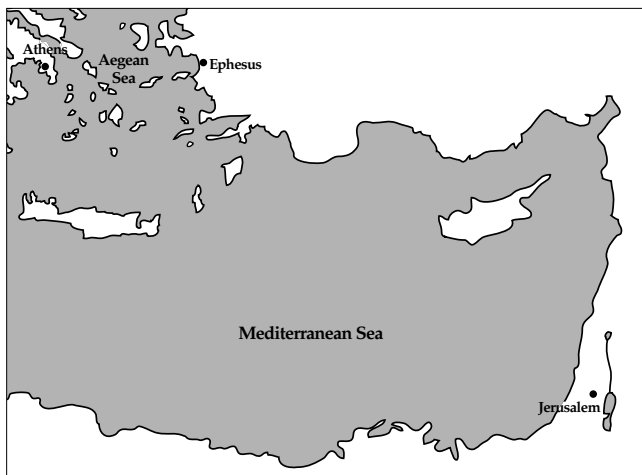
Paul taught that the spirit and the flesh are continually struggling against each other. Which one is winning in your life?

1. In your notebook, draw two columns and label one *Works of the Flesh* and the other *Fruits of the Spirit*. Read Galatians 5:16–26 and list the key words and phrases that describe each one. Ponder the lists and determine how your own spiritual war is going.
2. Read Galatians 6:1–9 and list three things you can do to have more of the fruits of the Spirit to help you in your spiritual battle.

The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Ephesians

Where Did the Ephesians Live?

The Ephesians lived in Ephesus, an important trading and cultural center on the Aegean Sea in what is now western Turkey. It was the center for the worship of the goddess Artemis, or Diana. The temple of Diana was one of the wonders of the ancient world and a source of wealth for the merchants of Ephesus (see Acts 19:24–27; see also Bible Dictionary, “Diana,” p. 657).



Why Did Paul Write This Letter?

Many of Paul’s epistles were written to stem the tide of apostasy or correct some doctrinal error. Paul’s letter to the Ephesians is different. It is a treasure chest of uplifting doctrinal teachings and seems intended to give more gospel light to the Saints. Paul wrote this letter from prison in Rome about A.D. 60.

What to Look For

Ephesians teaches many doctrines that are taught by the Latter-day Saints. In it we find references to the doctrine of foreordination, the dispensation of the fulness of times, the importance of prophets and apostles in the Church, the idea that there is only one true and unified Church, and the fact that the organization of the Church is essential. In this epistle we find some of the most sublime scriptural teachings on the role of the family and the importance of proper family life.



Ephesians 1–3 Essential Doctrines of the Church of Jesus Christ

If others really understood the first three chapters of Ephesians as do the Latter-day Saints, there would not be as much confusion among Christians as there is today. There would also not be as many different Christian churches. As you study Ephesians 1–3, notice what Paul taught about the Godhead, foreordination, grace, the Atonement, and the characteristics of the Church of Jesus Christ.

Understanding the Scriptures



Ephesians 1

Predestinated (vv. 5, 11)—Foreordained, chosen in the premortal existence for specific blessings and responsibilities

Adoption of children (v. 5)—Being spiritually reborn as sons and daughters of God (see Mosiah 27:25–26)

Prudence (v. 8)—Understanding

The mystery of his will (v. 9)—Truths about God’s plan for His children that cannot be understood except by revelation and then kept sacred

The earnest of our inheritance (v. 14)—The guarantee of gaining the celestial kingdom

All principality (v. 21)—Any king or ruler

Ephesians 1:4–5—“He Hath Chosen Us in Him before the Foundation of the World”

Not all people have the same desire to learn the truth and live righteously. Paul wrote, “He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world” (Ephesians 1:4). Some of Heavenly Father’s children were “chosen” and “predestinated” (foreordained) to certain callings, which helps explain the difference in people’s attitudes toward the truth.

“Foreordination comes as a blessing or reward for premortal righteousness and valiant commitment to Jesus Christ. Birth into the house of Israel and heirship to all the blessings of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are often seen as the birthright of dedicated souls (see Eph. 1:4–5; Rom. 9:4). These rights and blessings may still be obtained by any and all who elect to receive them, whether in this life or the next” (in Daniel H. Ludlow, ed., *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 5 vols. [1992], 2:522).

Ephesians 1:10—“The Dispensation of the Fulness of Times”

Heavenly Father has “dispensed” (revealed) the gospel to man at various times in the earth’s history. God’s revelations to Adam, Noah, and Moses are examples. This last dispensation (our time), which was revealed through the Prophet Joseph

Smith, was prophesied by Paul and called the “dispensation of the fulness of times” (Ephesians 1:10). Our dispensation was given this name because all things that have been a part of any previous dispensation will now be gathered together in Jesus Christ (see also D&C 128:18).

Ephesians 1:13—“Sealed with That Holy Spirit of Promise”

President Joseph Fielding Smith explained:

“The Holy Spirit of Promise is the Holy Ghost who places the stamp of approval upon every ordinance: baptism, confirmation, ordination, marriage. The promise is that the blessings will be received through faithfulness.

“If a person violates a covenant, whether it be of baptism, ordination, marriage or anything else, the Spirit withdraws the stamp of approval, and the blessings will not be received” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 1:45; see also D&C 132:7).

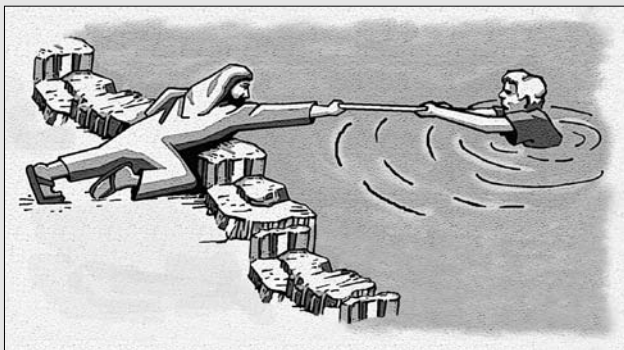
Ephesians 2

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| Quickened (vv. 1, 5)—Made alive | • | Uncircumcision (v. 11)—Gentiles |
| Course (v. 2)—Ways | • | Circumcision (v. 11)—Jews |
| The prince of the power of the air (v. 2)—Satan | • | Nigh (vv. 13, 17)—Near |

Ephesians 2:4–10—“For by Grace Are Ye Saved . . . Not of Works”

Some people believe that when Paul said we are saved by grace through faith he meant that nothing we do has any effect on whether or not we are saved—that it is completely a gift from God. This view is in opposition to James’s teaching that “faith without works is dead” (James 2:10–26).

The revelations of the Lord to Book of Mormon prophets help clarify this important doctrine. While it is true that no one can live the law well enough to be saved by his or her own obedience (see Romans 3:20–23; 2 Nephi 2:5), that does not mean that obedience is not important. If we do not strive to keep the commandments, believing alone will not be enough (see Matthew 7:21; James 2:17–19).



As the accompanying illustration shows, we are all like a man who cannot swim and is drowning in a river. The Savior stands on the bank and extends a branch to save us. That branch is the grace of God offered to us through the Atonement, without which we cannot be saved. If we do not put forth an effort to grasp the branch and hold on, we will still drown. We are not expected to do this on our own, however. If we try, the grace of God will increase our strength and give us the power to hold on and be saved (see Bible Dictionary, “Grace,” p. 697). As the prophet Nephi said, “We know that it is by grace that we are saved, *after all we can do*” (2 Nephi 25:23; italics added).

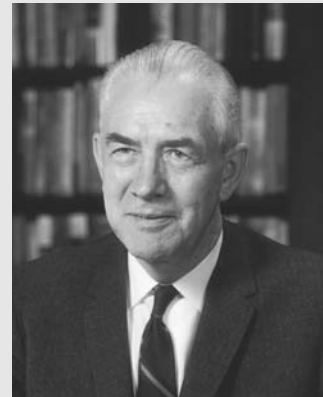
Ephesians 2:14–17—“Broken Down the . . . Wall of Partition between Us”

The Atonement of Jesus Christ ended the law of Moses. Christ then commanded that the gospel be preached to all the world (see Mark 16:15–16). Through the Atonement, the enmity (hostility) that separated Jews and Gentiles, like a partition or wall, was abolished (removed).

Ephesians 2:19—“Fellowcitizens with the Saints”

Everyone can be fellow citizens with the Saints through the ordinance of baptism if they will have faith in Christ, repent, and prepare themselves. Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints need never feel alone; they have brothers and sisters to help care for them.

Ephesians 2:20—Is Revelation through Apostles and Prophets Essential to the True Church?



Elder Mark E. Petersen, who was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, testified: “Another important sign [of the true Church] is that the Church would be guided by constant revelation through living prophets. Amos had said that the Lord will do nothing except through His authorized prophets (see Amos 3:7). The divine Church as restored, then, will be led by living seers and revelators

receiving current direction from heaven” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1979, 31; or *Ensign*, May 1979, 22–23).

Ephesians 3

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| Dispensation of the grace of God . . . to you-ward (v. 2)—The power and grace God gave Paul to minister to the Gentiles | • | Principalities (v. 10)—Area governed by rulers |
| Mystery (vv. 3, 9)—Divine truth that can only be known by revelation and then kept sacred | • | In whom we have boldness . . . by the faith of him (v. 12)—With faith in Jesus Christ we can approach God with confidence. |

Studying the Scriptures

Do activity C and at least one other activity (A, B, or D) as you study Ephesians 1–3.

A Find the Doctrine

Review Ephesians 1 and find at least three verses that describe the nature of the Godhead. Explain how those verses show that God the Father and Jesus Christ are separate beings.

B Find the Spiritual Blessings

In Ephesians 1:3–14 Paul lists some of the spiritual blessings that come to the faithful because of Jesus Christ. List those blessings and tell why they are important to you.

C Explain the Doctrine

1. Review Ephesians 2:4–10 and then read James 2:17–20. Explain how these two scriptures seem to disagree but are actually both correct (see the “Understanding the Scriptures” section for Ephesians 2:4–10 for help).
2. Draw an illustration like the one shown in the “Understanding the Scriptures” section above and label it to show the Savior, us, our earthly condition, and the Atonement.

D Picture This

In Ephesians 2:18–22, Paul taught that the Church of Jesus Christ is like a building “fitly framed together.” Draw a picture of a building that shows how Paul said the Church should be organized.

Ephesians 4–6

Characteristics of a Disciple

If a person believed and lived the doctrines Paul described in Ephesians 1–3, what difference would it make in his or her life? Would that person look or act differently from other people? Read Ephesians 4–6, look for how Paul described a true disciple of Christ. (Be sure to read the Joseph Smith Translation of Ephesians 4:26.)

Understanding the Scriptures



Ephesians 4

Ascended (vv. 8–10)—Went up	Vanity (v. 17)—Emptiness, weakness, without truth
Descended (vv. 9–10)—Went down	Alienated (v. 18)—Cut off, made a stranger
Edifying (vv. 12, 29)—Building up	Lasciviousness (v. 19)—Unbridled lust
The stature of the fulness of Christ (v. 13)—The level of glory that Jesus Christ enjoys	Former conversation (v. 22)—Earlier behavior
Sleight (v. 14)—Lying, deception	Malice (v. 31)—Evil thoughts and actions

Ephesians 4:8—“He Led Captivity Captive, and Gave Gifts unto Men”

Death holds all men captive. Jesus Christ “led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men” (Ephesians 4:8), meaning He conquered death and gave all men the gift of immortality.

Ephesians 4:15–16—“Grow Up into Him in All Things”

In Ephesians 4:15–16, as in 1 Corinthians 12:12–18, Paul taught that the Church is like a physical body with Jesus Christ as the head. When every member does his or her part, the whole Church can grow together in love.

Ephesians 5

Sweet-smelling savour (v. 2)—Sweet scent or fragrance, meaning a sacrifice that pleased God	Made manifest (v. 13)—Made to appear, shown
Covetousness (v. 3)—Greed, envy	Circumspectly (v. 15)—Wisely, exactly
Jesting (v. 4)—Obscene, disgusting	Redeeming the time (v. 16)—Making good use of your time
Whoremonger (v. 5)—Man guilty of sexual sin	Submitting, submit (vv. 21–22)—Yielding to, cooperating with
Reprove, reproved (vv. 11, 13)—Speak out against, chastise	Reverence (v. 33)—Respect, honor

Ephesians 5:22–33—Paul’s Advice to Husbands and Wives

Some people today object to Paul’s admonition that the husband be the head of the home. Such objections come from a misunderstanding of the divinely assigned roles of husband and wife. The First Presidency and the Council of the Twelve Apostles have declared:

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

“The family is ordained of God. Marriage between man and woman is essential to His eternal plan. . . . 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” (“The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102).

Ephesians 6

Wrath (v. 4)—Anger	Respect of persons (v. 9)—Favoritism, discrimination
Nurture and admonition (v. 4)—Teaching and training	Supplication (v. 18)—Pleading prayer
Eyeservice (v. 6)—Only obedient when someone is watching	

Ephesians 6:14—“Having Your Loins Girt About with Truth”

The “loins” refers to the area of the hips and waist. To be “girt” means to be clothed or wrapped. To have your “loins girt about with truth” (Ephesians 6:14) is to be clothed, wrapped, covered, and protected by truth, chastity, and virtue.

Studying the Scriptures

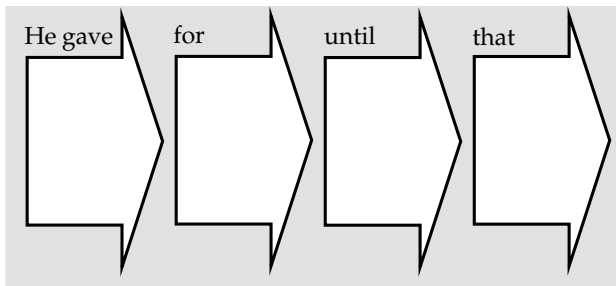


Do two of the following activities (A–D) as you study Ephesians 4–6.



Scripture Mastery—Ephesians 4:11–14

1. Does it matter how the Church is organized? Copy the following diagram into your notebook and fill in the missing parts as you study Ephesians 4:11–14.



2. In your own words explain why the Church must be organized as the Lord directed.

B What Is a Disciple of Christ?

Search Ephesians 4:21–5:4. List all of the characteristics you can find in those verses that describe a follower of Jesus Christ. (For example: “put off . . . the old man” of sin [v. 22] and “be renewed in the spirit” [v. 23].) Ponder which of those characteristics you might need to work on.

C What Is the Lord’s Plan for Husbands, Wives, and Children?

Review Ephesians 5:22–6:4.

1. If you are a young man, write a paragraph describing what your duty will be as a husband and father. If you are a young woman, write a paragraph describing what your duty will be as a wife and mother. (Use the information in the “Understanding the Scriptures” section to help you.)

2. Write another paragraph describing your duty as a child to your parents. Explain what you think it means to “obey your parents in the Lord.”

D “The Whole Armour of God”

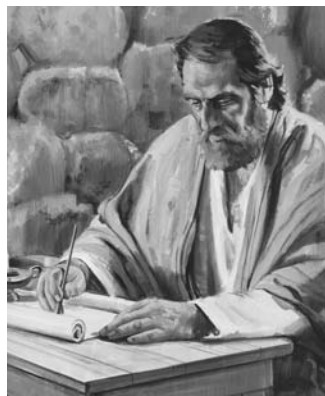


1. Draw the accompanying illustration of a soldier in your notebook. Then, as you study Ephesians 6:11–17, add to your drawing the pieces of armor and weapons that are described in these verses but are missing from the picture. Be sure to label the armor.

2. List each piece of armor and explain what it represents and why it is important. (See the “Understanding the Scriptures” section for Ephesians 6:14 for an example of what it means to have “your loins girt about with truth.”)

The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Philippians

Who Were the Philippians and Why Did Paul Write to Them?



The city of Philippi was a Roman colony and the first European city to receive the gospel (see Bible map 13 and information on the epistle to the Philippians in Bible Dictionary, “Pauline Epistles,” pp. 745–46). Paul first preached the gospel to the Philippians during his second missionary journey (see Bible map 13; Acts 16:9–40). Ten years later, upon hearing of Paul’s imprisonment in Rome,

the Philippian Saints sent gifts to sustain him in his affliction. He wrote this epistle to them from prison. It is an expression of his friendship, love, good counsel, and gratitude to friends who willingly helped him.

Philippians 1–4 Finding Strength in Jesus Christ

Have you ever faced a challenge that you felt you could not overcome? How did you feel at the time? Where did you turn for help? Paul, as a prisoner in Rome, taught where we should turn: “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me” (Philippians 4:13).

Understanding the Scriptures



Philippians 1

Bonds (vv. 7, 13–16)—Imprisonment

Manifest (v. 13)—Shown

Strife (v. 15)—Conflict, contention

In pretence (v. 18)—Falsely claimed

Conversation (v. 27)—Conduct

Philippians 1:28—“Which Is to Them an Evident Token of Perdition”

The Joseph Smith Translation changes that phrase to “who reject the gospel, which bringeth on them destruction” (JST, Philippians 1:28).

Philippians 2

Consolation (v. 1)—Encouragement, comfort

Vainglory (v. 3)—Boasting

Philippians 2:5–8—“Made Himself of No Reputation”

Elder Neal A. Maxwell, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, wrote: “In heaven, Christ’s lofty name was determined to be the only name on earth offering salvation to all mankind (see Acts 4:12; 2 Nephi 25:20; see also Abraham 3:27), yet the King of kings, the Mortal Messiah, willingly lived modestly, wrote Paul, even as a person ‘of no reputation’ (Philippians 2:7)” (*Men and Women of Christ* [1991], 63–64).

Philippians 2:25—Who Was Epaphroditus?

Epaphroditus was the messenger who delivered gifts to Paul from the Philippian Saints (see Philippians 4:18). After suffering a sickness “nigh unto death,” he returned home bearing this letter from Paul (see Philippians 2:25–28).

Philippians 3

The concision (v. 2)—Those who lead astray, apostasy

Dung (v. 8)—Waste, manure

Apprehend, apprehended (vv. 12–13)—Take possession of, obtain

Conversation (v. 20)—Citizenship

Subdue (v. 21)—Win, bring under control

Philippians 4

Intreat (v. 3)—Ask

Studying the Scriptures



Do activity A and either B or C as you study Philippians 1–4.

A Your Thoughts on Your Potential

“President [Lorenzo] Snow composed the following beautiful poem about ten years before his death. It . . . is the result of a life-long obedience to the teaching revealed to him about fifty-two years before. The poem is addressed to Apostle Paul, and was written in reply to the apostle’s epistle to the Philippians: . . .

As Abra’m, Isaac, Jacob, too,
First babes, then men—to gods they grew.
As man now is, our God once was;
As now God is, so man may be,—
Which doth unfold man’s destiny.
.

A son of God, like God to be,
Would not be robbing Deity;
And he who has this hope within,
Will purify himself from sin.

(LeRoi C. Snow, “Devotion to a Divine Inspiration,” *Improvement Era*, June 1919, 659–61.)

Compare this poem with Philippians 2:1–8.

1. What did you learn about your own potential?
2. What can you do to fulfill your potential?

B Letter to a Nonmember Father

Read Philippians 3:7–16 and think about what Paul was willing to do for the gospel. Did he consider it a sacrifice? Read the following story and write an ending that represents the truth Paul expressed:

Susan had never seen her father that angry before. She could still hear him: “How could you be taking lessons from missionaries of another church? Will you turn your back on your family, too?” Susan respected her father and had thought a lot about what he said. She sat down and wrote a letter to him, explaining . . .

C Seek After the Best Things

In the thirteenth article of faith the Prophet Joseph Smith quoted from Philippians 4:8–9. Read and compare the scripture with the article of faith. Review the following list and write a synonym for each word:

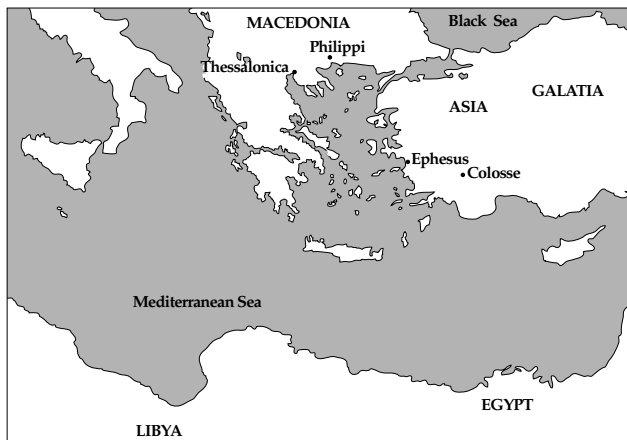
1. True
2. Honest
3. Just
4. Pure
5. Lovely
6. Good report
7. Virtue
8. Praiseworthy

We believe in being honest, true, chaste, benevolent, virtuous, and in doing good to all men; indeed, we may say that we follow the admonition of Paul—We believe all things, we hope all things, we have endured many things, and hope to be able to endure all things. If there is anything virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy, we seek after these things.

The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Colossians

Paul Counsels the Colossians

Like the epistle to the Philippians, Paul wrote this epistle to the Colossians while he was imprisoned in Rome. The Colossians were members of the Church in the city of Colosse. A Colossian named Epaphras visited Paul in Rome to ask for advice on how to deal with the serious problem of false teachers spreading corrupt doctrines among the Saints. This epistle is Paul's counsel to Epaphras and the other Colossians.



Colossians 1–4

A Warning against False Teachings

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that in order to be saved we must believe in God and have “a correct idea of his character, perfections, and attributes” (Lectures on Faith [1985], 38). It is important, therefore, to know the truth and guard against incorrect teachings and doctrines. As you read Colossians, notice Paul’s warnings and consider how they apply to your life.

Understanding the Scriptures

Colossians 1

Meet (v. 12)—Able
Translated (v. 13)—Brought
Preeminence (v. 18)—Have first place
Reconcile (v. 20)—Win over, make right

In the body of his flesh through death (v. 22)—Through the Atonement of Jesus Christ
Dispensation (v. 25)—Commission

Colossians 1:25–29—What Is the “Mystery Which Hath Been Hid from Ages”?

The “mystery which hath been hid from ages” (Colossians 1:26) is that God sent His Son, the “firstborn of every creature” (Colossians 1:15), into the world and that through His Son’s Atonement all mankind can become pure, blameless, and saved in His presence (see Colossians 1:20–23). Paul was making this mystery known to all who would listen.

Colossians 2

Beguile (vv. 4, 18)—Deceive
Rudiments (vv. 8, 20)—Basic principles
Ordinances (vv. 14, 20)—The law of Moses and its regulations

Nailing it to his cross (v. 14)—Through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the law of Moses was fulfilled
Will (v. 23)—Self-imposed regulations

Colossians 2:16–19—Beware of False Teachings

Paul warned the Colossians to “be not moved away” from the gospel they had been taught. False doctrines were being spread by Jewish Christians who wanted gentile members to live according to the law of Moses (see Colossians 2:16–17). These Jewish converts were setting strict rules about the kinds of food Christians were allowed to eat and the holidays they were allowed to celebrate. Some Saints were also worshiping angels and teaching that angels had the power to answer prayers (see Colossians 2:18–19). This false doctrine diminished the place of Jesus Christ in the plan of salvation. Paul reminded the Colossians that they could only gain salvation through Christ, for He is preeminent in the plan.

Colossians 3

Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth (v. 5)—Rise above your worldly tendencies
Inordinate affection (v. 5)—Uncontrolled affection

Evil concupiscence (v. 5)—Sinful desires, lust
Forbearing (v. 13)—Sustaining
Provoke (v. 21)—Stir up, cause

Colossians 4

Without (v. 5)—Nonmembers
Redeeming (v. 5)—Using every opportunity to do good

Salt (v. 6)—Wisdom

Studying the Scriptures

Do two of the following activities (A–D) as you study Colossians 1–4.

A Write Your Testimony of Jesus Christ

How much do you really know about Jesus Christ? Read Colossians 1:13–22 and list the names, titles, and phrases Paul used to describe the Savior. Write a paragraph that summarizes your testimony of these qualities of Jesus Christ.

B What Do You Think?

Listed below are several statements that represent false ideas. Write what you think is wrong about each idea.

1. It doesn't matter what movies I go see; after all, they're just movies.
2. The decision about when to start dating should be an individual one.
3. Church is boring and someone needs to make it more exciting.

Read Colossians 2:1–12 and write what could help you avoid being deceived by false teachings.

C Put On

Paul taught how to be born again by putting off certain negative characteristics and putting on better ones. Make two columns and label one *Put Off* and the other *Put On*. As you read Colossians 3:1–14, list what needs to be put off and put on in the appropriate column.

D Family Matters Do Matter

President Spencer W. Kimball reminded us: "The family is the basic unit of the kingdom of God on earth. The Church can be no healthier than its families" (*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, 331–32). Read Colossians 3:15–21 and write five ideas that would help families be a healthier part of the kingdom of God.



The First Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Thessalonians

Why Did Paul Write This Letter to the Thessalonians?

Early in his second missionary journey, Paul proclaimed the gospel in the city of Thessalonica (see Bible map 13). His message was greeted with great enthusiasm by many people. However, some unbelieving Jews stirred up violent opposition to Paul's preaching, so he left the city to spare the new converts further persecution (see Acts 17:1–10; see also the information on the epistles to the Thessalonians in Bible Dictionary, "Pauline Epistles," p. 743).

Paul sent Timothy to minister to the new members of the Church in Thessalonica. This epistle from Paul encouraged the Thessalonian Saints to live worthy lives and keep in mind that the Savior would come to judge everyone. Timothy later joined Paul in Corinth and reported on the condition of the Thessalonians.

guide at all times. As you study 1 Thessalonians, look for ways the gospel and the power of the Spirit prepare us for Christ's Second Coming.



1 Thessalonians 1–5

The Gospel Prepares Us for the Second Coming of Christ

Paul hurriedly left Thessalonica because of persecution in the city. But he wrote this letter to express his love to the Saints he left behind. He reminded them that knowing the gospel is not enough; we must strive to have the Holy Ghost as our

Understanding the Scriptures



1 Thessalonians 1

1 Thessalonians 1:4—What Is the "Election of God"?

Having an "election of God" means that one was "born at a time, at a place, and in circumstances where one will come in favorable contact with the gospel. This election took place in the premortal existence" (Bible Dictionary, "Election," 663).

1 Thessalonians 2

Exhortation (v. 3)—Strong gospel instruction

Guile (v. 3)—Craftiness, deceit

Cloke of covetousness (v. 5)—Covering for greed

Fill up their sins (v. 16)—People becoming completely wicked

1 Thessalonians 4

Sanctification (v. 3)—Purification, cleansing

Abstain (v. 3)—Not participate, not partake

Possess his vessel (v. 4)—Control his body, passions, actions

Concupiscence (v. 5)—Sinful desires, lust

Asleep, sleep (vv. 13–15)—Dead, die

1 Thessalonians 5

Travail (v. 3)—Pain

Wake or sleep (v. 10)—Those who have prepared themselves and are watching for the coming of the Savior and those

who have not; alive or dead at the coming of the Lord

Render (v. 15)—Return

Wholly (v. 23)—Completely

Studying the Scriptures

Do two of the following activities (A–D) as you study 1 Thessalonians 1–5.

A Mark Paul’s Words

How a missionary acts is as important as what he or she says. This is true of all members of the Church. Write what a

nonmember friend might think if a member of the Church did any of the following:

1. Went to an R-rated movie
2. Complained about something that happened at a Church meeting
3. Gossiped about another person
4. Went to a wild party

Read 1 Thessalonians 2:1–12 and list at least eight words or phrases that could help you avoid the situations listed above.

B Becoming Sanctified

President Brigham Young taught: “When the will, passions, and feelings of a person are perfectly submissive to God and His requirements, that person is sanctified” (*Journal of Discourses*, 2:123). Read 1 Thessalonians 4:1–8 and list the passions and feelings Paul said we need to control.

C Picture This

Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18 and draw a picture of the event described.

D How to Become Children of Light

In 1 Thessalonians 5:1–6, Paul taught that “children of light” would not be surprised by the coming of the Lord. Would you like to be prepared for the Second Coming? Read 1 Thessalonians 5:12–23 and list the fourteen suggestions Paul gave that can help you be a child of light. Choose three or four of the suggestions and write a goal that will set you on a path to greater light.

The Second Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Thessalonians

Why Did Paul Write a Second Letter?

After Paul’s first epistle to the Thessalonians, there was some confusion about the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. The inexperienced Saints may have been deceived by false teachers or have just misunderstood Paul. Paul wrote his second letter to clarify his teachings and add words of encouragement.



2 Thessalonians 1–3

“Be Not Weary in Well Doing”

The Thessalonian Saints expected the Second Coming to occur very soon, so many stopped worrying about preparing for the future. Paul wrote to correct that false idea and to get them working toward their own salvation again. Notice what Paul taught must happen before the Lord will come again. Also look for how he inspired the Saints to continue in well doing.

Understanding the Scriptures



2 Thessalonians 1

Recompense (v. 6)—Repay, reward

2 Thessalonians 2

Delusion (v. 11)—Faulty thinking

Consolation (v. 16)—Comfort, peace

2 Thessalonians 2:1–3—The Apostasy

In the early Christian Church many false teachers sought to change Church doctrines to fit the philosophies of the day. Those teachers were able to lead many away from the truth. Other Saints lost heart because they could not withstand the intense persecution from the Romans. Then when the Apostles were killed, the already weakening Church was left without leadership.

Over the years, the Church went from being the Church of Jesus Christ to a church based on the ideas and philosophies of men. That period in history when members fell away from the truth is now known as the Apostasy. It was not until the visitation of Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ to the Prophet Joseph Smith that the fulness of the gospel was restored to the earth.

2 Thessalonians 2:3–10—Who Is the “Mystery of Iniquity”?

Jesus Christ is “the mystery of godliness” (1 Timothy 3:16), and Satan is “the mystery of iniquity.” Satan and those who rebelled with him were cast out and are known as “sons of perdition.” Satan has had an influence on mankind only because God has allowed him to (see 2 Thessalonians 2:7). That is, Jesus Christ “suffereth [Satan] to work” for now (see JST, 2 Thessalonians 2:7). But the scriptures promise that eventually Jesus Christ shall destroy Satan and all wickedness “with the brightness of his coming” (2 Thessalonians 2:8; see also D&C 5:19).

2 Thessalonians 3

Wrought with labour and travail (v. 8)—Accomplished through hard work

Busybodies (v. 11)—Those who wrongfully assume concern about other people’s business



B Scripture Mastery—2 Thessalonians 2:1–3

Review the information found in the “Understanding the Scriptures” section for 2 Thessalonians 2:1–3. Then read 2 Thessalonians 2:1–12. Explain what you think verses 3, 4, 8, and 10 mean.

C Write a Note to a Friend

What would you tell a friend who said he or she was tired of helping on Church service projects? Remember Paul’s encouragement to the Thessalonian Saints to “be not weary in well doing” (2 Thessalonians 3:13).

1. Read 2 Thessalonians 3:1–13 and identify at least two principles that would help a person feel less weary with giving service.
2. Using those two principles, write an encouraging note to your friend.



Studying the Scriptures



Do two of the following activities (A–C) as you study 2 Thessalonians 1–3.

A The Second Coming

President Joseph Fielding Smith explained: “This great and dreadful day can be no other time than the coming of Jesus Christ to establish his kingdom in power on the earth, and to cleanse it from all iniquity. It will not be a day of dread and fear to the righteous, but it will be a day of fear and terror to the ungodly. This we have learned from the words of the Savior himself” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 1:173).

Read 2 Thessalonians 1 and write what it says will happen to the wicked and what will happen to the righteous at the Savior’s Second Coming.

The First Epistle of Paul the Apostle to Timothy

What You Should Know about Timothy

Timothy was “perhaps Paul’s most trusted and capable assistant” (Bible Dictionary, “Timothy,” 785). The name *Timothy* means “honored of God,” and describes this faithful and devoted servant well.

Timothy was most likely converted during Paul’s first missionary journey. As he grew in the gospel, he was highly regarded as a faithful disciple and Paul chose him as a missionary companion (see Acts 16:1–5). While they were preaching in Ephesus, Paul discovered growing problems among members of the Church, including false teachings and speculation. Because of those problems, Paul turned over two elders to the buffetings of Satan (see 1 Timothy 1:19–20). Paul then called Timothy to watch over the Church and help restore the faith of the Ephesian Saints. He wrote this epistle to Timothy from Macedonia to encourage and strengthen him in his calling.

The First of the Pastoral Epistles

Pastoral Epistles was “the name given to the epistles to Timothy and Titus, because they deal with the pastoral office and the duties of the shepherds or ministers of the Church” (Bible Dictionary, “Pastoral Epistles,” 742). A pastor is a bishop, and Timothy was ordained the first bishop of the Church in Ephesus. Therefore, *pastoral* refers to the office and duties of a bishop.

1 Timothy 1–2

Living the Gospel

What is unique about those who follow Jesus Christ? What simple principles do they follow that make such a difference in their lives? Paul counseled Timothy on how to live a gospel-centered life. As you read 1 Timothy 1–2, think about how following Paul’s counsel can help you as you strive to follow the Savior.

Understanding the Scriptures

1 Timothy 1

Charge (v. 3)—Teach, command : **Perjured persons** (v. 10)—Liars, promise breakers
Unfeigned (v. 5)—Sincere :
Whoremongers (v. 10)—Adulterers, fornicators : **Blasphemer** (v. 13)—One who speaks evil of God and others

1 Timothy 2

Intercessions (v. 1)—Prayers in behalf of another : **A ransom** (v. 6)—To pay the price
Mediator (v. 5)—One who helps settle differences : **Adorn** (v. 9)—Clothe
Sobriety (v. 9)—Self-control

1 Timothy 2:9–12—“Suffer Not a Woman to Teach”?

President Joseph Fielding Smith taught:

“In this dispensation the Lord gave commandment that the sisters of the Church should be organized, that they should hold meetings, teach each other the gospel of the kingdom, administer to the poor, the needy, and the distressed. They were to nurse the sick and those who needed comfort.



“Our Relief Society came by divine revelation. This is true also of the Mutual Improvement and Primary organizations. The foolish notions which were practiced by the Jews and others anciently have no place in the kingdom of God today. The Lord has promised to all, males and females alike, the gift of the Holy Ghost on

conditions of faithfulness, humility, and true repentance. They are required to study and to know the truths of the gospel and to prepare themselves by study, faith, and obedience to all commandments to seek for light and truth that they may be entitled to celestial glory” (*Answers to Gospel Questions*, 3:68–69).

Studying the Scriptures

Do activities A and B as you study 1 Timothy 1–2.

A Make a “To Do” List

Make two columns in your notebook. Label one column *To Do* and the other *Not to Do*. Read 1 Timothy 1–2 and list at least ten things in the appropriate columns that we are to do or not do. The “Understanding the Scriptures” section for 1 Timothy 1–2 may also be helpful.

B A Fashion Statement

1. Read 1 Timothy 2:9–10 and look for how Paul counseled women to dress. If Paul were to come to your school today, what clothing styles or fashion trends do you think he would condemn? (List at least five.)
2. The scriptures teach us about the Lord’s expectations for how we dress. Read 1 Nephi 13:7–8; Jacob 2:13; Alma 1:6; 4:6; 5:53; 31:27–28; 4 Nephi 1:24; Mormon 8:36–37; and Doctrine and Covenants 42:40. Summarize what you think these verses teach us. How well does your summary match the guidelines in the *For the Strength of Youth* pamphlet?

1 Timothy 3

Counsel to Bishops and Deacons



Church callings give us opportunities to serve others and grow in the gospel. When called to serve in the Church, we should strive to develop certain qualities and attributes. In 1 Timothy 3 we read what the Lord expects of bishops and deacons. As you study this chapter, find ways

in which Paul's counsel could help you serve better in your own callings.

Understanding the Scriptures

1 Timothy 3

Vigilant (v. 2)—Watchful, alert
Lucre (vv. 3, 8)—Money
Gravity (v. 4)—Seriousness, dignity
Reproach (v. 7)—Disgrace, criticize severely

1 Timothy 3:11–12—Married Deacons?

In Paul's day, and also in the early days of the restored Church, deacons were adult men, who could be married, who held the Aaronic Priesthood. The Lord, through His prophets, has since extended the privilege of holding the Aaronic Priesthood to worthy young men twelve years of age and older.

Studying the Scriptures

Do the following activity as you study 1 Timothy 3.

A Write about Your Bishop

1. Read 1 Timothy 3 and look for the Lord's expectations of His bishops. Why do you think a bishop should meet these requirements?
2. Write an article about your bishop for the *New Era*. List several questions you would be interested in asking your bishop if you interviewed him.

1 Timothy 4–6

"Fight the Good Fight of Faith"

Satan seeks to destroy Heavenly Father's children and the Church. Paul gave Timothy important counsel that he was to

"command and teach" (1 Timothy 4:11) so the faithful Saints could be preserved and protected from Satan's power. If we follow Paul's counsel, we will also have the power to win our battle with the adversary and "lay hold on eternal life" (1 Timothy 6:12).

Understanding the Scriptures

1 Timothy 4

Reproach (v. 10)—Rebuke
Despise (v. 12)—Look down on, despise
Exhortation (v. 13)—Preaching

1 Timothy 4:2—"Having Their Conscience Seared with a Hot Iron"



Cauterizing iron

Hot irons were sometimes used to cauterize (burn) skin tissue and seal wounds to stop them from bleeding. Paul used this intense image to explain that in the last

days there would be some whose consciences would be hardened or sealed off because of unrighteousness. The Book of Mormon prophets described them as being "past feeling" (1 Nephi 17:45; Moroni 9:20).

1 Timothy 4:3—"Forbidding to Marry, and Commanding to Abstain from Meats"

Paul prophesied that in the latter times there would be some who would follow the false practices of forbidding to marry and abstaining from meat. Read Doctrine and Covenants 49:15–21 and learn what the Lord revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith on these two subjects.

1 Timothy 5

Piety (v. 4)—Loyalty, devotion, reverence
Requite (v. 4)—Repay
Infidel (v. 8)—Unbeliever
Begun to wax wanton against Christ (v. 11)—Sexual desires that overcome one's commitment to Christ
Tattlers (v. 13)—Gossipers

1 Timothy 6

Unrebukenable (v. 14)—Not deserving punishment
Potentate (v. 15)—Absolute ruler

Studying the Scriptures

Do the following activity as you study 1 Timothy 4–6.

A Apply Paul's Teachings to Your Day

1. Read and think about what Paul taught in 1 Timothy 6:11–12. Write a paragraph in your notebook that summarizes what these verses mean to you.
2. Select two teachings each from 1 Timothy 4, 5, and 6 that you believe are most needed in your school. List the teachings, the verses where you found the teachings, and why you think they are important for today.

The Second Epistle of Paul the Apostle to Timothy

A Second Letter to Timothy

Paul wrote a second letter to Timothy from prison in Rome. Paul had been deserted by many of his friends and sensed that he would die soon, so he wrote another letter to his true friend Timothy and asked him to come to his aid. The Roman emperor Nero was executing Christians and Paul's life was in great danger. In this letter Paul expressed tender feelings and great conviction. He showed concern for the Saints in Ephesus and counseled Timothy to hold fast to the gospel, to persevere in it, to preach it, and if need be, to suffer for it (as Paul was doing). He then closed his letter with a powerful declaration of his testimony of Jesus Christ.

2 Timothy 1–2 Endure Hardness

Do you know anyone involved in the military, sports, farming, or ranching? As you read 2 Timothy 1–2, notice how Paul compared living the gospel to a war, an athletic contest, and the harvesting of crops. Why do you think Paul used these comparisons?

Understanding the Scriptures

2 Timothy 1

Unfeigned (v. 5)—Sincere

2 Timothy 2

Husbandman (v. 6)—Farmer, land worker

Charging (v. 14)—Commanding

Subverting (v. 14)—Destruction, ruin

Erred (v. 18)—Been in error

Gender (v. 23)—Bring about or cause

Studying the Scriptures

Do activity A or B as you study 2 Timothy 1–2.

A Spiritual Soldiers, Athletes, and Farmers

Make three columns in your notebook and label them with the words *Soldier*, *Athlete*, and *Farmer*.

1. Read 2 Timothy 2:1–6 and list in the columns what each person is to do (for example, the soldier is to “endure hardness”).
2. Write a paragraph describing why you think soldiers, athletes, and farmers are good comparisons to use in a talk about developing spirituality.

B In Your Own Words

Read 2 Timothy 2:22–26 and write a short paragraph explaining why you think these verses are important to you today.

2 Timothy 3–4 Apostasy

You live in the “last days.” What are the blessings or advantages of being a member of the Church in these times? Paul described the wickedness and apostasy that would exist in our day. Read 2 Timothy 3–4 and see if you think his description is accurate. What will guide us through these difficult times?

Understanding the Scriptures

2 Timothy 3

Perilous (v. 1)—Grievous, challenging, hard to bear

Divers (v. 6)—Many different
Reprobate (v. 8)—Unfit

2 Timothy 3:8—Who Were Jannes and Jambres?

Jannes and Jambres were the Egyptian magicians who challenged Moses's miracles (see Bible Dictionary, “Jannes and Jambres,” p. 710).

2 Timothy 4

Quick (v. 1)—Living

Heap (v. 3)—Gather

Having itching ears (v. 3)—Wanting to hear doctrine that pleases, instead of hearing the truth

2 Timothy 4:2—“Be Instant in Season, out of Season”

The Joseph Smith Translation changes the phrase “be instant in season, out of season; reprove” to “be instant in season; *those who are out of season reprove*” (JST, 2 Timothy 4:2; italics added). Paul was counseling Timothy to be earnest in correcting and teaching those who were struggling with or falling away from their faith.

Studying the Scriptures

Do two of the following activities (A–C) as you study 2 Timothy 3–4.

A Scripture Mastery—2 Timothy 3:1–5

In 2 Timothy 3:1–7 are listed twenty-one sins and weaknesses that Paul wrote would be common in the last days. Choose five or more of them and find newspaper, magazine, or other

articles that show that those problems exist in your community or nation.

B Scripture Mastery—2 Timothy 3:16–17

By now you have spent several months studying the scriptures in seminary.

1. Read 2 Timothy 3:16–17 and list the seven ways Paul said we can profit from inspired scripture.
2. Write your testimony and include how you have been blessed by the scriptures.

C Are You Fighting a Good Fight?

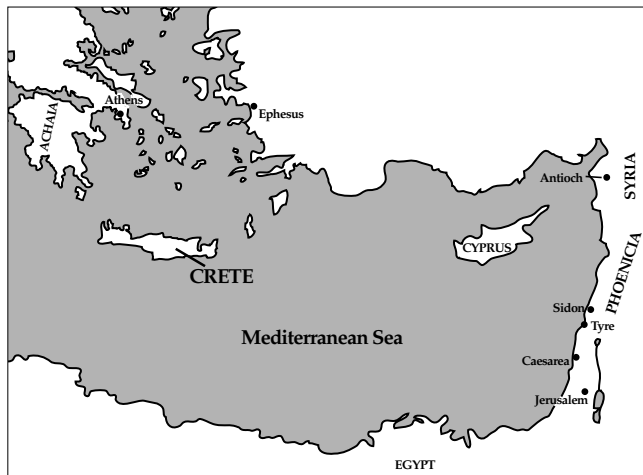
Think about what you have learned about Paul over the last several weeks of study. After reading 2 Timothy 4:7–8, answer the following questions:

1. Why is this declaration of Paul impressive to you?
2. What three things did he do in his life that tell you he meant what he said?
3. What five things could you do in the coming year to show that you are fighting a good fight?

The Epistle of Paul to Titus

Who Was Titus?

Titus is mentioned many times in the New Testament. He was one of Paul’s Greek converts. He was trusted and faithful and was called to serve with Paul on several missionary journeys. After Paul established the Church on the island of Crete (probably after his first imprisonment in Rome), he placed Titus in charge of the Church there and departed. As bishop, Titus was charged to set in order what was lacking there (see Titus 1:5).



What Is This Book About?

Paul placed Titus in charge of the Church members on the island of Crete. He described them by quoting the Greek poet Epimenides: “The Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies” (Titus 1:12). Paul knew, however, that Jesus Christ “gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity” (Titus 2:14). Christ made it possible for everyone, even people with a bad reputation like the Cretans, to be blessed by the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Paul wrote to help Titus with the challenges of organizing the Church and helping the Cretan Saints live righteously. He reminded Titus about the qualities of righteous leadership and encouraged him to set a proper example as a Church leader.

Titus 1–3

“Sound in the Faith”

Many of the members in Crete were sinning and teaching incorrect principles. To help them become sound in the faith, Paul counseled Titus, their bishop, to “rebuke them sharply” (Titus 1:13) and teach them sound doctrine (see Titus 2:1). As you read this epistle to Titus, look for the doctrines Paul told him to teach to the Saints. How does knowing these truths make a difference in your life.

Understanding the Scriptures



Titus 1

Wanting (v. 5)—Lacking

No striker (v. 7)—Not a contentious person

Circumcision (v. 10)—Jewish Christians who still lived according to certain parts of the law of Moses

Subvert (v. 11)—Destroy, corrupt

Rebuke (v. 13)—Correct, admonish

Abominable (v. 16)—Very wicked

Titus 2

Sober, soberly (vv. 2, 4, 6, 12)—Moderate, self-controlled

Grave (v. 2)—Serious, honorable

Temperate (v. 2)—Controlled, restrained

Zealous (v. 14)—Enthusiastic

Titus 3

Magistrates (v. 1)—Rulers, leaders

Washing of regeneration (v. 5)—Baptism by immersion

Heretick (v. 10)—Apostate, follower of false doctrine

Studying the Scriptures

Do the following activity as you study Titus 1–3.

A The Impact of True Doctrine

Elder Boyd K. Packer, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, taught:



“True doctrine, understood, changes attitudes and behavior.

“The study of the doctrines of the gospel will improve behavior quicker than a study of behavior will improve behavior” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1986, 20; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 17).

1. Read Titus 1:9, 13; 2:1, 15; and 3:8. How can Elder Packer’s statement apply to Paul’s counsel to Titus?
2. Read Titus 2 to either a grandparent or a parent, then ask why this is good counsel for someone his or her age. Record the response in your notebook.

The Epistle of Paul to Philemon

Why Did Paul Write to Philemon?

Paul wrote to his friend Philemon to ask him to treat a runaway slave named Onesimus with kindness. Onesimus had joined the Church and needed help. Under Roman law, a slave who ran away from his master faced the death penalty. Paul knew it was important for Onesimus to return home safely, and he asked Philemon to rise above the accepted cultural standards of the day and treat this slave with forgiveness, acceptance, and love.

*them as they find their way. Every one of them needs three things: a friend, a responsibility, and nurturing with ‘the good word of God’ (Moroni 6:4). It is our duty and opportunity to provide these things” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1997, 66; or *Ensign*, May 1997, 47).*

As you read Paul’s epistle to Philemon, think about how Paul’s counsel to him to receive a brother in the gospel is in harmony with what President Hinckley asked us to do.

Philemon 1

Receive a Brother in the Gospel

President Gordon B. Hinckley taught:



“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.

“With the ever increasing number of converts, we must make an increasingly substantial effort to assist

Understanding the Scriptures

Philemon 1

Enjoy thee (v. 8)—Command you to do

Unprofitable (v. 11)—Useless

Profitable (v. 11)—Useful

Studying the Scriptures

Do the following activity as you study Philemon 1.

A Write a Plan of Action

Someday, if you have not already, you will have the opportunity to meet and know a new convert to the Church. After reading Philemon, write at least five specific things you could do to treat a new convert in the right way, like Paul wanted Onesimus to be treated. By each of the five items, list a verse from Philemon that supports your plan of action.

The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews

Who Were the Hebrews?

Abraham was the first person referred to as a Hebrew in the scriptures (see Genesis 14:13). His descendants—especially the Jewish people who stayed together as a group the longest—were called Hebrews and spoke a language known as Hebrew. Jesus Christ, His original Twelve Apostles, and the first converts to His Church were all Hebrews.

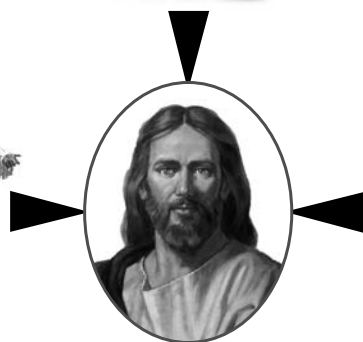
This Hebrew background explains why some Jewish converts to Christianity had such a difficult time giving up their rituals and traditions that were based on the law of Moses. They did not fully understand that Jesus Christ had come to fulfill that law and that He required them to live according to a higher law. As a former Pharisee, Paul understood the challenges they faced as they tried to live according to the “new covenant,” or fullness of the gospel of Jesus Christ. He encouraged them to exercise their faith in Jesus Christ and not in Hebrew or Judaic traditions or practices that had been discontinued or no longer had any meaning.

In this epistle, Paul shared with the Hebrews his great understanding of the Old Testament and the law of Moses, as well as his special witness as an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ. He taught them that the Old Testament did not oppose Christ, but actually testified of Him and His gospel.

Getting Ready to Study Hebrews

Following are some important ideas to look for in the book of Hebrews:

1. *The teachings and practices of the Old Testament are fulfilled in the life and mission of Jesus Christ.* Hebrews is one of the greatest commentaries we have on the Old Testament. As you carefully read and try to understand Hebrews, the Old Testament will make more sense to you.



2. *Jesus Christ and His gospel are greater than all the elements of the religion the Jews practiced under the law of Moses.* Although the Jewish religion under the law of Moses was the true religion at one time, Jesus fulfilled the law and gave a higher, celestial law. The law of Moses could not have brought salvation to the people, but Jesus Christ could and did. Paul used Old Testament scriptures to show that Christ is greater than the angels, the prophets, and the priests. He also showed that the priesthood of Christ—the Melchizedek Priesthood—is greater than the Aaronic Priesthood exercised under the law of Moses.
3. *The Old Testament people we admire accomplished great things because of their faith in Christ.* Paul wrote about many Old Testament heroes who centered their lives in Jesus Christ (Jehovah; see Hebrews 11), and he encouraged the Saints to look to them as examples.

Hebrews 1–2 Greater by Being Lower

Jewish Christians struggled to leave behind some of their old beliefs and traditions and to focus completely on Jesus Christ and His gospel. Consequently, Paul began his letter to them with a powerful testimony that Jesus Christ is greater and has precedence over all things except His Father. As you read Hebrews 1–2, notice what Paul taught about how Jesus obtained His power and why He is above the angels.

Understanding the Scriptures



Hebrews 1

Appointed (v. 2)—Chosen, selected, ordained

Heir (v. 2)—One who has the right to receive or inherit something

Express image of his person (v. 3)—In His likeness

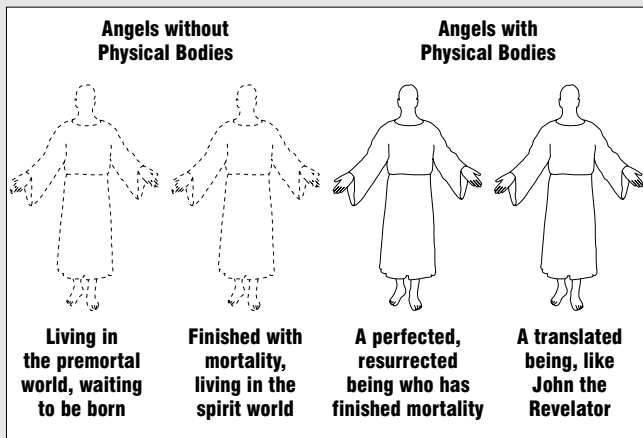
Purged (v. 3)—Cleansed (refers to when Jesus Christ made payment for our sins)

Sceptre (v. 8)—Staff or stick symbolizing power

Vesture (v. 12)—Piece of clothing

Hebrews 1:4–8, 13–14; 2:2, 5–9, 16—Angels

The term *angel* means “messenger.” An angel is any messenger sent by God to do His work. The angels referred to in Hebrews 1–2 were members of Heavenly Father’s family with special callings to serve and do His work. Some angels are Heavenly Father’s spirit children who have not yet come to earth. Others are people who lived on the earth and are (a) spirits in the Spirit World, (b) translated beings (like John the Beloved), or (c) resurrected beings (like Moroni or John the Baptist when they visited Joseph Smith).



Hebrews 2

Earnest heed (v. 1)—Careful attention	Sanctifieth, sanctified (v. 11)—Made pure and holy
Stedfast (v. 2)—Consistent, not subject to change	Subject to bondage (v. 15)—Like slaves
Just recompense of reward (v. 2)—Fair and right punishment	Behoved (v. 17)—Was necessary
Confirmed (v. 3)—Testified and taught	Reconciliation (v. 17)—Full payment (so there is no debt to God)
Put in subjection (v. 5)—Put under control	Succour (v. 18)—Give comfort and help

Hebrews 2:7–9—“A Little Lower than the Angels”

In Hebrews 1 Paul taught that Jesus Christ was greater than the angels. Then in Hebrews 2 he said Christ was made a little lower than the angels. How can this be? Actually, both statements are true. In Hebrews 2 Paul taught that although Jesus Christ was greater than all except His Father, He had Himself “lowered” to be born as all other men and to be subject to the ills of mortality (to which angels are not subject). Jesus Christ went far beyond enduring the ills of mortality to suffer the pains of all mankind (see 2 Nephi 9:21). He thus descended below what any of the children of Heavenly Father ever will in mortality. Paul explained that by submitting to the conditions of mortality, by His sufferings and Atonement, Jesus Christ learned mercy and obtained power over all things.

Studying the Scriptures

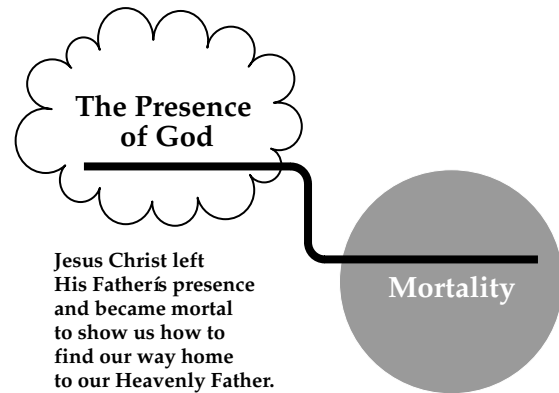
Do activities A and B as you study Hebrews 1–2.

A Learn More about Jesus Christ

- List at least five things you learned about Jesus from Hebrews 1:1–4 and 2:9–18.
- Paul wrote Hebrews to help the Jewish converts increase their faith in Jesus Christ. Which item on your list do you think would mean the most to them? Why?
- Explain how you could use something you learned about Jesus from Hebrews 1–2 to correct a misunderstanding that people have about Him today.

B Ponder the Role of Jesus Christ

- According to Hebrews 2:9–11, why did Jesus allow Himself to be “made a little lower than the angels”? (see the “Understanding the Scriptures” section above for help).
- Find what Paul called Jesus in Hebrews 2:10. How might it make a difference if a person thought of Him that way?
- Find in Hebrews 2:11 what Jesus is not ashamed to do. How do you feel knowing that?
- What does Hebrews 2:14–18 tell us about the importance of Jesus experiencing mortality? (You may want to read Alma 7:11–13 and Hebrews 4:15–16 as you consider this question.)



Hebrews 3–4

Lessons from the Exodus

One of the most important and well-known stories in the Old Testament is the story of the Israelites' exodus from Egypt and their journey toward the promised land. Like the Israelites of old, some of the Jewish Christians in Paul's day thought that what God had asked of them was too difficult. In Hebrews 3–4, Paul used the story of the Exodus to encourage the Jewish converts to keep the faith and avoid repeating the mistakes made by their forefathers. Because the Hebrews in the days of Moses did not have enough faith in God to obey Him throughout the entire journey from Egypt, they were not allowed to enter into the promised land. Paul did not want the Hebrews in his day to be kept from entering into the rest of the Lord because of lack of faith. Paul testified that just as Moses had led their forefathers, Jesus Christ would lead them back into the presence of Heavenly Father.

Hebrews 5

Jesus Christ, the Great High Priest

Many men from the tribe of Levi were called to work as priests in Israel's temples, but only one man—a descendant of Aaron—was called as the high priest (in the Aaronic Priesthood order). As explained in Leviticus 16, this high priest went into the Holy of Holies in the temple once a year and offered a special sacrifice for the sins of all the people. The people often fasted on this day, which was known as the day of Atonement. Paul explained in Hebrews 5 how the high priest in Israel was only a symbol of their real high priest, Jesus Christ, who made the ultimate Atonement for the sins of all people and then entered into the presence of His Father. This knowledge would have been helpful to converts from the Jewish faith who still felt pressure to follow the Jewish high priest, a powerful person in the community.

Understanding the Scriptures

Hebrews 5

Compassed with infirmity (v. 2)—Filled with weaknesses
As for the people, so also for himself (v. 3)—The priest not only offered sacrifice for other people's sins, but for his own as well.

Honour (v. 4)—Calling
Supplications (v. 7)—Prayers and pleading to God
Oracles (v. 12)—Words or utterances of God
Discern (v. 14)—Tell the difference between, judge

Hebrews 5:6–10—Melchizedek

The Joseph Smith Translation points out that Hebrews 5:7–8 refers to Melchizedek, who was a great high priest in the days of Abraham. These same verses could also refer to Christ. To learn more about Melchizedek, see the Joseph Smith Translation of Genesis 14:25–40 and “Melchizedek” in the Bible Dictionary (p. 730).

Hebrews 5:6, 9–10 refers to the Melchizedek Priesthood. Doctrine and Covenants 107:1–4 tells us that the Savior's priesthood is called the Melchizedek Priesthood for two reasons: to avoid the too-frequent use of Christ's name and because Melchizedek was such a great king and high priest. Paul emphasized throughout the book of Hebrews that Jesus was a high priest after the order of Melchizedek. He taught that the Melchizedek Priesthood was greater than the Aaronic Priesthood that was exercised under the law of Moses. We are fortunate to live in a day when the higher priesthood is given to all worthy, mature men in the Church so they can do Christ's saving work.

Studying the Scriptures

Do activities A–C as you study Hebrews 5.

A Scripture Mastery—Hebrews 5:4

1. According to Hebrews 5:4, who is entitled to receive the priesthood or any calling in it?
2. Read Exodus 28:1 and describe how Aaron was called. Compare this verse to the fifth article of faith.



B Learning Obedience

1. According to Hebrews 5:7–8, how did Melchizedek become so great?
2. Explain why you think a person can learn obedience that way.

C Milk or Meat?

In Hebrews 5:12–14 Paul explained that some members, such as small children, can only be fed spiritual “milk” until they become more mature in living the gospel and can handle spiritual “meat.” Consider your own spiritual maturity right now and write about the kind of spiritual food you are ready for. Explain why.

Hebrews 6–10

The Law of Moses Testified of Christ

Paul taught the Jewish converts how the Old Testament teachings and practices were fulfilled by Jesus Christ and His gospel (see Hebrews 6–10). He tried to show them that the “new covenant” of Jesus Christ is greater than the “old covenant” because the new covenant has the power to assure eternal life.

Understanding the Scriptures



Hebrews 6—Moving Forward

Paul reminded the Jews that they already knew the basic principles of the gospel and needed to move forward in their spiritual progression. He explained that God's promise of eternal life to Abraham could be extended to them—as Abraham's descendants—if they remained true and faithful to the end.

Hebrews 7—A Higher Priesthood

Paul taught the people more about Melchizedek and the difference between the Melchizedek Priesthood brought by Christ and the Aaronic Priesthood exercised by the Jews under the law of Moses. Because the Aaronic Priesthood is limited, a higher priesthood is necessary to obtain and administer the blessings of eternal life.

Hebrews 8—A New Covenant

Paul testified that Jesus Christ was the high priest of the “new covenant,” in fulfillment of a prophecy in Jeremiah 31:31–34.

Hebrews 9–10—Sacrifice

Paul taught the Hebrews the significance of the temple and its ordinances under the law of Moses. He testified that all of the sacrifices offered were symbolic of Jesus Christ, whose sacrifice made all other sacrifices meaningful. Through Jesus Christ's sacrifice we can obtain a remission of our sins and all, not just the high priest, may eventually enter into the presence of God.



Studying the Scriptures



Do the following activity as you study Hebrews 6–10.

A Two Great Prophets

Read Hebrews 7:1–4, including the Joseph Smith Translation of verse 3, and write what you learn about Abraham and Melchizedek. The first part of verse 3 refers to the priesthood, not Melchizedek, and means that a person did not have to come from a specific tribe of Israel to receive this higher priesthood. The last part of the verse applies to all who receive the Melchizedek Priesthood. (See Bruce R. McConkie, *The Promised Messiah: The First Coming of Christ* [1978], p. 451.)

Hebrews 11

The Power of Faith in Jesus Christ

This mortal life requires that we live by faith. The Bible contains many examples of people who showed us how to do this, and Paul named several of them in Hebrews 11. Like those great men and women in the scriptures, we seek by faith to understand and follow Heavenly Father's plan. When we center our faith in Jesus Christ, we gain strength to endure trials and temptations and are able to make spiritual progress toward our heavenly home.

President Gordon B. Hinckley said, “When all is said and done, the only real wealth of the Church is in the faith of its people” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1991, 74; or Ensign, May 1991, 54). As you read Hebrews 11, consider how you can apply the great examples of faith demonstrated by the men and women Paul wrote about and add your faith to the real wealth of God's kingdom.

Understanding the Scriptures



Hebrews 11

Evidence (v. 1)—Testimony, proof

Framed (v. 3)—Created

Heir (v. 7)—One who has the right to receive or inherit something

Sojourned (v. 9)—To live in a place only for a time, not permanently

Tabernacles (v. 9)—Tents, temporary houses

Conceive seed (v. 11)—Have children

Sprang there even of one (v. 12)—Came children from one person

Persuaded (v. 13)—Convinced, inspired

Figure (v. 19)—Symbol

Come to years (v. 24)—Old enough to be considered an adult

Esteeming (v. 26)—Valuing
Reproach of Christ (v. 26)—Criticism he received for following Christ

He had respect unto the recompence of the reward (v. 26)—He knew that he would eventually be judged and rewarded

Assaying (v. 29)—Trying, attempting

Compassed (v. 30)—Surrounded

Aliens (v. 34)—Foreigners, enemies

Scourgings (v. 36)—Whippings, beatings

Destitute (v. 37)—Without the necessities of life

Hebrews 11:1—Paul's Definition of Faith

Elder Howard W. Hunter, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, helped explain Hebrews 11:1 when he said, “Faith makes us confident of what we hope for and convinced of what we do not see. . . . Those who earnestly seek for God do not see him, but they know of his reality by faith. It is more than hope. Faith makes it a conviction—an evidence of things not seen” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1974, 138; or *Ensign*, Nov.

1974, 97). You may also want to read definitions of faith given by other prophets in Alma 32:21 and Ether 12:6.


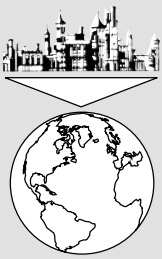
Hebrews 11:5—Enoch Was Translated

Enoch was translated, which means that God caused a change to come upon his body so he would not experience pain or death until the time of his own resurrection. (For another example, see 3 Nephi 28:4–9.)

Hebrews 11:10–16—What “City” or “Country” Were Ancient Prophets Looking For?

Simply stated, the city or country ancient prophets were looking for was heaven, the celestial kingdom, the place where God dwells. While the earth remains under the effects of the Fall, heaven is not found on earth. However, when God’s people make and keep fully their sacred covenants with Him they establish cities of righteousness called Zion (see Moses 7:18). Those in Zion are privileged to enjoy the presence of God on earth. By establishing Zion, faithful Saints may obtain the city sought by the prophets that Paul mentioned—a city “whose builder and maker is God” (Hebrews 11:10). The scriptures prophesy that in the last days Zion will again be built on earth, including a central city of Zion called the New Jerusalem (see D&C 45:65–67; 84:2–5).

Future Jerusalems

<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">Before the Millennium</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p style="font-size: small;">Independence Missouri</p> </div> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">A city built by the Saints in the last days</p>	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">After the Millennium</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p style="font-size: small;">Celestial Earth</p> </div> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">A holy city that descends to unite with a celestial earth</p>
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Studying the Scriptures

Do activities A and B as you study Hebrews 11.

A Examples of Faith

1. In your notebook, make a chart listing people of faith. Use what you learned in Hebrews 11 and the example in the following chart.

Name	Hebrews 11	How Showed Faith	Blessings Received
Abel	v. 4	Offered a “more excellent sacrifice” to God	A witness from God that he was righteous in His sight

2. Choose one of the people who was an example of faith. Write briefly about how that person’s example applies to you and the faith you need to meet the challenges you face today. How were that person’s challenges like your challenges?

B “By Faith”

We are told many times in Hebrews 11 that “by faith” those great men and women of the past obtained God’s blessings.

1. Give at least three examples of people you feel could be included in this chapter if it were written in your time and where you live.
2. Using Paul’s pattern from Hebrews 11, write about the three people you chose. Start each example with “By faith,” and then give the name of the person, tell what he or she did that showed great faith, explain why it showed great faith, and list some of the blessings God has promised such a person in this life and the next.

Hebrews 12

Commitment and Correction

Hebrews 11 contains many stories of people who demonstrated faith in Jesus Christ. In Hebrews 12 Paul explained how having such faith should inspire us to trust in the Lord. Allowing the Lord to correct us and staying committed to the end of our lives are two important ways we can show our faith and trust in Him. Having been inspired by the stories and examples in Hebrews 11, look in Hebrews 12 for how you can apply what you learned.

Understanding the Scriptures

Hebrews 12

Compassed (v. 1)—Surrounded

Cloud (v. 1)—Number, group

Beset (v. 1)—Trouble

Despising (v. 2)—Paying no attention

Chastening, chasteneth, chastisement, chastened (vv. 5–8, 10–11)—Scolding, correcting

Scourgeth (v. 6)—Punishes

Bastards (v. 8)—Children born to unmarried women (considered a vulgar term today); Paul used this term to show they were not legitimate

sons of God because they did not follow Him.

Reverence (vv. 9, 28)—Respect, obedience

Subjection (v. 9)—Willing to obey, under the control of

Grievous (v. 11)—Sad, grief

Feeble (v. 12)—Weak (can also symbolize fear)

Intreated (v. 19)—Asked with feeling, pleaded

Mediator (v. 24)—One who intervenes between two people to make (or restore) peace and friendship or to ratify a covenant

Hebrews 12:18–21—The Mount

These verses refer to the experience of Moses and the children of Israel at Mount Sinai. The Israelites were so afraid and unworthy that they refused an opportunity to go up onto the mount with Moses and enter into the presence of the Lord.



Hebrews 12:22—The Heavenly Jerusalem

To read about the heavenly Jerusalem Paul mentioned in Hebrews 12:22, see the “Understanding the Scriptures” section for Hebrews 11.

Hebrews 12:24—The Blood of Christ “Speaketh Better Things than That of Abel”

Abel’s death represented the end of mortal life. Christ’s death and resurrection opened the way to eternal life—ininitely better than what Abel’s death represented.

Studying the Scriptures

Do two of the following activities (A–C) as you study Hebrews 12.

A Enduring with Strength

1. In Hebrews 11 Paul listed many examples of faithful individuals. Read Hebrews 12:1–2 and list what Paul encouraged the Hebrew Saints to do to show their faith.

2. Explain how “looking unto” Jesus can help us finish “the race that is set before us” (the challenge of living faithfully until death). List two ways you could more fully look unto Jesus in your life.

B The Correction of a Loving Father

1. According to Hebrews 12:5–8, why should we be pleased when we receive correction or chastisement from Heavenly Father or His servants?
2. Name at least two ways Heavenly Father corrects us.
3. Explain how Heavenly Father’s corrections demonstrate His love for you, or give an example of a time when you felt the truthfulness of the ideas expressed in Hebrews 12:11.

C Our Effect on Others

In Hebrews 12:12–14 Paul counseled the Saints to help and serve one another. Then in verse 15 he warned them that if they forgot how God had blessed them and allowed negative feelings to develop, their bad example would cause trouble for themselves and others. Write about a time when someone’s positive example of love, service, or kindness helped you want to be more righteous.

Hebrews 13

Final Items of Instruction

As he closed his letter to the Hebrews, Paul counseled the Saints to live their religion by being kind to strangers (see Hebrews 13:1–3), faithful in marriage (see v. 4), unselfish (see vv. 5–6), supportive of their leaders (see vv. 7, 17–19, 24), and—above all—remembering Jesus Christ (see vv. 8–16, 20–21).

Studying the Scriptures

Do the following activity as you study Hebrews 13.

A It Would Make a Great Talk

Choose a phrase in Hebrews 13 that you think would be a good title for a talk that Church leaders might give. Explain why you chose the title and list at least two ideas that you think would be discussed in a talk with that title.

The General Epistle of James

What Is a General Epistle?

The book of James is the first of seven letters known as the general epistles. They are so named because they were written to a more general audience than Paul's epistles, which were addressed to individuals or congregations (see Bible Dictionary, "General Epistles," p. 678).

Who Was James?

James is the Greek name for the Hebrew *Jacob*, and was a common name in the New Testament. Some others named James were James, the brother of John the Beloved, who was a member of the First Presidency with Peter and John, and James, the son of Alphaeus, who was another of Jesus's Twelve Apostles. The author of this letter was James the Just. He was the brother of Jesus and served as the bishop of the Church in Jerusalem (see Bible Dictionary, "James," p. 709; James E. Talmage, *The Great Apostasy* [1953], p. 62).

James was privileged to see the resurrected Lord (see 1 Corinthians 15:7). He was faithful to the gospel throughout his life. Tradition states that he was executed about A.D. 63 by those who demanded that he denounce his beliefs. This epistle is believed to have been written around A.D. 50.

What Did James Teach?

James taught that true Christianity requires a life of righteous works and service. The test of being a follower of Jesus is in daily righteousness and acts of kindness. James taught that such acts are evidence of our faith in Jesus Christ.

James 1–2

"Faith without Works Is Dead"

What do you think of people who say they believe in Jesus Christ and the gospel but do not act like they do? James taught that "faith without works is dead" (James 2:26). As Saints, we must show our faith by living the gospel. As you read James 1–2, look for teachings that give encouragement and help you live the gospel.



Understanding the Scriptures



James 1

Entire (v. 4)—Complete	Endureth (v. 12)—Resisteth (see JST, James 1:12)
Liberally (v. 5)—Openly, freely	No variableness, neither shadow of turning (v. 17)—No change
Upbraideth (v. 5)—Reproves, rebukes, scolds	Glass (v. 23)—Mirror
Double minded man (v. 8)—Wavering, uncertain, doubting	Bridleth (v. 26)—Controls

James 1:5—"If Any of You Lack Wisdom, Let Him Ask of God"

Elder Bruce R. McConkie wrote, "This single verse of scripture has had a greater impact and a more far reaching effect upon mankind than any other single sentence ever recorded by any prophet in any age" (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3:246–47). It was after reading this scripture and feeling the truthfulness of it that Joseph Smith went to pray about which church to join. From that humble prayer came the beginning of the Restoration of the gospel.

James 1:25—What Is the "Perfect Law of Liberty"?

The "perfect law of liberty" is the fulness of the gospel. If we choose to live according to the principles of the gospel, we will be kept from the bondage of sin (see 2 Nephi 2:27; D&C 88:86).

James 2

Blaspheme (v. 7)—Irreverently use	Destitute (v. 15)—In dire need
Respect to persons (vv. 1, 9)—Favor some people over others	Wrought (v. 22)—Labored together
Convinced (v. 9)—Convicted or punished	Imputed (v. 23)—Counted

James 2:1—"Have Not the Faith of Our Lord"?

The Joseph Smith Translation corrects this phrase to read that "ye cannot" have the faith of Jesus Christ "and yet have respect to persons" (JST, James 2:1).

James 2:14–22—A Helpful Joseph Smith Translation

The Prophet Joseph Smith made several changes to James 2 that are very helpful and important for you to study (see JST, James 2:14–21). Please make special note of them.

Studying the Scriptures



Do two of the following activities (A–C) as you study James 1–2.

A Scripture Mastery—James 1:5–6

Joseph Smith was only fourteen years old and confused about religion when he read from the book of James.

1. Read James 1:5–8 and write the words or phrases that encourage you to look for direction from God.
2. Read about Joseph Smith's experience in Joseph Smith—History 1:10–13. Describe a situation in which you could receive help by exercising faith and asking God for wisdom.



B Write a Talk for Sacrament Meeting

Imagine you have been asked to speak in a sacrament meeting. Using what you learn from James 1:12–16, 22–27, outline a five-minute talk about how young people can better live the gospel.



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James 1:23

C Scripture Mastery—James 2:17–18

Some religions teach that faith is all that is needed in order to be saved and that good works are not necessary. James taught differently. Read the letter below and write a response using the information found in James 2:14–26.

Dear Friend,

I am afraid you are not Christian because you do not accept Jesus as your Savior. You believe that you need to do righteous works along with having faith to be accepted by God. You are deceived! Works are not necessary if you have faith and believe. The grace of Christ makes works nice, but unnecessary. Please turn from your errors, accept Christ, and do not rely on your works to save you. Only then can you have peace.

Your friend in another church.

James 3

Taming the Tongue

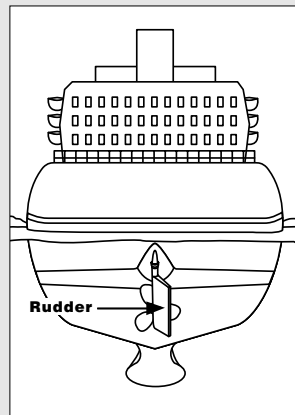
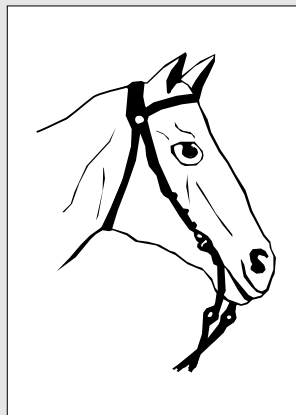
Have you ever been deeply hurt by something someone said to or about you? Who do you think was hurt more—you or the person who said it? A basic teaching of James's epistle is the need to control the tongue (see James 1:19, 26; 3:10). As you read James 3, try to determine why what we say can keep us from perfection.

Understanding the Scriptures



James 3

- Helm** (v. 4)—Rudder
- Listeth** (v. 4)—Desires, wants to go
- Kindleth** (v. 5)—Burns
- Defileth the whole body** (v. 6)—Destroys or makes unclean
- Similitude** (v. 9)—Likeness
- Endued with knowledge** (v. 13)—Intelligent or experienced
- Conversation** (v. 13)—Conduct
- Sensual** (v. 15)—Lustful



A small bit, placed properly in its mouth, can guide a powerful horse. Similarly, a small rudder can direct or steer a very large ship.

Studying the Scriptures



Do the following activity as you study James 3.

A Tame Your Tongue

What we say is important. It is a window to our hearts. Kind and uplifting words come from pure thoughts and good feelings; evil and hurtful words come from evil thoughts and bad feelings. Read James 3:1–13 and list at least three phrases that reflect different ideas about controlling what we say.

James 4–5

Overcoming Evil in Your Life

James gave practical advice for everyday living, like the importance of submitting to God's will and understanding how wealth can limit spiritual development. His counsel is as important today as when he first wrote it. Of the many ideas in James 4–5, note those that would help you most as you strive to live Heavenly Father's plan.

Understanding the Scriptures



James 4

Enmity (v. 4)—Opposed, against, hatred

Lusteth to envy (v. 5)—Has jealous desires

Nigh (v. 8)—Near

Heaviness (v. 9)—Sadness, sorrow

Vapour (v. 14)—Mist

James 5

Sabaoth (v. 4)—Hosts, multitudes

Wanton (v. 5)—Wasteful in luxurious living

Husbandman (v. 7)—Gardener, farmer

Grudge (v. 9)—Grumble, complain

Effectual (v. 16)—Effective, influential

Fervent (v. 16)—Intense, sincere

Studying the Scriptures

Do the following activities as you study James 4–5.

A Write a Prescription

Imagine you are a doctor. Read James 4:1–4 and identify four symptoms people have who suffer from the disease known as “friendship of the world.” Now that you have diagnosed the spiritual disease, read James 4:7–12 and write a prescription that would help people overcome their “friendship of the world” and become healed as a friend of God.

B Describe a Priesthood Blessing

Elder Neal A. Maxwell told the following story:

“I first felt the witness of the Spirit in my life around the time my sister was ill. She lay dying of whooping cough, six weeks old. I'd been about 14-years-old. I was a grease monkey [mechanic] at a Greyhound Bus Depot. I came home at three in the morning, saw the lights on. I knew she was ill and said to myself, ‘This is big trouble.’ And when I got inside, she was laying on the round dining room table and had stopped breathing.

“Antibiotics were not available. I watched my father, after the manner of the New Testament, bless her by the power of the priesthood, and I saw her begin to breathe again. I knew then the power of the priesthood was real” (“PBS Interview Studies Effect of God in Life,” *Church News*, Aug. 31, 1996, 4).



1. After reading James 5:14–16, describe what a priesthood blessing is.
2. Briefly write about a time in your life when you received or witnessed a priesthood blessing.

The First Epistle General of Peter

Peter, an Apostle of Jesus Christ

Peter was the President of the Church after the death and the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. As the chief Apostle, he provided leadership just as our prophet does today. Near the end of his life, persecution by the Roman Empire increased and life as a Christian became more dangerous. Many of the faithful members of the Church were executed for their beliefs. Peter wrote this letter to encourage the Saints in their sufferings and to remind them of the eternal reward for their faithfulness (see 1 Peter 4:12–13).

Some Unique Themes of 1 Peter

The Prophet Joseph Smith said, “Peter penned the most sublime [glorious] language of any of the apostles” (*History of the Church*, 5:392). Included in this epistle is Peter's testimony of the foreordination of Jesus Christ, his assurance that the Saints are

God's “peculiar people,” and some of the most revealing statements in the Bible about salvation for the dead.

1 Peter 1–2

Jesus Christ, the Foreordained Redeemer

Before His Crucifixion, the Savior said to Peter, “When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren” (Luke 22:32). As you read 1 Peter 1–2, look for Peter's testimony of Jesus Christ

and note how he encouraged and strengthened the Saints, fulfilling the Lord's commandment. Also ask yourself "How can these teachings strengthen me as I prepare for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ?"

Understanding the Scriptures



1 Peter 1

Elect (v. 2)—Chosen by God because of faith and obedience

Sanctification (v. 2)—Process of becoming clean and pure through the Atonement

Grace (vv. 2, 10, 13)—Divine help or strength given through God's mercy and love

Inheritance incorruptible and undefiled (v. 4)—Eternal salvation

Manifold (v. 6)—Various

Gird up the loins of (v. 13)—Prepare

Foreordained (v. 20)—Prepared in the premortal life for a calling during mortality

Unfeigned (v. 22)—Sincere

1 Peter 2

Malice (v. 1)—Desire to hurt

Guile (v. 1)—Deception

Cloke of maliciousness (v. 16)—Covering for evil intent

Buffeted (v. 20)—Battered, mangled

Reviled (v. 23)—Scolded, abused, offended

1 Peter 2:2—"Desire the Sincere Milk of the Word"

Babies can easily digest milk, and it helps them to grow properly. Likewise, basic gospel principles can help those young in the faith to grow in the gospel. Peter's analogy is similar to Paul's in 1 Corinthians 3:2.

1 Peter 2:4–8—What Do All of the "Stones" Refer To?

Peter compared the Church of Jesus Christ to a "spiritual house" (1 Peter 2:5). Jesus Christ, as "a living stone" (v. 4), was made the "chief corner stone" (v. 6) of this spiritual house. He is also "the stone which the builders disallowed" (v. 7), which refers to the rejection of Jesus Christ by the Jews. Despite that rejection, Peter testified that Jesus Christ had become "the head of the corner" (v. 7). He is the "rock" upon which we must build (see Helaman 5:12).

Studying the Scriptures



Do two of the following activities (A–C) as you study 1 Peter 1–2.

A Write a Job Description

In 1 Peter 1:1–16, Peter encouraged the members of the Church to realize who they are and fulfill the responsibilities they accepted in the premortal life. Read verses 2–5, 6–9, and 13–16, and then write a job description that gives God's expectations for the Saints in this life. A job description explains in simple terms what a person is to do in order to complete an assignment.

B Write a Dictionary of Scriptural Words

1. Read 1 Peter 2:9–10 and write an entry for a Bible Dictionary definition for each of the following phrases: chosen

generation, royal priesthood, holy nation, peculiar people. Try to make your definitions like those in a real dictionary.

2. President Joseph Fielding Smith taught: "The saints are peculiar. This is true of them both regarding their habits and their religious belief. If they are true to their faith, they cannot help being different from other peoples. Their religion requires it of them" (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 1:234). Write about a situation that shows how this statement is true.



"Ye are . . . a royal priesthood."

C Make a List

Peter asked the Saints in his day to believe in Jesus Christ and "follow his steps" (1 Peter 2:21). Read 1 Peter 2:11–13, 21–25 and list the steps required to follow the Savior. Think about which ones would be most needed in your life.

1 Peter 3–5

Redemption of the Dead

Elder David B. Haight, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, said, "Latter-day Saints are a chosen people, so appointed in the premortal world, to be in partnership with the Lord for the salvation of the living and the dead. The First Presidency has announced that one of the major responsibilities of the Church, and therefore of its members, is to redeem the dead" (in *Conference Report*, Oct. 1990, 74; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1990, 59). As you read 1 Peter 3–5, look for Peter's teachings on this important gospel responsibility.

Understanding the Scriptures



1 Peter 3

Be in subjection (v. 1)—
Conform, obey, submit

Plaiting (v. 3)—Braiding

Conversation (vv. 1–2, 16)—
Conduct (see JST, 1 Peter
3:1–2, 16)

Railing (v. 9)—Scolding,
criticizing

Just for the unjust (v. 18)—
Savior for the sinners

1 Peter 3:18–20; 4:6—The Mission of Jesus Christ in the Spirit World

On October 3, 1918, President Joseph F. Smith sat pondering these verses from 1 Peter. The eyes of his understanding were opened and he saw the hosts of the dead and was shown how the gospel is preached to those who have died. We have his account of that vision in Doctrine and Covenants 138. It tells us that the Lord visited the spirit world while His body lay in the tomb. He gathered the righteous spirits around Him and organized them into a missionary force. They accepted an assignment to teach the gospel to the spirits in prison.

The work we do in temples provides necessary ordinances for those who accept the gospel in the spirit world. In this way, all of Heavenly Father’s children have an opportunity to accept the gospel and receive all of the essential saving ordinances.



1 Peter 4

Lasciviousness (v. 3)—
Uncontrolled passions, lust

Banquetings (v. 3)—Drinking,
carousing, lustfulness

Abominable idolatries (v. 3)—
Unlawful worship of idols

Oracles of God (v. 11)—One
who speaks for God (prophets)

Reproached (v. 14)—
Undeserved rebuke or censure

1 Peter 5

Constraint (v. 2)—Force,
pressure, intimidation

For filthy lucre (v. 2)—To get
gain or money

Heritage (v. 3)—What is
obtained by lot, birthright

Whom resist (v. 9)—Resist
him by being

Babylon (v. 13)—Figurative
for Rome

Marcus (v. 13)—Mark, author
of the Gospel

Studying the Scriptures



Do two of the following activities (A–C) as you study 1 Peter 3–5.

A Make a Comparison

The First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles declared, “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” (“The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102).

Read 1 Peter 3:1–12 and identify three principles that relate to the statement above. Write them in your notebook. You may want to discuss with your parents what you learned from this activity and how it might relate to your family.



B Teach a Friend about the Spirit World

Imagine that a friend who recently joined the Church is concerned about his or her relatives who died and who never had a chance to hear the gospel and be baptized. Read and cross-reference 1 Peter 3:18–20 and 4:6 with Doctrine and Covenants 138:18–20, 27, 30–32, 57–59. In your notebook, write an outline of what you would teach your friend.

C Make a Grocery List

What does it mean to “feed my sheep”?

1. Read John 21:15–19 and write what the resurrected Lord asked Peter to do. Then read 1 Peter 5:1–4 and write what Peter asked priesthood leaders in his day to do. What does this teach about Peter’s obedience?
2. Read 1 Peter 5:5–9 and make a list of spiritual food needed to feed God’s flock.

The Second Epistle General of Peter

What Is the Message of 2 Peter?

Knowing he would soon die (see 2 Peter 1:14), and knowing there were some people who were teaching falsehoods and contradicting the truth (see 2 Peter 3:16), Peter wrote this letter in a simple and direct manner. Peter knew the eternal significance of the gospel and wanted the Saints to endure faithfully. This letter explains very clearly how we can gain a knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

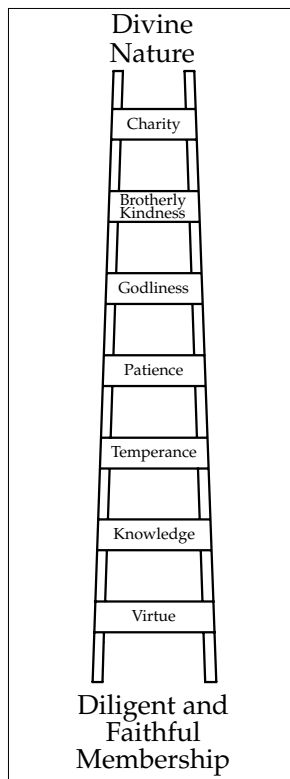
Elder Bruce R. McConkie wrote that Peter's words in 2 Peter "rank in spiritual grandeur and insight with those in the Vision of the degrees of glory and the sermons of the Lord himself" (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3:325).

An Easy Outline of 2 Peter

One purpose of the gospel is to help us overcome sin so that we can partake of the divine nature of Jesus Christ. This purpose is clearly taught in 2 Peter. Chapter one teaches how we can come to a knowledge of the Lord and partake of His divine nature. Chapter two contrasts a true knowledge of Christ with the false teachings being spread by apostates. And chapter three calls attention to the hope a true knowledge of the Lord brings—the promise of His glorious return to the earth.

2 Peter 1–3

Partake of the Divine Nature



Progressing toward godhood can be compared to climbing a ladder (for example, see Genesis 28:12–17). With the Lord's help, we must change and grow to be "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4). Some people, however, choose to follow a different course in life, one that will not lead to the celestial kingdom. Elder Russell M. Nelson, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, described such people as having "climbed their ladder of learning, only to find it leaning against the wrong wall" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1984, 37; or Ensign, Nov. 1984, 30). As you read 2 Peter, look for the steps the Lord asked us to follow and how we can protect ourselves from false teachers who would lead us down a wrong path.

Understanding the Scriptures



2 Peter 1

Divine (vv. 3–4)—Godly

Pertain unto (v. 3)—Have to do with

Unfruitful (v. 8)—Empty

Purged (v. 9)—Cleansed

In this tabernacle (v. 13)—Alive, in this body

Cunningly devised fables (v. 16)—Clever and false stories designed to deceive people

2 Peter 1:10—"Make Your Calling and Election Sure"

Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught that "to have one's calling and election made sure is to be sealed up unto eternal life; it is to have the unconditional guarantee of exaltation in the highest heaven of the celestial world; it is to receive the assurance of godhood" (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3:330). It is also referred to as "the more sure word of prophecy" (2 Peter 1:19).

2 Peter 2

Privily (v. 1)—Secretly

Damnable heresies (v. 1)—False teachings that cannot bring salvation but only destruction

Pernicious (v. 2)—Destructive, harmful

Feigned (v. 3)—Untrue, false

The angels that sinned (v. 4)—Followers of Satan in premortal life (see D&C 29:36–38)

Presumptuous (v. 10)—Bold and prideful

Beguiling unstable souls (v. 14)—Deceiving those who are weak

Much wantonness (v. 18)—Unbridled lust

Wallowing in the mire (v. 22)—Rolling in the mud

2 Peter 2:21—It Is Better "Not to Have Known the Way of Righteousness" Than to Turn from It

Those who sin after learning the truth have a greater accountability than those who sin ignorantly (see also Doctrine and Covenants 82:3).

2 Peter 3

Scoffers (v. 3)—Those who make fun of something

Hasting unto (v. 12)—To earnestly desire something

Wrest (v. 16)—Twist or change the meaning

2 Peter 3:3–9—Peter Spoke of Those Who Do Not Believe in the Second Coming

Peter said that it is as easy to believe in the Second Coming of Jesus Christ as it is in the Creation. It is just as likely for the world to be destroyed by fire as it was by flood. Although it seems to us like it takes a long time for God's purposes to be fulfilled, it is only a short time to Him.



Studying the Scriptures

Do two of the following activities (A–C) as you study 2 Peter 1–3.

A Make a List of Christlike Qualities

President Ezra Taft Benson said, “The virtues outlined by Peter [in 2 Peter 1:5–7] are part of the divine nature, or the Savior’s character. These are the virtues we are to emulate [follow] if we would be more like Him” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1986, 59; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 45).

1. Read 2 Peter 1:5–7 and list the qualities Peter mentioned.
2. Do you think attaining these qualities is more like climbing a ladder (done one step at a time) or like putting a puzzle together (each quality attained in random order)? Why?
3. Read 2 Peter 1:8–12 and list several blessings that come to those who receive these attributes.

B Spared or Delivered?

There are two main teachings in 2 Peter 2:1–9. One is that false teachers will not be spared, meaning they will not be protected. The other is that the righteous Saints will be protected and delivered. Read those verses and list at least three people or groups from the scriptures who were not spared and three who were protected and delivered from wickedness.

C Give Advice to a Friend

Suppose you have a friend who is beginning to doubt his or her testimony of Jesus Christ, particularly the reality of His Second Coming. In 2 Peter 3:1–17 we read about how a belief in the Second Coming can help keep us from being led away from the truth. Using what you learn from these verses, write a letter to your friend about the most important thing you learned concerning the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

The First Epistle General of John

The Three Epistles of John

The Apostle John, who also wrote the Gospel of John, probably wrote these letters between A.D. 70 and 100. The Church was then facing two serious difficulties. Enemies outside of the Church were persecuting the members and false teachers within the Church were defying leaders and encouraging many members into apostasy. John wrote the first epistle as his testimony of the Savior and the truth of the gospel.

1 John 1–2

“Walk in the Light”

Everyone sins and falls short of God’s glory (see 1 John 1:8). Through the Atonement we can be cleansed of our sins and receive the blessings of heaven. Think of some ways that you may be falling short, and consider what John said it would take to overcome your sins and to “walk in the light” each day (1 John 1:7). Also pay close attention to the Joseph Smith Translation changes in 1 John 1–2.

Understanding the Scriptures

1 John 1

That which was from the beginning (v. 1)—Jesus Christ

⋮	For the life was manifested
⋮	(v. 2)—Jesus Christ lived in
⋮	the flesh

1 John 2

The propitiation for (v. 2)—The sacrifice that pays for

⋮	Anointing (v. 27)—Gift of the
⋮	Holy Ghost

1 John 2:1—“If Any Man Sin, We Have an Advocate”

The Joseph Smith Translation changed this verse to read: “If any man sin and repent, we have an advocate with the Father” (JST, 1 John 2:1).

1 John 2:18–19, 22—Antichrists

The antichrists that John referred to are those who left the Church and stopped believing in Jesus Christ.

Studying the Scriptures

Do the following activity as you study 1 John 1–2.

A What Did He Mean?



President Ezra Taft Benson explained, “Just as a man does not really desire food until he is hungry, so he does not desire the salvation of Christ until he knows why he needs Christ. No one adequately and properly knows why he needs Christ until he understands and accepts the doctrine of the Fall and its effect upon all mankind (in Conference Report, Apr. 1987, 106; or *Ensign*, May 1987, 85).

1. Write a paragraph describing how what John wrote in 1 John 1 supports President Benson's statement.
2. Why might 1 John 2:1–3 mean more to someone who understood that we all are sinners, as John declared in 1 John 1:8, 10?

1 John 3–5

"The Love of God"

Becoming a son or daughter of God is different from being a spirit child of Heavenly Father. You become a son or daughter of God by accepting Christ and His gospel (see D&C 25:1; 45:8). His faithful sons and daughters will also eventually be exalted. John pointed out that these blessings are available because of the love that Heavenly Father has for us.

Understanding the Scriptures



1 John 3

Assure our hearts before him
(v. 19)—Stand with confidence
before God

1 John 3:15—"Whoso Hateth His Brother Is a Murderer"

Murder is one of the fruits of hatred, just as adultery and fornication are fruits of lust. The contrast between love and hate is shown in 1 John 3:16. Those who are filled with hate seek to hurt others, while those who are filled with love are willing to sacrifice even their lives so that others might live.

1 John 3:18—"Let Us Not Love in Word, . . . but in Deed and in Truth"

Disciples of Christ love others as Christ does. This love cannot simply be spoken ("in tongue") but must be shown in our actions ("in deed and in truth").

1 John 4

Confesseth (vv. 2–3)—Testifies	⋮	Casteth out (v. 18)—Drives out
Manifested (v. 9)—Shown	⋮	Fear hath torment (v. 18)—
The propitiation for (v. 10)— The sacrifice that pays for	⋮	Fear involves pain

1 John 4:7–12—"God Is Love"

Elder Bruce R. McConkie explained that "God is also faith, hope, charity, righteousness, truth, virtue, temperance, patience, humility, and so forth. That is, God is the embodiment and personification of every good grace and godly attribute—all of which dwell in his person in perfection and in fulness" (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3:398).

1 John 4:12—"No Man Hath Seen God at Any Time"

The Joseph Smith Translation teaches that "no man hath seen God at any time, except them who believe" (JST, 1 John 4:12). This is consistent with John's testimony as recorded in the Gospel of John (compare JST, John 1:19; John 6:46; and D&C 67:10–12).



Moses and Stephen saw God.



1 John 5

Him that begat (v. 1)—
Heavenly Father

⋮ **Have the petitions that we
desired of him** (v. 15)—
⋮ Received what we asked for

Studying the Scriptures



Do the following activity as you study 1 John 3–5.

A What Do You Think?

Read 1 John 3:16–23; 4:7–21; and 2 John 1:5–6. Write a paragraph telling how God shows His love for us and how we can show our love for God.

The Second Epistle of John

John's Second Epistle

The Second Epistle of John is more personal than John's first epistle and is addressed to "the elect lady and her children." It is not clear if these are actual people or symbols for a branch of the Church and its members. Like his first letter, this contains John's testimony of the truth of the gospel (see the introduction to 1 John).

2 John 1

Beware of False Teachers

John warned Church members to beware of people who desired to deceive and lead them away from the truth. Are you aware of any false teachings today? How are you able to know if a person or messenger (and his message) is from God? Look for helps from the writings of 2 John.

Understanding the Scriptures



2 John 1

Elect (v. 1)—Chosen

Beseech (v. 5)—Ask

Look to yourselves (v. 8)—Be careful

Abideth (v. 9)—Continues

Bid him God speed (v. 10)—

Help him or make him welcome

Studying the Scriptures



Do the following activity as you study 2 John.

A Write a Summary Statement

A summary statement is one or two sentences that describe the main point of a story or book. Read 2 John and write a summary statement of what John taught in this letter.

The Third Epistle of John

John's Third Epistle

The Apostle John wrote this third epistle about the same time as the first two. The occasion and purpose of this letter was similar to those of 1 John (see the introduction for 1 John). It was written to "well beloved Gaius" to thank him for his support of the brethren (missionaries) John had sent to the area. John also used that opportunity to chastise Diotrephes for not accepting those same leaders.

3 John 1

Help and Love Others

Think of the last new family who moved into your ward or branch or who was baptized in your area. How well were they received by the members? What did you do to help them feel welcome and loved? John wrote of two people, Gaius and Diotrephes, whose treatment of others differed. What can you learn from the examples of those two men? What does 3 John teach about the importance of helping others?



Understanding the Scriptures



3 John 1

The elder (v. 1)—The Apostle John

My children (v. 4)—Members John had taught or presided over

Borne witness of thy charity (v. 6)—Told of your love and kindness

Bring forward on their journey after a godly sort (v. 6)—Help them on their journey in a way approved by God

Loveth to have the preeminence (v. 9)—Likes to put himself first

Prating against us with
malicious words (v. 10)—
Accuse falsely

Salute (v. 14)—Send their
greetings

Studying the Scriptures

Do the following activity as you study 3 John.

A Write a Description

Imagine you have an artist friend who paints pictures of people based on how they act, not on how they look. Read 3 John and write for the artist a brief paragraph describing what you think Gaius, Diotrophes, and Demetrius were each like, giving reasons for your descriptions.

The General Epistle of Jude

Who Was Jude?

Jude was a brother of James and one of the “brethren of the Lord” (see Bible Dictionary, “Jude,” p. 719). He knew the Old Testament well and used stories and examples from it to teach valuable lessons.

Jude was concerned about the dangers of apostasy, which was subtly growing among those to whom he wrote. Some were unaware of the dangerous cancer of false doctrines that were being taught.

Jude 1

Find Solutions to Your Problems from the Scriptures

President Ezra Taft Benson taught:

“The word of God, as found in the scriptures, in the words of living prophets, and in personal revelation, has the power to fortify the Saints and arm them with the Spirit so they can resist evil, hold fast to the good, and find joy in this life. . . .

“ . . . When individual members and families immerse themselves in the scriptures regularly and consistently, these other areas of activity will automatically come. Testimonies will increase. Commitment will be strengthened. Families will be fortified. Personal revelation will flow. . . .

“Success in righteousness, the power to avoid deception and resist temptation, guidance in our daily lives, healing of the soul—these are but a few of the promises the Lord has given to those who will come to His word” (“The Power of the Word,” Ensign, May 1986, 79–82).

Look for how Jude used the scriptures to help the people to whom he wrote.

Unawares (v. 4)—Secretly

Who were before of old
ordained unto this

condemnation (v. 4)—Whose
wickedness was known

Turning the grace of our God
into lasciviousness (v. 4)—

Saying that because God will
mercifully forgive, we do not
need to obey the
commandments; we can freely
sin and give ourselves to
lustfulness

Angels which kept not their
first estate (v. 6)—Premortal
spirits who chose to follow
Lucifer

Defile the flesh (v. 8)—Give in
to sensual appetites

Despise dominion and speak
evil of dignities (v. 8)—Refuse
God’s leadership and speak
evil of Him and His leaders

Gainsaying (v. 11)—Rebellion,
denial

Hard speeches (v. 15)—Evil
words, violent

Swelling words (v. 16)—
Boasting or bragging

Pulling them out of the fire
(v. 23)—Help them out of the
power of Satan and his
followers

Hating even the garment
spotted by the flesh (v. 23)—
Having no desire for sin

Studying the Scriptures

Do one of the following activities (A or B) as you study Jude.

A Draw a Picture

1. Draw a picture of the items described in Jude 1:12–13.
2. Compare what happens to a cloud without water, a fruitless tree, the foam of the wave on the sea, and a wandering star to what will happen to the wicked at the Second Coming. (Use Jude 1:5–7, 11, 14–15 for help.)

B Lessons from History

Jude knew that false teachings can lead people into sin and unhappiness and gave several examples. Examine each of the following cases and explain how those examples are like the images of rainless clouds and barren fruit trees mentioned in Jude 1:12.

1. The people of Sodom and Gomorrah (see vv. 7–8)
2. A parable of Satan arguing with Michael (Adam; see v. 9)
3. Cain mocked God and Baalam tried to get money with the gifts he received from God (see v. 11)

Understanding the Scriptures

Jude 1

Sanctified (v. 1)—Made holy,
cleansed from all their sins

Earnestly contend for (v. 3)—
Work hard to defend, maintain

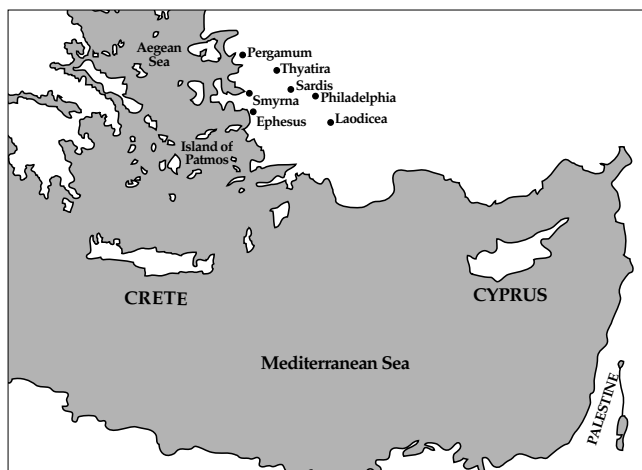
The Revelation of Saint John the Divine

What Is This Revelation About?

When they think of the book of Revelation, many people immediately think of prophecies about the last days, beasts, and other mysteries recorded in symbolic language. Revelation contains those things but, as the Apostle John recorded in the first verses, it is the revelation of Jesus Christ given to His servant, who would bear record of what he saw and of his testimony of Jesus Christ (see Revelation 1:1–2). In other words, the main message of the book of Revelation is like that of most other books of scripture—it reveals or teaches about Jesus Christ and invites us to come unto Him.

As you read the book of Revelation, discover its teachings about Jesus Christ. The symbolic language and images in this book may seem challenging at first, but you will find that they deepen your understanding of Christ's mission and of His power.

Historical Background



John received and wrote this revelation while he was a prisoner on the island of Patmos, in the Aegean Sea. At the time, the government of Rome was persecuting Christians and most of the Apostles of Jesus had been martyred for their faith. Many other members were treated cruelly in Rome and elsewhere in the Roman Empire.

Giving one's life for the Savior was a very real possibility for Saints in those days. In the midst of such difficult times, it is not hard to imagine Church members wondering why they were going through such trials and what the Lord would do in response to such evil on the earth—especially the evil specifically directed at the Lord's people. This revelation from the Lord to John revealed the larger or greater picture of God's plan and helped the Saints of that day better understand the persecutions and apparent victories of evil over good that occur in this life. Saints in our day who also wonder about the fight between good and evil and the seeming power of the devil on the earth will also find encouragement and hope in the message of the book of Revelation.

You can read more about the background and content of this book in the Bible Dictionary, "Revelation of John," (pp. 762–63).

For Our Day

The first three chapters of Revelation contain counsel to seven branches of the Church in John's day, but his counsel can be applied to our day. Most of what John saw in vision represents events that will occur in the last days before the Second Coming of Jesus Christ and during the Millennium (see 1 Nephi 14:14–28). Consequently, Saints in our day should be especially interested in its message.

A Challenge from John

Before John explained what he saw in vision and before he gave any counsel to the churches of his day, he said that we would be blessed if we would read and "hear the words of this prophecy, and keep [obey] those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand" (Revelation 1:3). As you read the book of Revelation you should seriously consider his challenge to hear and obey. You live in a day when the events written in this book are "at hand"—they have happened in our day or will yet happen.

Revelation 1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ

The island of Patmos was mainly a Roman prison camp. Christians were greatly persecuted during the last part of the first century. John himself was banished to the Isle of Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ (see Revelation 1:9). Even in those circumstances, however, John sought the Spirit "on the Lord's day" (Revelation 1:10) and had a marvelous vision of Jesus Christ, which we read about in Revelation 1.

Understanding the Scriptures

Revelation 1

Signified it (v. 1)—Revealed or delivered it

First begotten of the dead (v. 5)—First to be resurrected

Dominion (v. 6)—Authority, rule, to rule over

Alpha and Omega (vv. 8, 11)—The first and last letters of the Greek alphabet; name title of the Savior

Tribulation (v. 9)—Trials and troubles

The Lord's day (v. 10)—The Christian Sabbath (Sunday), the day of the week the Lord was resurrected

Girt about the paps (v. 13)—Wrapped around the chest

His countenance (v. 16)—Appearance, especially the expression on the face

Studying the Scriptures

Do activities A and B as you study Revelation 1.

A A Revelation of Jesus Christ

In your notebook, list what you learn about Jesus Christ from Revelation 1.

1. Answer one of the following two questions: What did you learn about Jesus Christ in Revelation 1 that you did not know about Him before? What most impressed you about Jesus Christ as you read what John wrote about Him?
2. Why do you think it is important to know these things about Jesus as you begin reading Revelation?

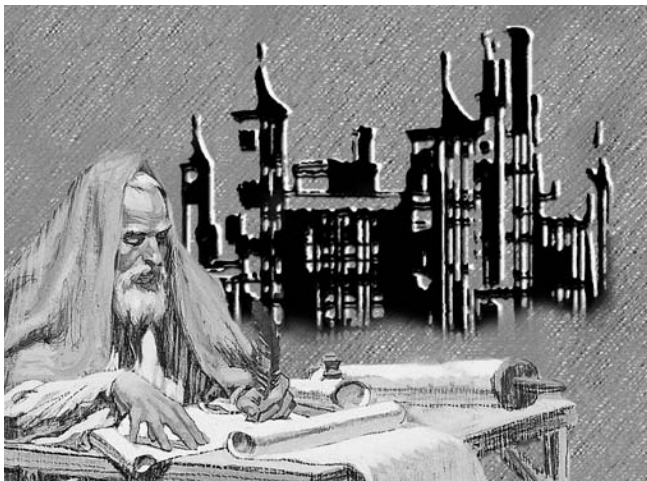
B Interpreting Important Symbols

Find the following symbols in Revelation 1 and write what you think each symbol represents and what it teaches us. In the Joseph Smith Translation for Revelation 1 and in Revelation 1:20 the Lord explained the meaning of some of the symbols that John saw. (You may want to read again “Look for Types and Symbolic Meanings,” p. 5, for help with interpreting symbols.)

- Seven golden candlesticks (see Revelation 1:12–13, 20; see also 3 Nephi 18:24)
- The white appearance of the Savior (see Revelation 1:14; see also Alma 13:24)
- Seven stars in the right hand of the Savior (see Revelation 1:16, 20; see JST, Revelation 1:1–8, 20 and note the change in the word *angels*)
- The Savior’s tongue is compared to a two-edged sword (see Revelation 1:16; see also Helaman 3:29)
- The face of the Savior glowing like the sun (see Revelation 1:16; see also D&C 88:7)

Revelation 2–3

Counsel for Seven Branches of the Church



Revelation 2–3 contains counsel that John gave to seven branches of the Church in his day. You will notice, however, that John was simply the messenger; the words are the counsel of the Lord. Like the counsel given to us today through our leaders, the purpose of the counsel in Revelation 2–3 was to encourage members to live according to Christ’s teachings and receive the blessings of the gospel. It should not be too difficult to understand how the counsel given in these chapters applies to Church members in our day. You will especially want to note the promises the Lord gave to the faithful. They are still true today.

Understanding the Scriptures

Revelation 2

Bear (v. 2)—Put up with, endure

Tried (vv. 2, 10)—Tested (to see if they were true)

Borne (v. 3)—Endured

Nicolaitans (vv. 6, 15)—A group of people who believed in certain false teachings and who allowed—even encouraged—immoral actions, but who apparently acted secretly

Tribulation (vv. 9–10, 22)—Trials and suffering

Blasphemy (v. 9)—To speak lies or irreverently about sacred things

The second death (v. 11)—To be shut out of the presence of the Lord forever

Thou holdest fast (vv. 13, 25)—You stay faithful

Martyr (v. 13)—A person who is killed for his or her beliefs

Seduce (v. 20)—Lead away, tempt

Vessels of a potter (v. 27)—Clay pots

Shivers (v. 27)—Pieces

The morning star (v. 28)—Refers to Jesus Christ (see Revelation 22:16)

Revelation 2—Important Changes from the Joseph Smith Translation

The Joseph Smith Translation for Revelation 2:1, 8, 12, and 18 changes the word *angel* to *servant*. (It is also changed for Revelation 3.) In Revelation 2:22 the Joseph Smith Translation changes the word *bed* to *hell*. It also changes Revelation 2:26–27, making it clear that the “rod of iron” by which Jesus rules is the word of God (see 1 Nephi 15:23–24) and that He rules with truth, justice, and equity—not with the seeming harshness verse 27 conveys.

Revelation 2:2, 9, 13, 19 (see also Revelation 3:1, 8, 15)—“I Know Thy Works”

The Lord made it clear to each of the branches that He sees and knows all their doings. He could say the same to us. He knows all of our thoughts, words, and actions.

Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 26 (see also Revelation 3:5, 12, 21)—“To Him That Overcometh” or “He That Overcometh”

The Lord’s promises to the branches of the Church are worded differently, but they all refer to eternal life and exaltation in the celestial kingdom. It is helpful and interesting to read the different ways exaltation is described in Revelation 2–3.

- The “tree of life” (Revelation 2:7) refers to eternal life (see Revelation 22:2).

- The “crown of life” (Revelation 2:10) and the promise of ruling (see Revelation 2:27) refer to the blessing in the celestial kingdom of ruling as kings and priests forever (see D&C 76:56).
- The white stone with a new name on it (see Revelation 2:17) is only given to those who obtain the celestial kingdom (see D&C 130:10–11).
- Those who are clothed in white and whose names are written in the book of life (see Revelation 3:4–5) are those who are sanctified and inherit the celestial kingdom (see D&C 88:2).
- Those who have the name of God written on them (see Revelation 3:12) are gods themselves, which is the promised blessing of those who are exalted (see D&C 76:58).
- To sit with Christ on His throne (see Revelation 3:21) is to be as He is. This blessing is only given to those who inherit exaltation in the highest degree of the celestial kingdom (see D&C 132:20).

It is significant that these promises of exaltation were given after the Lord explained ways the people had sinned. The Lord is merciful, and those who have sinned can obtain eternal life if they will repent.

Revelation 3

Thou holdest fast (vv. 3, 11)—You stay faithful

Defiled (v. 4)—Made unclean (spiritually unclean through sin)

Key of David (v. 7)—The power to rule

The Amen (v. 14)—A term, referring to Christ, that means “the true one”

Wretched (v. 17)—Enduring troubles, afflicted

Eyesalve (v. 18)—Eye medicine

Rebuke and chasten (v. 19)—Correct and discipline

Zealous (v. 19)—Sincere and diligent

Revelation 3:1—“Thou Livest, and Art Dead”

Elder Spencer W. Kimball, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, taught: “There are many people in this Church today who think they live, but they are dead to the spiritual things. . . . Their service is much of the letter and less of the spirit” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1951, 105).

Revelation 3:20—“I Stand at the Door, and Knock”

Elder Spencer W. Kimball, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, told the following story about Revelation 3:20:

“Holman Hunt, the artist, felt inspired to capture this stirring scripture on canvas. One day he was showing his picture of ‘Christ Knocking at the Door’ to a friend when the friend suddenly exclaimed: ‘There is one thing wrong about your picture.’

“‘What is it?’ inquired the artist.

“‘The door on which Jesus knocks has no handle,’ replied his friend.

“‘Ah,’ responded Mr. Hunt, ‘that is not a mistake. You see, this is the door to the human heart. It can only be opened from the inside.’

“And thus it is. Jesus may stand and knock, but each of us decides whether to open. The Spirit is powerless to compel a man to move. The man himself must take the initiative” (*The Miracle of Forgiveness* [1969], 212).

Studying the Scriptures

Do the following two activities (A and B) as you study Revelation 2–3.

A Organize What You Read

The Lord’s counsel to each of the seven branches of the Church in Asia follows a pattern: He repeated one of the descriptions of Himself from Revelation 1, He told the members of the branch what they were doing that pleased Him, He told them in what ways they needed to repent, and He told them of the blessings that would come if they were faithful. Make a chart in your notebook like the one below, and fill it in with information you find in Revelation 2–3.

City	Description of Christ	What they were doing that pleased the Lord	What they needed to repent of	Promised blessings
Ephesus (see Revelation 2:1–7)				
Smyrna (see Revelation 2:8–11)				
Pergamos (see Revelation 2:12–17)				
Thyatira (see Revelation 2:18–29)				
Sardis (see Revelation 3:1–6)				
Philadelphia (see Revelation 3:7–13)				
Laodicea (see Revelation 3:14–22)				

B Applying the Scriptures to Your Life

1. What counsel given to the seven branches of the Church in Asia do you think most applies to the Church today? Why?
2. Which of the promises the Lord gave to the seven Churches (see “Understanding the Scriptures” for Revelation 2) most inspires you to seek eternal life? Why?

Revelation 4

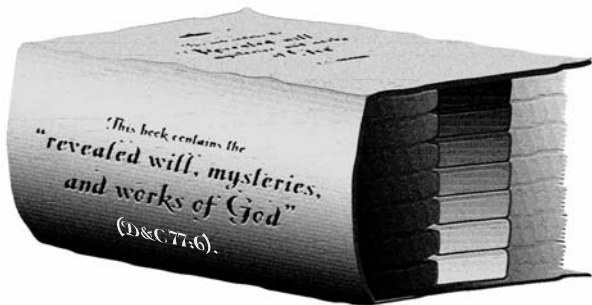
“Things Which Must Be Hereafter”

Revelation 4 begins John’s vision of events in the future—“things which must be hereafter” (v. 1). His account of this vision comprises the rest of the book of Revelation. Although it occasionally refers to events that occurred before John lived, the events were shown to better teach what will occur in the future.

In Revelation 4 John described a vision he had of the throne of God. The Prophet Joseph Smith received interpretations of some of the symbols in this chapter (see D&C 77:1–5).

Revelation 5–7

A Book with Seven Seals



In his vision, John saw the throne of God. He also saw that God held a book that was sealed with seven seals (see Revelation 5:1). Jesus Christ was the only one worthy to open this book, which He did, one seal at a time. As He opened each seal, John saw a vision of what was contained in that part of the book. Revelation 6:1–11 tells about the opening of the first five seals. The opening of the sixth seal begins in Revelation 6:12 and continues through chapter 7. Doctrine and Covenants 77:6–7 teaches us that the seven seals symbolize one thousand years of history. Thus, what John saw as each seal was opened symbolized events that occurred during that thousand years of history—the first seal representing the first thousand years after the Fall, the second seal representing the second thousand years, and so forth.

Understanding the Scriptures



Revelation 5

The Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David (v. 5)—Jesus Christ (see Genesis 49:9; Isaiah 11:10)

Vials (v. 8)—Containers, bowls
Odours (v. 8)—The pleasant smell of burning incense

Revelation 5:1, 5 (see also Revelation 1:4; 2:1; 8:2)—What Is the Significance of the Number Seven?

The number seven occurs throughout the book of Revelation. For example, John wrote to seven branches of the Church (see Revelation 2–3). He saw a book with seven seals (see Revelation 5), seven trumpets announced judgments upon the earth (see Revelation 8–9; 11), and seven vials of wrath were poured upon the earth (see Revelation 16). The Hebrew word for the number seven, *sheva*, is a word that represents the idea of fulness or perfection and may be part of the symbolism in

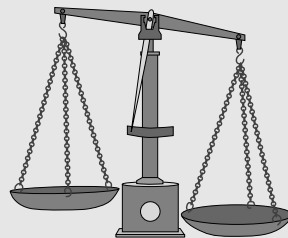
John's account of his vision. His writing to seven churches may be a symbolic way of speaking to the whole Church.

Revelation 5:1–2, 5 (see also Revelation 6:1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 12)—Seals

In ancient times, official documents, scrolls, and records were closed shut with a seal of wax that usually had an imprint signifying the one who sealed it. Documents thus sealed were only to be opened by one with authority and in the presence of witnesses. In this case, the “will, mysteries, and works of God” (D&C 77:6) were recorded in the book John saw. Only Christ had authority and was worthy to open it. The same is true of eternal life. “He *only* could unlock the gate of heaven and let us in” (“There Is a Green Hill Far Away,” *Hymns*, no. 194; italics added).

Revelation 6

Balances (v. 5)—Scales for weighing



Avenge our blood (v. 10)—

Exact justice for the martyrs

Sackcloth of hair (v. 12)—In ancient Israel, when people were or wanted to show they were repentant they put on as clothing the hair, or hide, of a black goat.

Bondman (v. 15)—Slave

Wrath (vv. 16–17)—Anger

Revelation 6:1, 3, 5, 7 (see also Revelation 4:6–9)—The Four Beasts

The four beasts were identified as being the highest, or most powerful, beasts of their kind—the lion among wild animals, the ox (or calf) among domesticated animals (those used by humans), the eagle among the birds, and man among all living things. Doctrine and Covenants 77:2–4 gives inspired commentary on these four beasts.

Revelation 6–7—Symbolism in the Six Seals

Modern revelation teaches us that each of the seals represents a thousand-year period of history (see the introduction to Revelation 5–7 above).

When the first seal was opened, John saw a man with a crown riding a white horse and conquering. Elder Bruce R. McConkie said that this represents Enoch, who helped his people conquer their enemies—including Satan—and establish a city of purity and righteousness symbolized by the white horse (see *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3:476–78). The opening of the second seal revealed the violence, death, and destruction that occurred in the time of Noah and the Flood.

The opening of the third seal represented a time when God's people were affected by famines. Abraham moved because of a famine, and the history of Jacob's (Israel's) family was very much affected by famines. The opening of the fourth seal reminds us that the time between 1000 B.C. and Christ's birth was a time of warfare among the covenant people. It was a time when they were conquered, taken captive, and scattered throughout the world by foreigners. The fifth seal revealed what faithful Saints of John's day were then encountering—giving their *lives* for their testimony.

Events depicted in the opening of the sixth seal are more detailed. They pertain to the dispensation in preparation for the Savior's Second Coming.

Revelation 6:6—What Is the Significance of the Price of Wheat and Barley?

A measure of wheat was enough to feed one man for a day. A penny was the wage for a day's work in those times. This shows that food was expensive because of the famine. Barley was cheaper, but it was of lesser quality and only used by man in times of famine. The image of the man carrying the balances in Revelation 6:5 suggests that food was given out in precise amounts—again suggesting a time of famine.

Revelation 7

Arrayed (v. 13)—Beautifully dressed
Tribulation (v. 14)—Trials and persecution

Revelation 7:3–8—Sealing the Servants of God in Their Foreheads

It was a common practice in John's day for people who worshiped false gods to mark their foreheads (or sometimes their hands) with the name or symbol of their god. Those who believed in the Savior's teachings did not mark themselves. From Revelation 3:12 and 22:1–5 we learn that the righteous are given the name of God. This indicates that they are god-like themselves and receive "his image in [their] countenances" (Alma 5:14). The symbol might signify to us that their thoughts are always upon their God—that they "always remember him" (see D&C 20:77, 79).

Some prophetic explanation of the sealing of the 144,000 is found in Doctrine and Covenants 77:9–11.

Studying the Scriptures

Do at least three of the five activities (A–E) as you study Revelation 5–7.

A Explain an Important Doctrine

What is the answer to the question the angel asked in Revelation 5:2?

B How Can He Be Both?

1. What are the names Jesus is called in Revelation 5:5–6 that are symbolically opposites of each other?
2. Explain how each of those names represent Jesus and how He can be both of those things.

C Honoring the Savior

1. Describe what Revelation 5 tells us the individuals in heaven did to praise and honor Jesus. Why do you think they continue to honor Him in heaven?

2. Name at least two ways you could honor Jesus here on earth. Include one that is *not* described in Revelation 5 and explain how you think your action would honor Him.

D Prescribe a Remedy

1. What was the name of the rider of the horse in John's vision of the fourth seal? Who followed close behind?
2. With the help of 2 Nephi 9:6–14, describe how those two can be overcome.

E Spiritual Protection in the Latter Days

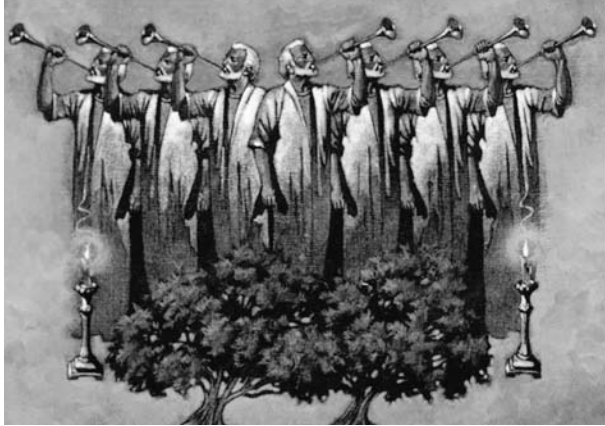
1. The events John saw at the opening of the sixth seal prior to the Second Coming of Christ are especially significant to Saints today. He described it as a time of wrath and wondered who would be able to endure it (see Revelation 6:17). From Revelation 7, what did John see that signified how the righteous would be preserved in a day of judgment?
2. In addition to the 144,000 who received this blessing, how many others were included? (see Revelation 7:9).
3. Based on the description in Revelation 7:13–17, why were those people preserved? Why would you want to be among them? (Consider also the explanation of "sealing" in the "Understanding the Scriptures" section for Revelation 7:3–8.)
4. What do you think are two of the most impressive symbols or images in Revelation 7 that you could use in a talk about spiritual protection in the latter days? Explain how you would use them.

Summary of the Seven Seals

First Seal	First 1,000 years	Enoch	White horse	Former Days
Second Seal	Second 1,000 years	Wars and the Flood	Red horse	
Third Seal	Third 1,000 years	Famines	Black horse	
Fourth Seal	Fourth 1,000 years	Empires	Pale horse	
Fifth Seal	Fifth 1,000 years	Martyrs		John
Sixth Seal	Sixth 1,000 years	Restoration and natural calamities		Latter Days
Seventh Seal	Seventh 1,000 years	Millennium		

Revelation 8–9

Seven Angels in the Seventh Seal



Revelation 8 begins with the opening of the seventh seal. What John saw after the seventh seal was opened is recorded in Revelation 8–22. As the following chart helps us understand, the seventh seal seems to be the focus of the book of Revelation.

Emphasis in the Book of Revelation

Events before the Fall	5 verses (Revelation 12:7–12) The war in heaven
First Seal First 1,000 years	11 verses (Revelation 6:1–11) First through fifth seals 14 verses (Revelation 6:12–7:8) Sixth seal 211 verses (Revelation 8–19) From the opening of the seventh seal to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ 6 verses (Revelation 20:1–6) The Millennium 9 verses (Revelation 20:7–15) Final scenes
Second Seal Second 1,000 years	
Third Seal Third 1,000 years	
Fourth Seal Fourth 1,000 years	
Fifth Seal Fifth 1,000 years	
Sixth Seal Sixth 1,000 years	
Seventh Seal Seventh 1,000 years	
Earth becomes a celestial kingdom	33 verses (Revelation 21:1–22:6) The earth is celestialized

Adapted from Gerald N. Lund, "The Book of Revelation—Three Keys for Making It a Book of Revelation," in *A Symposium on the New Testament* (1980), 120.

In Revelation 8 we read about the prayers of the Saints, symbolized by the smoke of incense going up to heaven. Because of the prayers of those Saints who were righteous in great tribulations, six angels—each in turn—came in judgment upon the wicked in the world. Revelation 8 tells

about the first four angels and Revelation 9 tells about the fifth and sixth angels, whose judgments were even more dramatic and powerful than the first four. Revelation 10 tells about a seventh angel coming down. What happens at his appearance is different from that of the first six angels.

Two things seem especially significant in Revelation 9. First, we read that the judgments of the fifth angel only came upon those who "have not the seal of God in their foreheads" (v. 4), which emphasizes again the spiritual—and often physical—protection provided by obedience to the ordinances of the gospel. The second thing of note is that although the Lord sent these destructions to encourage people to repent (see D&C 43:20–25), after six angels had "sounded" their judgment, the wicked were still not convinced to repent (see Revelation 9:20–21). As in the days of Noah and the last years of the Nephites in the Book of Mormon, the people apparently became so wicked that repentance was nearly impossible.

There are many symbolic images in Revelation 8–9. As in earlier chapters you have read, the images John used may not be what he was actually shown, but symbolically represent what he saw.

Revelation 10

John's Mission

Since Revelation 9 tells of the fifth and sixth angels, it may be expected that chapter 10 would tell of the seventh angel. Instead we read of "another mighty angel" (v. 1) who came down to teach John what must happen before the seventh angel sounds his trumpet and about John's role in the latter-day events he saw in vision.

Understanding the Scriptures



Revelation 10

As it were (v. 1)—Like

Mystery (v. 7)—Things not known to the world as a whole

Revelation 10:8–11—What Was the "Little Book" That John Ate?

Doctrine and Covenants 77:14 reveals what that little book represents. As confirmed in Doctrine and Covenants 7, John was translated. He experienced a change in his body that allows him to live without aging or experiencing physical pain. This allows him to accomplish the special mission given to him in Revelation 10. In June 1831, the Prophet Joseph Smith "prophesied that John the Revelator was then among the Ten Tribes of Israel who had been led away by Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, to prepare them for their return from their long dispersion" (*History of the Church*, 1:176).

Studying the Scriptures

Do the following activity as you study Revelation 10.

A Mission Call

1. John's eating the little book (see Revelation 10:8–11) represented his call to a special mission for the Lord. Read 2 Nephi 32:3 and explain what you think is symbolized by John eating the book and why he would want to do this before serving his mission (see also D&C 11:21–22).
2. Find the two words used to describe how the book tasted to John. Write what you think the meaning is of both these things (see also Alma 17:4–5; 26:28–33).

Revelation 11

Two Special Witnesses

Revelation 11 tells of the seventh angel sounding his trumpet. But before that occurred, John saw another significant event that lasted more than three years. Look for it as you read. Also find what happened when the seventh trump sounded and how it is different from what happened when the other six trumps sounded.

Understanding the Scriptures

Revelation 11

Reed (v. 1)—A long straight stick	• everything they needed to teach and testify of
Rod (v. 1)—Royal scepter, walking stick	• Make merry (v. 10)—Be happy, celebrate
Without (v. 2)—Outside	• Tormented (v. 10)—Reminded them of their guilt for their sins
Sackcloth (v. 3)—Simple clothing made of black goat hair, usually worn by someone who is humbled	• Remnant (v. 13)—The rest who were not destroyed
Testimony (v. 7)—Ministry; after they have said	• Woe (v. 14)—Something sad, grief

Revelation 11:2–3—“Forty and Two Months” and 1,260 Days

Revelation 11:2 says that the Gentiles will “tread under foot” Jerusalem for forty-two months, which is three and one-half years. This has reference to a time of apostasy when the Lord’s work is symbolically trampled on. Verse 3 indicates that “two witnesses” will serve a special mission to the sacred city for 1,260 days—which is also three and one-half years. Symbolically, John saw that the ministry of the Lord’s servants balances out the time of apostasy, thus giving people an equal opportunity to choose between the Lord and those who oppose Him. Unfortunately, as this chapter records, many will not listen to those prophets.

Revelation 11:3–12—“Two Witnesses”

Doctrine and Covenants 77:15 reveals more about the two witnesses. These two prophets have power like unto Elijah (see 1 Kings 17:1) and Nephi (see Helaman 10:6–11). Their enemies have power over them only after their mission is accomplished (see Revelation 11:7). In Revelation 11:4 they are called “olive trees” and “candlesticks.” Elder Bruce R. McConkie suggested that these symbolize their mission to “provide oil for the lamps of those who go forth to meet the Bridegroom . . . [see Matthew 25:1–13; D&C 45:56–57]; and that as lamp stands they shall reflect to men that light which comes from Him who is the Light of the World” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3:510).

Revelation 11:8—“The Great City, Which Spiritually Is Called Sodom and Egypt”

John called Jerusalem “Sodom” in Revelation 11:8 to symbolically represent the wickedness in the city at the time Jesus was crucified and any other time when the inhabitants reject Jesus and His authorized servants. John called Jerusalem “Egypt” to symbolize the spiritual bondage that results from such wickedness—like the bondage the children of Israel experienced in the days of Moses.

Studying the Scriptures

Do two of the following activities (A–C) as you study Revelation 11.

A Witnesses of the Lord

Prophets testify of Christ not only by what they say, but also by what they do. Carefully read Revelation 11:3–12 and list the similarities between what happened to the two witnesses and what happened to Christ and what He has done or will do.

B What Would You Say?

1. According to Revelation 11:10, how did the people John saw in vision feel about what the two prophets did during their mission?
2. Describe how people might view modern prophets in the same way.
3. If you could talk to one of the people John saw in vision or someone today who views prophets in the same way, what would you say to help that person understand how prophets help, rather than “torment” us?

C The Seventh Angel Sounds

Revelation 8–9 tells that John saw seven angels, each of which had a trumpet to sound, and what happened when the first six angels sounded them. Revelation 11:15–19 tells what happened when the seventh angel sounded his trump.

1. What does the seventh trump announce?
2. How is what happened after the seventh trump sounded different from what happened after the first six sounded?
3. Why do you think the Saints seemed so overcome with gratitude and praise for God?

Revelation 12

The Great Battle between Good and Evil

At the end of Revelation 11 we read that after the seventh angel sounded his trumpet “the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever” (v. 15). This would begin the Millennium, one thousand years of peace that will occur after the wicked are destroyed. During this time Christ will reign on the earth and “the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory” (Articles of Faith 1:10). Revelation 12, however, does not tell about the conditions during the Millennium, as one might expect. Instead, Revelation 12–18 tells more about the battle between good and evil, the growth of the kingdoms of Satan in opposition to the kingdom of God, and the eventual destruction of the kingdoms of Satan in preparation for the Millennium. In fact, Revelation 12 tells that John saw how this great battle between the followers of Satan and the followers of God began back in the premortal life and has continued throughout the history of the earth. Most of the next few chapters, however, refer to what will happen in the latter days (see 1 Nephi 14:18–22, 27).

earth and will be fully used when Christ comes again and reigns on earth throughout the Millennium (see D&C 65).

Revelation 12:3–4, 7–17—A Red Dragon with Seven Heads, Ten Horns, and Seven Crowns

The dragon is identified in Revelation 12:9 as Satan, the devil. The heads represent his knowledge, the horns represent his power, and the crowns represent his rule or control over those who allow themselves to be overcome by him. Notice that according to verse 4 he “drew the third part of the stars of heaven.” Modern revelation helps us understand this represents those who followed him in the premortal life and were not permitted to obtain a body and continue their eternal progression (see D&C 29:36–38; Abraham 3:23–28).

Revelation 12:7–11—“War in Heaven”

The Prophet Joseph Smith said, “The contention in heaven was—Jesus said there would be certain souls that would not be saved; and the devil said he would save them all, and laid his plans before the grand council, who gave their vote in favor of Jesus Christ. So the devil rose up in rebellion against God, and was cast down, with all who put up their heads for him” (*History of the Church*, 6:314; see also Moses 4:1–4; Abraham 3:23–28).

The war between good and evil was not over after Satan’s defeat in the premortal life. Revelation 12:17 tells us that he continues to war against the Saints of God (see also D&C 76:28–29). President Ezra Taft Benson said, “We live in that day which John the Revelator foresaw. . . Satan is waging war against the members of the Church who have testimonies and are trying to keep the commandments” (“The Power of the Word,” *Ensign*, May 1986, 79).

Understanding the Scriptures



Revelation 12

Travailing (v. 2)—In labor pains

Devour (v. 4)—Eat up (in this case, to destroy)

Prevailed (v. 8)—To gain the victory

Inhabiters of the earth (v. 12)—People who live on earth

Wrath, wroth (vv. 12, 17)—Anger, angry

Nourished (v. 14)—To be given what is necessary to stay alive

Time, and times, and a half time (v. 14)—This refers to three and one-half years

The remnant (v. 17)—The rest, those who are left

Be sure to read the Joseph Smith Translation for Revelation 12. There are many changes, corrections, and additions.

Revelation 12:1–6, 13–17—The Woman and the Man Child

The Joseph Smith Translation for Revelation 12 helps us understand that the woman John saw represents “the Church of God” and the man child represents “the kingdom of our God and his Christ” (JST, Revelation 12:7), who “was to rule all nations with a rod of iron” (JST, Revelation 12:3), or the word of God. Christ Himself set up this kingdom when He lived on earth. Apostasy drove it “into the wilderness” for centuries, which means it was not a governing influence in the lives of God’s children on earth for a period of time. In the last days, however, the keys of the kingdom of God have again been restored to the

Studying the Scriptures



Do two of the following activities (A–C) as you study Revelation 12.

A What’s in a Name?

List the five different names or titles referring to Lucifer in Revelation 12:1–10 and explain what each teaches us about him so that we may be warned about him and avoid his influence. You may want to use the Bible Dictionary for help.

B Reading about Yourself in the Scriptures

1. Revelation 12:7–11 tells about the war in heaven in the premortal life. How could you reasonably assume that you are one of the people referred to in verse 11? (see Abraham 3:23–28).
2. Write a paragraph that explains what you learn about yourself from Revelation 12:11 and how what you did then could help you now.
3. How can you apply these teachings and principles in your life today?

C Find Examples

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that “all beings who have bodies have power over those who have not. The devil has no power over us only as we permit him” (*Teachings of the Prophet*

Joseph Smith, 181). He also stated, “Wicked spirits have their bounds, limits, and laws by which they are governed” (*History of the Church*, 4:576). President James E. Faust, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, testified that there is “an ample shield against the power of Lucifer and his hosts” (“Serving the Lord and Resisting the Devil,” *Ensign*, Sept. 1995, 7).

Find examples in Revelation 12 that show the truth of what the Prophet Joseph Smith and President Faust said.

Revelation 13

Beasts That Represent Evil

In Revelation 13 John symbolically described his continuing vision of the battle between good and evil. This chapter portrays the evil that Satan promotes on earth as a powerful beast that goes against all that the kingdom of God stands for, and it seeks to enforce its ways with threats and violence. The beast also represents Satan’s efforts before the Second Coming of Christ, telling how wounding the beast does not stop it (see Revelation 13:3). In other words, even though one effort of Satan might be stopped, he continues others or starts new ones.

Many people have tried to explain the meaning of “the number of the beast” (666; v. 18). Modern prophets have not given an interpretation on this passage of scripture, and members should be careful not to teach or promote the theories of men that do not agree with the doctrine of the Church and are not taught by the prophets.

Revelation 14

Harvest Time on Earth



While Revelation 13 tells about the power and growth of the kingdoms of Satan, in Revelation 14 we read about the Restoration and the growth of the kingdom of God on the earth in the latter days. This period was (and is) compared to the harvest time, when all the good crops are gathered in and stored, while all things that are not useful are destroyed—cut down, plowed under, and burned. One purpose of the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth in the latter days is to warn the people of the earth of this harvest time, or day of judgment, that will occur at the Second Coming of Christ. If we are warned, we can be prepared by producing good fruit, or godly works, that allow us to be safely gathered to God.

Understanding the Scriptures



Revelation 14

Redeemed (vv. 3–4)—Saved (the literal meaning is to be purchased from slavery or bondage)

Defiled (v. 4)—Unchaste

Virgins (v. 4)—Sexually pure

Guile (v. 5)—Dishonesty of any kind, deception

Wrath (vv. 8, 10, 19)—Judgment

Fornication (v. 8)—The worship of idols

Indignation (v. 10)—Terrible judgments

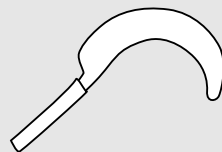
Sickle (vv. 14–19)—A curved, sharp blade used for cutting down stalks of grain

Reap (v. 15)—To cut down a crop at harvest time

Winepress (vv. 19–20)—A place where juice was removed from fruit by stomping on it



Winepress



Sickle

Revelation 14:1—Having the Father’s Name Written in Your Forehead

See “Understanding the Scriptures” for Revelation 7:3–8 (p. 168).

Revelation 14:1–5—The “Firstfruits unto God”

In ancient Israel the people brought their first and best crops to the temple as an offering to God. By giving up these “firstfruits,” Israelites demonstrated to the Lord that He was most important in their life. The 144,000 men described in Revelation 14:1–5 had done with their lives what ancient Israelites did with their crops—they gave the Lord the first and the best of their obedience (as described in verses 4–5). Thus they were the “firstfruits” of the Lord’s people on earth.

Revelation 14:6–7—“I Saw Another Angel . . . , Having the Everlasting Gospel to Preach unto Them That Dwell on the Earth”

President Gordon B. Hinckley quoted part of Revelation 14:6 and said, “That angel has come. His name is Moroni. His is a voice speaking from the dust, bringing another witness of the living reality of the Lord Jesus Christ” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1995, 93; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 70). His purpose is to prepare people for the coming of the Lord (see D&C 133:17–19).



In the context of John’s vision, Moroni first visited the Prophet Joseph Smith at the beginning of the harvest season in the place where Joseph lived and told him about a book that would be, as President Ezra Taft Benson said, “the instrument that God designed to ‘sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out [His] elect’ (Moses 7:62)” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1988, 3; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1988, 4) in preparation for the coming of the Lord.

Studying the Scriptures

Do activity A and two of the other activities (B–D) as you study Revelation 14.

A Scripture Mastery—Revelation 14:6–7

1. Read the “Understanding the Scriptures” section above for Revelation 14:6–7. You may want to mark or write something in or by these two verses based on what you read.
2. Using Revelation 14:6–7, write what you would tell someone who asked who and what the figure on the top of our temples represents.

B Explain the Symbolism

Imagine someone investigating Christianity asking you to explain the meaning of Revelation 14:1–5. They especially want to know if there are any members of the Church with Heavenly Father’s name written on their foreheads. Write what you would say to them about what it really means to take on the name of God and what the forehead might symbolize. Include something about how the 144,000 men demonstrated that they truly had taken on the Father’s name (see vv. 4–5).

C Important Assignments

1. There are six different angels spoken of in Revelation 14. Each seems to have a specific assignment. Write in your notebook the verses in which the assignment of each angel is described. Then describe what that angel is supposed to do. (Each of those angels might represent a whole group of angels, or heavenly ministrants.)
2. Choose any two of those angelic assignments and describe how you would feel if they had been given to you. Explain why you would feel that way.
3. Read Doctrine and Covenants 11:1–4, 27 and write in your notebook which angelic assignments are most like the one the Lord has given you.

D Thrust in Your Sickle

Revelation 14 speaks about a harvest prior to the Second Coming of Christ. Read each of the following scripture references and write what they teach you about what will happen in the harvest and the purpose of the harvest: Revelation 14:14–19; Alma 26:5–7; Doctrine and Covenants 12:1–4; 29:7–12; 33:2–7; 45:1–5; 86:1–7; 88:84–85, 94.

Revelation 15

A Vision of the Celestial World

Although Revelation 4–22 is considered one vision, the vision changes scenes from time to time. Revelation 15 marks a new scene in the vision. In it, John saw “a sea of glass mingled with fire” (v. 2) where those who overcame “the beast” (referred to in Revelation 13) lived. Doctrine and Covenants 130:6–7 tells us that globes that are “like a sea of glass and fire” are “in the presence of God.” President Brigham Young said, “This earth will become a celestial body—be like a sea of glass” (Discourses of Brigham Young, sel. John A. Widtsoe [1941], 101). John saw those who dwelt there singing songs of praise to God. He also saw a temple there that was filled with the glory of God. Out of the temple came seven angels, clothed in white. Their assignment is described in Revelation 16.

Studying the Scriptures

Do the following activity as you study Revelation 15.

A A Good Question

1. John recorded in Revelation 15 the words to a song he heard sung in the celestial world. How would you answer the question asked in verse 4, considering what is said after the question?

- If the answer is as obvious as the song seems to indicate, why do so many people struggle in honoring and glorifying the Lord in their lives?
- When are you most likely to feel like those singers felt? What could you do to keep that feeling and perspective in your life more often?

Revelation 16

Seven Angels “Pour Out” God’s Judgments

Revelation 15 tells how John saw seven angels come out of the temple in the presence of God. Each was given a vial, or container, “full of the wrath of God” (Revelation 15:7). Revelation 16 describes each of the angels pouring out his vial upon the earth, bringing the judgments, or punishments of God upon the wicked.

Some of what is found in Revelation 16 is like what we read in Revelation 8–9. Remember that in Revelation 12 John’s vision went back in time and showed him things leading up to what he saw in Revelation 8–11. Consequently, Revelation 16 might repeat some of the things he saw earlier, but this time they are shown for different purposes. For example, in Revelation 16 John saw the role the beast, Satan, played in these latter-day judgments.

In Revelation 9 are several verses about the warfare after the sixth angel sounded his trumpet. In Revelation 16, after the sixth angel poured out his vial, John saw that the beast gathered people to Armageddon (see vv. 14–16), which is the place of a last great battle before the Second Coming of Christ. The next thing that happened in Revelation 16 was the seventh angel, like the seventh angel in Revelation 11, announcing that “it is done” (Revelation 16:17), or that the time of the Second Coming had come. This was a most terrible time for those who refused to repent through the previous judgments, but a glorious time for the righteous.

In Revelation 16 John saw that the final event as the Savior came was the destruction of Babylon, which represents the kingdoms of the devil. The destruction of the kingdoms of the devil was the great victory of good in the battle against evil that has been a theme since Revelation 12. The destruction is described in Revelation 17–18.

Revelation 17–18

The Destruction of Babylon, the Harlot



Revelation 14 tells how John heard an angel declare that Babylon would be destroyed (see v. 8). Revelation 16:19 begins the account of that destruction, and Revelation 17–18 continues the account in greater detail. As in other parts of Revelation, the destruction of Babylon is described using symbolic language.

Babylon was the capital city of ancient Babylonia, but in the scriptures the name often referred to the whole nation. In the Old Testament we read that the Babylonians conquered the kingdom of Judah, taking many Israelites captive to Babylon. The city of Babylon was very large and the people of the city were very wealthy, displaying their riches with fancy buildings, clothing, and leisure activities. They also worshiped idols. Because of the worldliness of Babylon, and because it was a place where the children of Israel were captive, the Lord often used the name Babylon in the scriptures to represent sin, worldliness, the influence of the devil on the earth, and the spiritual captivity that comes from these things (see D&C 1:16; 133:5, 7, 14). Babylon is the opposite of Zion, as are its values (see Moses 7:18).

Understanding the Scriptures



Revelation 17

Whore (vv. 1, 15–16)—A person who accepts money to commit immoral acts; in this case it is symbolic of Babylon or the world

Fornication (vv. 2, 4)—Immoral acts; also the worship of idols

Blasphemy (v. 3)—Sayings and actions that insult or show disrespect for God and all He represents

Arrayed (v. 4)—Clothed

Abominations (vv. 4–5)—A foul or detestable thing, obscene and offensive

Harlots (v. 5)—A person who accepts money to commit immoral acts

Perdition (vv. 8, 11)—Destruction or ruin (see D&C 76:31–38)

Desolate (v. 16)—Destroyed

Revelation 17:8—The Beast That “Was, and Is Not, and Yet Is”

This confusing phrase seems to refer to the devil, or someone who entirely turned himself over to the service of the devil, and sounds like the opposite of what John learned about Jesus Christ in Revelation 1:4, 8. Although the devil may live forever, he is inconsistent, unstable, and completely untrustworthy (see Alma 30:60). Jesus Christ, however, is God “yesterday, today, and forever” (Mormon 9:9) and is not only powerful, but is consistent and can always be trusted. Consequently, we can center our faith in Him.

Revelation 18

Habitation (v. 2)—House, place where people live

Abundance of her delicacies (v. 3)—Great number of her (Babylon’s) luxuries, or worldly things

Plagues (vv. 4, 8)—Troubles, miseries, bad things that happen

Deliciously (v. 7)—Wickedly, seeking worldly pleasures

Bewail her, and lament for her (v. 9)—Be very sad for her, mourn

Nought (v. 17)—Nothing

Cast dust on their heads (v. 19)—A sign of sadness and mourning in Bible times

Avenged (v. 20)—To take revenge, gave what they deserved for their wickedness against others

Sorceries (v. 23)—Magic

Studying the Scriptures

Do the following activity as you study Revelation 17–18.

A Finding the Meaning of the Scriptures

Sometimes, the interpretation of a symbol or confusing passage of scripture can be understood by searching for clues in verses before or after it.

1. Compare Revelation 17:1–2, 6, 18 with Revelation 18:2–3, 24 and write a statement in your notebook about who the “whore” or woman in Revelation 17 symbolizes.

2. What does Revelation 17:15 help you understand about Revelation 17:1?

3. Revelation 17:3 speaks of a beast with seven heads and ten horns. According to Revelation 17:12, what are the horns?

On other occasions, you may need to turn to other books of scripture for help in understanding or for additional information. After you learn an interpretation (as you should in steps 1–5), you may want to mark your scriptures in a way that leads you to that interpretation the next time you study these chapters. For example, you may want to highlight the helpful reference in your footnotes or write the cross-reference in the margin next to the verse.

4. To help you understand Revelation 17, read 1 Nephi 14:9–17. Write what you learn about the meaning of the beast and what the woman did before the time period spoken of in Revelation 17.

5. How does Doctrine and Covenants 133:14 help you understand what it means to follow the Lord’s command in Revelation 18:4?

There are times when it is difficult to find additional help in the scriptures. The meaning has to come through the Spirit as you

take time to ponder. A helpful way to ponder over symbolic language is to take time to picture in your mind the symbols, and then write down a description of them. Ask yourself questions like: What are the most significant features of the symbol? What feeling or message do those features create? What is the spiritual message? These simple ideas often encourage pondering that invites a spirit of insight and understanding. Try using them in completing steps 6–7.

6. What does the description of the woman in Revelation 17:4 teach you about what Babylon represents?

7. Considering what you have learned, why is a harlot an appropriate symbol for Babylon? (You may want to consider information given in the introduction and the “Understanding the Scriptures” section.)

Revelation 19

The Second Coming of Christ

The final event that occurs in the destruction of Babylon and all it stands for is the coming of the “King of Kings, and Lord of Lords” (Revelation 19:16), who is Jesus Christ, to take the beast and cast him out. An account of this event is found in Revelation 19. John first began recording this event in Revelation 11:15–19, but then was shown greater detail concerning the events leading up to it and the significance of the judgments on and destruction of the wicked at the time of Jesus Christ’s coming. From Revelation 19 through the end of the book, John recorded events at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ and afterward.

Understanding the Scriptures

Revelation 19

Alleluia (vv. 1, 3–4, 6)—Praise to God!

Omnipotent (v. 6)—All powerful

Arrayed (v. 8)—Clothed

Linen (vv. 8, 14)—Smooth cloth made from flax

Vesture (vv. 13, 16)—Robe

Treadeth the winepress (v. 15)—See the help and drawing in “Understanding the Scriptures” for Revelation 14 (p. 172)

Remnant (v. 21)—The ones left over, the remaining ones

Revelation 19:7–9—The Marriage and Marriage Supper of the Lamb

In Revelation 12 we read that the Church is symbolized by a woman. On more than one occasion Jesus referred to Himself as the groom who marries the woman (see Isaiah 54:5; Matthew 22:2–14; Luke 5:34). This symbolic marriage reminds us that we have a covenant relationship with the Lord and that He cares for the Church as a perfect husband in whom we can rely and trust (see Ephesians 5:25).

The marriage supper is a feast celebrating the marriage. The image of a feast reminds us that the gospel of Jesus Christ

satisfies the spiritual, emotional, social, and physical hunger, or needs, of the entire posterity of Adam and Eve. Inviting others and preparing for this great supper is an important message of the latter days (see D&C 27:5–14; 58:8–12; 65:2–3).

Revelation 19:9, 17–21—Two Suppers

Two suppers are spoken of in Revelation 19. They are not the same, although they occur at a similar time in the history of the earth. The first, the marriage supper of the Lamb, is referred to in the preceding section. The other supper, “the supper of the great God” (v. 17), is a symbol that reminds us of the destruction of the wicked. Furthermore, it reminds us that if we put our trust in the things of this world and refuse to believe in life after death, the only future we will look forward to is the same as all other living things on earth—we will die, begin to rot, and birds of prey will eat our flesh. In contrast, the gospel proclaims victory from the grave and the opportunity for eternal happiness.

Revelation 19:15, 21—“Out of His Mouth Goeth a Sharp Sword, . . . and He Shall Rule Them with a Rod of Iron”

The sword and the rod of iron both refer to the word of God (see Hebrews 4:12; 1 Nephi 15:23–24). Although it may sound harsh, the rule of Jesus is not harsh, but firm, powerful, and cuts to the center of man to help him permanently change or to perfectly know his guilt (see 1 Nephi 16:2; Alma 31:5; 3 Nephi 11:3).

Studying the Scriptures

Do two of the following activities (A–C) as you study Revelation 19.

A Design an Invitation

1. In your notebook, draw or write an invitation that invites someone to the events described in Revelation 19:7–9. Include every important detail, including what will occur, what they should wear, and what they need in order to get in. Read and use Matthew 22:2–14; 2 Nephi 9:50–51; Doctrine and Covenants 27:5–14; and 58:8–9 as you determine the details of the invitation.
2. According to Doctrine and Covenants 65:1–5, who delivers the invitation to these great events spoken of in Revelation 19:7–9?

B Use a Scripture to Answer Questions

1. One of your Christian friends who is not a member of the Church does not believe in prophets today and wonders how we can say there are prophets in the Church. Use Revelation 19:10 in your explanation about our belief in prophets (see also Numbers 11:29).
2. Use Revelation 19:10 to explain the source of a true testimony (also consider 1 Corinthians 2:11; Alma 5:45–46).

C Why Red?

1. John described Jesus wearing red at the time of His Second Coming (see Revelation 19:13). Read Doctrine and Covenants 19:16–19 and 133:46–51, and then explain what His red clothing symbolizes.

2. What color is the clothing of those who come with Jesus at His coming? What does this color represent? (see Revelation 19:8, 14).

Revelation 20

The Millennium



When Jesus Christ comes in glory and Babylon is destroyed, it will begin a period in Heavenly Father’s plan for this earth called the Millennium, which is a word meaning “a thousand-year period of time.” Although the word millennium does not appear in Revelation 20, what John wrote clearly describes it.

Understanding the Scriptures

Revelation 20

Bottomless pit (vv. 1, 3)—Outer darkness, the future dwelling place of Satan and the sons of perdition (see D&C 76:31–38)

Expired (v. 7)—Over
Breadth (v. 9)—This refers to a great part of the world
Compassed (v. 9)—Surrounded

Revelation 20:4—Who Sits on the Thrones in Judgment?

This likely refers to the Lord’s servants who He said would sit in judgment with Him at the last day (see 1 Nephi 12:9–10; 3 Nephi 27:27).

Revelation 20:4–6—The First Resurrection

For more information on who takes part in the First Resurrection, see Mosiah 15:21–26; Doctrine and Covenants 76:64, 70; and 88:95–98.

Revelation 20:7–10—Gog and Magog

The names Gog and Magog are first used in Ezekiel 38–39. They refer to nations that fight against the Lord before His Second Coming. It is used in Revelation 20 to refer to those who follow Satan at the end of the Millennium and who fight against the Lord.

Studying the Scriptures

Do the following two activities (A–B) as you study Revelation 20.

A What Does It Say?

1. In Revelation there are nearly fifteen chapters describing the last days before the Second Coming of Christ, but only one chapter, chapter 20, describing the Millennium (see the chart “Emphasis in the Book of Revelation,” p. 169). And John’s description of the Millennium does not tell us how the people would live or what they would do. Explain why you think there was so much written about what would take place *before* the Millennium, but almost nothing about the happenings or activities during the Millennium.
2. Even though we do not learn much in the book of Revelation about the activities of people during the Millennium, we do learn some very important doctrines regarding this significant era in the earth’s history. List all of the truths relating to the Millennium that you find in Revelation 20. Write them in complete sentences and note the verses in which each truth is stated.

B Scripture Mastery—Revelation 20:12–13

1. List truths from Revelation 20:12–13 you think every person on the earth would want to know before he or she died. Explain why you think one would want to know those things.
2. What further understanding does 2 Nephi 9:10–16 give us about what happens when the books are opened, as described in Revelation 20:12–13?
3. Use what you have learned in this activity by choosing one of the following statements and writing what you would say to a person who said it:
 - “If you sin, it is easy to be forgiven and avoid the consequences.”
 - “God loves everyone, so judgment day won’t be so bad.”
 - “Nobody is perfect, and I’m better than a lot of people I know, so why worry about the judgment? It just gets in the way of having some fun.”
 - “What you do doesn’t matter, as long as you don’t hurt others.”

Revelation 21–22

The Earth Becomes a Celestial World



In these final two chapters of the book of Revelation we read what John saw concerning the future of the earth after the Millennium, when it will become a celestial world for those who live on it. He also left us his testimony that the things he saw are true. As you read what John wrote about the celestial kingdom and how wonderful it would be to dwell there, think about what is required to live there. Would obtaining such a glory be worth meeting those requirements?

President Brigham Young gave us a way to think about what is written in Revelation 21–22 when he said, “We talk about our trials and troubles here in this life: but suppose that you could see yourselves thousands and millions of years after you have proved faithful to your religion during the few short years in this time, and have obtained eternal salvation and a crown of glory in the presence of God; then look back upon your lives here, and see the losses, crosses, and disappointments, the sorrows . . . , you would be constrained to exclaim, ‘But what of all that? Those things were but for a moment, and we are now here. We have been faithful during a few moments in our mortality, and now we enjoy eternal life and glory, with power to progress in all the boundless knowledge and through the countless stages of progression, enjoying the smiles and approbation [favor] of our Father and God, and of Jesus Christ’ ” (in Journal of Discourses, 7:275).

Understanding the Scriptures



Revelation 21

Adorned (v. 2)—Made beautiful, dressed up

Tabernacle (v. 3)—Dwelling place

Foursquare (v. 16)—In the shape of a square

Defileth (v. 27)—To make unclean or unholy

Revelation 21:2—New Jerusalem

The New Jerusalem spoken of in Revelation 21 is not the same city that is to be built on the American continent as part of the last days and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ (see Articles of Faith 1:10). It refers to the celestial kingdom.

Revelation 21:11–25—The Description of the City of God

If you took the time to figure out the measurements John gave of the city of God, you would understand that he was describing a city whose size was larger than anything man had ever created. Furthermore, the description of precious metals and stones communicates a beauty beyond description. But the most glorious part is the very presence of God, which eliminates the need for a temple or even for light (see vv. 22–23).

Revelation 22

Curse (v. 3)—Refers to the effects of the Fall of Adam and Eve

Without (v. 15)—Outside

Root and the offspring of David (v. 16)—A descendant of David and rightful king of Israel; Jesus Christ

Plagues (v. 18)—Curses, calamities

Revelation 22:2, 14—The Tree of Life

After the Fall of Adam and Eve, the way to the tree of life was closed so that they would have a time to repent, be tested, and in all ways prepare themselves to partake of this great blessing (see Alma 12:22–26; 42:2–5; Moses 4:31). John saw that the fruit of the tree of life was available to all in the celestial world. Having the tree of life available shows that all of the effects of the Fall have been overcome in this place.

Revelation 22:17—“Come”

As stated in the introduction to this book (see p. 164), the main purpose of the book of Revelation is to invite us to come unto Christ. The closing of the book—Revelation 22:17 in particular—again emphasizes that invitation.

Revelation 22:18–19—Do Not Add to or Take away from These Things

Some people have used Revelation 22:18–19 to defend the idea that there can be no more revelation or scripture after the Bible because that would be adding to the Bible. In this way they try to discredit the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price.

Moses, however, wrote the same about his books (see Deuteronomy 4:2). If those words of Moses were interpreted in the same way some have interpreted what John wrote, then there would be no Bible after the first five books. John, like Moses, was simply referring to what God had directed him to write—the book of Revelation.

Anyone can find out the truthfulness of modern revelation and these latter-day scriptures by asking God Himself if they are true (see Matthew 7:7–11; James 1:4–5).

Studying the Scriptures



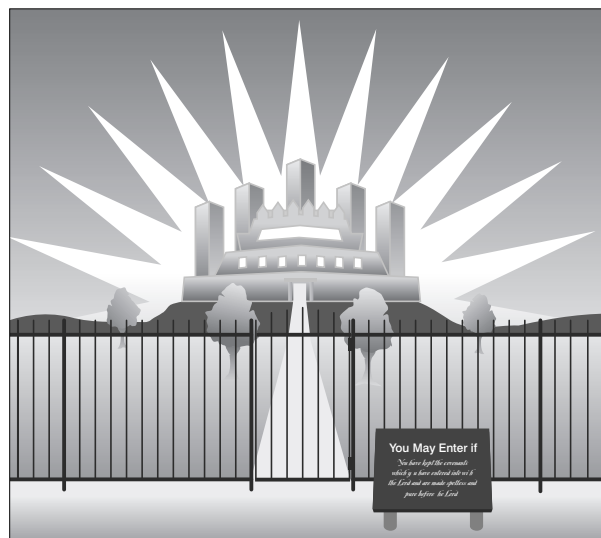
Do two of the following activities (A–D) as you read Revelation 21–22.

A Design a Poster

Choose a verse from Revelation 21–22 that you think would make a good poster to display and remind you to stay true to the Lord and His teachings. Explain why that verse would inspire you, and make a small sketch of how you would want the poster to look.

B Who Are These People?

1. Read and compare Revelation 7:9, 13–17 with Revelation 21:1–4 and tell who is a part of the holy city John saw. (You may also want to read Revelation 22:11–14.)
2. According to Revelation 21:8 and 22:15, who will not be in the Holy City? (Make sure you understand what all of the words in these verses mean.)



C Most Impressive

Speaking of the book of Revelation, Elder Bruce R. McConkie said, “Nowhere in any scripture now had among men are there such pointed and persuasive explanations as to why we must overcome the world, and the attendant blessings that flow therefrom. . . . Truly the teachings of this inspired work are some of the greatest incentives [motivations] to personal righteousness now found in holy writ” (“Understanding the Book of Revelation,” *Ensign*, Sept. 1975, 89).

In support of what Elder McConkie said, write about two or more of the most impressive things you learned from the book of Revelation that inspire and motivate you to live righteously.

D “Come, Lord Jesus”

Read Revelation 22:20. Think of what you have learned during your study of the New Testament and write your testimony of Jesus. Include why you would join in John’s prayer for Jesus to come.

THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

