

Book of Mormon

Gospel Doctrine Teacher's Manual



Book of Mormon

Gospel Doctrine Teacher's Manual

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

Comments and Suggestions

Your comments and suggestions about this manual would be appreciated.

Please submit them to:

Curriculum Planning

50 East North Temple Street, Floor 24

Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3200

USA

E-mail: cur-development@ldschurch.org

Please list your name, address, ward, and stake. Be sure to give the title of the manual. Then offer your comments and suggestions about the manual's strengths and areas of potential improvement.

Contents

Lesson Number and Title	Page
Helps for the Teacher	v
1 “The Keystone of Our Religion”	1
2 “All Things According to His Will” (1 Nephi 1–7)	6
3 The Vision of the Tree of Life (1 Nephi 8–11; 12:16–18; 15)	11
4 “The Things Which I Saw While I Was Carried Away in the Spirit” (1 Nephi 12–14)	16
5 “Hearken to the Truth, and Give Heed unto It” (1 Nephi 16–22)	20
6 “Free to Choose Liberty and Eternal Life” (2 Nephi 1–2)	25
7 “I Know in Whom I Have Trusted” (2 Nephi 3–5)	29
8 “O How Great the Goodness of Our God” (2 Nephi 6–10)	33
9 “My Soul Delighteth in the Words of Isaiah” (2 Nephi 11–25)	37
10 “He Inviteth All to Come unto Him” (2 Nephi 26–30)	42
11 “Press Forward with a Steadfastness in Christ” (2 Nephi 31–33)	47
12 “Seek Ye for the Kingdom of God” (Jacob 1–4)	51
13 The Allegory of the Olive Trees (Jacob 5–7)	56
14 “For a Wise Purpose” (Enos, Jarom, Omni, Words of Mormon)	61
15 “Eternally Indebted to Your Heavenly Father” (Mosiah 1–3)	66
16 “Ye Shall Be Called the Children of Christ” (Mosiah 4–6)	71
17 “A Seer . . . Becometh a Great Benefit to His Fellow Beings” (Mosiah 7–11)	75
18 “God Himself . . . Shall Redeem His People” (Mosiah 12–17)	79
19 “None Could Deliver Them but the Lord” (Mosiah 18–24)	84
20 “My Soul Is Pained No More” (Mosiah 25–28; Alma 36)	89
21 “Alma . . . Did Judge Righteous Judgments” (Mosiah 29; Alma 1–4)	94
22 “Have Ye Received His Image in Your Countenances?” (Alma 5–7)	98
23 “More Than One Witness” (Alma 8–12)	102
24 “Give Us Strength According to Our Faith . . . in Christ” (Alma 13–16)	107
25 “They Taught with Power and Authority of God” (Alma 17–22)	112
26 “Converted unto the Lord” (Alma 23–29)	116
27 “All Things Denote There Is a God” (Alma 30–31)	120

28	“The Word Is in Christ unto Salvation” (Alma 32–35)	124
29	“Give Ear to My Words” (Alma 36–39)	128
30	“The Great Plan of Happiness” (Alma 40–42)	133
31	“Firm in the Faith of Christ” (Alma 43–52)	138
32	“They Did Obey . . . Every Word of Command with Exactness” (Alma 53–63)	142
33	“A Sure Foundation” (Helaman 1–5)	146
34	“How Could You Have Forgotten Your God?” (Helaman 6–12)	150
35	“Repent and Return unto the Lord” (Helaman 13–16)	155
36	“On the Morrow Come I into the World” (3 Nephi 1–7)	160
37	“Whosoever Will Come, Him Will I Receive” (3 Nephi 8–11)	164
38	“Old Things Are Done Away, and All Things Have Become New” (3 Nephi 12–15)	168
39	“Behold, My Joy Is Full” (3 Nephi 17–19)	173
40	“Then Will I Gather Them In” (3 Nephi 16; 20–21)	177
41	“He Did Expound All Things unto Them” (3 Nephi 22–26)	181
42	“This Is My Gospel” (3 Nephi 27–30; 4 Nephi)	185
43	“How Could Ye Have Departed from the Ways of the Lord?” (Mormon 1–6; Moroni 9)	190
44	“I Speak unto You As If Ye Were Present” (Mormon 7–9)	194
45	“Never Has Man Believed in Me As Thou Hast” (Ether 1–6)	198
46	“By Faith All Things Are Fulfilled” (Ether 7–15)	202
47	“To Keep Them in the Right Way” (Moroni 1–6)	206
48	“Come unto Christ” (Moroni 7–8; 10)	210

Helps for the Teacher

In a meeting with the Twelve Apostles, the Prophet Joseph Smith “told the brethren that the Book of Mormon was the most correct of any book on earth, and the keystone of our religion, and a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than by any other book” (*History of the Church*, 4:461; see also the introduction to the Book of Mormon).

As a Gospel Doctrine teacher, you have the opportunity this year to teach from “the most correct of any book on earth.” Guided by the Spirit, you will be able to help class members understand eternal precepts and strengthen their testimonies of Jesus Christ, His gospel, and the Prophet Joseph Smith’s mission. You will also be able to help them receive other blessings that come from diligent study of the Book of Mormon, some of which were described by President Ezra Taft Benson:

“The Book of Mormon exposes the enemies of Christ. It confounds false doctrines and lays down contention. (See 2 Ne. 3:12.) It fortifies the humble followers of Christ against the evil designs, strategies, and doctrines of the devil in our day. The type of apostates in the Book of Mormon are similar to the type we have today. God, with his infinite foreknowledge, so molded the Book of Mormon that we might see the error and know how to combat false educational, political, religious, and philosophical concepts of our time” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1975, 94–95; or *Ensign*, May 1975, 64).

“There is a power in the book which will begin to flow into your lives the moment you begin a serious study of the book. You will find greater power to resist temptation. You will find the power to avoid deception. You will find the power to stay on the strait and narrow path. . . . When you begin to hunger and thirst after those words, you will find life in greater and greater abundance” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1986, 6; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 7).

As you teach, the Spirit of the Lord will bear witness to you of the power of the Book of Mormon in bringing people to a firm and steadfast knowledge of Jesus Christ and His doctrine.

Teaching by the Spirit

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

You can seek the Spirit by praying, fasting, studying the scriptures daily, and obeying the commandments. While preparing for class, pray for the Spirit to help you understand the scriptures and the needs of class members. The Spirit can also help you plan meaningful ways to discuss the scriptures and apply them to the present (see 1 Nephi 19:23). With the guidance of the Spirit, you

will become an effective instrument in the hands of the Lord to teach His word to His children.

Some suggestions for how to invite the Spirit into your class are given below:

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

Focusing on the Scriptures

Elder Boyd K. Packer taught, “True doctrine, understood, changes attitudes and behavior” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1986, 20; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 17). In your preparation and during class, focus on the saving doctrines of the gospel as presented in the scriptures and the teachings of latter-day prophets. This requires that you study the scriptures diligently and prayerfully. The Lord commanded, “Seek not to declare my word, but first seek to obtain my word, and then shall your tongue be loosed; then, if you desire, you shall have my Spirit and my word, yea, the power of God unto the convincing of men” (D&C 11:21).

Encourage class members to bring their scriptures to class every week. Read selected scripture passages together as you discuss them. Where possible, use Latter-day Saint editions of the scriptures.

Each class member should be given a copy of the *Book of Mormon Class Member Study Guide* (35684). This booklet will help class members improve their study skills. It will help them understand the scriptures, apply them, prepare to discuss them in class, and use them in family discussions. Encourage class members to read the appropriate scripture block and study guide section before coming to class each week.

Sharing the Book of Mormon

President Ezra Taft Benson challenged members of the Church to share the Book of Mormon. He said:

“The time is long overdue for a massive flooding of the earth with the Book of Mormon. . . . God will hold us accountable if we do not now move the Book of Mormon in a monumental way.

“We have the Book of Mormon, we have the members, we have the missionaries, we have the resources, and the world has the need.

“*The time is now!*” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1988, 4; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1988, 4–5).

As you teach the Book of Mormon in Sunday School this year, encourage class members to share the Book of Mormon with their nonmember friends and acquaintances (see the second additional teaching idea in lesson 1). At the beginning of the year, you may want to consult with the bishopric and ward mission leader about how class members can obtain copies of the Book of Mormon to share with others.

Using This Manual

This manual is a tool to help you teach the doctrines of the gospel from the scriptures. It has been written for youth and adult Gospel Doctrine classes and is to be used every four years. Additional references and commentaries should not be necessary to teach the lessons. Elder M. Russell Ballard said: “Teachers would be well advised to study carefully the scriptures and their manuals before reaching out for supplemental materials. Far too many teachers seem to stray from the approved curriculum materials without fully reviewing them. If teachers feel a need to use some good supplemental resources beyond the scriptures and manuals in presenting a lesson, they should first consider the use of the Church magazines” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1983, 93; or *Ensign*, May 1983, 68).

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

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

Each lesson includes the following sections:

1. *Title*. The title consists of two elements: a short descriptive quotation or phrase and the scriptures you should read as you prepare the lesson.
2. *Purpose*. The purpose statement suggests a main idea you can focus on as you prepare and teach the lesson.
3. *Preparation*. This section summarizes the scripture accounts in the lesson outline. It may also include additional reading and other suggestions for preparation, such as materials you may want to bring to class. Many of these materials are available in the meetinghouse library. (A five-digit number following the name of a suggested picture is the meetinghouse library number; if the picture is included in the Gospel Art Picture Kit [34730], that number is also given.)
4. *Attention activity*. This section consists of a simple activity, object lesson, quotation, or question to help class members prepare to learn, participate, and feel the influence of the Spirit. Whether you use the manual’s attention

activity or one of your own, it is important to focus class members' attention at the beginning of the lesson. The activity should be brief.

5. *Scripture discussion and application.* This is the main part of the lesson. Prayerfully study the scripture accounts so you can teach and discuss them effectively. Use the suggestions in "Encouraging Class Discussion" (pages viii–ix) and "Using Variety in Teaching the Scriptures" (pages ix–x) to vary the way you teach and to maintain class members' interest. Select questions and methods that are appropriate for class members' ages and experience.
6. *Conclusion.* This section helps you summarize the lesson and encourage class members to live the principles you have discussed. It also reminds you to bear testimony. Be sure to leave enough time to conclude each lesson.
7. *Additional teaching ideas.* This section is provided in most lessons in the manual. It may include additional truths from the scripture accounts, alternate teaching approaches, activities, or other suggestions that supplement the lesson outline. You may want to use some of these ideas as part of the lessons.

Encouraging Class Discussion

You normally should not give lectures. Instead, help class members participate meaningfully in discussing the scriptures. Class members' participation helps them:

1. Learn more about the scriptures.
2. Learn how to apply gospel principles.
3. Become more committed to living the gospel.
4. Invite the Spirit into the class.
5. Teach and edify each other so they benefit from each other's gifts, knowledge, experience, and testimonies.

Discussions should help class members draw nearer to the Savior and live as His disciples. Redirect discussions that do not accomplish these purposes.

Asking thought-provoking questions can be one of the most effective teaching techniques. It is a technique the Savior used when He taught. Seek the Spirit's guidance as you study the questions in this manual and decide which ones to ask. The manual provides scripture references to help you and class members find answers to most of these questions. Answers to other questions will come from class members' experiences.

It is more important to help class members understand and apply the scriptures than to cover all the lesson material you have prepared. If class members are learning from a good discussion, it is often helpful to let it continue rather than try to cover all the lesson material.

Use the following guidelines to encourage class discussion:

1. Ask questions that require thought and discussion rather than questions that can be answered with *yes* or *no*. Questions that begin with *why*, *how*, *who*, *what*, *when*, and *where* are usually most effective for encouraging discussion.
2. Encourage class members to share experiences that show how scriptural principles and doctrines can be applied to life. Also encourage them to

- share their feelings about what they are learning from the scriptures. Show appreciation for their contributions.
3. Be sensitive to the needs of each class member. Although all class members should be encouraged to participate in class discussions, some may hesitate to respond. You may wish to speak privately with them to find out how they feel about reading aloud or participating in class. Be careful not to call on class members if it might embarrass them.
 4. Give scripture references to help class members find the answers to some questions.
 5. Encourage class members to ponder the questions in the *Book of Mormon Class Member Study Guide* as they study each week's reading assignment. As you prepare each lesson, consider how to discuss these questions in class. Class members will be better able to participate in discussions if they have studied the reading assignment and if you ask questions that they are prepared to answer.

Using Variety in Teaching the Scriptures

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

1. Help class members understand what the scriptures teach about Jesus Christ. Ask them to consider how certain passages increase their faith in the Savior and help them feel His love.
2. Ask class members to think of and share specific ways that a scripture passage can apply in their lives. Have them personalize the scriptures by mentally substituting their names in selected passages.
3. In addition to teaching the doctrine, emphasize inspiring stories in the Book of Mormon. Ensure that class members understand the stories and discuss ways to apply them. Ask, "Why do you think this account was included in the Book of Mormon?" or "What can we learn from this story to help us be better followers of Christ?"
4. Have class members look for words, phrases, or ideas that are repeated often in a scripture passage or that have special meaning for them.
5. Encourage class members to use the study aids included at the end of the Latter-day Saint editions of the Bible and the Book of Mormon, such as the Topical Guide and Bible Dictionary for the Bible and the index for the Book of Mormon.
6. Write on the chalkboard phrases, key words, or questions that relate to the scripture account. Then read or summarize the account. As class members hear the phrases, key words, or answers to the questions, stop and discuss them.
7. Throughout the Book of Mormon, the phrase "thus we see" is used to introduce a summary of the principles taught (see, for example, Helaman 3:28). After reading a scripture passage, ask class members to explain the passage using the phrase "thus we see."

8. Look for and discuss symbols that are used in the Book of Mormon. For example, a strait and narrow path is often used to symbolize the gospel (see 2 Nephi 31:17–20; 33:9; Jacob 6:11; 3 Nephi 14:13–14; 27:33).
9. Note how people or events in the scriptures can be contrasted or compared with each other. For example, you could contrast Laman and Lemuel with their brothers Nephi and Sam, or compare the Savior’s Sermon on the Mount as recorded in the New Testament with the account in 3 Nephi 12–14.
10. Have class members dramatize scriptural stories by reading aloud the words of the different people in the stories. Ensure that dramatizations show proper respect for the scriptures.
11. Divide the class into two or more small groups. After reviewing a scripture account, have each group write down the principles and doctrines taught in the account. Then have the groups take turns discussing how these teachings apply in their lives.
12. Invite class members to bring pencils to mark significant verses as they discuss them.
13. Show segments from *Book of Mormon Video Presentations* (53911) as suggested in the “Preparation” section of various lessons.

Helping New Members

You may have the opportunity to teach members who are relatively new in the Church. Your teaching can help these members become firm in the faith.

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

Teaching the Gospel to Youth

If you are teaching youth, remember that they often need active participation and visual representations of the doctrines being discussed. Your use of video presentations, pictures, and activities suggested in the manual can help youth stay interested in the lessons. For other ideas to help you teach the gospel to youth, refer to *Teaching, No Greater Call* (36123) and the *Teaching Guidebook* (34595).

“The Keystone of Our Religion”

Lesson

1

Purpose

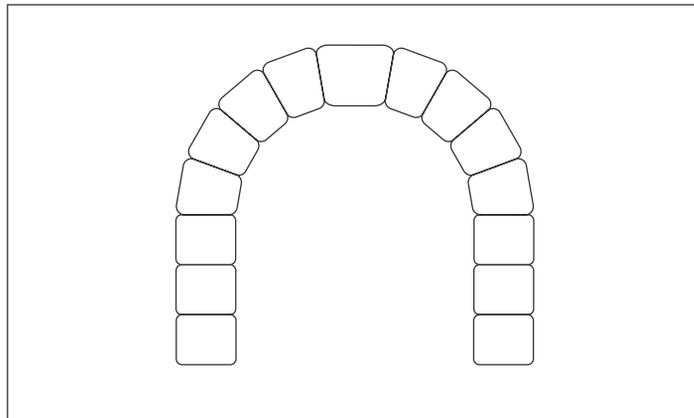
To help class members understand how the Book of Mormon is the keystone of our religion and how abiding by its precepts helps us draw nearer to God.

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures: 1 Nephi 13:38–41; 19:23; 2 Nephi 25:21–22; 27:22; 29:6–9; Mormon 8:26–41; Ether 5:2–4; Moroni 1:4; 10:3–5; Doctrine and Covenants 10:45–46; 20:8–12; 84:54–58. Also study the introductory material to the Book of Mormon, including the title page, the introduction, the Testimony of Three Witnesses, the Testimony of Eight Witnesses, and the Testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith.
 2. Additional reading: “The Book of Mormon—Keystone of Our Religion” (Ezra Taft Benson, *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 4–7; see also Conference Report, Oct. 1986, 3–7).
 3. Obtain a copy of the *Book of Mormon Class Member Study Guide* (35684) for each class member. (You should receive copies from the Sunday School presidency.)
 4. In advance, ask one class member to prepare to summarize the Testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith, another to prepare to summarize the Testimony of Three Witnesses, and a third to prepare to summarize the Testimony of Eight Witnesses.
 5. If the following materials are available, prepare to use them during the lesson:
 - a. The pictures *Moroni Appears to Joseph Smith in His Room* (62492; Gospel Art Picture Kit 404) and *Joseph Smith Receives the Gold Plates* (62012; Gospel Art Picture Kit 406).
 - b. “For Our Day,” a four-minute segment of *Book of Mormon Video Presentations* (53911).
-

Suggestions for Lesson Development

Attention Activity As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.
Draw a stone arch on the chalkboard:



Explain that when an arch such as this one is constructed correctly, it can remain standing even without any mortar between the stones.

- What holds the arch together?

Write the word *keystone* on the center stone of the arch. Explain that the keystone of an arch holds the other stones in place. This lesson discusses the keystone of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Scripture Discussion and Application

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

1. The Book of Mormon is the keystone of our religion.

Have class members turn to the introduction to the Book of Mormon, and invite a class member to read the sixth paragraph.

If you used the attention activity, write *Book of Mormon* on the chalkboard under the word *keystone*.

If you did not use the attention activity, write on the chalkboard *Book of Mormon = keystone* and explain that the keystone of an arch holds the other stones in place and prevents the arch from collapsing.

- Why do you think Joseph Smith called the Book of Mormon the keystone of our religion?

President Ezra Taft Benson explained, "Just as the arch crumbles if the keystone is removed, so does all the Church stand or fall with the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1986, 5; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 6).

- Why does the Church "stand or fall with the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon"?

After discussing this question, have a class member read the following statement by President Benson: "There are three ways in which the Book of Mormon is the keystone of our religion. It is the keystone in our witness of Christ. It is the keystone of our doctrine. It is the keystone of testimony" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1986, 4; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 5).

Write on the chalkboard *Witness of Christ*.

- Have class members turn to the title page of the Book of Mormon, and explain that this page was written by the prophet Moroni. According to the second paragraph, what are three purposes of the Book of Mormon? (To show the remnant of the house of Israel the great things the Lord has done for their fathers; to teach the covenants required by the Lord; and to convince all people that Jesus is the Christ, manifesting Himself to all nations.)
- In 1982 the subtitle *Another Testament of Jesus Christ* was added to the title of the Book of Mormon. Why is it important to have this additional testament of the Savior? (See 1 Nephi 13:38–41; 2 Nephi 29:6–9.) Why is it important to declare to the world that the Book of Mormon testifies of Christ?

- What have you learned from the Book of Mormon about Jesus Christ? How has the Book of Mormon strengthened your testimony of Jesus Christ?

Write on the chalkboard *Doctrine*.

- In what ways is the Book of Mormon the “keystone of our doctrine”? (See D&C 10:45–46; 20:8–12.)

President Benson stated: “The Lord Himself has stated that the Book of Mormon contains the ‘fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ’ (D&C 20:9). That does not mean it contains every teaching, every doctrine ever revealed. Rather, it means that in the Book of Mormon we will find the fulness of those doctrines required for our salvation. And they are taught plainly and simply so that even children can learn the ways of salvation and exaltation” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1986, 4; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 6).

- How has the Book of Mormon increased your understanding of important gospel doctrines?

Write on the chalkboard *Testimony*.

- Why is the Book of Mormon fundamental to a testimony of the restored gospel?
- What blessings come to those who receive a testimony of the Book of Mormon and follow its teachings? What must we do to gain a testimony of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon? (See Moroni 10:3–5.)

Invite class members to talk about how they came to know that the Book of Mormon is true.

2. Many witnesses have testified of the Book of Mormon.

If you are using the pictures of Moroni appearing to Joseph Smith and of Joseph Smith receiving the gold plates, display them now. Have the assigned class member summarize the events recorded in the Testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith. Then explain that after Joseph Smith had finished translating the Book of Mormon, other people were privileged to see the plates. Have the assigned class members present their summaries of the Testimony of the Three Witnesses and the Testimony of the Eight Witnesses.

- Why was it important to have witnesses of the gold plates? (See Ether 5:2–4.) How do you think having additional witnesses helped the Prophet Joseph Smith?
- What other witnesses do we have that the Book of Mormon is true?

If you are using the video presentation “For Our Day,” show it now.

3. The Book of Mormon was written for our day.

Point out that although the Book of Mormon is an ancient document, it was written and preserved for our day (2 Nephi 25:21–22; 27:22; Mormon 8:34–35; Moroni 1:4).

- Read with class members Mormon 8:26–41. Explain that these verses contain a prophecy about the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. What conditions did Moroni foresee would exist in the world when the Book of Mormon was

again brought forth? (Write class members' responses on the chalkboard. Answers may include those in the list below.) How are these conditions evident in the world today?

- a. "The power of God shall be denied" (verse 28).
 - b. "There shall be great pollutions upon the face of the earth" (verse 31).
 - c. People will "lift themselves up in the pride of their hearts" (verse 36).
 - d. People will "love money . . . more than [they] love the poor and the needy" (verse 37).
 - e. People will be "ashamed to take upon [themselves] the name of Christ" (verse 38).
- In what ways can the teachings of ancient prophets be a source of help to us? How might knowing that the Book of Mormon was written for our day influence the way we study it? (See 1 Nephi 19:23.)

President Benson taught: "The Book of Mormon . . . was written for our day. The Nephites never had the book; neither did the Lamanites of ancient times. It was meant for us. . . . Each of the major writers of the Book of Mormon testified that he wrote for future generations. . . . If they saw our day and chose those things which would be of greatest worth to us, is not that how we should study the Book of Mormon? We should constantly ask ourselves, 'Why did the Lord inspire Mormon (or Moroni or Alma) to include that in his record? What lesson can I learn from that to help me live in this day and age?'" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1986, 5; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 6).

4. The Book of Mormon can bring us nearer to God.

Have a class member again read the sixth paragraph of the introduction to the Book of Mormon.

- What are precepts? (Commandments or principles.) How can the precepts of the Book of Mormon bring us nearer to God?
- If we do not study the Book of Mormon, what will be the consequences to us, individually and as a church? (See D&C 84:54–58.)
- What changes and blessings have come into your life when you have studied and pondered the Book of Mormon regularly?

Conclusion

Read or have a class member read the following statement by President Ezra Taft Benson:

"The moment you begin a serious study of [the Book of Mormon, you] will find greater power to resist temptation. You will find the power to avoid deception. You will find the power to stay on the strait and narrow path. . . . When you begin to hunger and thirst after those words, you will find life in greater and greater abundance" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1986, 6; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 7).

Encourage class members to experience the fulfillment of these promises for themselves by studying the Book of Mormon this year.

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

Give each class member a study guide. Encourage class members to use these study guides as they study the scriptures in preparation for class each week.

Additional Teaching Ideas

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

1. The importance of the Book of Mormon in the Restoration of the gospel

List the following phrases on the chalkboard without the accompanying numbers:

- | |
|--|
| <p>6. Temple work for the dead begins.</p> <p>3. The Melchizedek Priesthood is restored.</p> <p>5. Apostles are called.</p> <p>1. Joseph Smith receives the First Vision.</p> <p>4. The Church is organized.</p> <p>2. The Book of Mormon is translated.</p> |
|--|

Ask class members to identify the order in which these events occurred (the numbers to the left of the events indicate their correct order; add these numbers to the chalkboard as class members identify the proper order of events). Then read or have a class member read the following comment by President Ezra Taft Benson:

“A . . . powerful testimony to the importance of the Book of Mormon is to note where the Lord placed its coming forth in the timetable of the unfolding Restoration. The only thing that preceded it was the First Vision. . . .

“Think of that in terms of what it implies. The coming forth of the Book of Mormon preceded the restoration of the priesthood. It was published just a few days before the Church was organized. The Saints were given the Book of Mormon to read before they were given the revelations outlining such great doctrines as the three degrees of glory, celestial marriage, or work for the dead. It came before priesthood quorums and Church organization. Doesn’t this tell us something about how the Lord views this sacred work?” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1986, 3; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 4).

2. Sharing the Book of Mormon

Consult with the bishopric and the ward mission leader about how members can obtain copies of the Book of Mormon to share with nonmember friends and acquaintances.

In class, suggest that a class goal this year should be to share the Book of Mormon with nonmember friends and acquaintances. Explain to class members how they may obtain copies of the Book of Mormon, and encourage each class member to give a copy to at least one friend or acquaintance during the year.

Several times during the year, as the Spirit directs, ask class members if any of them have yet shared a copy of the Book of Mormon. Invite class members who have done this to briefly describe the experience. Continue to encourage class members to share the Book of Mormon with others.

Lesson
2

“All Things According to His Will”

1 Nephi 1–7

Purpose

To help class members see, through the examples of Lehi and Nephi, that safety and salvation come through obedience to the Lord.

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. 1 Nephi 1–2. Lehi learns in a vision that Jerusalem will be destroyed. He warns the people to repent, but they reject him and seek his life. The Lord tells Lehi to take his family and leave Jerusalem. Lehi and his family depart into the wilderness.
 - b. 1 Nephi 3–4. Nephi and his brothers return to Jerusalem to obtain the plates of brass from Laban.
 - c. 1 Nephi 5. Nephi and his brothers bring the plates back to their family. These plates enable Lehi’s family to preserve for their descendants their language, their genealogy, and the teachings and commandments of God.
 - d. 1 Nephi 7. Nephi and his brothers return to Jerusalem to persuade Ishmael and his family to join them in the wilderness.
 2. Additional reading: Mosiah 1:3–7; Alma 3:11–12.
 3. In advance, ask a class member to prepare to summarize the efforts of Nephi and his brothers to obtain the brass plates from Laban (1 Nephi 3:9–4:38).
 4. If the following materials are available, prepare to use them during the lesson:
 - a. The pictures Lehi Prophesying to the People of Jerusalem (62517; Gospel Art Picture Kit 300) and Lehi’s Family Leaving Jerusalem (62238; Gospel Art Picture Kit 301).
 - b. A pen or pencil and a piece of paper for each class member.
 5. Before class begins, list on the chalkboard the headings and scripture references used in the chart on page 8.
-

Suggestions for Lesson Development

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

Ask class members to imagine that they have just learned that the city where they live is going to be destroyed and they must leave immediately.

- How would you feel about this news? What would you do?
- Would it make a difference in how you felt and what you did if you knew that this information had come through a prophet of God?

Explain that this lesson is about Lehi and his family, who left their home in Jerusalem because the city was soon to be destroyed. The lesson will discuss where they went and what they did after departing from Jerusalem.

Scripture Discussion and Application

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

1. Lehi leaves Jerusalem and takes his family into the wilderness.

Discuss 1 Nephi 1–2. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud.

- One of the first events described in the Book of Mormon is the departure from Jerusalem of Lehi and his family. What circumstances led to this departure? (See 1 Nephi 1:4–15, 18–20; 2:1–3. If you are using the picture of Lehi prophesying, display it now.)
- Why did the people of Jerusalem reject the message of Lehi and other prophets? (See 1 Nephi 1:19–20; 2:12–13; 16:1–2.) Why do some people today rebel against the Lord and His servants? How did Nephi respond to his father's message? (See 1 Nephi 2:16, 19.) What can we learn from Nephi about how to make our hearts more receptive to the teachings of the prophets?
- What did the Lord promise Nephi if he would obey the commandments? (See 1 Nephi 2:19–20, 22.) What did the Lord promise would happen to Laman and Lemuel if they rebelled? (See 1 Nephi 2:21, 23–24.) How does each of these promises apply to us?
- Into what kind of country did Lehi take his family when they left Jerusalem? (See 1 Nephi 2:2. If you are using the picture of Lehi's family leaving Jerusalem, display it now.) What did they leave behind as they departed? (See 1 Nephi 2:4.) How do you think Lehi's family felt having to leave their home, possessions, and friends? What sacrifices have you made to be obedient to the Lord? How have you been blessed as you have made such sacrifices?
- After three days in the wilderness, Lehi built an altar and gave thanks to the Lord (1 Nephi 2:6–7; see also 1 Nephi 5:9; 7:22). How can we develop feelings of gratitude even in difficult circumstances?
- What important blessings resulted from Lehi's obeying the Lord and leaving Jerusalem? (Write class members' answers on the chalkboard. Answers may include that Lehi's and Ishmael's families were saved from destruction; a branch of Israel was guided to the promised land; and the Book of Mormon, another witness of Jesus Christ, was provided.)

2. Nephi and his brothers return to Jerusalem to obtain the plates of brass.

Read and discuss selected verses from 1 Nephi 3–4.

- Why did Lehi send his sons back to Jerusalem? (See 1 Nephi 3:1–4.) How did Laman and Lemuel respond to being sent back? (See 1 Nephi 3:5.) How did Nephi respond? (See 1 Nephi 3:7.) If you had been asked to make this trip, how do you think you might have responded? What difference would it have made to know that the Lord had asked it of you?
- Why did Lehi's family need to obtain the brass plates? (See 1 Nephi 3:3, 19–20; 4:15–16; see also 1 Nephi 5:21–22; Mosiah 1:3–7.)

Have the assigned class member summarize the efforts of Nephi and his brothers to obtain the plates (1 Nephi 3:9–4:38).

- What are some situations in which we might need to be “led by the Spirit, not knowing beforehand the things which [we] should do”? (1 Nephi 4:6). What can we learn from Nephi’s words: “Nevertheless I went forth”? (1 Nephi 4:7).
- Why was Nephi reluctant to kill Laban? (See 1 Nephi 4:10.) How did Nephi become convinced that he should kill Laban? (See 1 Nephi 4:11–18.)
- Have a class member read 1 Nephi 3:7 aloud. How did the Lord “prepare a way” for Nephi to do what he had been commanded to do? How has the Lord prepared ways for you to keep His commandments?
- Why did Nephi and his brothers want Zoram to return to the wilderness with them? (See 1 Nephi 4:35–36.) What persuaded Zoram to accompany Nephi and his brothers? (See 1 Nephi 4:31–34. Explain that among the people in Lehi’s time, an oath was sacred. Zoram knew that Nephi would never break his oath.) Why is it important that we be known as people who keep our word?

Point out that although Laman and Lemuel obeyed their father by going into the wilderness and then returning to Jerusalem for the brass plates, they murmured and rebelled repeatedly during the family’s journeyings. Nephi and Sam, on the other hand, were faithful and obedient throughout their experiences. You may want to explain that while Sam is not often mentioned, the scriptures indicate that he was faithful and obedient, as Nephi was (1 Nephi 2:17; 8:3).

Invite half of the class members to read the scripture passages listed on the chalkboard under “Nephi.” Have them look for words or phrases that characterize Nephi. Invite the other class members to read the other passages, looking for words or phrases that characterize Laman and Lemuel. You may want to give each class member a piece of paper and a pen or pencil for making notes as they read. Then have class members report on what they have found. Write on the chalkboard a brief comment on the content of each verse (examples are given in the chart below; you do not need to use the exact wording given).

NEPHI	LAMAN AND LEMUEL
1:1 Knew he had “goodly parents”	2:11 Murmured against their father
2:16 Believed all the words spoken by his father	2:13 Did not believe all Lehi’s words
2:16, 19 Went to the Lord for understanding	2:12 “Knew not the dealings of . . . God”
3:7 Was willing to go and do what the Lord commanded	3:5 Complained that the Lord had asked “a hard thing”
3:15 Refused to return without records	3:14 Wanted to give up after one try
4:1, 3 Knew that the Lord was “mightier than Laban”	3:31 Doubted that the Lord could deliver Laban to them

When the chart is complete, discuss the following questions:

- How did Nephi show strong and abiding faith? How can we follow his example?
- Why did Laman and Lemuel murmur and rebel? (See 1 Nephi 2:11–12.) Why were they unable to know the dealings of God? (See 1 Nephi 2:18.)

3. Nephi and his brothers bring the brass plates to their family.

Read and discuss selected verses from 1 Nephi 5.

- How did Lehi and Sariah react when their four sons finally returned with the brass plates? (See 1 Nephi 5:1–9.) How did their return strengthen Sariah’s testimony? (See 1 Nephi 5:8.)
- What did the brass plates contain? (See 1 Nephi 5:10–16; 13:23. They included the five books of Moses, a record of the Jews down to King Zedekiah [about 600 B.C.], prophecies of the holy prophets, and the genealogy of Lehi’s family.)
- What prophecies did Lehi make about the brass plates? (See 1 Nephi 5:17–19.) How are these prophecies being fulfilled?

4. Nephi and his brothers return to Jerusalem for Ishmael and his family.

Read and discuss selected verses from 1 Nephi 7.

- Why did Nephi and his brothers return again to Jerusalem soon after bringing back the brass plates? (See 1 Nephi 7:1–2.) How were Ishmael and his family persuaded to join Lehi’s family? (See 1 Nephi 7:4–5.)
- Why did Laman and Lemuel and some of the children of Ishmael rebel during their journey in the wilderness? (See 1 Nephi 7:6–7.) Why do you think they wanted to return to Jerusalem? What did Nephi say would happen if they continued in the wilderness and were faithful to the Lord? (See 1 Nephi 7:13.) What did he say would happen if they returned to stay in Jerusalem? (See 1 Nephi 7:13–15.)
- What qualities did Nephi exhibit in his dealings with his brothers? (See 1 Nephi 2:17–18 and 7:21 for some examples.) How can we demonstrate these qualities in our relationships with our family members and others?

Conclusion

Remind class members that because of Lehi’s and Nephi’s willing obedience, millions of people have been blessed. Encourage class members to always “go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded” (1 Nephi 3:7).

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

Additional Teaching Ideas

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

1. “Born of goodly parents” (1 Nephi 1:1)

- What are some responsibilities of “goodly parents” for their children? (See 1 Nephi 1:1.) What can parents learn from Lehi and Sariah about how to fulfill these responsibilities?

2. Everyone experiences adversity

List the following words on the chalkboard: *spiritual, valiant, worried, strong, joyful, faithful, sad, trusting, disheartened, diligent, patient, charitable.*

Have class members decide which of these words describe Nephi. Circle the words they choose, and have them relate brief incidents about Nephi that illustrate the character traits they selected.

Then explain that *all* of the words describe Nephi at various times in his life. Emphasize that Nephi was a faithful person and is remembered for his devotion in obeying the commandments. But even Nephi occasionally became worried, disheartened, and sad. Point out that we often think of the prophets and other Church leaders as having only positive experiences and never having struggles. However, like us, they also face adversity and afflictions.

- How can it help us to know that prophets and other Church leaders also have trials?
- Although Nephi had “seen many afflictions in the course of [his] days,” he knew he had “been highly favored of the Lord” (1 Nephi 1:1). How is it possible to have many afflictions and still be favored of the Lord? How can afflictions help us receive blessings? (Invite class members to ponder this question silently if they do not want to share their responses with the class.)

3. Contents of Nephi’s record

- 1 Nephi 6 contains Nephi’s explanation of what he would write in his record. What did Nephi say was his purpose in keeping a record? (See 1 Nephi 6:3–4. Note that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is Jesus Christ.) How have Nephi’s writings helped you come unto Christ?

Encourage class members to write their testimonies, as well as other spiritual experiences, thoughts, and feelings, in their journals.

The Vision of the Tree of Life

Lesson 3

1 Nephi 8–11; 12:16–18; 15

Purpose To help class members understand the symbols in the vision of the tree of life and the application of these symbols in their lives.

Preparation Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures: 1 Nephi 8–11; 12:16–18; 15.

Suggestions for Lesson Development

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

Explain that many symbolic dreams and visions are recorded in the scriptures. Then share the following examples and ask class members to explain the meaning of each symbol:

- a. King Nebuchadnezzar dreamed of a large image, or statue, of a man. Each part of the man's body was made of a different material. A stone destroyed the image and became a mountain, filling the whole earth. (See Daniel 2:31–45; see also D&C 65:2. The various parts of the image represented kingdoms that have reigned on the earth. The stone represented the kingdom of God, which would consume all other kingdoms in the latter days.)
- b. Pharaoh dreamed of seven lean and ill cattle devouring seven fat and healthy cattle and seven poor ears of corn devouring seven good ears of corn. (See Genesis 41:17–31. The seven healthy cattle and seven good ears of corn represented seven years of prosperity that would come to Egypt. The seven ill cattle and seven poor ears of corn represented seven years of famine that would follow the years of plenty.)
- c. In a vision, the Apostle Peter saw unclean animals lowered from heaven in a great sheet, and he was commanded to kill and eat these animals. (See Acts 10:9–16, 28, 34–35. The unclean animals represented the Gentiles, who were now to be taught the gospel.)

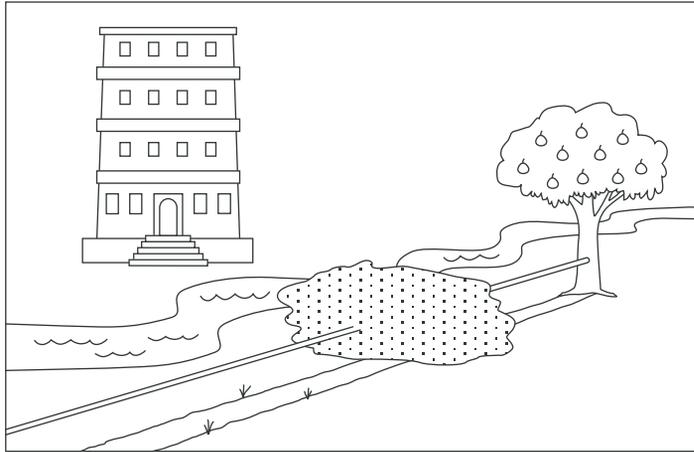
Explain that today's lesson discusses another symbolic dream described in the scriptures: the vision of the tree of life received by Lehi and Nephi. Unlike the many dreams or visions that have application only to specific people or at a specific time (like Pharaoh's dream of the cattle and corn), the vision of the tree of life applies to each of God's children.

Scripture Discussion and Application As you teach the following scripture accounts, discuss how the symbols they contain can be applied in our daily lives. Encourage class members to share appropriate experiences that relate to the principles illustrated by these symbols.

1. The symbols in the vision of the tree of life

Explain that Lehi received a vision and told his family about it (1 Nephi 8:2). After Nephi heard his father speak about the things in the vision, he also wanted to “see, and hear, and know of [those] things” (1 Nephi 10:17; see also the first additional teaching idea). Because of Nephi’s belief in Jesus Christ, his request was granted (1 Nephi 11:6). It is through Nephi’s record of his experience that we know the interpretation of the vision.

Discuss the vision of the tree of life. As you discuss what Lehi and Nephi saw, draw (or have one or more class members draw) the major elements of the vision on the chalkboard. The finished drawing should look something like this:



The tree of life and its fruit

Have a class member read 1 Nephi 8:2–10. Then draw (or have a class member draw) the tree and its fruit on the chalkboard.

- When Nephi was shown the tree of life, he asked to know its interpretation (1 Nephi 11:8–11). What did he learn that the tree represents? (See 1 Nephi 11:21–25.) What did Nephi see that helped him better understand God’s love? (See 1 Nephi 11:13–21, 24, 26–33. He saw the birth, ministry, and Atonement of Jesus Christ.)

Have a class member read John 3:16 aloud. Emphasize that Heavenly Father showed the depth of His love for us when He “gave his only begotten Son.” The Atonement is evidence of Jesus Christ’s great love for us.

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland taught that the tree of life is a symbol of Jesus Christ. He said: “The images of Christ and the tree [are] inextricably linked. . . . At the very outset of the Book of Mormon, . . . Christ is portrayed as the source of eternal life and joy, the living evidence of divine love, and the means whereby God will fulfill his covenant with the house of Israel and indeed the entire family of man, returning them all to their eternal promises” (*Christ and the New Covenant* [1997], 160, 162).

- What influence does the love of God have in our lives? How can we more fully recognize God’s love for us?
- What did the fruit of the tree represent? (See 1 Nephi 15:36; D&C 14:7.)

- How did Lehi and Nephi describe the tree of life and its fruit? (Have class members look in the appropriate verses to find the phrases listed below. Write the phrases on the chalkboard as class members find them. Abbreviate the phrases as necessary.)
 - a. “Most sweet, above all that I ever before tasted” (1 Nephi 8:11)
 - b. “White, to exceed all . . . whiteness” (1 Nephi 8:11; see also 1 Nephi 11:8)
 - c. “Desirable above all other fruit” (1 Nephi 8:12; see also 1 Nephi 15:36)
 - d. Having “beauty . . . exceeding of all beauty” (1 Nephi 11:8)
 - e. “Precious above all”; “most precious” (1 Nephi 11:9; 15:36)
 - f. “Most joyous to the soul” (1 Nephi 11:23; see also 1 Nephi 8:10)
 - g. “The greatest of all the gifts of God” (1 Nephi 15:36)

Emphasize that eternal life is the “most sweet” and “most precious” blessing we can receive. Because of God’s love for us, this blessing is available to us through the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

- In the vision, what did Lehi desire once he had partaken of the fruit of the tree? (See 1 Nephi 8:12.) How can we help our loved ones draw nearer to the Savior and receive the promise of eternal life?

The rod of iron

Have a class member read 1 Nephi 8:19–20. Then draw (or have a class member draw) the rod of iron and the path leading to the tree.

- What did the rod of iron represent? (See 1 Nephi 11:25; 15:23–24.) Where can we find the word of God? (In the scriptures, the teachings of latter-day prophets, and the promptings of the Holy Ghost.) How does the word of God help us come unto Christ? How does it keep us on the path to eternal life?

The river of filthy water, the mist of darkness, and the great and spacious building

Have a class member read 1 Nephi 8:13, 23, 26–27. Then draw (or have a class member draw) the river, the mist of darkness, and the great and spacious building.

- What did the river of filthy water represent? (See 1 Nephi 12:16; 15:26–29.)
- What did the mist of darkness represent? (See 1 Nephi 12:17.) What are the effects of the mist of darkness? (See 1 Nephi 8:23; 12:17.) Why might Satan want our eyes to be blinded to the love of God? to the Atonement of Jesus Christ? to the word of God? In what ways does Satan try to blind our eyes?
- The rod of iron “extended along the bank of the river” (1 Nephi 8:19), serving as a protection between the strait and narrow path and the filthy water. It also gave the people in the vision something to cling to when they were in the mist of darkness (1 Nephi 8:24, 30). What does this teach about how the word of God can help us?
- What did the great and spacious building represent? (See 1 Nephi 11:34–36; 12:18.) Why is it significant that the building “stood . . . in the air”? (See 1 Nephi 8:26. Note that the building did not have a solid foundation.) How can pride keep a person from receiving eternal life?
- Some people in the vision tasted of the fruit but were ashamed because the people in the great and spacious building mocked them (1 Nephi 8:26–28). How can we receive strength to withstand persecution?

2. The people in the vision of the tree of life

Explain that in the vision, Lehi saw “numberless concourses of people” (1 Nephi 8:21). These people can be divided into four categories based on their actions in seeking the tree and the fruit. Help class members identify and describe these four categories, using the passages listed below. (You may want to divide class members into four groups and have each group read one passage and then describe the actions of the people mentioned in that passage.)

- a. 1 Nephi 8:21–23. (Those who start on the path but then become lost in the mist of darkness.)
 - b. 1 Nephi 8:24–28. (Those who hold to the rod of iron until they reach the tree and partake of the fruit, but then become ashamed and fall away.)
 - c. 1 Nephi 8:30. (Those who hold to the rod of iron until they reach the tree and partake of the fruit, and who then remain faithful.)
 - d. 1 Nephi 8:31–33. (Those who never start on the path but instead go directly toward the great and spacious building.)
- How are these categories manifest in the world today? (For example, people who say that they want eternal life but are distracted by other things, such as material wealth or worldly pleasures, are like those who start on the path but then become lost.)
 - In the vision, what kinds of roads did people travel when they let go of the iron rod or left the tree of life? (See 1 Nephi 8:28, 32; 12:17.) What happens to those who follow such roads? If we are moving toward “forbidden,” “strange,” or “broad” roads, how can we return to the strait and narrow path?
 - What are some things we must do to stay on the strait and narrow path? How can we help others stay on the path?

Conclusion

Suggest that class members mark the following words in their scriptures: *commence* (1 Nephi 8:22), *caught hold* (1 Nephi 8:24), *clinging* (1 Nephi 8:24), and *continually* (1 Nephi 8:30). Point out that these words help us understand what we must do to reach the tree of life: we must commence in the strait and narrow path, catch hold of the rod of iron and cling to it, and continue moving toward the tree.

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

Additional Teaching Ideas

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

1. “He that diligently seeketh shall find” (1 Nephi 10:19)

- What did Nephi desire after he heard about his father’s vision? (See 1 Nephi 10:17.) What did he do to have this desire fulfilled? (See 1 Nephi 10:17–19; 11:1–6.) How can Nephi’s example help us as we seek to understand gospel truths? (Ask class members to share experiences in which the Holy Ghost has helped them understand gospel truths.)
- In what ways did Laman and Lemuel’s response to their father’s vision differ from Nephi’s response? (See 1 Nephi 15:1–2.) Why were Laman and Lemuel unable to understand the truths Lehi had taught them? (See 1 Nephi 15:3, 8–11.)

2. “Knowest thou the condescension of God?” (1 Nephi 11:16)

To help class members understand the phrase “condescension of God” (1 Nephi 11:16, 26), explain that in this phrase the word *condescension* means coming down voluntarily to a lower level. Then share the following statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie:

“The condescension of God (meaning the Father) consists in the fact that . . . he became the personal and literal Father of a mortal Offspring born of mortal woman. And the condescension of God (meaning the Son) consists in the fact that . . . he [Jesus Christ] submitted to all the trials of mortality, suffering ‘temptations, and pain of body, hunger, thirst, and fatigue, even more than man can suffer, except it be unto death’ (Mosiah 3:5–8), finally being put to death in a most ignominious manner” (*Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. [1966], 155).

3. “And they were in the attitude of mocking” (1 Nephi 8:27)

As class members discuss the great and spacious building, point out that the people in the building had an “attitude of mocking.” This mocking led some who had partaken of the fruit to be ashamed and fall away (1 Nephi 8:27–28).

- In what ways might our attitudes toward others lead them to fall away?

Emphasize that accountable individuals are responsible for their own actions; however, our attitude toward others can either strengthen them in their righteous efforts or discourage them. Encourage class members to strengthen each other and to never mock or belittle others.

4. Hymn

With class members, sing or read the words to “The Iron Rod” (*Hymns*, no. 274).

“The Things Which I Saw While I Was Carried Away in the Spirit”

1 Nephi 12–14

Purpose

To help class members understand Nephi’s vision of the future and how the warnings and promises in it apply to us today.

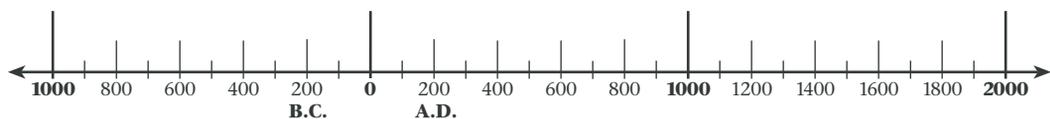
Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. 1 Nephi 12. Nephi sees in vision his descendants and the descendants of his brothers. He sees them war against each other and sees the wicked destroyed before the visit of the Savior. He sees them live righteously for a time following the visit of the Savior but then fall away into wickedness.
 - b. 1 Nephi 13. Nephi sees in vision the formation of the great and abominable church, the colonization of the Americas, the Apostasy, and the Restoration of the gospel in the last days.
 - c. 1 Nephi 14. Nephi sees in vision the blessings promised to the Gentiles who remain faithful, the cursing that will come to the Gentiles who do not remain faithful, and the ultimate victory of the Church of the Lamb of God over the great and abominable church.
2. If you use the attention activity, prepare the time line on a large piece of paper or posterboard or on the chalkboard.

Suggestions for Lesson Development

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

Refer to the following time line:



Help class members place the following events on the time line. Depending on the knowledge of class members, you could write the dates on the time line and ask class members to identify the event that happened on each date. Or you could list the events on the chalkboard and ask class members to identify when each event happened.

- a. The Crucifixion of Jesus Christ (A.D. 33)
- b. The Great Apostasy (approximately A.D. 100 through A.D. 1800)
- c. The final battle between the Lamanites and the Nephites (about A.D. 385)
- d. The discovery of the Americas by Christopher Columbus (A.D. 1492)
- e. The Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ (A.D. 1820–present)

When class members have placed the events on the time line, explain that Nephi saw these events and others in his vision of the future.

Scripture Discussion
and Application

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

1. Nephi sees the future of his descendants and his brothers' descendants.

Discuss 1 Nephi 12. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud. Explain that in 1 Nephi 12, Nephi describes his vision of the future of his seed (his descendants) and the seed of his brothers. As you discuss this chapter, note how some symbols in the vision of the tree of life (the mist of darkness, the great and spacious building, and the river of filthy water) foreshadowed the downfall of Nephi's seed.

- How did Nephi describe the conditions on the earth that would precede the Savior's visit to America? (See 1 Nephi 12:1–6.) How were these conditions similar to the conditions that will precede the Savior's Second Coming? (See Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:27–37.) How did Nephi describe the conditions that would follow the Savior's visit? (See 1 Nephi 12:11–12; see also the fulfillment of this prophecy, which is recorded in 4 Nephi 1:2–4.) What brought about this righteousness and peace? (See 4 Nephi 1:15.)
- Nephi saw that after nearly four generations of righteousness, his seed and the seed of his brethren would again begin battling each other (1 Nephi 12:12–15). What did Nephi see happening to his descendants in these battles? (See 1 Nephi 12:19–20.) Why were Nephi's descendants overpowered and destroyed? (See 1 Nephi 12:19.) How can pride and the temptations of the devil lead to destruction?

2. Nephi sees the formation of the great and abominable church, the colonization of the Americas, the Apostasy, and the Restoration of the gospel.

Read and discuss selected verses from 1 Nephi 13. Explain that 1 Nephi 13 is a record of Nephi's vision of the following:

- a. The formation of the great and abominable church.
- b. The discovery and colonization of the Americas.
- c. The Apostasy and the loss of many plain and precious parts of the Bible.
- d. The coming forth of the Book of Mormon and the Restoration of the gospel.

The formation of the great and abominable church

- What did Nephi see formed "among the nations of the Gentiles"? (See 1 Nephi 13:4–5.) Who is the founder of the great and abominable church? (See 1 Nephi 13:6.)

Elder Bruce R. McConkie said, "The titles *church of the devil* and *great and abominable church* are used to identify all churches or organizations of whatever name or nature—whether political, philosophical, educational, economic, social, fraternal, civic, or religious—which are designed to take men on a course that leads away from God and his laws and thus from salvation in the kingdom of God" (*Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. [1966], 137–38).

Emphasize that the great and abominable church is a symbol of apostasy in all its forms. It is a representation of all false doctrine, false worship, and irreligious attitudes. It does not represent any specific church in the world today.

- What are some of the characteristics of the “great and abominable church”? (See 1 Nephi 13:5–9. Answers may include that it weakens faith, desires worldly riches and sins, and seeks the praise of the world.) What symbol from the vision of the tree of life corresponds to the great and abominable church? (Compare 1 Nephi 13:5–9 with 1 Nephi 11:35–36.)
- What evidence do you see of the great and abominable church working to destroy the Saints today? How can we ensure that we are not deceived by people or organizations that lead people away from God and His laws?

The discovery and colonization of the Americas

- The Gentiles who “went forth . . . upon the many waters” are understood to be Christopher Columbus and other early explorers and settlers of the Americas (1 Nephi 13:12–13). What enabled these explorers and settlers to be successful in their endeavors? (See 1 Nephi 13:14–19.)
- What role did these early explorers and settlers play in the Restoration of the gospel? (They prepared the way for the founding of the United States of America. The Constitution of the United States established freedoms regarding religion that were necessary for the Book of Mormon to be brought forth and the gospel to be restored. See D&C 101:77–80.)

The Apostasy and the loss of many plain and precious parts of the Bible

- What was the book Nephi saw the Gentiles carrying? (See 1 Nephi 13:20–23. The Bible.) What did the great and abominable church do to this book? (See 1 Nephi 13:24–26.) Why? (See 1 Nephi 13:27.)
- What consequences have resulted from the loss of “many plain and precious things” from the Bible? (See 1 Nephi 13:29.)

The coming forth of the Book of Mormon and the Restoration of the gospel

- The Lord knew that the great and abominable church would try to destroy the word of God in the Bible. How did He ensure that His words would be preserved to come forth in the latter days? (See 1 Nephi 13:35–36.) What is this record that was kept by Nephi’s seed? (The Book of Mormon.)
- What are the purposes of the Book of Mormon? (See 1 Nephi 13:40–41; see also Mormon 7:8–9; D&C 20:8–12. You may want to list class members’ responses on the chalkboard.) How have you seen these purposes fulfilled?
- What are some doctrines that are difficult to understand in the Bible but plain and precious in the Book of Mormon? (Answers may include the Atonement, resurrection, and baptism. You may want to share examples of how these doctrines are taught clearly in the Book of Mormon. For example, you could have class members read Alma 11:42–45, which teaches plain and precious truths about the Atonement and resurrection, or 3 Nephi 11:21–26 and Moroni 8:11–12, which teach plain and precious truths about baptism.) How has the Book of Mormon helped make the Bible more understandable to you or increased your testimony of the Bible?

3. Nephi sees the blessings promised to the faithful; he also sees the destruction of the great and abominable church.

Read and discuss selected verses from 1 Nephi 14.

Divide the class into two groups. Have one group search 1 Nephi 14:1–7 to find the blessings promised to the Gentiles (non-Israelites) if they remain faithful to the Lord. Have the other group read the same verses to find the cursings promised to the Gentiles if they harden their hearts and turn away from the Lord. List these items on the chalkboard. Then ask:

- What must we do to soften our hearts so that we can receive these blessings?
- In what sense are there only two forces in the world today? (See 1 Nephi 14:10; 2 Nephi 10:16.)
- What will eventually happen to the great and abominable church? (See 1 Nephi 14:3–4, 15–17; 22:23.)
- Nephi saw that even though the members of the Lord’s Church in the last days would be comparatively few, they would be able to overcome the persecution of the great and abominable church. What did Nephi see the Saints of God armed with? (See 1 Nephi 14:14.) How can we be “armed with righteousness and with the power of God”?

Conclusion

Explain that Nephi’s vision provides an overview of much that has occurred and will yet occur in the history of the earth. It also shows us that we must choose between only two options: following Jesus Christ or working against Him and thus following Satan. Remind class members that the blessings promised in 1 Nephi 14 are available to all of us if we choose to follow Jesus Christ.

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

Lesson
5

“Hearken to the Truth, and Give Heed unto It”

1 Nephi 16–22

Purpose To inspire class members to follow Nephi’s example of faith and willing obedience.

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. 1 Nephi 16; 17:1–3. Lehi’s sons and Zoram marry Ishmael’s daughters. The Lord gives the people the Liahona, with which He guides them through the wilderness according to their faith and diligence. Nephi’s bow breaks, making it difficult to hunt for food. Everyone murmurs except Nephi, who makes a new bow, asks Lehi where to go for food, and brings food to the people.
 - b. 1 Nephi 17:4–55; 18:1–4. Nephi demonstrates unwavering faith by obeying the Lord’s command to build a ship.
 - c. 1 Nephi 18:5–25. Laman, Lemuel, the sons of Ishmael, and their wives join in rebellion on the ship. Laman and Lemuel bind Nephi, who demonstrates courage and gratitude despite this trial. The Lord sends a great tempest. Laman and Lemuel loose Nephi, who guides the ship to the promised land.
2. Additional reading: Alma 37:38–46.
3. Speak with three class members in advance, asking each of them to prepare to summarize one of the scripture accounts listed below. Ask them to report on the events described in the accounts rather than doctrine or personal application, which will be discussed in class after they give the reports.
 - a. 1 Nephi 16:9–33
 - b. 1 Nephi 17:4–55; 18:1–4
 - c. 1 Nephi 18:5–22
4. If the following materials are available, prepare to use them during the lesson:
 - a. The pictures *The Liahona* (62041; Gospel Art Picture Kit 302) and *Lehi and His People Arrive in the Promised Land* (62045; Gospel Art Picture Kit 304).
 - b. “I Will Prepare the Way,” an eight-minute segment of *Book of Mormon Video Presentations* (53911).

**Suggestions for
Lesson Development**

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

Write the following statements on the chalkboard:

I don’t want to.
I’ll think about it.
I’ll try.

Ask a class member to read 1 Nephi 3:4.

- What might have happened if Nephi had responded to the Lord's commandment with one of these statements on the chalkboard? How did Nephi respond? ("I will." See 1 Nephi 3:7.)

Erase the statements from the chalkboard, and write the statement *I WILL* in large letters. Explain that Nephi and his family were blessed as they traveled to the promised land because Nephi continued to have an "I will" attitude—he did not hesitate to obey the Lord's commandments. This lesson shows how we can follow Nephi's example of faith and willing obedience.

Scripture Discussion
and Application

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

1. The Lord guides the families of Lehi and Ishmael according to their faith and diligence.

If you are using the picture of Lehi finding the Liahona, display it now. Ask the assigned class member to summarize the events described in 1 Nephi 16:9–33. Then read and discuss selected verses from 1 Nephi 16; 17:1–3.

- The "ball, or director" that the Lord gave Lehi was called "Liahona" (Alma 37:38). What were the purposes of the Liahona? (See 1 Nephi 16:10, 29.) What did the people need to do in order for the Liahona to work? (See 1 Nephi 16:28–29; Alma 37:40.) What were the consequences when the people were unfaithful and disobedient? (See Alma 37:41–42.)
- What are some guides in our lives that, like the Liahona, work according to our faith and diligence? (Answers may include the scriptures, as explained in Alma 37:38–46; the Holy Ghost; patriarchal blessings; teachings of living prophets; and our conscience, as explained in the quotation below.) How have these guides helped you?

President Spencer W. Kimball said:

"The Lord gave to . . . every person, a conscience which tells him everytime he starts to go on the wrong path. He is always told if he is listening; but people can, of course, become so used to hearing the messages that they ignore them until finally they do not register anymore.

"You must realize that you have something like the compass, like the Liahona, in your own system. Every child is given it. . . . If he ignores the Liahona that he has in his own makeup, he eventually may not have it whispering to him. . . . Our ship will not get on the wrong course . . . if we listen to the dictates of our own Liahona, which we call the conscience" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1976, 117; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1976, 79).

- How did Laman and Lemuel react when Nephi broke his bow? (See 1 Nephi 16:18, 20.) How did Lehi react? (See 1 Nephi 16:20.) How did Nephi react? (See 1 Nephi 16:22–23.) What can we learn from Nephi's response to this challenge that can help us when we face challenges? (Answers may include

that we should trust in the Lord, work diligently to overcome the challenges, and avoid complaining against the Lord and His servants.)

- After Nephi made a new bow, he asked Lehi where to go to obtain food (1 Nephi 16:23). How did Lehi respond to his son's request? (See 1 Nephi 16:24–25.) What was the result of Lehi's humbling himself and turning to the Lord? (See 1 Nephi 16:26–32.) What can we learn from the Lord's dealings with Lehi in this instance? (Answers may include that the Lord will forgive and bless us when we humble ourselves and turn to Him.)
- Speaking of the Liahona, Nephi observed that "by small means the Lord can bring about great things" (1 Nephi 16:29; see also Alma 37:6–7; D&C 64:33). In your life, how have you seen that this is true? How can the knowledge of this principle help us?

2. Nephi demonstrates unwavering faith by fulfilling the Lord's command to build a ship.

Ask the assigned class member to summarize the events described in 1 Nephi 17:4–55; 18:1–4. Then read and discuss selected verses from those passages.

- What can we learn from Nephi's actions in response to the Lord's command to build a ship? (See 1 Nephi 17:8–11, 16–19, 50–51; 18:1–3; see also James 2:17–18.)

Elder L. Tom Perry said: "This is one of the more interesting stories we have in the scriptures because it tells of an instance in which the Lord provided help but then stepped aside to allow one of His sons to exercise his own initiative. I have sometimes wondered what would have happened if Nephi had asked the Lord for tools instead of a place to find the ore to make the tools. I doubt the Lord would have honored Nephi's request. You see, the Lord knew that Nephi could make the tools, and it is seldom the Lord will do something for us that we can do for ourselves" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1991, 87–88; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1991, 64).

If you are using the video presentation "I Will Prepare the Way," show it now. After you have shown it, discuss how the Lord prepared the way for Susan, the main character, to share the gospel. Help class members see that they, like Nephi and Susan, can find strength in the Lord's promise: "I will prepare the way before you, if it so be that ye shall keep my commandments" (1 Nephi 17:13).

- What was Laman and Lemuel's reaction when they saw that Nephi was about to build a ship? (See 1 Nephi 17:17–22.) Nephi rebuked them by reminding them of the Israelites' exodus from Egypt. How was the exodus of Lehi and his family similar to the exodus of Moses and the Israelites? (See 1 Nephi 17:23–44.)
- Nephi told Laman and Lemuel that they "were past feeling, that [they] could not feel [the Lord's] words" (1 Nephi 17:45). What does it mean to feel the words of the Lord? (See the quotation below.) What causes people to become "past feeling"? How can we prepare ourselves to feel the words of the Lord?

Elder Boyd K. Packer taught: "The Holy Ghost communicates with the spirit through the mind more than through the physical senses. This guidance comes as thoughts, as feelings, through impressions and promptings. It is not always

easy to describe inspiration. The scriptures teach us that we may ‘feel’ the words of spiritual communication more than hear them, and see with spiritual rather than with mortal eyes (see 1 Nephi 17:45)” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1989, 16; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1989, 14).

- What consequence do people face when they, like Laman and Lemuel, harden their hearts against the truth? (See 1 Nephi 17:46–47.)
- Nephi urged his brothers not to murmur against their father (1 Nephi 17:49). How does murmuring affect our families? How can we overcome the practice of backbiting and speaking against family members?
- Nephi continued to pray for guidance as he built the ship (1 Nephi 18:1–3). How did the Lord answer his prayers? (See 1 Nephi 18:1, 3–4.) Why is it important for us to seek the Lord often in prayer?

3. Laman and Lemuel bind Nephi, who shows courage and gratitude despite this trial. After they free him, he guides the ship to the promised land.

Ask the assigned class member to summarize the events described in 1 Nephi 18:5–22. Then read and discuss selected verses from 1 Nephi 18:5–25.

- As they sailed toward the promised land, Laman, Lemuel, the sons of Ishmael, and their wives “began to make themselves merry” (1 Nephi 18:9). What was Nephi’s response to their actions? (See 1 Nephi 18:10.) What was wrong with this merrymaking? (See 1 Nephi 18:9. They forgot the Lord and acted with rudeness. You may want to contrast this verse with D&C 136:28.)
- What was the only thing that would convince Laman and Lemuel to release Nephi? (See 1 Nephi 18:15–20.) Laman and Lemuel became more hard-hearted as they rebelled against the Lord, repented, and then continued to rebel (contrast 1 Nephi 18:20 with 1 Nephi 2:14; 7:19–21; 16:39; 18:4). What is the danger of returning to the same sin over and over again? (See D&C 82:7.)
- How did the Lord bless the people after Laman and Lemuel repented and loosed Nephi? (See 1 Nephi 18:21–25. If you are using the picture of the people arriving in the promised land, display it now.)
- As the people traveled through the wilderness and across the sea, what circumstances led many of them to murmur? (See 1 Nephi 16:18–20, 34–36; 17:21.) What was Nephi’s attitude during these difficult times? (See 1 Nephi 18:16. Emphasize that even when those around him complained against God, Nephi never wavered in his obedience and his love for the Lord.)

Conclusion

Point out that the last words written by Nephi in the Book of Mormon are a fitting description of his true character: “The Lord commanded me, and I must obey” (2 Nephi 33:15). Then share the following statement by Elder Heber J. Grant:

“No obstacles are insurmountable when God commands and we obey” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1899, 18).

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

Additional Teaching Ideas

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

1. Scripture search

Have class members scan 1 Nephi 16–18, looking for words that describe Nephi and words that describe Laman and Lemuel. List the words on the chalkboard, and use them to show the contrast between Nephi and his rebellious brothers.

2. Insights from 1 Nephi 19–22

- One of the first things the Lord commanded Nephi to do after the families arrived in the promised land was to keep a record of the people (1 Nephi 19:1–4). Nephi said that he wrote “sacred things” for his people “that perhaps [he] might persuade them that they would remember the Lord their Redeemer” (1 Nephi 19:5, 18). What blessings will come to our posterity if we record sacred events in our lives?
- According to Nephi, how would the world receive the Savior during His mortal ministry? (See 1 Nephi 19:7–10.) Why did the world reject Jesus as “a thing of naught”? (See 1 Nephi 19:9.) Why was Jesus willing to endure such persecution? (See 1 Nephi 19:9.)
- According to Nephi, why would the Jews be “scourged by all people”? (See 1 Nephi 19:13–14.) What will happen when the Jews “no more turn aside their hearts” against Jesus? (See 1 Nephi 19:15–16.)
- Nephi taught his brethren concerning “the prophets of old” and “the doings of the Lord in other lands, among people of old” (1 Nephi 19:21–22). How have you been blessed as you have studied the scriptures and learned of the prophets of old?
- Why is it important to “liken all scriptures unto us”? (1 Nephi 19:23). How have you benefited from doing this?

1 Nephi 21–22 contains significant prophecies concerning the last days. You may want to review the following passages:

- a. 1 Nephi 21:22–23; 22:6–8. The Restoration of the gospel will bring scattered Israel together again.
- b. 1 Nephi 21:26; 22:10–12. The Lord will bring Israel “out of obscurity and out of darkness; and they shall know that the Lord is their Savior and their Redeemer.” (Note that the Book of Mormon plays a key role in “bringing about [the Lord’s] covenants and his gospel unto those who are of the house of Israel.” Compare 1 Nephi 22:11–12 with the title page of the Book of Mormon.)
- c. 1 Nephi 22:13–15. Nations that reject God will war against one another and be destroyed.
- d. 1 Nephi 22:16–19. The Lord will preserve the righteous.
- e. 1 Nephi 22:26. Satan will be bound during Christ’s millennial reign.

“Free to Choose Liberty and Eternal Life”

Lesson 6

2 Nephi 1–2

Purpose To help class members have a greater desire to “choose liberty and eternal life” through Jesus Christ, “the great Mediator of all men” (2 Nephi 2:27).

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. 2 Nephi 1. Lehi teaches that his people have “obtained a land of promise” by covenant. He exhorts his sons to repent, obey the Lord’s commandments, and put on the armor of righteousness.
 - b. 2 Nephi 2:1–10. Lehi teaches that redemption comes through the Atonement of Jesus Christ.
 - c. 2 Nephi 2:11–30. Lehi teaches that opposition is necessary in Heavenly Father’s plan and that we are “free to choose liberty and eternal life . . . or to choose captivity and death.”
2. If you use the attention activity, bring an alarm clock to class.

Suggestions for Lesson Development

Attention Activity As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. Bring an alarm clock to class, and set it to ring at the beginning of the lesson. When it rings, point out that we often need something like an alarm clock to help us wake up. Explain that this lesson begins with counsel from Lehi to help some of his sons wake up spiritually.

Scripture Discussion and Application The chapters covered in this lesson contain some of Lehi’s final words to his children. Encourage class members to look for ways to apply Lehi’s counsel in their lives. Prayerfully select the scripture passages, questions, and other lesson material that will best meet class members’ needs.

1. Lehi exhorts his sons to repent, obey the Lord’s commandments, and put on the armor of righteousness.

Discuss 2 Nephi 1. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud. Explain that this chapter contains counsel that Lehi gave to his sons shortly before he died. Ask class members to look for specific things that Lehi counseled his sons to do and for the blessings that he promised they would receive if they obeyed his counsel.

- Lehi said that despite their afflictions, his people had “obtained a land of promise” by covenant (2 Nephi 1:5). What was the covenant between the Lord and Lehi’s people? (See 2 Nephi 1:6–7, 9–10.) What did Lehi say would happen to the inhabitants of the land if they rejected the Savior? (See 2 Nephi 1:10–12.)
- Lehi called his sons to repentance by commanding them to “awake . . . from the sleep of hell, and shake off the awful chains by which [they were] bound”

(2 Nephi 1:13; see also verses 14, 21, and 23). How is sinfulness like being in a deep sleep? How is sinfulness like being bound by chains?

- Lehi counseled his sons to “arise from the dust . . . and be men” (2 Nephi 1:21). What are the qualities of a righteous man? (See 2 Nephi 1:21–27. Have class members search these verses for the qualities Lehi suggested. You may want to list these and other qualities on the chalkboard.) What is the world’s definition of manhood? How can we help young men choose righteousness over the world’s definition of manhood?
- What blessings had Lehi received through his faithfulness? (Have a class member read 2 Nephi 1:15 aloud. Note that while some of his sons were bound by the “awful chains” of sin, Lehi was “encircled about eternally in the arms of [the Savior’s] love.” Emphasize that as we humbly come unto Christ through repentance and obedience, we will be redeemed and “encircled about eternally in the arms of his love.”)

2. Lehi testifies of the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

Read and discuss 2 Nephi 2:1–10.

- Lehi said that “by the law no flesh is justified; or, by the law men are cut off” (2 Nephi 2:5). To be justified is to be reconciled to God, pardoned from punishment for sin, and declared righteous and guiltless. How does the law cut us off and prevent us from being justified? (See James 2:10; 1 Nephi 10:21. When we disobey the commandments, we become guilty and unclean, and no unclean thing can dwell with God.)
- Since we cannot be justified by the law, how can we be justified and made worthy to enter God’s presence? (See 2 Nephi 2:6–8. Emphasize that because of the Atonement of Jesus Christ, we can repent and be forgiven of our sins.)
- Lehi said that the Savior would “answer the ends of the law” (2 Nephi 2:7). The phrase “the ends of the law” refers to the consequences of the Fall and to the “punishment that is affixed” for disobedience to God’s commandments (2 Nephi 2:5, 10). How did the Savior answer the ends of the law? (See 2 Nephi 2:7; Alma 34:13–16; D&C 19:16–19; 45:3–5; see also the quotation below.)

President Joseph F. Smith said, “Jesus came and suffered, ‘the just for the unjust,’ he that was without sin for him that had sinned, and was subjected to the penalty of the law which the sinner had transgressed” (*Gospel Doctrine*, 5th ed. [1939], 204).

- How must we live so we can be justified through Christ’s suffering for our sins? (See 2 Nephi 2:7; see also Romans 10:4; D&C 19:15–16; Articles of Faith 1:3.)
- Ask a class member to read 2 Nephi 2:8 aloud. What are “these things” that we should make known? (See 2 Nephi 2:6–8.) How can we “make these things known”? How does our making these things known show gratitude to the Savior for His Atonement?

3. Lehi teaches the importance of opposition and the freedom to choose good from evil.

Read and discuss selected verses from 2 Nephi 2:11–30.

As Lehi taught his sons about the need for opposition, he reviewed the account of Adam and Eve partaking of the forbidden fruit. Have class members take turns

reading a few verses from 2 Nephi 2:15–25. Ask them to look for (1) conditions that existed for Adam and Eve before they partook of the forbidden fruit and (2) the opposition Adam and Eve experienced after they partook of the fruit. Summarize class members' responses in a chart on the chalkboard. The chart should look something like the chart below.

Note that in 2 Nephi 2 Lehi mentions some of the conditions that were brought about by the Fall. However, the doctrine of the Fall is broader in scope than is presented in this chapter. Class members should understand that the Fall brought physical death and spiritual death into the world, thus bringing the plan of redemption into operation.

CONDITIONS BEFORE PARTAKING OF THE FRUIT	OPPOSITION EXPERIENCED AFTER PARTAKING OF THE FRUIT
They could act for themselves (2 Nephi 2:15–16), but they did not do good, “for they knew no sin” (2 Nephi 2:23).	They could do good, and they could also commit sin (2 Nephi 2:23). They were commanded to repent of their sins (2 Nephi 2:21).
They did not have to till the ground in order for food to grow in the garden (2 Nephi 2:19; see also Moses 2:29).	They had to work to obtain food (2 Nephi 2:19).
They knew no misery or joy (2 Nephi 2:23).	They experienced misery and joy (2 Nephi 2:23).
They would have remained “in the same state . . . forever, and had no end” (2 Nephi 2:22).	They became fallen and mortal—subject to physical death (2 Nephi 2:22; see also Moses 6:48).

- If Adam and Eve had not partaken of the fruit, they would not have experienced the opposition mentioned in this chart (2 Nephi 2:22–23). What blessings can we receive because the Fall of Adam and Eve brought opposition into the world? (See 2 Nephi 2:23–27; Moses 5:10–12.)
- Lehi told his children that “it must needs be, that there is an opposition in all things” (2 Nephi 2:11; see also verse 15). How have you seen that it is important to have opposition in our daily lives? (You may want to have class members read 2 Nephi 2:11–13 as they discuss this question.) How can opposition help us progress?
- According to 2 Nephi 2:24–28, what does our Father in Heaven want for us? (Joy, liberty, and eternal life.) How did He provide a way for us to receive these blessings? (See 2 Nephi 2:26–27; see also John 14:6.) What does Satan want for us? (See 2 Nephi 2:18, 27, 29. Misery, captivity, and spiritual death.) How do our individual actions determine whether we receive joy, liberty, and eternal life or misery, captivity, and spiritual death?

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin taught: “The Lord has given you the gift of agency (see Moses 7:32) and instructed you sufficiently to know good from evil (see 2 Nephi 2:5). You are free to choose (see 2 Nephi 2:27) and are permitted to act (see 2 Nephi 10:23; Helaman 14:30), but you are not free to choose the

consequences. With absolute certainty, choices of good and right lead to happiness and peace, while choices of sin and evil eventually lead to unhappiness, sorrow, and misery” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1989, 94; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1989, 75).

- 2 Nephi 2 contains the doctrines of the Creation (2 Nephi 2:14–15), the Fall (2 Nephi 2:4–5, 8, 18–25), and the Atonement (2 Nephi 2:3–4, 6–10, 26–27). How are these three doctrines central to Heavenly Father’s plan of redemption?

Conclusion

Emphasize that through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, we can be “encircled about eternally in the arms of [the Savior’s] love” (2 Nephi 1:15). Explain that it is a great blessing to be “free to choose,” and encourage class members to “choose liberty and eternal life” through Jesus Christ, “the great Mediator of all men” (2 Nephi 2:27).

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

Additional Teaching Idea

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use this idea as part of the lesson.

Using Lehi’s teachings to counter the teachings of the world

Write on the chalkboard the statements listed below under the heading “False Teachings of the World.” Invite class members to imagine that they have heard a friend, coworker, or schoolteacher present persuasive arguments for these false statements. Then explain that Lehi shared truths that can give us peace and reassurance when we are confronted by the world’s false teachings. Write on the chalkboard the scripture references listed below under the heading “Lehi’s Teachings.” Have class members read each scripture passage and determine how it could help them feel peace if they are troubled by the false teachings of the world. Encourage class members to discuss ways to apply the scripture references in their lives.

FALSE TEACHINGS OF THE WORLD	LEHI’S TEACHINGS
There is no good or evil.	2 Nephi 2:5. (“Men are instructed sufficiently that they know good from evil.”)
There is no law.	2 Nephi 2:5. (“The law is given unto men.”)
There is no Christ.	2 Nephi 2:6. (“Redemption cometh in and through the Holy Messiah.”)
There is no existence after this life.	2 Nephi 2:10. (“All men [will] stand in the presence of [God], to be judged of him.”)
There is no God.	2 Nephi 2:14. (“There is a God.”)
Life has no purpose.	2 Nephi 2:25. (“Men are, that they might have joy.”)
Our actions are determined by genetics and environment.	2 Nephi 2:26–27. (We are free “to act for [our]selves and not to be acted upon.” We are “free to choose liberty and eternal life . . . or to choose captivity and death.”)

“I Know in Whom I Have Trusted”

Lesson 7

2 Nephi 3–5

Purpose To help class members strengthen their testimonies of the Prophet Joseph Smith and to encourage them to find happiness through trusting in the Lord and keeping His commandments.

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. 2 Nephi 3. Lehi teaches his son Joseph about the ancient prophet Joseph, who prophesied of Joseph Smith. Lehi teaches Joseph that their descendants will be blessed through the Prophet Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon.
 - b. 2 Nephi 4. Lehi dies after giving his final counsel to his children and grandchildren. Nephi laments his own sinfulness but glories in God’s goodness.
 - c. 2 Nephi 5. The anger of Laman and Lemuel increases against Nephi. The followers of Nephi obey the Lord’s command to separate from the followers of Laman. The Nephites live “after the manner of happiness,” and the Lamanites are cursed for their wickedness.
2. Additional reading: Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 50:24–38; Bible Dictionary, “Joseph, Son of Rachel,” 716–17.
3. You may want to ask a class member to prepare to read 2 Nephi 4:15–35 aloud. Inform the class member that this passage is sometimes called “the Psalm of Nephi” and that it expresses some of Nephi’s deepest feelings.

Suggestions for Lesson Development

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

Tell class members that there are four men mentioned in 2 Nephi 3 who have the same name. Invite class members to look for these four men in 2 Nephi 3:1–15. After class members have had time to look through these verses, ask them whom they have found. The correct answers are listed below:

- a. Joseph, last-born son of Lehi and Sariah (2 Nephi 3:1–3)
- b. Joseph of Egypt (2 Nephi 3:4–5)
- c. Joseph Smith Jr. (2 Nephi 3:6–15)
- d. Joseph Smith Sr. (2 Nephi 3:15)

After this brief activity, go directly into a discussion of 2 Nephi 3.

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

1. Lehi teaches that his descendants will be blessed through the Prophet Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon.

Discuss 2 Nephi 3. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud.

- Lehi taught his son Joseph about a prophecy made by Joseph, the son of Jacob and Rachel who was “carried captive into Egypt” (2 Nephi 3:4; see also Genesis 30:22–24; 37:1–3, 23–28). Why were the covenants that Joseph of Egypt made with the Lord important to Lehi’s family? (See 2 Nephi 3:4–5; Jacob 2:25; see also Genesis 45:7.)
- Who was the “choice seer” whom Joseph of Egypt saw in vision? (See 2 Nephi 3:6–15. The Prophet Joseph Smith.) How did Joseph Smith “bring forth [the Lord’s] word”? (See 2 Nephi 3:11 and the quotation below.) How have you been blessed because of the word of God brought forth by Joseph Smith?

Elder LeGrand Richards said: “The Prophet Joseph Smith brought us the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, the Pearl of Great Price, and many other writings. As far as our records show, he has given us more revealed truth than any prophet who has ever lived upon the face of the earth” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1981, 43; or *Ensign*, May 1981, 33).

- The Lord told Joseph of Egypt about the Bible, which would contain words written by descendants of Judah, and the Book of Mormon, which would contain words written by descendants of Joseph (2 Nephi 3:12). How have the Bible and the Book of Mormon “grow[n] together”? What blessings did the Lord say would come because the Bible and the Book of Mormon would “grow together”? (See 2 Nephi 3:12.)
- The Lord promised that “a righteous branch” of the descendants of Joseph of Egypt would be “broken off” but would be “remembered in the covenants of the Lord” (2 Nephi 3:5). What are the roles of Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon in the fulfillment of these covenants? (See 2 Nephi 3:12–13, 18–21; 30:3–6.) How is this promise being fulfilled today? How does the Book of Mormon help you remember and keep your covenants with the Lord?
- What connects Joseph of Egypt, Lehi’s son Joseph, and Joseph Smith, in addition to their name? (See 2 Nephi 3:4–7, 11–12, 18–21. Answers may include lineage, covenants, and the Book of Mormon.)

2. Nephi laments his sinfulness but glories in the goodness of God.

Read and discuss selected verses from 2 Nephi 4. Explain that just before Lehi died, he counseled and blessed his children and grandchildren (2 Nephi 4:3–12).

Soon after Lehi’s death, “Laman and Lemuel and the sons of Ishmael were angry with [Nephi] because of the admonitions of the Lord” (2 Nephi 4:13). As Nephi wrote of these continuing difficulties, he recorded his feelings in a passage that is sometimes called “the Psalm of Nephi.” As an introduction to the discussion of the Psalm of Nephi, explain that a psalm is a poem or hymn, much like our hymns today. You may want to ask class members to name a few of their favorite hymns and briefly talk about why those hymns are meaningful to them.

If you have asked a class member to prepare to read the Psalm of Nephi, invite him or her to do so now. Invite the other class members to follow along silently.

- Nephi said, “My soul delighteth in the things of the Lord; and my heart pondereth [them] continually” (2 Nephi 4:16). What specific things did Nephi delight in? (See 2 Nephi 4:15–16.) What does it mean to ponder? What can we do to make time to ponder the things of the Lord? How can pondering the things of the Lord help us?
- What words would you use to describe Nephi? (Answers may include *righteous*, *obedient*, and *humble*.) Why would Nephi say that he was a “wretched man” whose “soul grieveth because of [his] iniquities”? (See 2 Nephi 4:17, 27; see also 1 Nephi 10:6.) Why is it important to recognize our fallen nature before God?
President Ezra Taft Benson said: “Just as a man does not really desire food until he is hungry, so he does not desire the salvation of Christ until he knows why he needs Christ. No one adequately and properly knows why he needs Christ until he understands and accepts the doctrine of the Fall and its effect upon all mankind” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1987, 106; or *Ensign*, May 1987, 85).
- How did Nephi find hope despite feeling “encompassed about” by temptation and sin? (See 2 Nephi 4:18–19.) How had the Lord helped Nephi in the past? (Have class members read 2 Nephi 4:20–25 to find answers to this question. List their answers on the chalkboard. Some possible answers are shown below.)

The Lord had:

- a. Been Nephi’s support (2 Nephi 4:20).
 - b. Led Nephi through afflictions in the wilderness (2 Nephi 4:20).
 - c. Filled him with His love (2 Nephi 4:21).
 - d. Confounded his enemies (2 Nephi 4:22).
 - e. Heard his cry (2 Nephi 4:23).
 - f. Given him knowledge by visions (2 Nephi 4:23).
- When have you received similar blessings from the Lord? How can remembering blessings you have received in the past help you through difficult times?
 - Nephi asked himself why he yielded to sorrow and sin in spite of the things that he had seen and the things that he knew (2 Nephi 4:26–27). Why do we sometimes struggle with sorrow and temptation despite our knowledge of the gospel? What can Nephi’s psalm teach us about overcoming sorrow and temptation? (See 2 Nephi 4:28–30.)
 - In the first part of his psalm, Nephi’s words were directed toward himself (2 Nephi 4:15–30). The conclusion of the psalm was a prayer (2 Nephi 4:30–35). What did Nephi ask of Heavenly Father in this prayer? (See 2 Nephi 4:31–33. Invite class members to discuss parts of Nephi’s prayer that are especially meaningful to them. You may want to use some of the questions below to encourage discussion.)
 - a. How does the Lord “deliver [us] out of the hands of [our] enemies”? (See 2 Nephi 4:31, 33.)
 - b. What does it mean to “shake at the appearance of sin”? (See 2 Nephi 4:31; Mosiah 5:2; Alma 13:12.)
 - c. What do you think it means to “walk in the path of the low valley” and “be strict in the plain road”? (2 Nephi 4:32).
 - d. What do you think it means for the Lord to “encircle [us] around in the robe of [His] righteousness”? (2 Nephi 4:33).

- In his prayer, what did Nephi promise to do? (See 2 Nephi 4:30, 34–35. He promised to trust God and praise Him forever.) What did Nephi mean when he said, “I will not put my trust in the arm of flesh”? (See 2 Nephi 4:34; 28:31.) What are some ways that people “trust in the arm of flesh”? What are the dangers of this? What can we do to increase our trust in the Lord?

3. The anger of Laman and Lemuel increases against Nephi, and the Lord commands the followers of Nephi to separate from the followers of Laman.

Read and discuss selected verses from 2 Nephi 5.

- Why were Laman and Lemuel angry toward Nephi? (See 2 Nephi 4:13; 5:3.) What did Laman and Lemuel seek to do as a result of their increasing anger? (See 2 Nephi 5:2, 4. Compare their anger with Nephi’s efforts to control his anger, as recorded in 2 Nephi 4:27–29.) What are some dangers of increasing anger? What can we do to be peacemakers in the home, the community, and the Church?

President Howard W. Hunter taught: “We need a more peaceful world, growing out of more peaceful families and neighborhoods and communities. To secure and cultivate such peace, ‘we must love others, even our enemies as well as our friends.’ . . . We need to extend the hand of friendship. We need to be kinder, more gentle, more forgiving, and slower to anger. We need to love one another with the pure love of Christ. May this be our course and our desire” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1992, 87; or *Ensign*, May 1992, 63).

- Because of the anger of his brothers, Nephi prayed for help (2 Nephi 5:1). How did the Lord answer his prayers? (See 2 Nephi 5:5.)
- When Nephi and his people had departed, they “lived after the manner of happiness” (2 Nephi 5:27). What did they do that contributed to their happiness? (See 2 Nephi 5:10–17. Answers may include that they kept the commandments, preserved the records that were on the plates of brass, built a temple, and worked together.) How can the Nephites’ example help us as we strive to live “after the manner of happiness”?

Conclusion

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

Additional Teaching Idea

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use this idea as part of the lesson.

Awake, my soul! . . . Rejoice, O my heart” (2 Nephi 4:28)

Explain that we can follow Nephi’s example when we feel discouraged. Chapters 4 and 5 of 2 Nephi give several examples of things we can do to overcome feelings of discouragement. Discuss the following examples with class members:

- a. Read the scriptures (2 Nephi 4:15).
- b. Delight in and ponder the things of the Lord (2 Nephi 4:16).
- c. Trust in the Lord and look to Him for support (2 Nephi 4:20–21, 34).
- d. Engage in mighty prayer (2 Nephi 4:24).
- e. Be industrious; work (2 Nephi 5:15, 17).
- f. Serve in the temple (2 Nephi 5:16).

“O How Great the Goodness of Our God”

Lesson 8

2 Nephi 6–10

Purpose To help class members understand their need for the Atonement of Jesus Christ and to teach them how to receive all the blessings of the Atonement.

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. 2 Nephi 9:1–26, 39–54. Jacob testifies that through the Savior’s Atonement, we can be redeemed from temporal death and spiritual death. He discusses principles that help us receive all the blessings of the Atonement.
 - b. 2 Nephi 9:27–38. Jacob discusses attitudes and actions that prevent us from receiving all the blessings of the Atonement.
 - c. 2 Nephi 10. Jacob prophesies that the Redeemer will be called Christ. Jacob prophesies that the Nephites’ descendants will perish in unbelief and that the Jews in Jerusalem will crucify the Savior and be scattered until they believe in Him. Jacob testifies of the Lord’s covenants with His people and exhorts the people to reconcile themselves to the will of God.
2. Additional reading: Isaiah 49–52. You may want to compare Isaiah 49:22–26 with 2 Nephi 6:6–7, 16–18; Isaiah 50 with 2 Nephi 7; Isaiah 51 with 2 Nephi 8:1–23; and Isaiah 52:1–2 with 2 Nephi 8:24–25.
3. If you use the attention activity, bring the following pictures to class: Sermon on the Mount (62166; Gospel Art Picture Kit 212); Jesus Healing the Blind (62145; Gospel Art Picture Kit 213); Stilling the Storm (62139; Gospel Art Picture Kit 214); Jesus Blessing Jairus’s Daughter (62231; Gospel Art Picture Kit 215); Christ with the Children (62467; Gospel Art Picture Kit 216); Jesus Praying in Gethsemane (62175; Gospel Art Picture Kit 227); and The Crucifixion (62505; Gospel Art Picture Kit 230).

Suggestions for Lesson Development

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

Display the pictures listed in the “Preparation” section. Invite class members to look at the pictures and think about what Jesus Christ has done for them. Then ask them to share some of the things they have thought about. List their responses on the chalkboard.

Ask class members to read the following verses aloud: 2 Nephi 6:17; 7:2; 8:3–6, 12. Ask them to look for words in the verses that refer to things the Savior does for us. List the words on the chalkboard. The list may include the following words: *deliver* (2 Nephi 6:17; 7:2), *redeem* (2 Nephi 7:2), *comfort*, *comforteth* (2 Nephi 8:3, 12), *light* (2 Nephi 8:4), *judgment*, *judge* (2 Nephi 8:4–5), and *salvation* (2 Nephi 8:5–6).

Explain that this lesson discusses the Atonement, which is the greatest act Jesus Christ has done for us.

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

1. Through His Atonement, Jesus Christ offers redemption from temporal death and spiritual death.

Explain that 2 Nephi 9 contains a discourse by Jacob, one of Nephi's younger brothers, about the Atonement of Jesus Christ, which is the central event in the plan of salvation. To understand the teachings in this chapter, it is helpful to know how Jacob referred to temporal death and spiritual death:

Temporal death is the death of the physical body and the separation of the spirit from the physical body. As a result of the Fall of Adam, all people will die temporally (2 Nephi 9:6). In 2 Nephi 9, Jacob uses the following words and phrases to refer to temporal death: "death" (verse 6), "the death of the body" (verse 10), and "the grave" (verse 11).

Spiritual death is separation from the presence of God. We are all separated from God as a result of the Fall of Adam (2 Nephi 9:6). We further separate ourselves from God when we sin (Romans 3:23; Alma 12:16; Helaman 14:18). In 2 Nephi 9, Jacob uses the following words and phrases to refer to spiritual death, or separation from God: "shut out from the presence of our God" (verse 9), "the death of the spirit" (verse 10), "spiritual death" (verse 12), "hell" (verse 12), and "death" (verse 39).

Discuss 2 Nephi 9:1–26, 39–54. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud.

- What did the Savior do to overcome temporal death and spiritual death? (See 2 Nephi 9:5–7, 12, 21–22; see also Luke 22:44; Mosiah 3:7; D&C 19:16–19.)
- Through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, all people will be resurrected—saved from temporal death (2 Nephi 9:12–13, 22). What would happen to us without the power of Christ's Resurrection? (See 2 Nephi 9:6–9. Temporal and spiritual death would be permanent. We would be shut out from God's presence forever, and our spirits would be subject to Satan. We would "remain with the father of lies, in misery.") How does this show that temporal death and spiritual death are an "awful monster"? (2 Nephi 9:10).
- Through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, all people will be restored to God's presence to be judged (2 Nephi 2:10; 9:15). However, not all people will be "saved in the kingdom of God," or permitted to dwell in God's presence forever (2 Nephi 9:23; Mormon 7:7). According to Jacob, what are some of the things we must do to be "saved in the kingdom of God"? (Have class members read 2 Nephi 9:18, 21, 23–24, 39, 41, 50–52 to find answers to this question. Summarize their answers on the chalkboard. Discuss the answers as shown below.)
 - a. Believe in Jesus Christ, the Holy One of Israel, and come unto Him (2 Nephi 9:18, 23–24, 41). Why is faith in Jesus Christ essential in order to receive all the blessings of His Atonement?
 - b. Endure the crosses of the world and despise the shame of the world (2 Nephi 9:18). What does it mean to endure the crosses of the world?

- (See Matthew 16:24, footnote 24*d*; 3 Nephi 12:29–30.) What does it mean to despise the shame of the world? (See 2 Nephi 9:49.)
- c. Hearken to the voice of the Lord (2 Nephi 9:21). How can we hear the voice of the Lord? (See D&C 1:38; 18:33–36; 88:66.)
 - d. Repent, be baptized, and endure to the end (2 Nephi 9:23–24).
 - e. Be spiritually minded (2 Nephi 9:39; see also Romans 8:5–8). What does it mean to you to be spiritually minded? How does being spiritually minded lead to “life eternal”? What does it mean to be carnally minded? How does being carnally minded lead to spiritual death? What can we do to become more spiritually minded?
 - f. “Feast upon that which perisheth not” (2 Nephi 9:50–51). What are some things that never perish? How can we “feast” on these things?
 - g. Remember the words of God (2 Nephi 9:52). How does remembering God’s words help us receive all the blessings of the Atonement? (See 3 Nephi 15:1.)
 - h. Pray continually and give thanks (2 Nephi 9:52). How has praying and expressing gratitude to our Heavenly Father helped you draw nearer to Him and His Son?

2. Certain attitudes and actions prevent us from receiving all the blessings of the Atonement.

Read and discuss 2 Nephi 9:27–38. Explain that in addition to speaking of requirements for receiving all the blessings of the Atonement, Jacob spoke of attitudes and actions that prevent us from receiving those blessings.

- What are some attitudes and actions that prevent us from receiving all the blessings of the Atonement? (Have class members read 2 Nephi 9:27–38 to find answers to this question. Summarize their answers on the chalkboard. Discuss the answers as shown below.)
 - a. Transgressing the commandments and wasting the days of our probation (2 Nephi 9:27). In the Book of Mormon, prophets often refer to our life on earth as a “state of probation,” or a time to be tested (2 Nephi 2:21; see also 2 Nephi 2:30; Mormon 9:28). How might some people waste the days of their probation? (See 2 Nephi 9:38; Alma 34:31–33; Helaman 13:38.)
 - b. Placing learning, money, and other idols above God (2 Nephi 9:28–30, 37). How can the pursuit of knowledge and riches keep us from receiving all the blessings of the Atonement? (See 2 Nephi 9:28, 30, 42.) In what situations are learning and riches good? (See 2 Nephi 9:29; Jacob 2:18–19.)
 - c. Being spiritually deaf and blind (2 Nephi 9:31–32). What does it mean to be spiritually deaf and blind? How can we open our ears and eyes to the truths of the gospel?
 - d. Being “uncircumcised of heart” (2 Nephi 9:33). In ancient Israel, a man who was uncircumcised was breaking a covenant with God (Genesis 17:11, 14). With this understanding, what does it mean to be “uncircumcised of heart”?
 - e. Lying and committing murders and whoredoms (2 Nephi 9:34–36).

3. The Lord remembers His covenants with His people.

Read and discuss selected verses from 2 Nephi 10.

- Jacob prophesied that the Nephites’ descendants would “perish in the flesh because of unbelief” and that the Jews in Jerusalem would crucify the Savior

and be scattered because of their sins (2 Nephi 10:2–6). What will the Lord do for these people when they believe in Him and repent of their sins? (See 2 Nephi 10:2, 7–8, 21–22; see also 1 Nephi 21:15–16; 2 Nephi 9:1–3, 53; 30:2.) How does this apply to us individually? (See Mosiah 26:22.)

Elder Boyd K. Packer taught: “The discouraging idea that a mistake (or even a series of them) makes it everlastingly too late, does not come from the Lord. He has said that *if* we will repent, not only will He forgive us our transgressions, but He will forget them and remember our sins no more (see Isaiah 43:25; Hebrews 8:12; 10:17; Alma 36:19; D&C 58:42)” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1989, 72; or *Ensign*, May 1989, 59).

- Jacob said that his people should “cheer up [their] hearts” because the Lord remembers His covenant people (2 Nephi 10:22–23). How can we find comfort in the knowledge that the Lord remembers His covenant people?
- As Jacob concluded this address to the people, what did he encourage them to remember? (See 2 Nephi 10:23–24.) In what ways do we choose either the way of everlasting death or the way of everlasting life? (See 2 Nephi 2:26–27.) What does it mean to be reconciled to the will of God? Why is it important to remember that “it is only through the grace of God that [we] are saved”?

Conclusion

Have a class member read aloud 2 Nephi 10:25, which is Jacob’s concluding message in this discourse. Express your gratitude for the Atonement of Jesus Christ, and encourage class members to “choose . . . the way of eternal life” (2 Nephi 10:23).

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

Additional Teaching Ideas

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

1. Hymn

With class members, sing or read the words to a hymn about the love of Jesus Christ, such as “Reverently and Meekly Now” (*Hymns*, no. 185) or “Dear to the Heart of the Shepherd” (*Hymns*, no. 221).

2. The gathering of Israel

- How will Israel be gathered? (See 2 Nephi 10:8–9.)

President Ezra Taft Benson taught:

“The responsibility of the seed of Abraham, which we are, is to be missionaries to ‘bear this ministry and Priesthood unto all nations’ (Abraham 2:9). Moses bestowed upon Joseph Smith in the Kirtland Temple the keys to gather Israel (see D&C 110:11).

“Now, what is the instrument that God has designed for this gathering? It is the same instrument that is designed to convince the world that Jesus is the Christ, that Joseph Smith is His prophet, and that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is true. It is that scripture which is the keystone of our religion” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1987, 107–8; or *Ensign*, May 1987, 85).

“My Soul Delighteth in the Words of Isaiah”

Lesson 9

2 Nephi 11–25

Purpose To inspire class members to read the prophecies of Isaiah and to help them understand how these prophecies apply in their lives.

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. 2 Nephi 11; 25:1–7. Nephi testifies of the importance of Isaiah’s writings and teaches of keys that help us understand them.
 - b. 2 Nephi 12:1–12. Isaiah sees the latter-day temple and the gathering of Israel.
 - c. 2 Nephi 15:26–29; 21:12. Isaiah prophesies that the Lord will raise an ensign and gather Israel.
 - d. 2 Nephi 16; 22; 25:19–30. Isaiah and Nephi testify of the Savior’s redeeming power.
2. Additional reading: Bible Dictionary, “Isaiah,” 707.
3. If the following pictures are available, prepare to use them during the lesson: Isaiah Writes of Christ’s Birth (62339; Gospel Art Picture Kit 113); Salt Lake Temple (62433; Gospel Art Picture Kit 502); and Jesus the Christ (62572; Gospel Art Picture Kit 240).
4. To increase your understanding of Isaiah’s writings, you may wish to review lessons 36–40 in the *Old Testament Gospel Doctrine Teacher’s Manual* (35570).

Suggestions for Lesson Development

Attention Activity As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. Read Mosiah 8:17–18. Then ask class members the following questions:

- What are seers able to see? (Past, present, and future events.) Why are seers so important for us?

Explain that because he was a seer, Isaiah saw in vision such events as the War in Heaven, the destruction of Jerusalem after the Savior’s death, the battle of Armageddon, and the millennial reign of the Savior.

Many of Isaiah’s writings seem difficult to understand because they refer to a wide range of past and future events described in symbolic language. However, we can come to understand them as we make a consistent, prayerful effort to read and study them. This lesson discusses some of Isaiah’s most significant writings.

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

1. Nephi testifies of Isaiah's writings and gives keys for understanding them.

Discuss 2 Nephi 11; 25:1–7. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud. If you are using the first additional teaching idea, invite the assigned class member to give a brief report about Isaiah and his times.

- Why did Nephi find Isaiah's words important for his record? (See 1 Nephi 19:23; 2 Nephi 11:2–6, 8; 25:3. Ask different class members to read aloud each of these passages. While each passage is read, ask a class member to write on the chalkboard the reference and the reason for quoting Isaiah. An example is shown below.)

WHY NEPHI QUOTED ISAIAH	
1 Nephi 19:23	To "more fully persuade them to believe in the Lord"
2 Nephi 11:2–4	To provide another witness of Jesus Christ
2 Nephi 11:5–6, 8	To help us (his readers) rejoice
2 Nephi 25:3	To reveal God's judgments

- Why are these reasons important for us today? How can understanding Isaiah's words cause us to rejoice?

Explain that Nephi provided several keys that can help us better understand the writings of Isaiah. As time permits, discuss these keys with class members.

Key 1: "Liken all scriptures unto us" (1 Nephi 19:23; see also 2 Nephi 11:2, 8). Many of Isaiah's prophecies deal with events in the latter days. As we watch these prophecies unfold and as we participate in their fulfillment, we can better understand Isaiah's teachings and apply them in our lives. For example, 2 Nephi 15 contains Isaiah's prophecy that the Lord will "lift up an ensign to the nations" to gather Israel (2 Nephi 15:26). This prophecy can help us better understand the importance of sharing the restored gospel—the ensign, or standard, to guide all nations to the Lord.

Key 2: "Know . . . concerning the manner of prophesying among the Jews" (2 Nephi 25:1). Isaiah's prophecies are written in a style that the Jews were accustomed to reading and hearing. We can better understand Isaiah's writings if we remember that he used imagery and symbolism that would have been familiar to Jewish people in his time. For example, in 2 Nephi 12:1–3, Isaiah uses the word *mountain* to symbolize a high spiritual place, a place for revelation and closeness with God, such as the temple.

Key 3: "Know the judgments of God" (2 Nephi 25:3; see also verse 6). Isaiah foresaw how the kingdoms of Israel and Judah would suffer because of their wickedness, but he also prophesied that their blessings would be restored when they repented and followed Jesus Christ. From Isaiah's accounts of what happened to Israel and Judah, and from his prophecies of the future restoration

of the house of Israel, we can better understand how God works in our lives and how He blesses nations according to their righteousness.

Key 4: “Know concerning the regions round about [Jerusalem]” (2 Nephi 25:6). Knowing the geography and place-names in Israel helps us better understand Isaiah’s prophecies concerning the kingdoms of Israel and Judah and the nations that threatened them. For example, in 2 Nephi 20:28–34, Isaiah named the cities the Assyrian army would pass through and how it would be stopped just as it reached Jerusalem. The events happened exactly as he prophesied.

Key 5: Be “filled with the spirit of prophecy” (2 Nephi 25:4).

- What is the spirit of prophecy? (See Revelation 19:10.) How can we obtain it? How can the spirit of prophecy help us understand Isaiah’s teachings about the Savior?

2. Isaiah sees the latter-day temple and the gathering of Israel.

Read and discuss 2 Nephi 12:1–12. If you are using the picture of the Salt Lake Temple, display it now.

- How does the Salt Lake Temple fulfill a portion of Isaiah’s prophecy recorded in 2 Nephi 12:2–3? Why do you think Isaiah described the temple as “the mountain of the Lord”? (Ancient prophets often went up into the mountains to commune with the Lord and receive revelation from Him.) How can all temples be “mountains” for our worship?

Emphasize that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has been established in the tops of the mountains and that temples are being built where people can come and learn about the Lord.

- Isaiah described temples as a “place of refuge” from heat and storms (2 Nephi 14:6). What are some examples of spiritual storms that we face in this life? How can the temple help protect us from these storms?
- How can we as Latter-day Saints help establish the kingdom of God on earth, as described in 2 Nephi 12:3–5? (See D&C 133:7–14.)
- Isaiah exhorted the house of Jacob to “walk in the light of the Lord” instead of “all [going] astray, every one to his wicked ways” (2 Nephi 12:5). What are some of the specific sins mentioned in 2 Nephi 12:7–12? How are these sins still prevalent today? How can we avoid these pitfalls and “walk in the light”?

3. Isaiah prophesies that the Lord will raise an ensign and gather Israel.

Read and discuss 2 Nephi 15:26–29; 21:12.

- Isaiah prophesied that the Lord would “lift up an ensign to the nations” (2 Nephi 15:26; see also 2 Nephi 21:12). What is an ensign? (A banner or flag; a standard-bearer.) What did Isaiah say would happen when this ensign was raised? (See 2 Nephi 15:26–29.)
- When the angel Moroni appeared to Joseph Smith, he said that chapter 11 of Isaiah (quoted in 2 Nephi 21) was about to be fulfilled (Joseph Smith—History 1:40). How is the restored gospel of Jesus Christ an ensign to all nations? (See D&C 64:41–43; 105:39; 115:4–6.)

- How is the prophecy that nations will be “gather[ed] together” being fulfilled today? (See 2 Nephi 21:12. Missionaries are going throughout the world to teach the gospel and gather people to the truth.) What can each of us do to help fulfill this prophecy?

4. Isaiah and Nephi testify of Jesus Christ’s redeeming power.

Read and discuss selected verses from 2 Nephi 16; 22; 25:19–30. If you are using the picture of Isaiah writing of Christ’s birth and the picture of Jesus Christ, display them now.

- 2 Nephi 16 contains Isaiah’s account of a vision in which he saw the Lord. How did Isaiah describe the setting of the vision? (See 2 Nephi 16:1–4.) How did Isaiah feel in the presence of the Lord? (See 2 Nephi 16:5.)
- What was symbolized by the angel touching Isaiah’s lips with the burning coal? (See 2 Nephi 16:6–7. Isaiah’s sins were forgiven.) How did Isaiah respond when he heard the voice of the Lord? (See 2 Nephi 16:8.) In what other scriptural account have you seen similar language used? (See Abraham 3:27.) When might we need to give a similar response to the Lord?
- Have class members read 2 Nephi 22:1–6. Explain that these verses contain Isaiah’s description of how all people will praise the Savior during the Millennium. What impresses you about these verses? What “excellent things” (2 Nephi 22:5) has the Savior done for us?
- Invite class members to scan 2 Nephi 25:19–30 and discuss Nephi’s testimony of the Savior. What impresses you about Nephi’s testimony? How can we, like Nephi, “labor diligently . . . to persuade our children . . . to believe in Christ”? (2 Nephi 25:23; see also verse 26).
- Nephi taught that “it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do” (2 Nephi 25:23). What does this statement teach about the relationship between the grace of Jesus Christ and our works? (See 2 Nephi 10:24–25; D&C 20:29–31.) How does this statement give you encouragement to do the best you can?
- Have a class member read 2 Nephi 25:29 aloud. What might you do this week to comply more fully with Nephi’s exhortation to worship the Lord “with all your might, mind, and strength, and your whole soul”? (You may want to invite class members to think about this question rather than answer it aloud.)

Conclusion

Point out that the Savior gave His approval of Isaiah’s teachings in this single statement: “Yea, a commandment I give unto you that ye search these things diligently; for great are the words of Isaiah” (3 Nephi 23:1).

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

Additional Teaching Ideas

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

1. Isaiah and his times (class member report)

A week before you teach this lesson, invite a class member to prepare a brief report about Isaiah, using the information found on page 707 of the Bible

Dictionary. Have the class member present the report at the beginning of section 1 of this lesson.

2. Hymn

As part of the discussion on 2 Nephi 15:26, have a class member sing or read the words to “High on the Mountain Top” (*Hymns*, no. 5). You may want to discuss with class members how this hymn celebrates the fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy of the Restoration of the gospel.

3. Calling “evil good, and good evil” (2 Nephi 15:20)

- In what ways might we, like ancient Israel, make the mistake of calling “evil good, and good evil”? (2 Nephi 15:20). How can we be sure that we recognize good and evil for what they really are? (See Moroni 7:12–17.)

4. How the Book of Mormon increases our understanding of Isaiah

The Book of Mormon is one of the greatest guides to help us understand the writings of Isaiah. Share with class members the following ways the Book of Mormon helps us understand Isaiah.

- a. The Book of Mormon quotes, either in their entirety or in part, 22 of the 66 chapters in the book of Isaiah, and it contains additional commentary about those chapters. Because the Book of Mormon prophets lived near the time of Isaiah, their commentaries can help us understand his teachings.
- b. The writings of Isaiah that are quoted in the Book of Mormon include words, phrases, and explanations that do not appear in any other copies of the book of Isaiah.
- c. The world’s oldest known copy of Isaiah was discovered among the Dead Sea Scrolls. The “Isaiah scroll” dates back to 200 B.C. (Bible Dictionary, “Dead Sea Scrolls,” 654). However, the chapters of Isaiah in the Book of Mormon date back to the time of Nephi, approximately 600 B.C. Joseph Smith’s translation of the Book of Mormon provided the world with a copy of Isaiah’s writings that predates the Dead Sea Scrolls by 400 years.
- d. Because the tone of the first 33 chapters of Isaiah differs from the last 33 chapters, many people believe that the book of Isaiah was written by two different people. The Book of Mormon quotes from both the first and last half of Isaiah and identifies Isaiah as the author, thus bearing witness of and authenticating his writings.

Lesson
10

“He Inviteth All to Come unto Him”

2 Nephi 26–30

Purpose

To help class members understand that through the Restoration of the gospel and the teachings of the Book of Mormon, the Lord will cause truth to triumph over evil.

Preparation

Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:

- a. 2 Nephi 26. Nephi prophesies of the Savior’s ministry among the Nephites. Nephi also foresees pride and priestcrafts and the eventual destruction of his people.
- b. 2 Nephi 27. Nephi testifies of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon as part of the Restoration of the gospel.
- c. 2 Nephi 28. Nephi prophesies that Satan will spread false doctrine in the last days.
- d. 2 Nephi 29–30. Nephi teaches about the importance of the Book of Mormon and the blessings that will come to those who receive it.

Suggestions for Lesson Development

Attention Activity

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

Read the following statement by Elder Gene R. Cook:

“Last summer on a lonely stretch of desert highway, we saw ahead what appeared to be the road covered with water. My children would have wagered their entire savings on that fact. But within a few minutes we were at the distant spot and saw not one drop of water. What an illusion!

“How many things there are in this life that appear to be one way and all of a sudden are the reverse. . . . Satan operates that way. He is the master of illusion. He creates illusions in an attempt to detour, dilute, and divert the power and the attention of the Latter-day Saints from the pure truth of God” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1982, 35–36; or *Ensign*, May 1982, 25).

- What is an illusion? (Something that deceives or misleads.) What are some illusions that Satan uses to lead people astray? How can we discern between these illusions and the truth?

Explain that the chapters discussed in this lesson contain powerful prophecies concerning the last days. Nephi prophesied about people who would be deceived by Satan and fall away from the truth. However, he also foresaw the Restoration of the gospel and the blessings that would be given to the righteous. This lesson discusses these prophecies and helps us understand how to avoid being deceived by Satan’s falsehoods and remain faithful to the truth.

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

1. Nephi prophesies of the Savior's ministry among the Nephites.

Discuss 2 Nephi 26. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud. Explain that Nephi foresaw that before the Savior visited the Nephites, there would be "great wars and contentions" for many generations (2 Nephi 26:1–2). He prophesied that between the time of Christ's death and His ministry among the Nephites, the wicked would be destroyed (2 Nephi 26:3–7).

- How did Nephi describe those who would be preserved at the Savior's coming? (See 2 Nephi 26:8.) Why are these same qualities important for us today? How were the righteous Nephites and their posterity blessed? (See 2 Nephi 26:9.)
- Nephi prophesied that after four generations of peace and righteousness, his people would meet a "speedy destruction" (2 Nephi 26:10). What would cause this destruction? (See 2 Nephi 26:10–11.) Why is pride such a serious sin? What can we do in our lives to keep the Spirit of the Lord with us?
- How did Nephi describe the way Satan leads people to destruction? (See 2 Nephi 26:22. You may want to explain that a flaxen cord is made of thin, light strands.) What are some ways Satan uses "flaxen cords" before binding people with "strong cords"?
- How did Nephi describe the way the Savior leads people to salvation? (See 2 Nephi 26:23–27, 33.) How can we help others "partake of his salvation"? (2 Nephi 26:24).
- Nephi warned against priestcrafts. What are priestcrafts? (See 2 Nephi 26:29; Alma 1:16.) What examples of priestcraft are evident in the world today? How can we counteract these conditions? (See 2 Nephi 26:30–31; 3 Nephi 18:24; Moroni 7:45–47.)

2. Nephi testifies of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon.

Read and discuss selected verses from 2 Nephi 27.

- Chapter 27 contains further prophecies about the last days. Which events described in 2 Nephi 27 have been fulfilled in this dispensation? (Have class members take a few minutes to review 2 Nephi 27:6–35. You may want to divide the class into groups and have each group focus on different verses within the passage. Summarize their answers on the chalkboard. Some answers are listed below, with discussion questions to encourage participation.)
 - a. An ancient book would be delivered to a man for translation (2 Nephi 27:9). What was this book? (See 2 Nephi 27:6.) What reason did the Lord give for choosing a young, unlearned man to translate the Book of Mormon? (See 2 Nephi 27:19–23.)
 - b. A portion of the words of the book would be shown to a learned man, who would ask to see the book (2 Nephi 27:15). What event was prophesied in these verses? (See Joseph Smith—History 1:63–65.) Why did the learned

- man want to see the book? (See 2 Nephi 27:16.) In what ways might the Book of Mormon be “sealed” to those who seek the glory of the world?
- c. Witnesses would testify of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon (2 Nephi 27:12–14). Why was it important for witnesses to see the plates? (See Ether 5:2–4; see also 2 Corinthians 13:1.)
 - d. The power of the Book of Mormon would be manifest in people’s lives (2 Nephi 27:26, 29–30, 35). What changes have you seen in your life or the lives of others because of the power of the Book of Mormon?

3. Nephi prophesies that Satan will spread false doctrines in the last days.

Read and discuss selected verses from 2 Nephi 28.

- Nephi prophesied that in the last days people would deny the power of God and teach false, vain, and foolish doctrines (2 Nephi 28:3–9; see also 2 Nephi 26:20–21). How was this condition prevalent in Joseph Smith’s time? (See Joseph Smith—History 1:5–6, 19, 21.) How is it prevalent today?
- How did Nephi describe the false teaching that people would use to justify sinning? (See 2 Nephi 28:7–9.) What are some of the rationalizations people use today to excuse sin? What are the dangers of not worrying about “committing a little sin”? (2 Nephi 28:8).
- Nephi also foresaw that people in the last days would be filled with pride (2 Nephi 28:12–15). What was the eventual result of the pride of the Nephites? (See 2 Nephi 26:10–11.) How is pride a stumbling block to our spiritual growth? How can we overcome pride?
- Nephi taught that pride would lead many to “rob the poor” (2 Nephi 28:13). How might a desire for “fine clothing” or other luxuries cause us to neglect the poor? In what ways can we help those who are less fortunate, both physically and spiritually?
- According to Nephi, how would many people react to the word of the Lord in the last days? (See 2 Nephi 28:20, 28.) Why do the words of God often “stir [many] up to anger against that which is good”?
- Nephi prophesied that Satan would pacify the people and “lull them away into carnal security” (2 Nephi 28:21). What is carnal security? (The word *carnal* refers to the flesh. To have carnal security is to find security in following the appetites of the flesh or trusting in worldly objects or ideas.) How can the contentment of carnal security keep us from repentance? What does the phrase “leadeth them away carefully” (2 Nephi 28:21) suggest about Satan’s tactics?

Elder James E. Faust shared the following analogy: “Thomas R. Rowan . . . said: ‘Author and commentator Malcolm Muggeridge once told a story about some frogs who were killed without resistance by being boiled alive in [a] cauldron of water. Why didn’t they resist? Because when they were put in the cauldron, the water was tepid. Then the temperature was raised ever so slightly, . . . then a bit warmer still, and on and on and on. The change was so gradual, almost imperceptible, that the frogs accommodated themselves to their new environment—until it was too late. The point that Mr. Muggeridge was making was not about frogs but about us and how we tend to accept evil as long as it is not a shock that is thrust on us abruptly. We are inclined to accept something

morally wrong if it is only a shade more wrong than something we are already accepting’” (*National Press Club Forum*).

After sharing this analogy, Elder Faust said, “This gradual process was foretold by ancient prophets” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1989, 40; or *Ensign*, May 1989, 32).

- How did Nephi describe the ways that Satan would “flatter” some people? (See 2 Nephi 28:22.) Why do you think Satan would want us to believe that there is no devil and no hell? How can studying the Book of Mormon help us be spiritually alert and avoid becoming “at ease in Zion”? (2 Nephi 28:24).

President Ezra Taft Benson said: “The Book of Mormon exposes the enemies of Christ. It confounds false doctrines and lays down contention. (See 2 Ne. 3:12.) It fortifies the humble followers of Christ against the evil designs, strategies, and doctrines of the devil in our day. The type of apostates in the Book of Mormon are similar to the type we have today. God, with his infinite foreknowledge, so molded the Book of Mormon that we might see the error and know how to combat false educational, political, religious, and philosophical concepts of our time” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1975, 94–95; or *Ensign*, May 1975, 64).

4. Nephi teaches about the importance of the Book of Mormon.

Read and discuss selected verses from 2 Nephi 29–30.

- Why will some people in the last days reject the Book of Mormon? (See 2 Nephi 29:3; see also 2 Nephi 28:29.) Why should we study the Book of Mormon in addition to the Bible? (See 2 Nephi 29:4–14; see also 2 Nephi 28:30.)
- Nephi prophesied that the Book of Mormon would be successful in bringing the Gentiles (2 Nephi 30:3), the posterity of Lehi (2 Nephi 30:3–6), and the Jews (2 Nephi 30:7) to a belief in Jesus Christ as the Savior. How are these prophecies beginning to be fulfilled?

Conclusion

Explain that through studying the Book of Mormon and living the gospel, we will gain the power to avoid Satan’s deceptive illusions and be guided as we strive to stay on the strait and narrow path. Challenge class members to study the Book of Mormon individually and with their families so that they may receive the blessings the Lord has promised to the righteous.

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

Additional Teaching Ideas

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

1. “A great division among the people” (2 Nephi 30:10)

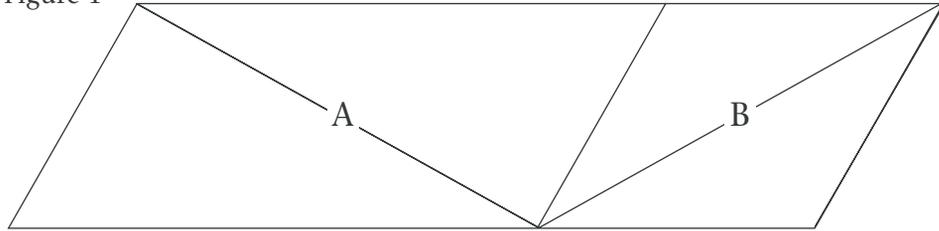
- Nephi prophesied that before the Millennium the Lord would “cause a great division among the people” (2 Nephi 30:10). How did Nephi describe that division? (See 2 Nephi 30:10.) What are some of the blessings the righteous will enjoy in the Millennium? (See 2 Nephi 30:12–18.)

2. Youth activity

Show class members the three optical illusions on this page (if possible, you may want to make and distribute a copy of the optical illusions for each class member). Discuss with class members the questions below the figures. (In figure 1, lines A and B are the same length. In figures 2 and 3, the middle prong does not attach to the other two prongs.) After you have had a few minutes to talk about these illusions, ask the following questions:

- How are these pictures deceptive? What are some illusions Satan uses to deceive us? What can we do to see, or understand, the truth?

Figure 1



Which is longer, A or B?

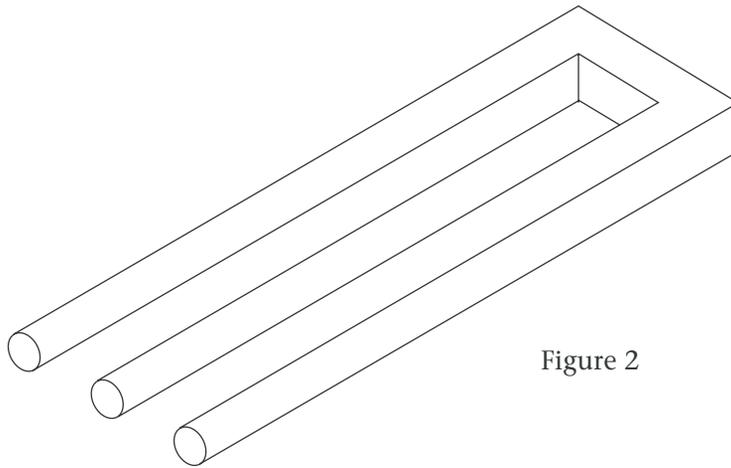


Figure 2

Where do the middle prongs attach?

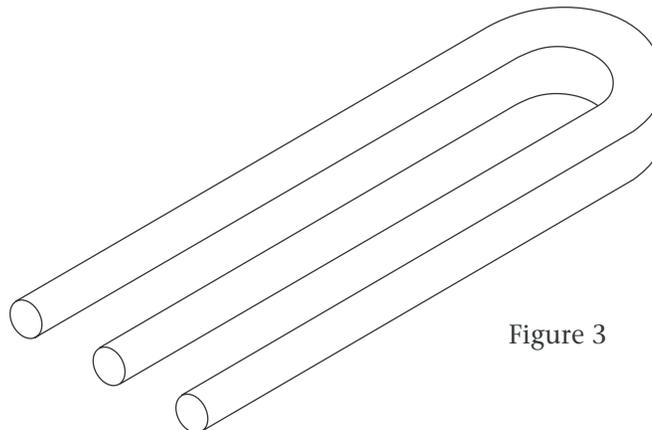


Figure 3

“Press Forward with a Steadfastness in Christ”

Lesson
11

2 Nephi 31–33

Purpose To help class members understand the doctrine of Christ and have an increased desire to press forward, feasting on His words.

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. 2 Nephi 31:1–18. Nephi teaches of the doctrine of Christ. He teaches that Jesus was baptized to “fulfil all righteousness” and that we must be baptized and follow Him. He also teaches about the blessings and power of the Holy Ghost.
 - b. 2 Nephi 31:19–21. Nephi teaches that we must press forward and endure to the end.
 - c. 2 Nephi 32. Nephi speaks of the importance of feasting on the words of Christ and praying always.
 - d. 2 Nephi 33. Nephi declares that people will believe his words if they believe in Christ. He warns that we will be judged according to our acceptance or rejection of his words.
2. Additional reading: Moroni 7:13–17; Doctrine and Covenants 20:37, 71–74.

Suggestions for Lesson Development

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

Ask class members to describe a feast. What kinds of foods would be on the table? How is a feast different from an ordinary meal? After you have had a few moments to discuss this, ask a class member to read 2 Nephi 32:3, beginning with “Wherefore, I said unto you.” Tell the class that the Lord has invited us to a feast—one that will give us eternal life. This lesson discusses Nephi’s teachings on how to live the doctrine of Christ and feast on His words.

Scripture Discussion and Application Nephi stands as one of the most valiant of all the sons of God. Though he experienced family strife, warfare, and other trials, he loved the Lord with all his heart. He was full of faith, zeal, and integrity, and he never wavered in his obedience. As you study the assigned chapters, remember that these words are among Nephi’s last.

1. Nephi teaches of the doctrine of Christ.

Read and discuss selected verses from 2 Nephi 31:1–18. Point out that Nephi began his final writings by saying that he would “speak concerning the doctrine of Christ” (2 Nephi 31:2). Ask class members to ponder this phrase and what it might mean as they discuss chapter 31. Explain that later in the lesson you will ask for their thoughts on what the “doctrine of Christ” is.

- Nephi began by reminding the people that he had previously spoken about Jesus' baptism (2 Nephi 31:4). Why was Jesus baptized? (See 2 Nephi 31:5.) How did He "fulfil all righteousness" by being baptized? (See 2 Nephi 31:6–7. You may want to point out that President Joseph F. Smith said that to fulfil all righteousness is "to fulfil the law" [in Conference Report, Apr. 1912, 9].)
- According to 2 Nephi 31:9, for what other reason was Jesus baptized? Why do we need baptism? (Have class members read 2 Nephi 31:13, 17 and Doctrine and Covenants 20:37, 71–74 to find answers to this question. Summarize their answers on the chalkboard. Some answers are listed below.)
 - a. To receive the gift of the Holy Ghost (2 Nephi 31:13).
 - b. To receive a remission of sins (2 Nephi 31:17).
 - c. To enter the gate for the path to eternal life (2 Nephi 31:17).
 - d. To receive membership in the Lord's Church (D&C 20:37, 71–74).
- Nephi exhorted his people to "follow the Son, with full purpose of heart, acting no hypocrisy and no deception before God" (2 Nephi 31:13). What do you think it means to act without hypocrisy or deception before God? How can following the Son "with full purpose of heart" help us avoid hypocrisy and deception?
- What gift will we receive when we show our willingness "to follow [the] Savior down into the water" through baptism? (2 Nephi 31:13). How did Nephi describe the way a person could speak after being baptized and receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost? (See 2 Nephi 31:13.) What does it mean to "speak with the tongue of angels"? (See 2 Nephi 32:2–3. It means to speak the words of Christ by the power of the Holy Ghost.) In what situations might we be blessed to speak with the "tongue of angels"? (Answers may include when we are teaching or testifying to friends and family, during a talk in church, or when we pray.)
- Nephi also taught that after baptism we receive a remission of sins "by fire and by the Holy Ghost" (2 Nephi 31:17). Why do you think Nephi used the word "fire" in describing this process? (Just as fire purifies and cleanses, the Holy Ghost cleanses from sin those who sincerely repent and are baptized.)
- Nephi taught that the Holy Ghost "witnesses of the Father and the Son" (2 Nephi 31:18). Why is it essential for us to receive a testimony of the Father and the Son through the Holy Ghost?
- In what ways can a witness from the Holy Ghost come to us? (See D&C 8:2 and the following quotation.) Why is it important to understand how the Holy Ghost speaks to us? (See 2 Nephi 32:5.)

President Boyd K. Packer taught: "The Holy Ghost speaks with a voice that you *feel* more than you *hear*. It is described as a 'still small voice'" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1994, 77; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 60).

Note: Many times members of the Church feel the influence of the Spirit but are not aware that the feelings they are experiencing are from the Holy Ghost. On occasion throughout the year, when you feel the influence of the Spirit during the lesson, you may want to stop and share your feelings with class members. Explain that they may not feel the influence of the Spirit in exactly the same way you do, but that the influence of the Spirit brings peace and joy.

2. Nephi teaches that we must press forward and endure to the end.

Read and discuss 2 Nephi 31:19–21. Explain to class members that Nephi taught that baptism is the gate to enter the strait and narrow path to eternal life. He also taught what it means to walk in this path.

- What question did Nephi ask in 2 Nephi 31:19? What is the answer to this question? (See 2 Nephi 31:19–20.) What do you think it means to “press forward”? (To move forward with determination, regardless of adversity or distraction.) What are some things that might distract us from pressing forward? Why is pressing forward an important part of enduring to the end?
- What does it mean to have “a steadfastness in Christ”? (2 Nephi 31:20). How can following Christ help us have a “perfect brightness of hope”? What are some ways we can help one another in our efforts to press forward? What can we do to help new members of the Church as they begin their journeys along the path?

President Gordon B. Hinckley taught: “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).

- Based on Nephi’s teachings in 2 Nephi 31, how would you define “the doctrine of Christ”? (See 2 Nephi 31:13, 15; see also 3 Nephi 11:31–40. Answers should include believing in Christ, repenting, being baptized, receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, and enduring to the end.)

3. Nephi speaks of the importance of feasting on the words of Christ.

Read and discuss selected verses from 2 Nephi 32.

- In 2 Nephi 32, Nephi gave additional instructions about what we must do after we have entered in the path to eternal life (2 Nephi 32:1–3). What specific instruction is given in verse three? What sources do we have for receiving the words of Christ?
- What do you think it means to feast on these words? (See the quotation below.) How is “feasting” different from reading or even studying? How can we help others feast?

Elder Neal A. Maxwell said: “We need to feast upon the words of Christ in the scriptures and as these words come to us from living prophets. Just nibbling occasionally will not do. (See 2 Nephi 31:20 and 32:3.) Feasting means partaking with relish and delight and savoring—not gorging episodically in heedless hunger, but partaking gratefully, dining with delight, at a sumptuous spread carefully and lovingly prepared . . . over the centuries” (*Wherefore Ye Must Press Forward* [1977], 28).

- What promise did Nephi give regarding the words of Christ? (See 2 Nephi 32:3.) How have you found this to be true?

- Nephi taught that the Spirit teaches, or encourages, a person to pray (2 Nephi 32:8). Why is it important that we pray before we perform “any thing unto the Lord”? (2 Nephi 32:9). How have you been blessed as you have followed this counsel?

4. Nephi declares that people will believe his words if they believe in Christ.

Read and discuss selected verses from 2 Nephi 33. Explain that this chapter contains Nephi’s testimony of the truth of his words and of their importance to all people.

- Why are Nephi’s words “of great worth”? (See 2 Nephi 33:3–5.) How can we learn of the worth of these words? How can we know that the words of Nephi are true? (See 2 Nephi 33:10; see also Moroni 7:13–17.)
- Nephi said that we will meet him “face to face” at the judgment bar (2 Nephi 33:11). How could Nephi’s words “condemn [us] at the last day”? (See 2 Nephi 33:14. If we choose to reject these words or disobey the principles they teach, we will be cut off from the presence of the Lord.)
- Among Nephi’s last written words is the declaration “For thus hath the Lord commanded me, and I must obey” (2 Nephi 33:15). Why is this a fitting end to Nephi’s writings? What have you learned from Nephi’s example that can help you as you strive to be more obedient?

Conclusion

Summarize again the doctrine of Christ, which includes believing in Christ, repenting, being baptized, receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, and enduring to the end.

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

Additional Teaching Ideas

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

1. Hymn

With class members, sing or read the words to “Press Forward, Saints” (*Hymns*, no. 81).

2. Overcoming barriers to understanding

- Read and discuss 2 Nephi 32:7. Why did the Spirit stop Nephi from speaking? How are the problems mentioned in these verses still prevalent today? How can we help each other avoid these pitfalls?

“Seek Ye for the Kingdom of God”

Lesson
12

Jacob 1–4

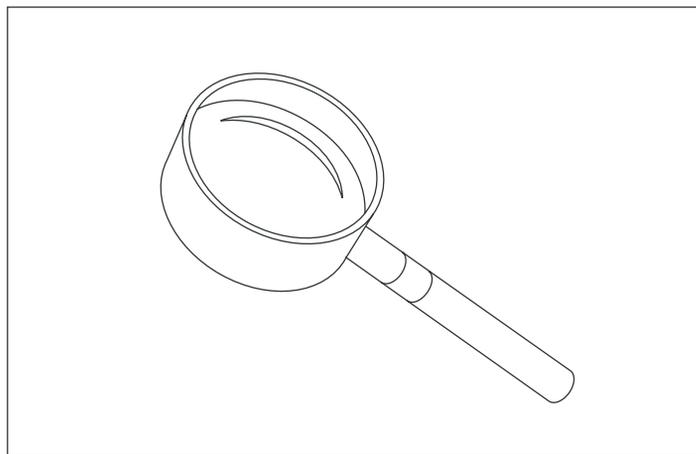
Purpose To help class members feel a greater desire to magnify their callings, be chaste, and invite others to come unto Christ.

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. Jacob 1. Jacob magnifies his calling from the Lord to preach repentance to the people.
 - b. Jacob 2–3. Jacob warns against the love of riches, pride, and unchastity. He promises the pure in heart that God will console them in their afflictions as they look to Him, receive His word, and pray in faith.
 - c. Jacob 4. Jacob testifies of the Atonement of Jesus Christ. He warns the people against “looking beyond the mark.”
2. If *Family Home Evening Video Supplement 2* (53277) is available, you may want to prepare to show “Repentance: It’s Never Too Late,” a six-minute segment.
3. If you use the attention activity, bring a magnifying glass to class (or draw one on the chalkboard before class begins).

Suggestions for Lesson Development

Attention Activity As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. Display the magnifying glass (or draw one on the chalkboard before class).



- What does a magnifying glass do? What does the word “magnify” mean? (To enlarge, to increase in significance, to cause to be held in greater esteem or respect.) What does it mean to “magnify” a calling in the Church?

Have a class member read Jacob 1:17–19 aloud. Invite the other class members to identify phrases that describe how Jacob magnified his calling from the Lord. You may want to list their answers on the chalkboard. The list could include the following:

- a. Obtained his errand from the Lord (Jacob 1:17).
- b. Had been consecrated, or set apart (Jacob 1:18).
- c. Took responsibility (Jacob 1:19).
- d. Taught the word of God with all diligence (Jacob 1:19).
- e. Labored with his might (Jacob 1:19).

Explain that when Nephi neared the end of his mortal life, he gave his younger brothers, Jacob and Joseph, responsibility for the spiritual welfare of the Nephites. Jacob felt the weight of his calling and sorrowed over the growing pride that led his people to be greedy and unchaste. He strongly exhorted them to repent—to be reconciled to God through the Atonement. Invite class members to think about their own callings in the Church and how they might better magnify them.

Scripture Discussion
and Application

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

1. Jacob magnifies his calling from the Lord.

Discuss Jacob 1. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud. Explain that Jacob was a son of Lehi and Sariah and was born in the wilderness. He saw the Savior in his youth, and he was ordained to the priesthood (2 Nephi 2:4; 6:2; 11:3). He became custodian of the small plates and succeeded Nephi in the ministry.

- When Nephi gave the small plates to Jacob, he also gave Jacob specific instructions. What did Nephi instruct Jacob to record on these plates? (See Jacob 1:1–4.) Why was it important to record and preserve this information? (See Jacob 1:5–8.) What do these verses teach us about some of the things we should be recording about our lives?
- Jacob wrote that his people “loved Nephi exceedingly” (Jacob 1:10). Why did they have this great love for Nephi? (See Jacob 1:10.) How have you felt toward those who have labored to serve you?
- What did Jacob mean when he said that he “first obtained [his] errand from the Lord” before he taught the people? (Jacob 1:17–18). How do we obtain our errand from the Lord? (By being called and set apart.) How can we find out what the Lord wants us to do in our callings?
- What did Jacob say would happen if he and Joseph did not teach the people diligently? (See Jacob 1:19.) Why is it so important that we magnify our callings? (If you did not use the attention activity, take a moment to discuss what it means to magnify a calling.)
- What are some good examples you have seen of people magnifying their callings? How can we better magnify our callings? (See D&C 58:26–28.) How have you been blessed as you have done your best to fulfill your callings?

2. Jacob warns against the love of riches, pride, and unchastity.

Discuss Jacob 2–3. Invite class members to read selected verses.

- As he began to preach to the people of Nephi, Jacob said that he was “weighed down with much more desire and anxiety” than he had been before (Jacob 2:3). Why was Jacob’s soul “burdened”? (See Jacob 2:5–9; see also Jacob 1:15–16.) Why do you think that Jacob described sin as “labor”? (Jacob 2:5).
- How did the search for material wealth become a stumbling block to the Nephites of Jacob’s day? (See Jacob 2:12–16.) How can obtaining an abundance of material wealth lead to pride? What are the proper ways to use wealth? What counsel did Jacob give to help us avoid the misuse of wealth? (See Jacob 2:17–21.)

President Spencer W. Kimball taught:

“The possession of riches does not necessarily constitute sin. But sin may arise in the acquisition and use of wealth. . . . ‘For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.’ (1 Tim. 6:10–11.)

“Book of Mormon history eloquently reveals the corrosive effect of the passion for wealth. . . . Had the people used their wealth for good purposes they could have enjoyed a continuing prosperity. But they seemed unable for a sustained period to be simultaneously wealthy and righteous” (*The Miracle of Forgiveness* [1969], 47–48).

- After warning the people about pride and the love of riches, Jacob called them to repentance for their immoral behavior. How were the Nephites rationalizing their immoral behavior? (See Jacob 2:23–24.) How do many people today try to excuse unchastity?
- Why is it important to be morally clean? (See Jacob 2:27–29; see also Exodus 20:14; 1 Corinthians 6:18–20.) How can sexual immorality affect the sinner’s family and friends and all members of society? (See Jacob 2:31–35; 3:10.) What counsel and comfort did Jacob give to those who had been hurt by the immorality of others? (See Jacob 3:1–2.)
- What must a person do to be forgiven of immorality?

President Ezra Taft Benson suggested five steps to be forgiven of unchastity (“The Law of Chastity,” in *Brigham Young University 1987–88 Devotional and Fireside Speeches* [1988], 53–54). Discuss these steps with class members:

“1. Flee immediately from any situation you are in that is either causing you to sin or that may cause you to sin.”

“2. Plead with the Lord for the power to overcome.”

“3. Let your priesthood leaders help you resolve the transgression and come back into full fellowship with the Lord.”

“4. Drink from the divine fountain [the scriptures and words of the prophets] and fill your lives with positive sources of power.”

“5. Remember that through proper repentance you can become clean again.”

- According to Jacob, how were the Lamanites blessed for being chaste? (See Jacob 3:5–7.) What are the blessings of being morally clean?

3. Jacob testifies of the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

Read and discuss selected verses from Jacob 4. If you are using the video presentation “Repentance: It’s Never Too Late,” show it now.

- After calling his people to repentance, Jacob ended his sermon by testifying of the hope of forgiveness through the Atonement. How do the scriptures and the prophets help us gain a testimony of the Atonement? (See Jacob 4:4–6.) How can we obtain the hope in Christ that Jacob spoke of? (See Jacob 4:10–12.)
- What do you think it meant that the Jews looked “beyond the mark”? (See Jacob 4:14. The Jews delighted in expounding the difficult texts of scripture, but without faith and the help of the Holy Ghost they could not understand them. They despised the “words of plainness” in the scriptures and looked for salvation in some way other than through Jesus Christ.)
- How might we sometimes “look beyond the mark” in our daily living? How can we be more diligent in remembering the importance of the Savior in our lives?

To conclude this section, have a class member read Mosiah 3:17 aloud.

Conclusion

Explain that Jacob’s teachings help us understand the importance of magnifying our callings and avoiding pride and immorality. By emphasizing the Atonement at the conclusion of his sermon, Jacob taught that we must rely on the Savior.

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

Additional Teaching Ideas

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

1. Jacob condemns the unauthorized practice of plural marriage

- Whom did the Nephites claim as examples to justify their whoredoms? (See Jacob 2:23–24.) Why were David and Solomon unworthy examples? (See D&C 132:38–39. The Lord gave wives and concubines to David and Solomon, but they sinned by marrying additional wives outside of the covenant.) You may want to explain that anciently, a concubine was not an immoral mistress, but a legal wife of lesser social standing (see Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. [1966], 154).
- What marriage law did Jacob teach to the Nephites? (See Jacob 2:27–28.)

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught, “I have constantly said no man shall have but one wife at a time, unless the Lord directs otherwise” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 324).

Explain that the Lord gave such direction (see D&C 132), but He later withdrew His sanction of plural marriage when conditions changed (see Official Declaration 1). Emphasize that the law of the Lord regarding marriage today is the same as it was in Jacob’s day.

2. Recognizing and avoiding abuse

Jacob rebuked the Nephite men for their mistreatment of their wives and children (see Jacob 2:9, 31–32, 35). Latter-day Church leaders have also given strong warnings against abuse of any kind. The First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve have warned that “individuals who violate covenants of chastity, who abuse spouse or offspring, or who fail to fulfill family responsibilities will one day stand accountable before God” (“The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102).

Abuse can be defined as treating or speaking to someone in a way that is demeaning or that causes injury or serious offense. As appropriate, discuss the following specific definitions and instructions with class members:

Child abuse occurs when someone who is in a position of trust or control threatens or causes physical or emotional harm to a child. It includes physical abuse or neglect, emotional abuse, and sexual abuse.

Spouse abuse may also be physical, emotional, or sexual. Emotional abuse can consist of name calling, demeaning statements, unrighteous control or compulsion, threats, isolation, intimidation, or manipulation. Physical abuse includes withholding necessities and using physical violence such as pushing, choking, scratching, pinching, restraining, or hitting. Sexual abuse may be either emotional or physical and includes sexual harassment, the inflicting of pain, and the use of force or intimidation.

Every effort should be made by priesthood leaders, family members, and others to prevent abuse and to assist in the healing of an abused person. Leaders and family members should also try to help the abuser repent; Church discipline may be necessary to bring this about.

If class members need more information on abuse, they may ask the bishop for copies of two pamphlets produced by the Church, *Preventing and Responding to Child Abuse* (35655) and *Preventing and Responding to Spouse Abuse* (35869). In addition, they should feel welcome to ask the bishop for specific counsel on preventing and responding to abuse.

- What can we do to help recognize and prevent abuse? How can we help those who have been hurt by abuse?

3. Jacob warns against racial prejudice

- Why did many of the Nephites look down on the Lamanites? (See Jacob 3:5, 9.) What did Jacob say about this prejudice? (See Jacob 3:8–9.) How can prejudice prevent the Church from fulfilling its divine mission?

President Howard W. Hunter said:

“The restored gospel is a message of divine love for all people everywhere, based upon the conviction that all humans are children of the same God. . . .

“ . . . The validity, the power of our faith is not bound by history, nationality, or culture. It is not the peculiar property of any one people or any one age” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1991, 23–24; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1991, 19).

Lesson
13

The Allegory of the Olive Trees

Jacob 5–7

Purpose To help class members better understand Zenos’s allegory of the olive trees and how it applies in our day.

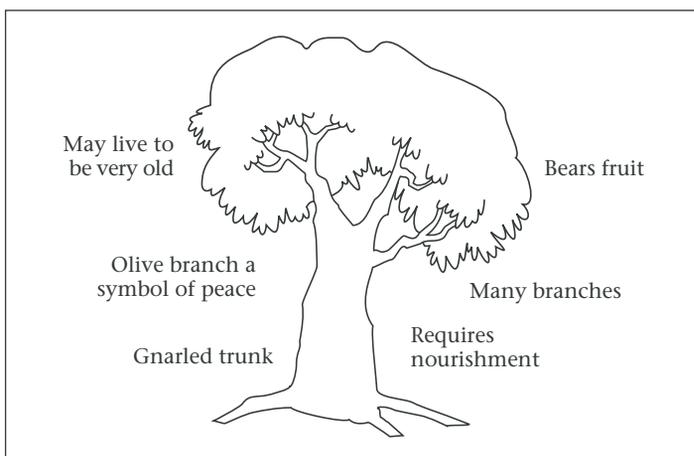
Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. Jacob 5. Jacob quotes Zenos’s allegory of the tame and wild olive trees, which describes the history and destiny of the house of Israel.
 - b. Jacob 6. Jacob exhorts his listeners to repent and follow Christ.
2. Additional reading: 1 Nephi 10:12–14; 22:3–5; Bible Dictionary, “Olive Tree,” 739–40.

Suggestions for Lesson Development

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

Draw an olive tree on the chalkboard, and ask class members to tell as many things about an olive tree as they can think of in one minute. Write their answers on the chalkboard around the illustration. If class members need help, suggest a few of the answers shown below or listed in the second additional teaching idea.



Explain that this lesson discusses how the olive tree was used as a symbol to describe the Lord’s dealings with the house of Israel.

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

1. Jacob quotes Zenos's allegory of the olive trees.

Discuss Jacob 5. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud. Explain that in this chapter Jacob quotes an allegory from Zenos, a Hebrew prophet mentioned several times in the Book of Mormon. An allegory is a literary device in which one object or event is used to describe or represent another. Zenos's allegory uses olive trees to summarize Israel's history and foretell its destiny.

- What symbols did Zenos use in this allegory? What are the meanings of these symbols?

Allowing class members to contribute as much as possible, identify the main symbols from the allegory and their meanings. List these in a chart on the chalkboard. The completed chart will look something like this:

ZENOS'S ALLEGORY	
<u>Symbol</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
Vineyard	The world
Master of the vineyard	Jesus Christ
Tame olive tree	The house of Israel, the Lord's covenant people
Wild olive tree	Gentiles (people not born into the house of Israel)
Branches	Groups of people
Servants	Prophets and others called to serve
Fruit	Lives or works of people

Leave this chart on the chalkboard throughout the lesson.

- The allegory begins with the master of the vineyard finding that his tame olive tree is beginning to decay (Jacob 5:3–4). What does this decay represent? (Apostasy.) What did the master of the vineyard do when he found his tame olive tree decaying? (See Jacob 5:4–14. You may need to explain that grafting is a process in which part of a second plant is joined to a first plant in such a way that it becomes a permanent part of the first plant.) Why did the master ask the servant to graft in some wild branches? (See Jacob 5:11, 18.)
- What does grafting represent in this allegory? (Bringing Gentiles into the house of Israel through baptism.) When was the gospel first taken to the Gentiles? (See Acts 10.)
- What is represented by transplanting the tame branches into distant parts of the vineyard? (See 1 Nephi 10:12–13.) What specific groups might these tame branches represent? (See 1 Nephi 2:19–20; 22:3–4.) Why was Israel scattered? (See Amos 9:8–9.)
- The master of the vineyard repeatedly worked with his servant to prune, dig about, and nourish his tree. What does this suggest about Jesus Christ's involvement in the lives of His people?
- When the master visited the vineyard for the second time, what did he discover about the wild branches that were grafted into the tame tree? (See Jacob 5:15–18.) What does the bearing of good fruit symbolize? How can new converts add life and strength to the Church?

- What did the master find when he visited the natural (tame) branches he had planted in various places around the vineyard? (See Jacob 5:19–25. Point out that the branches planted in poor ground brought forth good fruit, while the branches planted in good ground yielded both good and wild fruit.) What application might these situations have for us today?
- When the master visited the vineyard the third time, what had happened to all the fruit? (See Jacob 5:29–32, 37–42.) What do the many kinds of corrupt fruit symbolize? (Universal apostasy.) What caused the apostasy? (See Jacob 5:37, 40, 48.) What might the “loftiness” of the vineyard symbolize? How can our own loftiness, or pride, prevent us from bearing good fruit?
- What does the master’s response to his corrupted vineyard tell us about the Lord’s feelings for His people? (See Jacob 5:41, 47.) How does knowing that the Lord loves you make a difference in your life?

You may want to point out other verses that illustrate the Lord’s love for us. Some suggestions are given below:

- a. “I will prune it, and dig about it, and nourish it, that . . . it perish not” (Jacob 5:4).
 - b. “It grieveth me that I should lose this tree” (Jacob 5:7).
 - c. “What shall we do unto the tree, that I may preserve again good fruit thereof unto mine own self?” (Jacob 5:33).
 - d. “I may have joy again in the fruit of my vineyard” (Jacob 5:60).
- What did the master decide to do to save his corrupted vineyard? (See Jacob 5:49–54, 58, 62–64. He decided to nourish and prune the vineyard once more and graft some of the transplanted branches back into the original tree.) What does this final nourishing, pruning, and grafting represent? (See 1 Nephi 10:14; 2 Nephi 29:14; D&C 33:3–6. The Restoration of the gospel and the gathering of scattered Israel.)
 - Who are the “other servants” mentioned in Jacob 5:61, 70? (See D&C 133:8.) Although these servants are few, what are the results of their efforts? (See Jacob 5:71–75.) How can we help in this final nourishing, pruning, and grafting in the Lord’s vineyard?

2. Jacob exhorts his listeners to repent and follow Christ.

Read and discuss selected verses from Jacob 6.

- What did Jacob prophesy after relating Zenos’s allegory? (See Jacob 6:1.) What time period did Jacob refer to in Jacob 6:2? (The latter days.) What does this tell us about the relevance of Zenos’s allegory to us?
- Have a class member read Jacob 6:4–5 aloud. What do these verses teach about how the Savior will recover Israel in the last days?
- What gospel principles did Jacob emphasize after testifying that the events in Zenos’s allegory would all come to pass? (See Jacob 6:3–13.) What are the responsibilities of those who “have been nourished by the good word of God”? (See Jacob 6:11–12; Moroni 6:3–4.) What are some specific ways we can fulfill these responsibilities? (Emphasize that every member of the Church can fulfill these responsibilities. For example, we can invite our nonmember friends to

talk with the missionaries, we can serve diligently as home teachers and visiting teachers, and couples can serve full-time missions together.)

Conclusion

President Joseph Fielding Smith said, “Today Latter-day Saints are going to all parts of the world as servants in the vineyard to gather this fruit and lay it in store for the time of the coming of the Master” (*Answers to Gospel Questions*, comp. Joseph Fielding Smith Jr., 5 vols. [1957–66], 4:142). Emphasize that we should participate in this great gathering. Because we have been nourished by the Lord, we are obligated to help others receive this nourishment.

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

Additional Teaching Ideas

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

1. Sherem’s false teachings

Discuss the account of Sherem, found in Jacob 7:1–23.

- How did Sherem lead many people away from the truth? (See Jacob 7:1–7.) What evidence do you see that some people today use similar methods to lead others away from Christ?
- How was Jacob able to confound Sherem? (See Jacob 7:8–22.) How can we protect ourselves from the deceptions of anti-Christ? (See Jacob 7:23; Romans 16:17–18; Ephesians 4:11–15.)

President Joseph Fielding Smith said: “*There is not anything in this world of as great importance to us as obedience to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Let us search these scriptures. Let us know what the Lord has revealed. Let us put our lives in harmony with his truth. Then we will not be deceived*” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. [1954–56], 1:301).

2. Additional information about olive trees

The more we know about olive trees, the better we can understand why Zenos was inspired to use this particular tree to symbolize Israel. Share the following information as appropriate during the lesson (if needed, use some of this information as part of the attention activity):

- a. The olive tree is a living thing that can produce much fruit. It requires constant nourishment to survive.
- b. The olive branch is traditionally a symbol of peace.
- c. The tree must be carefully pruned to be fruitful and productive.
- d. For a wild olive tree to become tame and productive, its main stem must be cut back completely, and a branch from a tame olive tree must be grafted into the stem of the wild one.
- e. An olive tree may produce fruit for centuries. Some trees now growing in Israel have been producing abundantly for over 400 years.
- f. As a tree grows old and begins to die, its roots send up new shoots, which, if grafted and pruned, will mature to full-grown olive trees. Thus, the root of the tree may go on producing new trees and fruit for thousands of years.

3. Youth activity

The allegory of the olive trees can be difficult for youth to understand. You may want to have class members illustrate the allegory on the chalkboard as you discuss it. Or you could set up the classroom as if it were the vineyard (the world) and have class members walk through the allegory as you discuss it, as shown below:

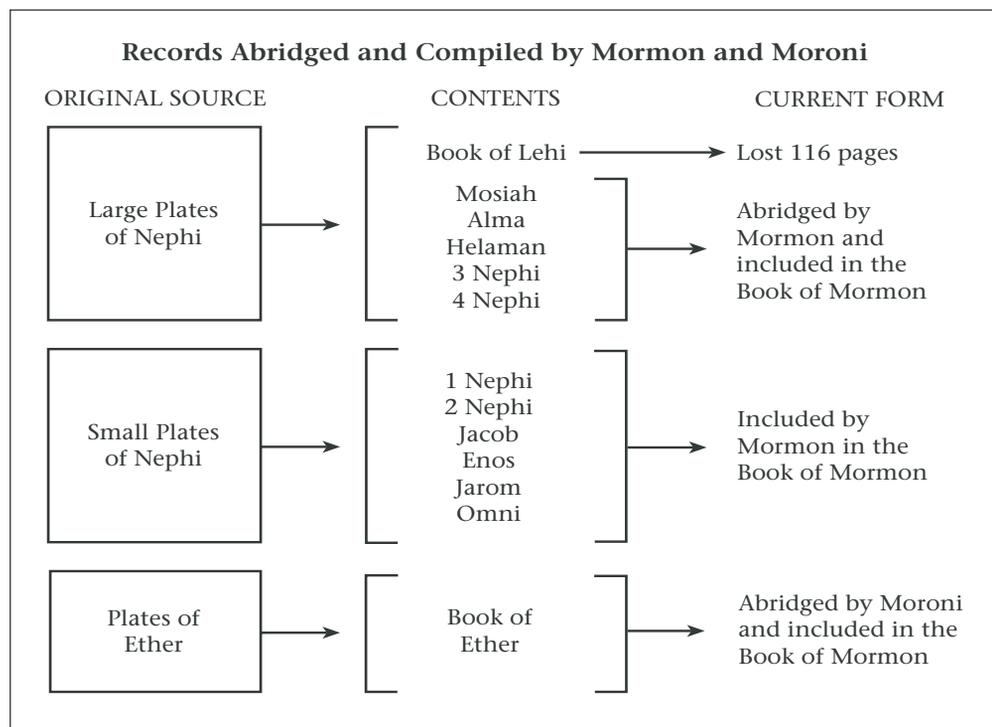
Sketch an olive tree on a poster and label it *Jerusalem (the House of Israel)*. Place this poster on the floor in the middle of the room. Sketch a branch of an olive tree on each of several other posters. Label these posters as areas where parts of the house of Israel were dispersed (*The Americas, Europe, Africa, Asia*, and so on). Place these posters on the floor around the perimeter of the classroom. Have class members move from poster to poster at appropriate times in the discussion of the allegory. For example, have some class members represent the house of Israel (tame, or natural, branches) and have some represent Gentiles (wild branches). When you discuss the master of the vineyard grafting in wild branches, have the class members representing Gentiles move to the center poster. When you talk about the master of the vineyard taking natural branches and planting them throughout the vineyard, have the class members representing the house of Israel move to the posters on the perimeter of the classroom.

“For a Wise Purpose”

Enos, Jarom, Omni, Words of Mormon

Purpose To emphasize that the scriptures have been prepared and preserved for us.

- Preparation**
1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. Enos. Influenced by the teachings of his father, Enos prays for forgiveness. Then he prays for his people, the Nephites, and for their enemies, the Lamanites. He asks the Lord to preserve the records of the Nephites.
 - b. Jarom. Jarom records that the Lamanites come to battle often against the Nephites. The Nephites withstand the Lamanites and prosper in the land because prophets and teachers persuade them to repent continually, keep the commandments of God, and look forward to the coming of the Messiah.
 - c. Omni. Omni, Amaron, Chemish, Abinadom, and Amaleki keep the records. The Nephites experience seasons of peace and seasons of war, and the “more wicked part” of them are destroyed. Mosiah and his people encounter the people of Zarahemla (the Mulekites).
 - d. Words of Mormon. Mormon adds the small plates of Nephi to his abridgment of the large plates of Nephi, knowing that he does so “for a wise purpose.”
 2. If you use the attention activity, ask a class member to prepare to share an incident or feeling that would have been forgotten if the class member had not recorded it in his or her journal. Or prepare to share such an incident or feeling from your own journal.
 3. Copy the following chart onto the chalkboard or a large piece of paper:



4. If the picture Mormon Abridging the Plates is available, prepare to use it during the lesson (62520; Gospel Art Picture Kit 306).

Suggestions for Lesson Development

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

Ask the assigned class member to tell about an incident or feeling that would have been forgotten if he or she had not recorded it in a journal (or tell about one yourself). Have the class member answer the following questions:

- Why did you write about this incident (or feeling)? How has it benefited you to have this information written in your journal?

Then have all class members discuss the following question:

- What are some reasons Nephi gave for the importance of keeping his written record? (See 1 Nephi 6:4; 9:5; 19:3; 2 Nephi 25:26.)

Explain that the keepers of the records that have become the Book of Mormon labored mightily to preserve the word of the Lord and the experiences of their people in learning to keep His commandments. They recognized the importance of recording this information for future generations. Because of their diligence in keeping the records and because of God's hand in protecting and preserving the records, we are able to learn from the spiritual successes and failures of those who have gone before us.

Point out that the four books discussed in today's lesson—Enos, Jarom, Omni, and Words of Mormon—were written by eight men who, like Nephi, understood the importance of keeping sacred records.

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

1. Enos prays for himself, the Nephites, and the Lamanites.

Discuss the book of Enos. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud.

- Whom did Enos credit with teaching him the gospel? (See Enos 1:1.) Who was Enos's father? (See Jacob 7:27.) What does it mean to teach children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord"? (See the quotation below.) How can the teaching and example of righteous parents help children develop faith in the Savior?

President Gordon B. Hinckley counseled parents to be righteous examples for their children, as Enos's father was for him: "Treat your children as sons and daughters of God. Be kind. Love them. Respect them. Counsel with them. Teach them. Pray for them. Guide them and God will bless both them and you" (in *Church News*, 1 Nov. 1997, 2).

- What did Jacob's teachings influence Enos to do? (See Enos 1:3–4.) How did Enos describe his prayer to the Lord? (See Enos 1:2.) Why do you think Enos

called his experience a “wrestle”? What can his account of seeking forgiveness teach us about repenting?

- How did Enos know his sins had been forgiven? (See Enos 1:5–6.) How can we know our sins have been forgiven? (See the quotation below.) What enabled Enos to receive forgiveness of his sins? (See Enos 1:7–8.) Why is faith in Christ necessary for us to repent and receive forgiveness?

President Harold B. Lee said: “If the time comes when you have done all that you can to repent of your sins . . . and have made amends and restitution to the best of your ability . . . , then you will want that confirming answer as to whether or not the Lord has accepted of you. In your soul-searching, if you seek for and you find that peace of conscience, by that token you may know that the Lord has accepted of your repentance” (*Stand Ye in Holy Places* [1974], 185).

- After Enos learned that his sins were forgiven, what did he pray for? (See Enos 1:9, 11–13.) Why did Enos want to be sure that the records would be preserved? (See Enos 1:13–14.)
- What can we learn about prayer from Enos?
- Enos described the Nephites of his time as a “stiffnecked people” who were only moved by “exceeding harshness” and “exceedingly great plainness of speech” (Enos 1:22–23). What similarities do you see between the Nephites of Enos’s time and some people today?
- What impresses you about Enos’s faith and testimony? (See especially Enos 1:15–18, 26–27.)

2. The Nephites prosper through continual repentance.

Read and discuss selected verses from the book of Jarom.

- What did Jarom say was his purpose in adding to the records? (See Jarom 1:1–2.) Why didn’t Jarom record the prophecies and revelations he had received?
- How did Jarom describe his people, the Nephites? (See Jarom 1:3–4; see also the additional teaching idea.) How were they able to prosper in the land and overcome the Lamanites? (See Jarom 1:5, 7–12.)
- What role did prophets, priests, and teachers play in the success of the Nephites? (See Jarom 1:11–12.) What does it mean to “prick their hearts with the word”? (Jarom 1:12). When has your heart been pricked by the words of a prophet or another Church leader or teacher?
- The Nephite leaders persuaded the people to “look forward unto the Messiah, and believe in him to come as though he already was” (Jarom 1:11; see also Mosiah 3:13). How can we follow this counsel as we prepare for the Savior’s Second Coming?

3. Omni, Amaron, Chemish, Abinadom, and Amaleki keep the records.

Read and discuss selected verses from the book of Omni. Point out that the book of Omni covers approximately 200 years and was written by five record keepers, yet it is only 30 verses long.

- Although the writers of the book of Omni wrote little, each writer obeyed the commandment to keep and preserve the plates. Why was preserving the records so vital?

Explain that the second half of the book of Omni, written by Amaleki, illustrates the importance of preserving the records by showing what happened to a people that had not preserved its records.

- Amaleki recorded the story of Mosiah and his followers, who were commanded by the Lord to leave the land of Nephi. Where were Mosiah and his followers led? (See Omni 1:13.) Whom did they find in the land of Zarahemla? (See Omni 1:14.) Where had these people come from? (See Omni 1:15–16; see also 1 Nephi 1:4, which explains that Zedekiah was king of Jerusalem at the time that Lehi and his family went into the wilderness.)
- Why were the people of Zarahemla (the Mulekites) so happy to see Mosiah and his followers? (See Omni 1:14.) What consequences did Amaleki imply had come to the Mulekites because they did not bring any records with them when they left Jerusalem? (See Omni 1:17. Their language had degenerated and they had lost the knowledge of Jesus Christ and His teachings.) How might we be affected if we did not have the scriptures? (See Mosiah 1:3–5.) How are we affected when we have the scriptures but do not study them?

Explain that by interpreting an engraved stone kept by the Mulekites, Mosiah learned of another civilization, the Jaredites, that had existed in the land (Omni 1:20–22). The Jaredites came to the western hemisphere at the time of the Tower of Babel. Coriantumr, the last survivor of the Jaredite nation, had lived with the Mulekites for a time. Point out that the records of the Jaredites are abridged in the book of Ether, and they will be discussed in later lessons.

- What can we learn about Amaleki from Omni 1:25–26? How can we “offer [our] whole souls as an offering” to the Savior, as Amaleki counseled?

4. Mormon adds the small plates of Nephi to his abridgment of the large plates.

Read and discuss selected verses from the Words of Mormon. Point out that from 1 Nephi through Omni, the Book of Mormon contains a straight chronological account. The Words of Mormon, however, were written more than 500 years after Amaleki completed the book of Omni. If you are using the picture of Mormon abridging the plates, display it now.

- When did Mormon write the Words of Mormon, and why? (See Words of Mormon 1:1–5.)

Explain that after Mormon abridged the large plates of Nephi, he found the small plates of Nephi and included them in his record (Words of Mormon 1:3–5). The first six books of the Book of Mormon, from 1 Nephi through Omni, are a translation of these small plates. The book titled Words of Mormon is Mormon’s explanation of why he included the small plates. It serves as a transition between the records from the small plates and the records from the large plates.

- What were Mormon’s impressions of the small plates? (See Words of Mormon 1:4, 6.) Why did he decide to include the small plates in his record? (See Words of Mormon 1:7.) What was the “wise purpose” to which Mormon referred?

Display the chart showing the records that Mormon and Moroni abridged and compiled (see “Preparation,” item 4). Note that the books that are not listed on the chart (Words of Mormon, Mormon, and Moroni) were written by Mormon and Moroni.

Explain that the small plates of Nephi covered approximately the same time period (600 to 200 B.C.) as the first records in the large plates. There was no apparent need for Mormon to include both in his abridgment. But the Lord knew that the translation of the first records from the large plates would be lost centuries later, when Martin Harris took 116 pages of the Book of Mormon manuscript to show to his family members and friends. After these 116 pages of the translation were lost, the Lord instructed Joseph Smith not to retranslate the same records (D&C 10:8–14). These records are not found in the Book of Mormon today. Instead, the same time period is described through the account from the small plates.

- What did Mormon say was the purpose of the entire sacred record he was abridging? (See Words of Mormon 1:2, 8; see also the title page of the Book of Mormon.) Why is it important that we read the Book of Mormon with this purpose in mind?

Conclusion

Remind class members that the writers of the Book of Mormon kept and preserved the records of their people so that future generations would know the dealings of the Lord with these people. Encourage class members to study the Book of Mormon so that they may be guided and directed by the word of the Lord contained within it.

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

Additional Teaching Idea

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use this idea as part of the lesson.

Feeling the promptings of the Spirit

Ask a class member to read Jarom 1:3 aloud.

- What four conditions did Jarom mention that can keep us from feeling the promptings of the Spirit? (A hard heart, deaf ears, a blind mind, and a stiff neck.)

Discuss with class members what these four symbolic conditions represent and how they prevent us from feeling the promptings of the Spirit.

- What blessings come to those who overcome these conditions? (See Jarom 1:4.)

Lesson
15

“Eternally Indebted to Your Heavenly Father”

Mosiah 1–3

Purpose

To increase class members’ understanding of their indebtedness to God and to encourage them to “[put] off the natural man . . . through the atonement of Christ the Lord” (Mosiah 3:19).

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. Mosiah 1. King Benjamin teaches his sons the importance of the truths contained in the brass plates. He chooses his son Mosiah to succeed him as king and instructs Mosiah to gather the people together.
 - b. Mosiah 2. King Benjamin teaches the people that when they are in the service of others they are in the service of God. He reminds them that they are “eternally indebted to [their] heavenly Father, to render to him all that [they] have and are.”
 - c. Mosiah 3. King Benjamin repeats an angel’s prophecies about Jesus Christ and His Atonement.
2. If the following materials are available, prepare to use them during the lesson:
 - a. The picture King Benjamin (62298; Gospel Art Picture Kit 307).
 - b. “Becoming Children of Christ,” an eleven-minute segment from *Book of Mormon Video Presentations* (53911).

Suggestions for Lesson Development

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

Invite class members to look at the picture on the cover of this lesson manual. Point out that the class member study guide has the same picture on the cover. Then share the following information:

- a. There are 238 chapters in the Book of Mormon.
- b. Only 50 (about 21 percent) of those chapters contain accounts of events that occurred after Jesus’ birth.
- c. Only 18 (about 8 percent) of those chapters contain accounts of Jesus’ visit among the Nephite people.

Ask class members to silently consider how they would answer the following question:

- Why do you think this picture was chosen to represent our study of the Book of Mormon?

Have a class member read Mosiah 3:13 aloud. Emphasize that Jesus Christ is the central figure in the Book of Mormon. His Atonement applies to people who lived before His mortal ministry, just as it applies to those who lived during His mortal ministry and just as it applies to us today. Explain that today’s lesson and

next week's lesson focus on the words of King Benjamin, a prophet-leader who helped his people exercise faith in Jesus Christ hundreds of years before His mortal ministry and Atonement.

Scripture Discussion and Application

Prayerfully select the scripture passages, questions, and other lesson material that will best meet class members' needs. As you prepare and present the lesson, be sure to leave enough time to discuss Mosiah 3, which contains powerful teachings about the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

1. King Benjamin teaches his sons and has Mosiah call the people together.

Discuss Mosiah 1. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud.

- In the book of Mosiah, the first account of Benjamin is not about his reign as king but about his teachings as a father (Mosiah 1:2–8). What does this teach about King Benjamin? What can parents learn from this example?
- What did King Benjamin teach his sons? (See Mosiah 1:2–7. Note that the word *mysteries* in verses 3 and 5 refers to spiritual truths that are known only by revelation.) What was the difference between the Nephites, who studied the scriptures, and the Lamanites, who did not? (See Mosiah 1:5.) How do you see this difference reflected in modern society? How can parents help their children develop a love for the scriptures?
- King Benjamin “gave [Mosiah] charge concerning the records . . . on the plates of brass” (Mosiah 1:16). The Lord has commanded today's prophets, seers, and revelators to see that the scriptures are “preserved in safety” (D&C 42:56). Why is it important that the scriptures be “preserved in safety”? (See Mosiah 1:3–5.)
- Why did King Benjamin ask his son Mosiah to call the people together? (See Mosiah 1:10–12. Note that the name that King Benjamin referred to was the name of Christ. Toward the end of his discourse, King Benjamin taught the people to take the name of Christ upon themselves. You will discuss this teaching as part of lesson 16.)

2. King Benjamin teaches the people of their eternal indebtedness to God.

Read and discuss selected verses from Mosiah 2.

- How did the people organize themselves once they arrived at the temple to hear King Benjamin? (See Mosiah 2:5–6; see also the first additional teaching idea.) What did King Benjamin do when he observed that not all the people could hear his words? (See Mosiah 2:7–8. If you are using the picture of King Benjamin, display it now.) How was this gathering similar to general conference today?
- King Benjamin told the people that he had not commanded them to come together to trifle with his words (Mosiah 2:9; note that to trifle with someone's words is to treat those words lightly). What did he counsel them to do as they listened to his teachings? (See Mosiah 2:9.) What does it mean to open our ears, hearts, and minds to the teachings of living prophets?
- What impresses you about the way Benjamin served as king? (See Mosiah 2:10–16.) What effect did King Benjamin's leadership have on his people? (See Mosiah 1:1; 6:7.)

- What did King Benjamin teach about service? (See Mosiah 2:17–19.) How does our service to others show our gratitude to God? What manner of service inspires others to “thank [their] heavenly King”? (For some examples, see Mosiah 18:8–10; D&C 18:10–16.)
- Have a class member read Mosiah 2:20–21 aloud. What does it mean to be an unprofitable servant? Why are we unprofitable servants to God even if we praise and serve Him with all our souls? (See Mosiah 2:22–25; see also the quotation below and the second additional teaching idea.) What does this teach about Heavenly Father’s love for us?

President Joseph Fielding Smith said: “Do you think it will ever be possible for any one of us, no matter how hard we labor, . . . to pay our Father and Jesus Christ for the blessings we have received from them? The great love, with its accompanying blessings, extended to us through the crucifixion, suffering, and resurrection of Jesus Christ is beyond our mortal comprehension. We never could repay” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1966, 102; or *Improvement Era*, June 1966, 538).

- As unprofitable servants, we are “eternally indebted to [our] heavenly Father, to render to him all that [we] have and are” (Mosiah 2:34). How can we do this? (See Mosiah 2:17, 22; 4:10.) What will Heavenly Father give us when we give Him “all that [we] have and are”? (See Mosiah 2:22, 41; see also D&C 84:38.)
- What are the consequences of refusing to obey the commandments after having been taught them? (See Mosiah 2:36–39.) According to King Benjamin, what is the cause of the torment that is often likened to a lake of fire? (See Mosiah 2:38; see also Mosiah 3:23–27.)

3. King Benjamin repeats an angel’s prophecies about Jesus Christ and His Atonement.

Read and discuss selected verses from Mosiah 3. Explain that before his address to the people, King Benjamin had been visited by an angel who came “to declare glad tidings of great joy” (Mosiah 3:1–4). Mosiah 3 contains the angel’s message.

- Have a class member read Mosiah 3:5–10 aloud. Why did Jesus suffer temptations, pain, hunger, thirst, and fatigue? (See Alma 7:11–12.) Why did He suffer anguish for the wickedness of the people? (See the quotation below for answers to this question and the following three questions.) Why is it important to know that He was the Son of God and of Mary? Why did He give His life? In what ways is this a message of “great joy”? (Mosiah 3:3).

Elder Robert D. Hales said: “What we must remember about the Savior is that He and He alone had the power to lay down His life and take it up again. He had the ability to die from His mortal mother, Mary, and the ability to overcome death from His immortal Father. Our Savior, Jesus Christ, went willingly and deliberately to His death, having told His followers that this would happen. Why? one might ask. The answer: to give immortality to all mankind and the promise of eternal life to those who believed in Him (see John 3:15), to give His own life for a ransom for others (see Matthew 20:28), to overcome Satan’s power, and to make it possible for sins to be forgiven. Without Jesus’ Atonement, there would be an impassable barrier between

God and mortal men and women. When we comprehend the Atonement, we remember Him with awe and gratitude” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1997, 34; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 26).

- According to the angel, who will receive salvation through the Atonement of Jesus Christ? (See the list below.) How does this show the Atonement’s power to ensure “that a righteous judgment might come upon the children of men”? (Mosiah 3:10).
 - a. People “who have died not knowing the will of God concerning them, or who have ignorantly sinned” (Mosiah 3:11; note that from Doctrine and Covenants 137:7–9 we learn that people who die without a knowledge of the gospel but who would have received the gospel with all their hearts will be heirs of the celestial kingdom).
 - b. People with a knowledge of the gospel who repent and exercise faith in Jesus Christ (Mosiah 3:12–13).
 - c. Little children who die in their infancy (Mosiah 3:16, 18, 21; see also D&C 137:10).
- Why are little children “blameless before God”? (See Mosiah 3:16, 21; Moroni 8:12; D&C 29:46. Although “by nature, they fall,” they are “blameless before God” because they are “alive in Christ” through the Atonement.)
- The angel said that “the natural man is an enemy to God” (Mosiah 3:19). What is the meaning of the phrase “natural man”? (See Alma 42:6–10 and the quotation below.)

Elder Bruce R. McConkie said: “After the fall of Adam, man became carnal, sensual, and devilish by nature; he became *fallen man*. . . . All accountable persons on earth inherit this fallen state, this probationary state, this state in which worldly things seem desirable to the carnal nature. Being in this state, ‘the natural man is an enemy to God,’ until he conforms to the great plan of redemption and is born again to righteousness. (Mosiah 3:19.) Thus all mankind would remain lost and fallen forever were it not for the atonement of our Lord. (Alma 42:4–14.)” (*Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. [1966], 267–68).

- How can we “[put] off the natural man”? (See Mosiah 3:19. Discuss answers as shown below.)
 - a. Yield to “the enticings of the Holy Spirit.” How does this help us “[put] off the natural man”? (See 2 Nephi 32:5; Mosiah 5:2; 3 Nephi 28:11.)
 - b. Become “a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord.” What does it mean to be a true saint? (You may want to point out that the word *saint* implies sanctification, or holiness. In the Book of Mormon, the word is used to refer to devoted members of the Lord’s Church. See, for example, the use of the word *saints* in 1 Nephi 14:12 and 2 Nephi 9:18.) How does the Atonement help us become true saints?
 - c. Become “as a child.” How can we become “alive in Christ,” as little children are? (See Mosiah 3:17–19, 21; see also 2 Nephi 25:23–26; Moroni 8:10.)

If you are using the video presentation “Becoming Children of Christ,” show it now.

- Where did the angel say that the knowledge of the Savior would spread? (See Mosiah 3:20.) How is this prophecy being fulfilled? How will it continue to be fulfilled?

Conclusion

If you have not already done so as part of the lesson, ask a class member to read Mosiah 3:19 aloud.

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

Additional Teaching Ideas

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

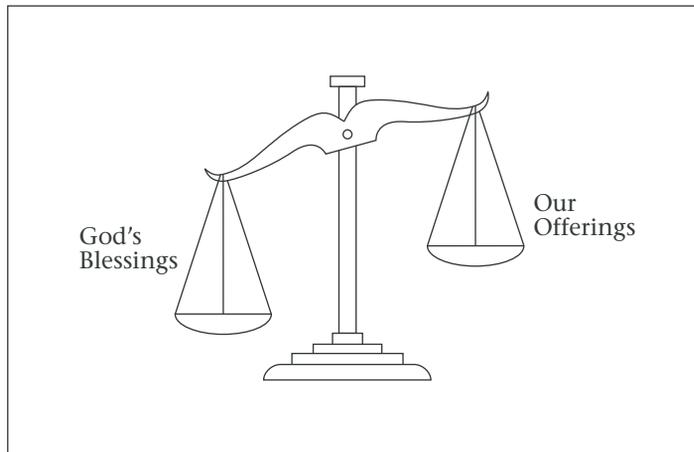
1. “They pitched their tents . . . towards the temple” (Mosiah 2:6)

When the people went to hear King Benjamin speak, they “pitched their tents round about the temple, every man having his tent with the door thereof towards the temple” (Mosiah 2:6). Contrast these people with Lot, who “pitched his tent toward Sodom” (Genesis 13:12). Explain that at first Lot only lived near the wicked city of Sodom, but eventually he and his family lived in the city of Sodom itself (Genesis 14:12).

- What things might we do that are the equivalent of pitching our tents toward Sodom? What things might we do that are the equivalent of pitching our tents toward the temple? How can we point our homes more toward the temple instead of toward worldly places?

2. “Eternally indebted” (Mosiah 2:34)

Draw a scale on the chalkboard, as shown below:



- Why is this scale unbalanced?

Have class members read Mosiah 2:20–25 aloud. As they read, invite them to look for offerings we can give to the Lord and for blessings He gives us. List our offerings on the side of the scale labeled *Our Offerings*. List God's blessings on the side of the scale labeled *God's Blessings*. Help class members see that we will always be indebted to God.

“Ye Shall Be Called the Children of Christ”

Lesson
16

Mosiah 4–6

Purpose To encourage class members to seek and maintain the “mighty change” of heart that comes through exercising faith in Jesus Christ.

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. Mosiah 4:1–12. King Benjamin’s people respond to his words by humbly seeking and receiving a remission of their sins.
 - b. Mosiah 4:13–30. King Benjamin exhorts his people to teach the gospel to their children, impart of their substance to the poor, and obey the commandments of God.
 - c. Mosiah 5–6. All King Benjamin’s people experience a “mighty change” and enter into a covenant to keep the commandments of God and do His will in all things. King Benjamin tells the people that because of the covenant they have made they will be called the children of Christ.
2. If the picture King Benjamin is available, prepare to use it during the lesson (62298; Gospel Art Picture Kit 307).

Suggestions for Lesson Development

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

Write the following headings on the chalkboard:

Left hand of God

Right hand of God

- What does it mean to sit on the right hand of God? (To receive exaltation and live with God again.) What kind of people will be entitled to sit on the right hand of God? on the left hand of God? (See Matthew 25:33–46; D&C 29:27. List class members’ answers to these two questions under the appropriate headings on the chalkboard.)

Explain that at the end of his sermon, King Benjamin told his people what they needed to do to be entitled to sit on the right hand of God. We can learn from King Benjamin’s words because the requirements are the same for us.

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

1. King Benjamin’s people seek and receive a remission of their sins.

Read and discuss Mosiah 4:1–12. If you are using the picture of King Benjamin, display it throughout the lesson.

- After King Benjamin taught his people about the mission of the Savior (see lesson 15), he saw that “they had fallen to the earth” (Mosiah 4:1). Why did the people fall to the earth? (See Mosiah 4:1–2.) How are we “less than the dust of the earth”? (See Helaman 12:4–8; Moses 1:9–10.) Why do you think King Benjamin emphasized his people’s “nothingness” and unworthiness? (See Mosiah 4:5–8, 11–12.) Why is it essential for us to recognize our dependence on the Lord?
- What did understanding their “carnal state” lead King Benjamin’s people to do? (See Mosiah 4:2.) What caused them to become “filled with joy”? (See Mosiah 4:3.) What enabled them to be forgiven of their sins? How did they know they had been forgiven? How can we know that we are forgiven after we repent? (For help in answering this question, you may want to refer to the statement by President Harold B. Lee on page 63.)
- What did King Benjamin teach about how we obtain a remission of our sins? (See Mosiah 4:9–10.) What did he teach about how we *retain* a remission of our sins? (See Mosiah 4:11–12, 26.) What does it mean to retain a remission of our sins?
- How can King Benjamin’s words to his people give us hope when we are discouraged by our weaknesses?

2. King Benjamin teaches his people how to live Christlike lives.

Read and discuss selected verses from Mosiah 4:13–30. You may want to begin this discussion by dividing class members into three groups. Assign each group one of the scripture passages below, and ask them to read the passage together and summarize it in a single sentence. (One possible summary sentence is given after each reference; class members do not need to use these exact statements.)

Group 1: Mosiah 4:13–15 (Teach the children.)

Group 2: Mosiah 4:16–26 (Share with the poor.)

Group 3: Mosiah 4:27–30 (Watch your thoughts, words, and deeds.)

When the three groups have finished reading and summarizing, write the heading *King Benjamin’s Counsel* on the chalkboard. Have one person from each group write the group’s summary sentence on the chalkboard under this heading.

- According to King Benjamin, what obligations do parents have to their children? (See Mosiah 4:14–15.) What conditions in the world today make King Benjamin’s counsel to parents especially important? Why is it so important that parents teach the gospel to their children?

President Gordon B. Hinckley said, “The health of any society, the happiness of its people, their prosperity, and their peace all find their roots in the teaching of children by fathers and mothers” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1993, 79; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, 60).

- How can we teach children to love and serve one another? (Teachers of youth may want to discuss how class members’ examples can influence younger children.)
- King Benjamin also instructed his people to care for the needy (Mosiah 4:16). According to King Benjamin, why do some people refuse to help the needy?

(See Mosiah 4:17, 22.) Why do we have “great cause to repent” if we have this attitude? (See Mosiah 4:18–23.) In what sense are we all beggars? (See Mosiah 4:19–20.)

- Why is charitable service an important characteristic of members of Christ’s Church?
- How can we follow Heavenly Father’s example as we give to the needy? (See Mosiah 4:16, 20–21.) How can we ensure that when we give to the needy, we give the right assistance in the right way?

You may want to explain that there is no single right approach to helping the needy. We should remember the principles taught by King Benjamin and seek the guidance of the Spirit in each situation. You may also want to point out that the Lord has established ways in which we can help the needy. When we give fast offerings or donate money, goods, time, or other service to the Church, we can be confident that our contributions are being used wisely.

- What counsel did King Benjamin give to the poor who could not impart of their substance? (See Mosiah 4:24–25.) How can we develop a generous heart regardless of our financial situation?
- Why do you think serving others helps us retain a remission of our sins? (See Mosiah 4:26.)
- Have a class member read Mosiah 4:27 aloud. What does it mean to do all things “in wisdom and order”? How can you be helped by this counsel?
- King Benjamin taught his people that to avoid sin and maintain their commitment to God, they must watch their thoughts, words, and deeds (Mosiah 4:29–30). How are our thoughts, words, and deeds related? How will our words and deeds be affected when we watch our thoughts?

3. King Benjamin’s people experience a “mighty change” and covenant to do God’s will in all things.

Discuss Mosiah 5–6. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud.

- How did the people know that King Benjamin’s words were true? (See Mosiah 5:2.) What effect did the Spirit of the Lord have on the people? (See Mosiah 5:2–5.) How might our lives and relationships be affected if we “had no more disposition to do evil”?
- Why is it important for us to know that the people who heard King Benjamin’s sermons and experienced a mighty change of heart were already members of the Church?
- Once we have experienced a “mighty change . . . in our hearts” (Mosiah 5:2), what challenges do we face in maintaining this change? How can we meet these challenges?
- What does it mean to become children of Christ? (See Mosiah 5:2, 5–7.) What does it mean to “take upon [ourselves] the name of Christ”? (See Mosiah 5:8–11; see also the quotation on the next page.) What can we do each day to help us keep Christ’s name written in our hearts? (See Mosiah 5:11–15.)

Elder Dallin H. Oaks explained: “Our willingness to take upon us the name of Jesus Christ affirms our commitment to do all that we can to be counted among those whom he will choose to stand at his right hand and be called by his name at the last day. In this sacred sense, our witness that we are willing to take upon us the name of Jesus Christ constitutes our declaration of candidacy for exaltation in the celestial kingdom. Exaltation is eternal life, ‘the greatest of all the gifts of God’ (D&C 14:7)” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1985, 105; or *Ensign*, May 1985, 83).

- How is the covenant made by King Benjamin’s people similar to the covenant we made at baptism and renew each time we take the sacrament? (See Mosiah 5:5, 7–8; D&C 20:37, 77, 79.) Why is it important that we renew this covenant frequently?
- King Benjamin saw that all his people (except those who were too young) had entered into the covenant to obey God’s commandments (Mosiah 6:1–2). Why was it important to record their names?
- Why was it important to appoint teachers and priests over the people? (See Mosiah 6:3.) How do our teachers and Church leaders help us remember the covenants and promises we have made?

Conclusion

Read or have a class member read Mosiah 5:15, the final words of King Benjamin’s address. Point out that these blessings are available to each of us. Encourage class members to seek and maintain that “mighty change” of heart that will enable them to be children of Christ.

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

Additional Teaching Ideas

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

1. “Under this head ye are made free” (Mosiah 5:8)

- In calling his people the children of Christ, King Benjamin said, “Under this head ye are made free” (Mosiah 5:8). How does obedience to the Lord bring freedom?

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that “in obedience there is joy and peace unspotted, unalloyed; and as God has designed our happiness, . . . He never has—He never will institute an ordinance or give a commandment to His people that is not calculated in its nature to promote that happiness” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 256–57).

- How have you seen obedience to God’s commandments bring happiness to your life and the lives of those around you?

2. “How knoweth a man the master whom he has not served?” (Mosiah 5:13)

- King Benjamin asked, “How knoweth a man the master whom he has not served?” (Mosiah 5:13). How have you come to know Christ better through serving Him?

“A Seer . . . Becometh a Great Benefit to His Fellow Beings”

Lesson
17

Mosiah 7–11

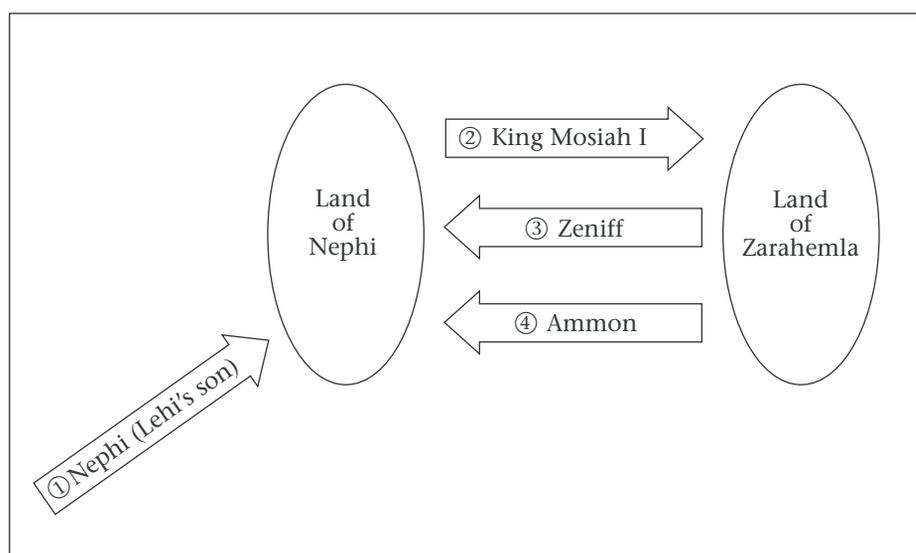
Purpose To encourage class members to follow the counsel of Church leaders, particularly those whom the Lord has called as prophets, seers, and revelators.

- Preparation**
1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. Mosiah 7–8. Ammon leads an expedition to learn of the people who years earlier had left Zarahemla to return to the land of Nephi. Ammon and his brethren find Limhi and his people. Ammon teaches the people of Limhi, receives a record of the people, and learns of 24 Jaredite plates discovered by the people. He explains that Mosiah, who is a seer, can translate the engravings on the plates.
 - b. Mosiah 9–10. Part of the record of Zeniff, Limhi’s grandfather, recounts a brief history of how Zeniff’s people arrived in the land of Nephi. It also recounts how the Lord strengthened them in wars against the Lamanites.
 - c. Mosiah 11. Zeniff’s son Noah rules in wickedness. Despite the warnings of the prophet Abinadi, the people are blind to the wickedness of Noah and his priests.
 2. Additional reading: Bible Dictionary, “Seer,” 771; “Urim and Thummim,” 786–87.

Suggestions for Lesson Development

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

Draw the following diagram on the chalkboard:



Explain that in order to understand the Lord’s dealings with His people in the book of Mosiah, it is helpful to understand the events described in 2 Nephi 5,

the book of Omni, and Mosiah 7 and 9. Tell class members that you will use the diagram on the chalkboard to briefly recount those events. Read or share in your own words the information below (the numbers correspond with the numbers on the diagram):

1. After Lehi's death, the Lord commanded the followers of Nephi to separate from the followers of Laman. The Nephites settled in a land that they called the land of Nephi (2 Nephi 5:5–8). The land was later also known as “the land of Lehi-Nephi” (Mosiah 7:1).
2. About 400 years later the Nephites were led by a king named Mosiah. The Lord commanded Mosiah to flee from the land of Nephi with “as many as would hearken unto the voice of the Lord.” Mosiah and his people discovered a group of people called the people of Zarahemla. The two groups of people united and called themselves Nephites. Mosiah was appointed to be their king (Omni 1:12–19).
3. A group of Nephites left the land of Zarahemla to regain part of the land of Nephi (Omni 1:27). They obtained land there under the leadership of a man named Zeniff, who became their king (Mosiah 9:1–7).
4. About 79 years later King Mosiah II, the grandson of the first King Mosiah, “was desirous to know concerning the people who went to dwell in the land of Lehi-Nephi.” He permitted a man named Ammon to lead an expedition for this purpose (note that this Ammon was not the son of Mosiah who later preached the gospel among the Lamanites). Ammon and his brethren found King Limhi and his people. Limhi was Zeniff's grandson (Mosiah 7:1–11).

Scripture Discussion
and Application

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

1. Ammon and his brethren find Limhi and his people. Ammon teaches Limhi of the importance of a seer.

Read and discuss selected verses from Mosiah 7–8. For an explanation of Mosiah 7:1–11, see item 4 in the attention activity.

- Why did Limhi take Ammon and his companions captive? (See Mosiah 7:8–11.) Why did Limhi rejoice when he learned who Ammon was? (See Mosiah 7:12–15. Explain that later in the lesson you will discuss how Limhi's people were brought into bondage.) What message did Limhi share with his people after talking with Ammon? (See Mosiah 7:17–20, 29–33.) What does this reveal about Limhi's qualities as a leader?
- Limhi told Ammon that he once sent 43 people to search for their brethren in Zarahemla (Mosiah 8:7). What did this group find instead? (See Mosiah 8:8–11; see also Ether 1:1–2. They found the remains of the Jaredite civilization. The Jaredites had settled there centuries before the Nephites arrived.)
- What did Limhi request of Ammon regarding the 24 gold plates of the Jaredites? (See Mosiah 8:11–12.) Why would it be helpful for Limhi's people—and for us—to “know the cause of [the] destruction” of the Jaredites?

- How did Ammon respond to Limhi's request? (See Mosiah 8:13–14. He said that Mosiah, the king in Zarahemla, was a seer who could translate the records.) What other titles did Ammon associate with the title of seer? (See Mosiah 8:16.) Whom do we sustain today as prophets, seers, and revelators? (Members of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.)
- What are the roles of a seer? (See Mosiah 8:13, 17–18.) How do latter-day prophets, seers, and revelators fulfill these roles? (See the quotation below. You may also want to have class members discuss other conference addresses, proclamations, or events that show how members of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve have acted as seers.) How have latter-day prophets, seers, and revelators been “a great benefit” to you?

Elder Boyd K. Packer said:

“The scriptures speak of prophets as ‘watch[men] upon the tower’ who see ‘the enemy while he [is] yet afar off’ and who have ‘beheld also things which were not visible to the natural eye . . . [for] a seer hath the Lord raised up unto his people.’

“[Many years ago] the Brethren warned us of the disintegration of the family and told us to prepare. . . . The weekly family home evening was introduced by the First Presidency. . . . Parents are provided with excellent materials for teaching their children, with a promise that the faithful will be blessed.

“While the doctrines and revealed organization remain unchanged, all agencies of the Church have been reshaped in their relationship to one another and to the home. . . . The entire curriculum of the Church was overhauled—based on scriptures. . . . And years were spent preparing new editions of the Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price. . . .

“We can only imagine where we would be if we were just now reacting to [the] terrible redefinition of the family. But that is not the case. We are not casting frantically about, trying to decide what to do. We know what to do and what to teach. . . .

“The course we follow is not of our own making. The plan of salvation, the great plan of happiness, was revealed to us, and the prophets and Apostles continue to receive revelation as the Church and its members stand in need of more” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1994, 24–25; or *Ensign*, May 1994, 20).

2. The record of Zeniff recounts a brief history of Zeniff's people.

Read and discuss selected verses from Mosiah 9–10. Explain that chapters 9–22 of the book of Mosiah contain a history of the people who left Zarahemla to return to the land of Nephi. The history begins with the account of Zeniff, Limhi's grandfather.

- Zeniff was a member of a group of Nephites who wanted to regain from the Lamanites some of the land of Nephi (Mosiah 9:1). What was the Lamanites' attitude toward the Nephites? (See Mosiah 10:11–17. They were “wroth” because they felt that Laman and Lemuel, their ancestors, had been “wronged by their brethren.” Because of this, they taught their children to hate the Nephites.) How do the traditions of the past sometimes stir people up to hatred? (You may

want to invite class members to share examples of similar situations in communities, nations, or the world.) Why are such traditions perpetuated?

- What can we learn from Zeniff about overcoming feelings of hatred? (See Mosiah 9:1. Zeniff was sent as a spy to determine how to destroy the Lamanites. However, when he saw “that which was good” among the Lamanites, he no longer wanted to destroy them.) What can we do to honestly see the good in others?
- What mistake did Zeniff make in his efforts to “inherit the land of [his] fathers”? (See Mosiah 7:21–22; 9:3.) What were the results of Zeniff’s overzealousness? (See Mosiah 9:3–12; 10:18.) What are some dangers of being overzealous, even in a good cause? How can we be zealous in the Lord’s work without being overzealous?
- In their determination to obtain a part of the land of Nephi, Zeniff and his people “were slow to remember the Lord [their] God” (Mosiah 9:3). What finally led them to turn to the Lord? (See Mosiah 9:13–17.) How were they blessed when they remembered the Lord and prayed for deliverance? (See Mosiah 9:18; 10:19–21.) As members of the Church, we have made a covenant to “always remember” the Lord (D&C 20:77, 79). What are some things we can do that can help us keep this covenant?

3. Abinadi warns the people, but they are blind to Noah’s wickedness.

Read and discuss selected verses from Mosiah 11.

- Who became king after Zeniff? (See Mosiah 11:1.) What kind of a ruler was Noah? (See Mosiah 11:1–19. You may want to list on the chalkboard some of the ways Noah “[walked] after the desires of his own heart” and “changed the affairs of the kingdom.”)
- How did Noah influence the lives of his people? (See Mosiah 11:2, 5–7.) How did the people and Noah share the responsibility for their sinfulness?
- The Lord sent the prophet Abinadi to call Noah and his people to repentance (Mosiah 11:20). What warnings did the Lord give through Abinadi? (See Mosiah 11:20–25. You may want to discuss how Abinadi fulfilled the role of a seer, as discussed earlier in the lesson.)
- How did Noah and his people respond to Abinadi’s warnings? (See Mosiah 11:26–28; see also Mosiah 12:13–15.) Why were the people angry with Abinadi and not with Noah, who had taxed them and caused them to support him in his iniquity? (See Mosiah 11:7, 29.)
- Why do some people today reject servants of the Lord, like Abinadi, in favor of people like Noah? Why is it important to recognize and follow prophets of God? (See Mosiah 8:16–18; D&C 1:38; 84:36–38.)

Conclusion

Encourage class members to follow the counsel of righteous leaders, particularly those whom the Lord has called as prophets, seers, and revelators.

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

“God Himself . . . Shall Redeem His People”

Lesson
18

Mosiah 12–17

Purpose To help class members appreciate the importance of the Atonement of Jesus Christ and stay true to their testimonies of the Atonement.

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. Mosiah 12–13. Abinadi calls King Noah and his priests to repentance. He exhorts them to keep the commandments. He teaches them that the performances and ordinances of the law of Moses are types, or symbols, of the Atonement of Jesus Christ.
 - b. Mosiah 14–16. Abinadi quotes Isaiah. He testifies of the Atonement and exhorts Noah’s priests to teach the people that redemption comes through Christ.
 - c. Mosiah 17. Alma, one of Noah’s priests, repents and records the words of Abinadi. Abinadi seals his testimony of the Savior with his life.
2. If the picture Abinadi before King Noah is available, prepare to use it during the lesson (62042; Gospel Art Picture Kit 308).
3. If you use the attention activity, bring to class some or all of the pictures listed in the activity.

Suggestions for Lesson Development

Attention Activity As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. Explain that there are many scriptural accounts of the Lord commanding people to fulfill difficult missions.

- What are some difficult missions or callings recorded in the scriptures? (Some possible responses are listed below, along with item numbers of pictures that depict some of the events.)
 - a. Noah preaching to the people (62053; Gospel Art Picture Kit 102)
 - b. Moses leading the Israelites out of Egypt (62100)
 - c. Lehi warning the people in Jerusalem (62517; Gospel Art Picture Kit 300)
 - d. Esther going before King Ahasuerus (Gospel Art Picture Kit 125)
 - e. Abinadi preaching to King Noah (62042; Gospel Art Picture Kit 308)
 - f. Samuel preaching in Zarahemla (62370; Gospel Art Picture Kit 314)
 - g. Joseph Smith fulfilling his mission as the Prophet of the Restoration (62470; Gospel Art Picture Kit 403)
- Why were these missions difficult? Why do you think these people were willing to fulfill their missions despite the difficult circumstances?

Display the picture of Abinadi before King Noah, and explain that this lesson discusses the teachings of Abinadi. Encourage class members to look for reasons why Abinadi was willing give his life in order to preach to the people.

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

1. Abinadi calls Noah and his priests to repentance, exhorts them to keep the commandments, and teaches of the Atonement.

Discuss Mosiah 12–13. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud. If you are using the picture of Abinadi before King Noah, display it throughout the lesson.

- Two years after Abinadi had originally preached to Noah's people, he returned to tell them that because they had not repented, they would suffer and be brought into bondage (Mosiah 12:1–7). He also said that they would be destroyed if they did not repent (Mosiah 12:8). How did the people respond to this message? (See Mosiah 12:9–16.) Why do you think they defended Noah?
- After Abinadi withstood the priests' efforts to "cross him," one of the priests asked him a question about a scripture passage (Mosiah 12:20–24; have a class member read these verses aloud). Why were the priests unable to understand this scripture passage? (See Mosiah 12:25–27. Note that the meaning of this passage is discussed later in the lesson.) What does it mean to apply our hearts to understanding? Why is it important to apply our hearts as we study and teach the gospel? (See D&C 8:2–3.)
- What did Abinadi reveal was the problem with the priests' claim that they taught the law of Moses? (See Mosiah 12:28–37.) Why is it important that we strive to live according to the truths we teach?
- What happened to make it possible for Abinadi to deliver his message? (See Mosiah 13:1–9. Point out that the Lord did this so Abinadi would be able to testify of the Atonement of Jesus Christ. This illustrates the importance of the message of the Atonement.)
- Why did Abinadi read the Ten Commandments to Noah and his priests? (See Mosiah 13:11.) What does it mean to have the commandments "written in [our] hearts"? How might having the commandments written in our hearts affect our efforts to obey them?
- After calling Noah and the priests to repentance for not keeping the law of Moses, Abinadi said, "Salvation doth not come by the law alone" (Mosiah 13:28). How does salvation come? (See Mosiah 13:14, 28, 32–35; Articles of Faith 1:3.)
- What was the purpose of the law of Moses? (See Mosiah 13:29–33. Explain that the performances and ordinances of the law of Moses were types, or symbols, of things to come. They were given to help the people look to Christ.)

2. Abinadi quotes Isaiah, testifies of the Atonement, and exhorts Noah's priests to teach the people that redemption comes through Christ.

Read and discuss selected verses from Mosiah 14–16.

- As part of his testimony of Jesus Christ, Abinadi quoted the prophet Isaiah. What are some things we learn about the Savior from the prophecy quoted in Mosiah 14? (Have class members take turns reading verses in this chapter

to find answers to this question. Summarize their answers on the chalkboard. Some possible answers are listed below.)

- a. The Savior lived meekly and humbly (Mosiah 14:2).
 - b. Many people rejected Him (Mosiah 14:3).
 - c. He carried our griefs and sorrows (Mosiah 14:4).
 - d. He took upon Himself the sins of all people (Mosiah 14:5–6, 8, 10–12).
 - e. He willingly subjected Himself to persecution and death (Mosiah 14:7–9).
 - f. He was without sin (Mosiah 14:9).
- Abinadi said that the Savior “satisfied the demands of justice” (Mosiah 15:9). What are the demands of justice? (See Alma 42:11, 14.) What did the Savior do to satisfy the demands of justice? (See Mosiah 15:9; Alma 42:12–13, 15.)
 - Abinadi spoke of the seed, or the sons and daughters, of Jesus Christ (Mosiah 15:10; see also Mosiah 14:10). What does it mean to be the Savior’s sons and daughters? (See Mosiah 15:11–14; see also Mosiah 5:5–7. Explain that Jesus Christ is the author of salvation. There is a Father-child relationship between Him and those who accept His gospel. We become His seed, or His sons and daughters, when we believe in Him, repent of our sins, and covenant to do His will and obey His commandments.)
 - Remind class members that one of Noah’s priests asked Abinadi to interpret Isaiah’s statement “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings” (Mosiah 12:20–24). What are these good tidings? (See Mosiah 15:19–25; D&C 76:40–42.) Who are the messengers who share these good tidings? (See Mosiah 15:13–18. The Savior Himself, the prophets, and others who share the gospel.) How can we help bring these good tidings to others?
 - How will we be blessed after we die if we have believed in Christ, followed Him, and accepted His Atonement? (See Mosiah 15:21–23; 16:8–11.) What will happen to us if we have rejected Christ and His Atonement? (See Mosiah 15:26–27; 16:2–3, 5, 10–12.)
 - At the end of his discourse, what did Abinadi exhort Noah and the priests to do? (See Mosiah 16:13–15.) How can we apply this counsel in our lives?

3. Abinadi seals his testimony of the Savior with his life.

Read and discuss selected verses from Mosiah 17.

- Was Abinadi successful in his mission to King Noah and his people? Why or why not? Who was converted because of Abinadi’s teachings? (See Mosiah 17:2–4; Alma 5:11–12; see also the fourth additional teaching idea.)
- After Abinadi had given his message, what did King Noah and the judges decide to do to him? (See Mosiah 17:1, 7.) What could Abinadi have done to avoid being put to death? (See Mosiah 17:8.) Why did he refuse to recall the words he had spoken? (See Mosiah 17:9–10, 20.) Although we will likely not need to die for our faith, in what ways can we follow Abinadi’s example?

President Ezra Taft Benson said: “Christ changes men, and changed men can change the world. Men changed for Christ will be captained by Christ. . . . Men captained by Christ will be consumed in Christ. . . . Their will is swallowed up in His will. (See John 5:30.) They do always those things that

please the Lord. (See John 8:29.) Not only would they die for the Lord, but more important they want to live for Him” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1985, 5–6; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1985, 6).

Conclusion

Point out that the actions of Abinadi and Alma can help us see the importance of the Atonement. Abinadi’s life was preserved by the Lord so he could testify of the Atonement (Mosiah 13:1–9). After Abinadi had shared this message, he “sealed the truth of his words by his death” (Mosiah 17:20). Alma wrote “all the words which Abinadi had spoken” (Mosiah 17:4). He then obeyed Abinadi’s command to “teach . . . that redemption cometh through Christ the Lord” (Mosiah 16:15). Encourage class members to stay true to their testimonies and share the message of the Atonement.

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

Additional Teaching Ideas

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

1. Hymn

With class members, sing or read the words to a hymn about the Atonement of Jesus Christ, such as “I Stand All Amazed” (*Hymns*, no. 193) or “How Great the Wisdom and the Love” (*Hymns*, no. 195). Or play a recording of a hymn about the Atonement.

2. Video presentation

As you discuss Abinadi’s testimony of the Savior and the reaction of King Noah and his priests, show “What Think Ye of Christ?” a five-minute segment of *Family Home Evening Video Supplement 2* (53277).

3. “The Father and the Son” (Mosiah 15:2)

Use the following information to explain Abinadi’s teachings in Mosiah 15:1–9:

When Abinadi spoke of Jesus as “the Father and the Son,” he did not teach that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ are the same being. Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost are three separate and distinct personages (D&C 130:22).

When ancient prophets spoke of God or of the Lord, they often referred to Jehovah, the premortal Messiah (Mosiah 13:33–34; 14:6). Thus, Abinadi taught of Jesus Christ when he said, “God himself shall come down among the children of men, and shall redeem his people” (Mosiah 15:1; see also Mosiah 7:27–28). Abinadi’s teachings in Mosiah 15:1–9 refer to Jesus’ Fatherly roles and to His roles as the Son of God.

Jesus’ roles as Father include (a) His work as “the Father of heaven and earth, the Creator of all things from the beginning” (Mosiah 3:8); (b) His mission as the Father of those who accept His gospel and follow Him (Mosiah 5:7; 15:10–13; Ether 3:14); and (c) His authority to speak and act in behalf of Heavenly Father, which has been termed “divine investiture of authority.” Jesus’ roles as the Son of God include (a) His Atonement for the sins of the world (Mosiah 15:6–9) and (b) His service as our Mediator and Advocate with Heavenly Father (Jacob 4:10–11; D&C 45:3–5).

Abinadi said that Jesus was called the Son “because he dwelleth in flesh” and the Father “because he was conceived by the power of God” (Mosiah 15:2–3; see also D&C 93:3–4). When Abinadi spoke of “the will of the Son being swallowed up in the will of the Father” (Mosiah 15:7), he referred to Jesus subjecting His flesh to His spirit (Mosiah 15:2–5; see also 3 Nephi 1:14). When Jesus subjected His flesh to His spirit, He also subjected His will to the will of Heavenly Father (Matthew 26:39; D&C 19:16–19).

4. The unseen results of missionary work

Explain that Abinadi may have died without knowing if anyone believed his teachings. But Alma was converted because of Abinadi’s efforts, and he and his descendants had a great influence on the Nephites for many generations. Share the following story told by President Gordon B. Hinckley:

“You don’t know how much good you can do; you can’t foresee the results of the effort you put in. Years ago, President Charles A. Callis, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, but who previously was president of the Southern States Mission for twenty-five years, told me this story. He said that he had a missionary in the southern [United States] who came in to get his release at the conclusion of his mission. His mission president said to him, ‘Have you had a good mission?’

“He said, ‘No.’

“‘How is that?’

“‘Well, I haven’t had any results from my work. I have wasted my time and my father’s money. It’s been a waste of time.’

“Brother Callis said, ‘Haven’t you baptized anyone?’

“He said, ‘I baptized only one person during the two years that I have been here. That was a twelve-year-old boy up in the back hollows of Tennessee.’

“He went home with a sense of failure. Brother Callis said, ‘I decided to follow that boy who had been baptized. I wanted to know what became of him. . . .

“ . . . ‘I followed him through the years. He became the Sunday School Superintendent, and he eventually became the branch president. He married. He moved off the little tenant farm on which he and his parents before him had lived and got a piece of ground of his own and made it fruitful. He became the district president. He sold that piece of ground in Tennessee and moved to Idaho and bought a farm along the Snake River and prospered there. His children grew. They went on missions. They came home. They had children of their own who went on missions.’

“Brother Callis continued, ‘I’ve just spent a week up in Idaho looking up every member of that family that I could find and talking to them about their missionary service. I discovered that, as the result of the baptism of that one little boy in the back hollows of Tennessee by a missionary who thought he had failed, more than 1,100 people have come into the Church.’

“You never can foretell the consequences of your work, my beloved brethren and sisters, when you serve as missionaries” (*Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley* [1997], 360–61).

Lesson
19

“None Could Deliver Them but the Lord”

Mosiah 18–24

Purpose To encourage class members to renew their determination to honor their baptismal covenants and trust in the Lord.

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. Mosiah 18. Alma teaches the baptismal covenant, baptizes a group of people, and establishes the Church among the people.
 - b. Mosiah 19. King Noah betrays his people and suffers death by fire. Noah's son Limhi becomes king.
 - c. Mosiah 20–22. Limhi's people are brought into bondage by the Lamanites. After trying to deliver themselves from bondage, they repent and turn to the Lord. The Lord eventually delivers them from bondage.
 - d. Mosiah 23–24. Alma's people are taken captive by the Lamanites. Amulon, who had been one of Noah's priests, rules over them. They turn to the Lord, and He makes their burdens light and delivers them from bondage.
2. Additional reading: Bible Dictionary, “Baptism,” 618–19.
3. If you use the attention activity, bring to class the picture Alma Baptizes in the Waters of Mormon (62332; Gospel Art Picture Kit 309). You may also want to use this picture during the lesson.

Suggestions for Lesson Development

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

Ask class members:

- What are some of the most beautiful places you have ever seen? What makes those places so beautiful for you?

Display the picture of Alma baptizing in the waters of Mormon.

- What made this place beautiful for Alma's people? (Have a class member read Mosiah 18:30 aloud. Invite one or two class members to share their feelings about a place of spiritual significance to them.)

Explain that in this lesson you will discuss a covenant that Alma's people made at “the place of Mormon.”

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

1. Alma teaches the baptismal covenant and baptizes many people.

Read and discuss selected verses from Mosiah 18. Remind class members that Alma, one of King Noah's priests, believed the teachings of Abinadi. He fled from Noah's servants and hid in the wilderness, where he wrote "all the words which Abinadi had spoken" (Mosiah 17:2–4). He then "repented of his sins . . . and began to teach the words of Abinadi" (Mosiah 18:1–3). The people who believed Alma went to hear him teach in a place called Mormon (Mosiah 18:4–6).

- What did Alma teach at "the place of Mormon"? (See Mosiah 18:7.) What did the people desire after Alma taught them? (See Mosiah 18:8.) What does it mean to "come into the fold of God, and . . . be called his people"? (See Mosiah 18:16–17; see also Hebrews 8:10; Alma 5:60.)
- What were the people willing to do as members of "the fold of God"? (Have class members read Mosiah 18:8–9 to find answers to this question. Summarize their answers on the chalkboard. Then discuss the answers as shown below.)
 - a. "Bear one another's burdens" (Mosiah 18:8). How can we "bear one another's burdens"? How does bearing one another's burdens make those burdens light? How have you been blessed as others have helped bear your burdens?
 - b. "Mourn with those that mourn" (Mosiah 18:9). Why is it helpful to "mourn with those that mourn"?
 - c. "Comfort those that stand in need of comfort" (Mosiah 18:9). How can we appropriately offer comfort to others?
 - d. "Stand as witnesses of God" (Mosiah 18:9). What does it mean "to stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things, and in all places"? (Mosiah 18:9).
- After Alma preached to the people, what did he invite them to do? (See Mosiah 18:10. He invited them to be baptized and enter into a covenant with the Lord.) What is a covenant?

President Joseph Fielding Smith taught: "A covenant is a contract and an agreement between at least two parties. In the case of gospel covenants, the parties are the Lord in heaven and men on earth. Men agree to keep the commandments and the Lord promises to reward them accordingly" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1970, 91; or *Improvement Era*, Dec. 1970, 26).

- Referring to Mosiah 18:8–13, President Marion G. Romney said, "I know of no better explanation of the baptismal covenant" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1975, 109; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1975, 73). According to Mosiah 18:8–13, what do we covenant to do when we are baptized? (See also Moroni 6:2–3; D&C 20:37.) What does the Lord promise to do when we are baptized and keep our baptismal covenant? (See Mosiah 18:10, 12–13; see also 2 Nephi 31:17.)
- How did the people respond to Alma's invitation to be baptized? (See Mosiah 18:11. If you are using the picture of Alma baptizing, display it now.) What can we do to help others receive this great joy? (You may want to encourage class members to think of people with whom they can share the gospel.)
- After the people were baptized, Alma commanded them to have "their hearts knit together in unity and in love" (Mosiah 18:21). What can we do at home and in our ward or branch to follow this command? (See Mosiah 18:19–21.)

2. King Noah betrays his people and suffers death by fire.

Read and discuss selected verses from Mosiah 19. Explain that some of King Noah's people began to turn against him (Mosiah 19:2–3). One of those people, Gideon, was about to kill Noah when Noah saw an army of Lamanites advancing toward them (Mosiah 19:4–6).

- What did King Noah do when he saw the advancing Lamanites? (See Mosiah 19:7.) Who was Noah most concerned about? (See Mosiah 19:8.) How does this compare to people today who, like Noah, try to lead us away from the Lord and His prophets?
- What had Abinadi prophesied about King Noah's death? (See Mosiah 12:3.) How was this prophecy fulfilled? (See Mosiah 19:18–20. Point out that the people who eventually valued Noah's life "as a garment in a hot furnace" had at one time been blind to his wickedness, as shown in Mosiah 11:29.)

3. Limhi's people are chastened and eventually delivered by the Lord.

Read and discuss selected verses from Mosiah 20–22 (note that these chapters contain the account of Ammon and his brethren finding Limhi's people, as discussed in lesson 17). Explain that after Noah was killed, his son Limhi became king. Limhi made an oath that he and his people would pay one-half of all they possessed to the king of the Lamanites in exchange for a promise that the Lamanites would not slay them (Mosiah 19:25–26).

- After two years of peace, the Lamanites waged war against Limhi's people (Mosiah 20:7–10). Why did the Lamanites seek to destroy Limhi's people? (See Mosiah 20:1–6.)
- When the Lamanites learned that they had misjudged Limhi's people, they returned to their own land in peace (Mosiah 20:17–26). However, "after many days the Lamanites began again to be stirred up in anger against the Nephites" (Mosiah 21:2). What did the Lamanites do to the Nephites rather than break their king's oath that they would not kill them? (See Mosiah 21:3.)
- How did the bondage of Limhi's people fulfill prophecies made by Abinadi? (Have class members compare Mosiah 21:3–5, 14–15 with Mosiah 11:20–25 and 12:2, 4–5.) Why were Limhi's people brought into bondage? (See Mosiah 7:25–32; 20:21. They had rejected Abinadi's teachings and his warnings about the consequences of their sinfulness.) Why is it important to remember that sin brings consequences?
- After failing three times to defeat the Lamanites in battle, what did Limhi's people finally do? (See Mosiah 21:13–14.) Why was the Lord slow to respond to their cries? (See Mosiah 21:15; see also D&C 101:1–9.) Although the Lord did not deliver them immediately, what did He do for them? (See Mosiah 21:15–16.) How does the Lord sometimes permit us to "prosper by degrees"?
- How did Limhi's people escape from the Lamanites? (See Mosiah 22:3–12.) How were they received by the people in Zarahemla? (See Mosiah 22:13–14.)

4. The Lord delivers Alma's people from bondage.

Read and discuss selected verses from Mosiah 23–24. Help class members see the difference between the way the Lord blessed Limhi's people, who attempted

three times to deliver themselves before they turned to Him, and the way He blessed Alma's people, who had turned to Him completely.

- When Alma and his people were in the place of Mormon, King Noah “sent his army to destroy them” (Mosiah 18:33). The Lord warned Alma's people and strengthened them so they could escape (Mosiah 18:34–35; 23:1–5). How was this different from the experience of Limhi's people? (See Mosiah 19:6. Note that the first time the Lamanites attacked these people, when Noah was still their king, the people received no warning.)
- How did Alma respond when the people asked him to be king? (See Mosiah 23:6–7.) How had Alma learned the danger of “one man think[ing] himself above another”? (See Mosiah 23:8–14.) What can we learn from Alma and his people to help us avoid this error? (See Mosiah 23:15.)
- Under Alma's leadership, his people lived righteously and prospered (Mosiah 23:15–20). Nevertheless, the Lord allowed them to be brought into bondage under Amulon, who had been one of King Noah's priests (Mosiah 23:23–39). How did the bondage of Alma's people fulfill prophecies made by Abinadi? (See Mosiah 12:2, 4–5.) In what ways can our poor choices bring lingering consequences even after we have been forgiven of our sins?

Elder Marvin J. Ashton said: “Our freedom to choose our course of conduct does not provide personal freedom from the consequences of our performances. God's love for us is constant and will not diminish, but he cannot rescue us from the painful results that are caused by wrong choices” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1990, 24; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1990, 20).

Point out that although the Lord could not prevent Alma's people from suffering the consequences of their past sins, He comforted and strengthened them in their afflictions. The rest of this lesson discusses how He delivered them from bondage.

- Referring to the bondage of Alma's people, Mormon said, “The Lord seeth fit to chasten his people” (Mosiah 23:21). Why does the Lord chasten His people? (See Mosiah 23:21; D&C 95:1–2.) How should we respond when the Lord chastens us? (See Mosiah 23:22.)
- What did Alma's people do when Amulon threatened to kill them if they prayed? (See Mosiah 24:10–12.) How did the Lord answer their silent prayers? (See Mosiah 24:13–16.) How did this help them “stand as witnesses” for the Lord, as they had covenanted in the waters of Mormon? (See Mosiah 24:14.)
- Why are our burdens easier to bear when we “submit cheerfully and with patience to all the will of the Lord”? (Mosiah 24:15). In what ways has the Lord strengthened you to help you “bear up [your] burdens with ease”? How has this helped you stand as a witness of God?
- Why did the Lord bless Alma's people while they were in bondage more quickly and abundantly than He blessed Limhi's people? (Compare Mosiah 21:5–15 with Mosiah 23:26–27; 24:10–16.) How does this apply in our lives?
- Before the Lord delivered them, both Alma's people and Limhi's people were in bondage to wicked rulers. Alma observed that in the days of King Noah, the people had also been “bound with the bands of iniquity” (Mosiah 23:12). How is iniquity, or sin, a kind of bondage? What can we learn from Limhi's

people and Alma's people about receiving deliverance from the bondage of sin? (See Mosiah 7:33; 21:14; 23:23; 29:18–20; see also D&C 84:49–51. Only the Lord can deliver us from the bondage of sin. We must turn to Him through repentance, faith, humility, and enduring obedience.)

Conclusion

Briefly review the Lord's promises in the baptismal covenant (Mosiah 18:10, 13). Point out that in light of the blessings the Lord has promised to us, it should not be difficult to keep our covenant to "serve him and keep his commandments" (Mosiah 18:10). Emphasize that when we receive the ordinance of baptism and continue in repentance, faith in Jesus Christ, humility, and obedience, we are delivered from the bondage of sin and are on the path to eternal life (2 Nephi 31:17–20).

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

Additional Teaching Ideas

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

1. "Both Alma and Helam were buried in the water" (Mosiah 18:14)

Use the statement below to explain how Alma had the authority to baptize and to show that Alma did not baptize himself when he baptized Helam:

President Joseph Fielding Smith taught, "Alma was baptized and held the priesthood before the coming of Abinadi, but he became involved with other priests under the reign of the wicked King Noah, and when he baptized Helam, he felt he needed a cleansing himself so he buried himself in the water as a token of full repentance" (*Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. [1954–56], 2:336–37).

2. Serving the Lord humbly

- Before Alma began baptizing the people, he prayed, "O Lord, pour out thy Spirit upon thy servant, that he may do this work with holiness of heart" (Mosiah 18:12). How might we be blessed as we approach our service to the Lord in this spirit?

3. "Observe the sabbath day, and keep it holy" (Mosiah 18:23)

- Why is it important that we observe the Sabbath day? (See Mosiah 18:23, 25.) How have you felt blessed when you have kept the Sabbath day holy? What are some things you do to help make this a holy day?

4. Helping those who are in need

- What principles did Alma teach about giving to the needy? (See Mosiah 18:27–29.) Why is it important that we give spiritually as well as temporally? What blessings come from giving generously and receiving graciously?

“My Soul Is Pained No More”

Lesson 20

Mosiah 25–28; Alma 36

Purpose To inspire class members to continually apply the principle of repentance, become converted, and share the gospel.

- Preparation**
1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. Mosiah 25. Limhi’s people and Alma’s people gather in the land of Zarahemla with the people of Mosiah. Limhi and his people are baptized. King Mosiah authorizes Alma to organize the Church of God throughout the land of Zarahemla.
 - b. Mosiah 26; 27:1–7. Many Church members are led into sin by unbelievers. The Lord tells Alma that those who repent shall be forgiven, but those who do not repent shall not be numbered among the people of the Church. Mosiah issues a proclamation forbidding believers and unbelievers from persecuting each other.
 - c. Mosiah 27:8–31; Alma 36:6–23. Alma the Younger and the four sons of Mosiah seek to destroy the Church of God. In answer to the prayers of their fathers and other Church members, an angel appears to them. Alma the Younger and the sons of Mosiah are converted. Alma the Younger testifies of his conversion.
 - d. Mosiah 27:32–28:20; Alma 36:24. Alma the Younger and the sons of Mosiah dedicate themselves to preaching the gospel.
 2. Ask a class member to prepare a brief summary of the events that led to the conversion of Alma the Younger and the sons of Mosiah (Mosiah 27:8–24).
 3. If the picture Conversion of Alma the Younger is available, prepare to use it during the lesson (Gospel Art Picture Kit 321).
-

Suggestions for Lesson Development

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

Ask class members:

- How many of you are converts?

Point out that we often use the term *convert* to refer to a person who was baptized into the Church after the age of eight. In another sense, however, each of us should be a convert. Each of us, no matter when we are baptized, must acquire his or her own testimony of the gospel of Jesus Christ. For some people this conversion is sudden and dramatic, but for most it is a subtle, gradual process. Some people become converted easily, while others must struggle to develop this testimony and commitment. (Note that lesson 22 further discusses the process of becoming converted.)

This lesson discusses five young men who, despite being the sons of strong and faithful Church leaders, had to experience their own conversions to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Scripture Discussion and Application

Prayerfully select the scripture passages, questions, and other lesson material that will best meet class members' needs. Discuss the importance of becoming converted to the gospel of Jesus Christ, and encourage class members to share appropriate experiences that relate to the principles being discussed.

1. Limhi's and Alma's people join Mosiah's people in the land of Zarahemla.

Discuss Mosiah 25. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud. Explain that Limhi's people and Alma's people joined the people of King Mosiah in Zarahemla (Mosiah 22:11–14; 24:20, 23–25). Help class members understand that there were now four groups united in Zarahemla under King Mosiah:

- Limhi's people, who were descended from Zeniff and the others who returned from Zarahemla to the land of Nephi.
- Alma's people, who had broken away from the group descended from Zeniff during the reign of Noah.
- The Nephites who had remained in Zarahemla.
- The Mulekites, the original residents of Zarahemla.

Explain that all these people now called themselves Nephites (Mosiah 25:12–13).

- Mosiah assembled the people in Zarahemla and read the records of Limhi's people and Alma's people to them (Mosiah 25:5–6). How did the people of Zarahemla respond to these records? (See Mosiah 25:7–11.) How did their responses demonstrate their charity?
- How have you benefited from studying the accounts of Limhi's and Alma's people?
- After Mosiah finished reading the records, he invited Alma to speak (Mosiah 25:14). What did Alma speak about? (See Mosiah 25:15–16.) Why was it important that the people remember who had delivered them out of bondage? What effect did Alma's teachings have on Limhi and his people? (See Mosiah 25:17–18.)
- Mosiah authorized Alma to "establish churches throughout all the land of Zarahemla" (Mosiah 25:19–20). How were the people able to remain "one church" after being assembled into different congregations? (See Mosiah 25:21–24.) How can their example help us today as we face the challenges of remaining "one" in a worldwide Church?

2. Many Church members are led into sin by unbelievers.

Read and discuss selected verses from Mosiah 26; 27:1–7.

- Why did many of the "rising generation" refuse to join the Church? (See Mosiah 26:1–4.) How can older generations help youth gain testimonies of Jesus Christ and His gospel? How can older generations help youth feel God's love and understand their relationship to Him?
- The unbelievers led many members of the Church into sin. What was Alma's responsibility for the Church members who had sinned? (See Mosiah 26:6–8.)

What responsibility has the Lord placed on Church leaders today to help members who have committed serious sins?

- Whom did Alma consult when Mosiah declined to judge the people who had sinned? (See Mosiah 26:10–14.) How have you received guidance in your responsibilities when you have turned to God in prayer?
- What did the Lord tell Alma to do with the people who had sinned? (See Mosiah 26:29–30, 32.) Why is confession an important step in the process of repentance? Why is it important to “forgive one another”? (Mosiah 26:31). How have you been blessed by forgiving someone or by having someone forgive you?
- Although the Church “began again to have peace and to prosper,” members of the Church were often persecuted by unbelievers (Mosiah 26:37–38; 27:1). What did King Mosiah do when Church members complained about this persecution? (See Mosiah 27:1–5.) In what ways might Church members be persecuted today? What are some productive ways to deal with persecution?

3. Alma the Younger and the sons of Mosiah are visited by an angel.

Read and discuss selected verses from Mosiah 27:8–31; Alma 36:6–23. Explain that even after Mosiah had issued a proclamation forbidding persecution, some unbelievers continued to try to destroy the Church. These unbelievers included Mosiah’s own four sons and one of Alma’s sons (Mosiah 27:8–9).

Ask the assigned class member to summarize the events that led to the conversion of Alma the Younger and the sons of Mosiah (Mosiah 27:8–24). If you are using the picture of Alma the Younger, display it now.

- Why did the Lord send an angel to speak to Alma the Younger and his companions? (See Mosiah 27:14.) How can prayer help us when a loved one strays from the gospel?

When he was Church Commissioner of Education, Jeffrey R. Holland said: “Perhaps no anguish of the human spirit matches the anguish of a mother or father who fears for the soul of a child. . . . [But] parents can never give up hoping or caring or believing. Surely they can never give up praying. At times prayer may be the only course of action remaining—but it is the most powerful of them all” (“Alma, Son of Alma,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1977, 80–81).

- What are some ways the Lord sends help in response to the prayers of the righteous for loved ones who have strayed? (Help class members understand that the Lord will not always send an angel, as He did to Alma, but He sends help in countless other ways. He may send a sensitive leader or friend, dedicated home teachers or visiting teachers, or an inspired sermon to affect the lives of those for whom we pray.) How have you seen the power of prayer help in a situation that appeared to be beyond remedy?
- What did the angel tell Alma the Younger? (See Mosiah 27:13–17.) What happened to Alma the Younger after the angel departed? (See Mosiah 27:18–19.) How did Alma respond when he heard about his son’s experience with the angel? (See Mosiah 27:20.) Why did he rejoice?

Explain that years after his conversion, Alma told his son Helaman about the experience (Alma 36:6–24). Using the accounts in Mosiah 27 and Alma 36, help

class members contrast Alma’s feelings before and after he was forgiven (consider asking some class members to look at the account in Mosiah 27 while others look at the account in Alma 36). You may want to summarize the discussion in a chart like the one below:

BEFORE	AFTER
Carnal and fallen, to be cast off (Mosiah 27:25–27; Alma 36:11)	Redeemed of God, born of the Spirit (Mosiah 27:24–25; Alma 36:23)
Wading through much tribulation (Mosiah 27:28)	Snatched out of an everlasting burning (Mosiah 27:28)
In the gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity (Mosiah 27:29)	Redeemed from the gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity (Mosiah 27:29)
In the darkest abyss (Mosiah 27:29)	Beheld the marvelous light of God (Mosiah 27:29)
Racked with eternal torment (Mosiah 27:29)	Soul pained no more (Mosiah 27:29)
Harrowed up by the memory of his many sins (Alma 36:17)	No longer harrowed up by the memory of his sins (Alma 36:19)
Felt exquisite and exceeding pain (Alma 36:20–21)	Felt exquisite and exceeding joy (Alma 36:20–21)
Soul racked with horror at the thought of being in the presence of God (Alma 36:14–15)	Soul longed to be in the presence of God (Alma 36:22)

- What led Alma to be delivered from his suffering? (See Alma 36:17–18.)
- How can Alma’s experiences be compared to our own experiences in becoming converted? (See the quotation below for one possible answer.)

Elder Bruce R. McConkie said: “Alma serves as a pattern. The horror for sin that engulfed him should be felt by every wayward member of the kingdom; then repentance would be forthcoming, as it was with our Nephite friend” (*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* [1985], 229).

4. Alma and the sons of Mosiah dedicate themselves to preaching the gospel.

Read and discuss selected verses from Mosiah 27:32–28:20; Alma 36:24.

- What did Alma the Younger and the sons of Mosiah do after their conversion? (See Mosiah 27:32–37.) How did this demonstrate that they were truly converted? How do our actions reflect the sincerity and depth of our conversion?
- Why did the sons of Mosiah and their companions want to preach the gospel among the Lamanites? (See Mosiah 28:1–3 and the quotation below.) What promises did the Lord give King Mosiah regarding his sons’ missionary efforts? (See Mosiah 28:6–7.)

Elder L. Tom Perry said: “After conversion comes the desire to share—not so much out of a sense of duty, even though that responsibility falls on the priesthood, but out of a sincere love and appreciation for that which has been received. When such a ‘pearl of great price’ comes into our lives, we cannot be content just to admire it by ourselves. It must be shared!” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1984, 106; or *Ensign*, May 1984, 79).

- Once we have been converted, how can we increase our commitment to share the gospel?

Conclusion

Explain that each of us must experience his or her own conversion. Though it may be more subtle and gradual than the conversion experienced by Alma and the sons of Mosiah, it will have the same results.

Read Mosiah 27:29. Emphasize that through repentance and the Atonement of Jesus Christ, we can receive forgiveness so our souls will be “pained no more.” Then we can become instruments in the Lord’s hands to bless the lives of others.

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

Additional Teaching Idea

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use this idea as part of the lesson.

“They did deceive many with their flattering words” (Mosiah 26:6)

- How were Alma the Younger and the sons of Mosiah, along with other unbelievers, able to lead many members of the Church into sin? (See Mosiah 26:6; 27:8–9.) How can flattery deceive us and lead us astray? Why is it important that we be careful about whom we allow to influence us? (See the quotation below.) How can a foundation of faith in Jesus Christ help us avoid being influenced by the flattery of unbelievers?

Elder Ezra Taft Benson said: “Seeking the applause of the world, we like to be honored by the men the world honors. But therein lies real danger, for oftentimes, in order to receive those honors, we must join forces with and follow those same devilish influences and policies which brought some of those men to positions of prominence. . . . Today we are being plagued within by the flattery of prominent men in the world” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1964, 57; or *Improvement Era*, Dec. 1964, 1067).

Lesson
21

“Alma . . . Did Judge Righteous Judgments”

Mosiah 29; Alma 1–4

Purpose To help class members understand righteous principles of government and avoid priestcraft and pride.

Preparation Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:

- Mosiah 29. Mosiah teaches principles of good government and warns his people of the dangers of having a king. The people heed his counsel and appoint judges to be their political leaders, with Alma the Younger as chief judge.
- Alma 1. Alma the Younger serves as chief judge and high priest. He combats priestcraft among the people.
- Alma 2–3. Amlici seeks to be king but is rejected by the voice of the people. He and his followers join with the Lamanites, mark their foreheads red, and wage war against the believing Nephites.
- Alma 4. Church members prosper but become prideful. Alma resigns the judgment seat to devote himself to the ministry.

Suggestions for Lesson Development

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

List the following words on the chalkboard: *Monarchy, Republic, Democracy, Theocracy.*

- What do these words mean? (Use the following definitions as needed to help class members.)

Monarchy: absolute rule by one person, such as a king

Republic: rule by a group of elected representatives

Democracy: government by the people, with majority rule

Theocracy: government guided by God through revelation to a prophet

- What type of government did the Nephites have under Mosiah?

Explain that for many years Mosiah served as a king and a prophet who received revelation from God to lead the people. After the reign of King Mosiah, Alma the Younger was appointed chief judge over the people of Nephi, thus beginning a new form of government and a time period known as “the reign of the judges.” According to the scriptures, “Alma did walk in the ways of the Lord, and he did keep his commandments, and he did judge righteous judgments” (Mosiah 29:43). This lesson explains how the system of judges was organized to provide righteous leadership and describes some of the challenges Alma faced as chief judge and as the presiding high priest over the people.

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

1. Mosiah teaches principles of good government.

Discuss Mosiah 29. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud. Explain that when all of King Mosiah's sons refused to succeed him as king, Mosiah sent a written proclamation among the people, recommending a system of government to replace the rule of kings after his death.

- What counsel did Mosiah give his people about having kings? (See Mosiah 29:13, 16.) Which two men did Mosiah describe as different examples of kings? (See Mosiah 29:13, 18. You may want to briefly review the influence these two kings had on the people.) How did Mosiah describe the consequences of having a wicked leader? (See Mosiah 29:16–18, 21–23.)
- Mosiah suggested that the people establish a system of judges to replace the rule of kings. What qualities did Mosiah say these judges should have? (See Mosiah 29:11; see also D&C 98:10.) Why are these qualities important in leaders today?
- What was the foundation of the laws that the people would be judged by? (See Mosiah 29:11; see also Mosiah 29:12–14.) What blessings can people enjoy when they live by laws that are based on righteous principles?
- What did Mosiah propose to limit the power that could be obtained by wicked individuals or groups? (See Mosiah 29:24–26, 28–29. He proposed that they do all things by the voice of the people, appoint judges and make the judges accountable to the people, and have a system of appeals against judges who did not judge by the law.)
- What did Mosiah say would happen if the majority of the people chose wickedness? (See Mosiah 29:27.) What are some ways we can help others understand and choose righteousness?

2. Alma the Younger serves as chief judge and combats priestcraft.

Read and discuss selected verses from Alma 1. Explain that the people had followed Mosiah's counsel and appointed judges throughout the land, with Alma the Younger as chief judge.

- In the first year of the reign of the judges, a man named Nehor was brought before Alma to be judged (Alma 1:1–2, 15). What had Nehor been teaching the people? (See Alma 1:3–4.) What was the effect of his teaching? (See Alma 1:5–6.) Why do you think Nehor's teachings were appealing to so many people? Which of these same teachings have you heard in our day?
- While Nehor was preaching to the people, he was met by Gideon, a member of the Church who served as a teacher (Alma 1:7–8; you may want to remind class members that Gideon had served faithfully as a captain for King Limhi). How did Gideon respond to Nehor's false teachings? (See Alma 1:7.) How does knowing and testifying of the word of God help us withstand false teachings?

- Nehor became angry with Gideon and slew him with a sword (Alma 1:9). When the people took Nehor before Alma, what two crimes did Alma find him guilty of? (See Alma 1:10–13. Priestcraft and murder.) What is priestcraft? (See Alma 1:16; see also 2 Nephi 26:29.) What warning did Alma give regarding priestcraft? (See Alma 1:12.) What evidence have you seen of priestcraft in our day?
- Although Nehor was put to death for his crimes, priestcraft and other wickedness continued to spread throughout the land (Alma 1:15–16). What began to happen between those who belonged to the Church and those who did not? (See Alma 1:19–22.) How should we treat people who disagree with our beliefs? (See D&C 38:41.)
- How did this contention affect some members of the Church? (See Alma 1:23–24.) What can we learn from those who remained in the Church of God? (See Alma 1:25.) How can we remain “steadfast and immovable” in keeping the commandments of God?

Alma 1:26–30 describes a time of peace and prosperity among the people of the Church. You may want to read these verses aloud and then discuss some of the following questions.

- How did the priests regard those whom they taught? (See Alma 1:26.) Why is this attitude important when we are teaching others? How have you been blessed by teachers who have taught with humility?
- How did Alma describe the way the members of the Church treated those in need? (See Alma 1:27.) How can following their example bring peace to our lives?

3. Amlici seeks to be king but is rejected by the voice of the people.

Read and discuss selected verses from Alma 2–3.

- In the fifth year of the reign of the judges, a cunning man named Amlici was joined by many followers who wanted to make him king over the land (Alma 2:1–2). Why did Amlici want to be king? (See Alma 2:4.) What did he do when the majority of the people voted against him? (See Alma 2:7–10.)
- What was the result of the first battle between the Nephites and the Amlicites? (See Alma 2:16–19.) When Alma sent spies to follow the remainder of the Amlicites, what did the spies observe? (See Alma 2:23–25.) Even though they were fewer in number, how were the Nephites able to defeat the combined army of the Amlicites and Lamanites? (See Alma 2:27–28.)
- What did the Amlicites do to distinguish themselves from the Nephites? (See Alma 3:4, 13.) How were these markings a fulfillment of prophecy? (See Alma 3:14–19.) Why is it important for us to “see that they brought upon themselves the curse”? (Alma 3:19).

4. The Church prospers but becomes prideful. Alma resigns the judgment seat to devote himself to the ministry.

Read and discuss selected verses from Alma 4.

- Even though the Nephites had been victorious in battle over the Amlicites and the Lamanites, many Nephites had died, and those who remained had suffered great losses among their flocks and their grain (Alma 4:1–2). What

were some results of these afflictions? (See Alma 4:3–5.) How might our afflictions awaken us to remember our duty?

- How long did it take the members of the Church to return from great righteousness to pride and worldliness? (See Alma 4:5–6. One year.) Why do you think it is often difficult for prosperous people to avoid pride and materialism? How can we avoid these sins?
- How did pride affect the way the people of the Church treated others, both in and out of the Church? (See Alma 4:8–12.) How did this influence the way nonmembers viewed the Church? (See Alma 4:10.) Why is the example of Church members important to the missionary work of the Church? When have you seen people influenced for good by the example of Church members?
- What did Alma do in response to the increasing pride and iniquity of the people? (See Alma 4:15–18.) Why did he do this? (See Alma 4:19.) How can preaching the word of God “stir [people] up in remembrance of their duty”? How can preaching the word of God “pull down” pride, craftiness, and contention?
- What does the phrase “bearing down in pure testimony” suggest about the power with which Alma would teach? (Alma 4:19). How has your life been changed by hearing others bear pure testimony of the gospel? What problems in the world today could be solved by preaching and living the gospel?

Conclusion

Invite class members to ponder how the challenges Alma faced are similar to problems we face today and how many of the solutions to these problems are similar.

Explain that in the coming weeks, class members will study Alma’s response to other challenges he faced as the high priest over the people. Encourage class members to observe how Alma preached the word of God to deal with each situation he faced.

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

Lesson
22

“Have Ye Received His Image in Your Countenances?”

Alma 5–7

Purpose To help class members understand what it means to experience a change of heart and continue in the process of conversion.

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. Alma 5. Alma exhorts the members of the Church in Zarahemla to live in such a way that they are prepared to experience a “mighty change” of heart.
 - b. Alma 6. Many people in Zarahemla humble themselves and repent of their sins. Alma and the people establish the order of the Church in Zarahemla.
 - c. Alma 7. In the valley of Gideon, Alma testifies of Jesus Christ. He encourages the people to continue following the Savior.
2. Additional reading: “Beware of Pride” (Ezra Taft Benson, *Ensign*, May 1989, 4–7; see also Conference Report, Apr. 1989, 3–7).

**Suggestions for
Lesson Development**

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

Draw two large hearts on the chalkboard. Explain that the heart is often used as a symbol of our desires and affections. Write the word *Proud* above one of the hearts.

- What do proud people set their hearts on? (Have two class members read Alma 4:8 and Alma 5:53 aloud.) What are some examples of “vain things of the world”? (Write class members’ responses in the heart with the word *Proud* written above it.)

Write the word *Humble* above the second heart.

- What do humble people desire? (Write class members’ responses in the heart with the word *Humble* written above it.)

Explain that when we humble ourselves before God, we are prepared to be “born of God” and experience a “mighty change in [our] hearts” (Alma 5:14). This lesson discusses the conditions under which the Lord can change our hearts.

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

**1. Alma teaches the people how they can experience a “mighty change”
of heart.**

Read and discuss selected verses from Alma 5. Remind class members that Alma was the chief judge in the people’s government. As chief judge, he had the

authority to enforce the laws of the land. He was also the presiding high priest in the Church. As high priest, he had the responsibility to preach the word of God. When he saw the wickedness of the members of the Church, he resigned as chief judge and “confined himself wholly to the high priesthood . . . , to the testimony of the word” (Alma 4:11–20). President Ezra Taft Benson taught why it became important for Alma to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ rather than serve as chief judge:

“The Lord works from the inside out. The world works from the outside in. . . . The world would mold men by changing their environment. Christ changes men, who then change their environment. The world would shape human behavior, but Christ can change human nature” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1985, 5; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1985, 6).

- At the beginning of his address, Alma spoke of the previous generation, who had been delivered from physical and spiritual bondage (Alma 5:3–9). Why do you think it was important for the people to remember their fathers’ captivity and deliverance? (As class members discuss this question, you may want to have them read Alma 5:5–7.) How did Alma describe their fathers after the Lord “changed their hearts”? (See Alma 5:7–9.)
- Have a class member read the three questions in Alma 5:10. What are the answers to these questions? (See Alma 5:11–13.) What was the message that led to “a mighty change [being] wrought” in the heart of Alma’s father? (See Mosiah 16:13–15.) What happened to the people who believed Alma the Elder when he taught them the gospel? (See Alma 5:13; see also Mosiah 18:1–11.) How can others’ testimonies of the Savior help us experience a change of heart?
- Throughout his address to the people in Zarahemla, Alma spoke of experiencing a “mighty change” of heart and being “born of God” (Alma 5:14). We often use the word *conversion* when we speak of this experience. What does it mean to be converted? (See Mosiah 5:2; 27:24–26.) Is conversion a single event or a process?

Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught: “Except in . . . unusual circumstances, as with Alma (Mosiah 27), spiritual rebirth is a process. It does not occur instantaneously. It comes to pass by degrees. Repentant persons become alive to one spiritual reality after another, until they are wholly alive in Christ and are qualified to dwell in his presence forever” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1966–73], 3:401).

As part of this discussion, you may want to read Alma 5:45–46 with class members. Note that even Alma, who had experienced a miraculous conversion, had “fasted and prayed many days that [he] might know these things.”

Explain that as Alma preached to the people in Zarahemla, he asked them a series of questions. We can use these questions to examine ourselves as we continue in the conversion process. Have class members take turns reading verses from Alma 5:14–21, 26–31. Invite them to discuss questions from these verses that are especially meaningful to them. You may want to use the following discussion questions to encourage participation and to help class members ponder how they can continue in the conversion process:

- Alma spoke of having “the image of God engraven upon [our] countenances” (Alma 5:19). The word *countenance* refers to a person’s behavior or to the way a person’s face expresses his or her character. Invite class members to silently consider how they would answer the following question from Alma: “Have ye received his image in your countenances?”
- How can it be helpful to imagine ourselves being judged by the Lord? (See Alma 5:15–19.)
- Alma asked, “If ye have experienced a change of heart, and if ye have felt to sing the song of redeeming love, . . . can ye feel so now?” (Alma 5:26). Invite class members to silently consider how they would answer this question. Once a person has “felt to sing the song of redeeming love,” what might cause that feeling to diminish? What can we do to continue in the process of conversion?
- How can we keep ourselves “blameless before God”? (See Alma 5:27, 50–51.)
- How do pride and envy make us unprepared to meet God? (See Alma 5:28–29.) Why are we unprepared to meet God if we mock or persecute others, as recorded in verses 30 and 31?
- After Alma asked these questions, he urged the people to repent of their sins (Alma 5:31–32). Then he reassured them that they could be forgiven through the Atonement of Jesus Christ (Alma 5:33–35). What invitation does the Savior extend to us? (See Alma 5:33–35.) How can this invitation give us hope?
- To the unrighteous people in Zarahemla, Alma said, “A shepherd hath called after you and is still calling after you, but ye will not hearken unto his voice!” (Alma 5:37). Who is the shepherd Alma referred to? (See Alma 5:38.) How does the Savior call after us? What can we do to hearken to His voice?
- What can we learn from Alma 5:43–49 about the calling of a prophet?
- Alma warned the people that they should not persist, or continue, in their wickedness (Alma 5:53–56; note that Alma asked the question “Will ye persist?” four times). Why is forsaking sin a necessary part of repenting? (See Alma 5:56; see also Mosiah 16:5; D&C 58:42–43.)
- Alma commanded his people, “Come ye out from the wicked, and be ye separate” (Alma 5:57). How can we separate ourselves from wickedness while living in the world?

2. Alma and the people establish the order of the Church in Zarahemla.

Read and discuss selected verses from Alma 6.

- After Alma’s discourse, many people repented of their sins and humbled themselves before God (Alma 6:1–2). Why were other people unwilling to repent of their sins? (See Alma 6:3. They were “lifted up in the pride of their hearts.”) How does pride prevent people from repenting? How can we overcome pride in our hearts?

President Ezra Taft Benson said: “The antidote for pride is humility—meekness, submissiveness (see Alma 7:23). . . . Let us choose to be humble. We can choose to humble ourselves by conquering enmity toward our brothers and sisters, esteeming them as ourselves, and lifting them as high or higher than we are. . . . We can choose to humble ourselves by receiving

counsel and chastisement. . . . We can choose to humble ourselves by forgiving those who have offended us. . . . We can choose to humble ourselves by rendering selfless service. . . . We can choose to humble ourselves by going on missions and preaching the word that can humble others. . . . We can choose to humble ourselves by getting to the temple more frequently. . . . We can choose to humble ourselves by confessing and forsaking our sins and being born of God. . . . We can choose to humble ourselves by loving God, submitting our will to His, and putting Him first in our lives” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1989, 6; or *Ensign*, May 1989, 6–7).

- Alma and the people in Zarahemla “began to establish the order of the church” by ordaining priests and elders, baptizing new converts, and gathering together often in fasting and prayer (Alma 6:1–6). How does such order in the Church help us continue in the conversion process?

3. Alma testifies of Jesus Christ. He encourages the people in Gideon to follow the Savior.

Read and discuss selected verses from Alma 7. Explain that after Alma taught in Zarahemla, he went to preach to the people in the valley of Gideon (Alma 6:8).

- Alma told the people in Gideon that there were “many things to come” but that the coming of Jesus Christ was of the greatest importance (Alma 7:7). What did Alma teach about the Savior’s mission on earth? (See Alma 7:10–13.) Why did the Savior take upon Himself our pains, afflictions, sicknesses, and sins? (See Alma 7:11–14. As appropriate, invite class members to share their feelings about the Savior’s power to understand their needs, trials, and sorrows and to take away their sins.)
- In what ways was Alma’s message to the people in Gideon different from his message in Zarahemla? In what ways were the messages similar? Why did Alma preach repentance to the people in Gideon even though they were striving to live righteously? (See Alma 7:9, 14–16, 22, 26.)

Conclusion

Have a class member read Alma 7:23–25. Explain that these verses describe a person who has experienced the change of heart spoken of by Alma and who continues to “sing the song of redeeming love” (Alma 5:26). As we continue in the conversion process, we will be able to look forward to the day when we are received “in the kingdom of heaven to go no more out” (Alma 7:25).

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

Additional Teaching Idea

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use this idea as part of the lesson.

Video presentation

If *Book of Mormon Video Presentations* (53911) is available, show “Can You Imagine,” a seven-minute segment. In this presentation, a young man asks himself some of the questions in Alma 5. You may want to preview the presentation to determine whether its treatment of these questions will be helpful for those you teach.

Lesson
23

“More Than One Witness”

Alma 8–12

Purpose To increase class members’ understanding of the plan of redemption and the power of having more than one witness to testify of gospel truths.

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. Alma 8–9. After preaching in Melek, Alma calls the people of Ammonihah to repentance, but they reject him. He leaves but is commanded by an angel to return. Alma is received by Amulek, and both are commanded to preach in Ammonihah.
 - b. Alma 10. Amulek preaches to the people of Ammonihah and describes his conversion. The people are astonished that there is another witness to Alma’s teachings. Amulek contends with unrighteous lawyers and judges.
 - c. Alma 11. Amulek contends with Zeezrom and testifies of the coming of Christ, the judgment of the wicked, and the plan of redemption.
 - d. Alma 12. Alma further explains Amulek’s words, warning against hard-heartedness and wickedness and testifying of the Fall and the plan of redemption.
2. Ask a class member to prepare to summarize the account of how Alma and Amulek met (Alma 8:19–32).
3. Ask two class members to prepare to read the dialogue in Alma 11:21–40, with one person reading Amulek’s words and the other person reading Zeezrom’s.
4. If you use the attention activity, bring to class an object in a box or bag. Bring an unusual object, one that class members would not expect or believe you to have. Make sure that the box or bag conceals the object from class members.

**Suggestions for
Lesson Development**

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

Display the box (or bag) with the object inside it (see “Preparation,” item 4). Tell class members what is inside the box, but do not show them the object. Ask if they believe that such an item is really in the box.

After class members have had a chance to respond, invite one of them to come and look inside the box. Ask this person to tell the other class members what is inside the box. Then ask class members again if they believe the item is in the box.

- Why was it easier to believe that the object was in the box after someone else came and looked at it?

Explain that as Alma preached repentance to the people of Ammonihah, he was joined by Amulek. This lesson discusses how Alma's teaching was strengthened through Amulek's witness.

Scripture Discussion
and Application

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

1. Alma calls the people of Ammonihah to repentance, but they reject him.

Discuss Alma 8–9. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud. Remind class members that Alma delivered up the judgment seat to Nephihah and began his missionary journeys. These included a journey to the wicked city of Ammonihah.

- After he established the order of the Church among the people in Gideon and Melek, Alma went to preach in the land of Ammonihah. What challenge did he face there? (See Alma 8:8–9.) Which words in Alma 8:10 describe the intensity of Alma's efforts in Ammonihah? How did the people of Ammonihah respond to Alma's preaching? (See Alma 8:11–13.)
- What happened as Alma left Ammonihah and traveled toward the city of Aaron? (See Alma 8:14–17.) According to the angel, what reason did Alma have to rejoice? (See Alma 8:15.) How did Alma respond to the angel's instructions? (See Alma 8:18.) What can we learn from his response?

Have the assigned class member briefly tell about how Alma and Amulek met (Alma 8:19–32). If you have not asked a class member to do this, tell about the account yourself.

- How did the Lord prepare Amulek to preach with Alma? (See Alma 8:20, 27; 10:7–11.) What are some ways in which individuals are prepared to do the Lord's work?
- Why did the people of Ammonihah continue to reject Alma's warnings? (See Alma 9:5.) What arguments did they use to reject his message? (See Alma 9:2, 6.)
- Alma said that the wicked people in Ammonihah had forgotten the righteous tradition of their fathers, the commandments of God, and the Lord's deliverance of their fathers (Alma 9:8–11). How did their forgetfulness lead to wickedness? What are some reasons people forget what the Lord has done for them and others? What effective ways have you found for remembering the Lord's blessings to you?
- Alma warned that if the wicked Nephites of Ammonihah did not repent, the day of judgment would be "more tolerable" for the Lamanites than for them (Alma 9:15). Why would this be so? (See Alma 9:14–24; see also Luke 12:47–48; D&C 82:3.) What does the Lord require of those who have received greater light?
- What did Alma teach about the "promises which are extended to the Lamanites"? (Alma 9:16–17). How are these promises being fulfilled today?

2. Amulek preaches to the people of Ammonihah.

Read and discuss selected verses from Alma 10. Explain that after Alma had spoken to the people, Amulek stood up and began to preach to them. Amulek was a descendant of Lehi and was a wealthy man “of no small reputation” in the community (Alma 10:2–4).

- Amulek said that he had been “called many times” but “would not hear” and that he “knew concerning these things” but “would not know” (Alma 10:6). What are some of the ways the Lord calls to us? Why are we sometimes slow to respond to Him? How can we be more receptive to Him?
- When was Amulek finally converted? (See Alma 10:7–11; you may want to ask a class member to read all five of these verses aloud.)
- What was the intent of the lawyers who questioned Amulek? (See Alma 10:13–16, 31–32.) Why were they unable to deceive him? (See Alma 10:17.)
- Amulek rebuked the lawyers and warned that they were laying the foundation of the destruction of the people (Alma 10:17–21, 27). How were they laying this foundation? What had kept the people from being destroyed already? (See Alma 10:22–23.) How do you think the prayers of the righteous help counter the effects of wickedness today?
- Why were the people astonished by Amulek’s words? (See Alma 10:12.) What are the benefits of having more than one witness when sharing the gospel? How can we sustain each other in these endeavors? (You may want to mention people in the Church who teach in pairs, such as full-time missionaries, home teachers, visiting teachers, and parents.)

Invite class members to observe through the rest of the lesson how Alma and Amulek continued to support each other’s efforts by preaching the same doctrines. As the doctrines are discussed, you may want to summarize them on the chalkboard. The following chart provides an example of how you could do this.

DOCTRINE	AMULEK’S WITNESS	ALMA’S WITNESS
The Atonement	Alma 11:40	Alma 12:33–34
Repentance	Alma 11:40	Alma 12:24
Judgment	Alma 11:41	Alma 12:14
Resurrection	Alma 11:41–42	Alma 12:24–25

3. Amulek contends with Zeezrom and testifies of Christ.

Read and discuss selected verses from Alma 11. Explain that chapter 11 begins with a description of the Nephites’ monetary system. Beginning in Alma 11:20 is the account of Amulek being questioned by Zeezrom, one of the most cunning lawyers in the land of Ammonihah.

- How did the judges in Ammonihah earn money? (See Alma 11:1, 20.) Why did they want to contend with Alma and Amulek? (See Alma 11:20.)

Have the two assigned class members read the dialogue between Amulek and Zeezrom (found in Alma 11:21–40). Or use the additional teaching idea at the end of the lesson to introduce these verses. Then discuss the remaining questions in this section.

- How did Amulek respond to Zeezrom’s first question? (See Alma 11:21–22.) How can we keep our words and teachings in harmony with the Spirit of the Lord?
- Zeezrom asked Amulek if Jesus would save people in their sins (Alma 11:34). What reasons did Amulek give for saying that we cannot be saved in our sins? (See Alma 11:34, 37.) What is the difference between the false idea of being saved *in* our sins and the truth that we can be saved *from* our sins? (If we are unrepentant and remain in a state of sin, we cannot be saved. If we repent, Jesus Christ can save us from our sins.)
- Which blessings of Christ’s Atonement come to all people? (See Alma 11:42–43.) Which blessings come only to those who have faith in Him and keep His commandments? (See Alma 11:40–41.)
- What did Amulek teach about resurrection? (See Alma 11:43–45.) Why are these truths important for us to know?

4. Alma further explains Amulek’s words and warns against hard-heartedness.

Read and discuss selected verses from Alma 12. Point out that after Amulek had answered Zeezrom’s contentions, Zeezrom “began to tremble” (Alma 11:46). Seeing this, Alma began to speak to “establish the words of Amulek, . . . to unfold the scriptures beyond that which Amulek had done” (Alma 12:1).

- From Alma’s words to Zeezrom in Alma 12:3–6, what can we learn about what Satan desires and how he works? (Point out that Satan often tries to deceive one person in order to bring many people to destruction.) How can we protect ourselves against Satan’s subtle devices?
- What did Alma teach about how the condition of our hearts affects our understanding of God’s word? (See Alma 12:9–11.) What blessings come to those who do not harden their hearts? (See Alma 12:10.) How can we develop hearts that recognize, understand, and accept the word of God? (See 1 Nephi 2:16; 15:11.)
- Alma taught that people who harden their hearts against the word of God will be condemned by their words, works, and thoughts (Alma 12:13–14). Why do you think the Lord judges according to our thoughts as well as our words and actions?
- How did Alma describe the state of those who do not repent and thus die in their sins? (See Alma 12:14–18.) Why will these people “be as though there had been no redemption made”? (See D&C 19:16–18.)
- Alma 12:22–34 contains Alma’s description of the Fall of Adam and the plan of redemption. What did Alma teach about the purpose of mortality? (See Alma 12:24.) How can an understanding of this principle help us live more righteously?

- Why is it significant that “God gave [Adam and Eve] commandments, *after* having made known unto them the plan of redemption”? (Alma 12:32; italics added). How does an understanding of the plan of redemption help us keep the commandments? How can parents and teachers apply this principle as they teach the importance of the commandments?
- Why is it necessary for us to know that God has prepared a plan for our redemption? What does the plan of redemption teach us about God’s justice and mercy?

Conclusion

Point out that as Alma and Amulek worked together as witnesses of the gospel of Jesus Christ, they strengthened each other and delivered powerful teachings about the plan of redemption. Encourage class members to look for opportunities to strengthen one another in bearing witness of the gospel.

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

Additional Teaching Idea

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use this idea as part of the lesson.

Answering Zeezrom’s questions

With their scriptures closed and no prior discussion, have class members try to answer correctly the questions Zeezrom asked Amulek, recorded in Alma 11:26–39. Compare the answers they give to those given by Amulek. Then discuss how Zeezrom was trying to trick Amulek into giving contradictory answers. Point out that it is essential to understand gospel principles and seek the guidance of the Holy Ghost so we can be prepared for such questions.

“Give Us Strength According to Our Faith . . . in Christ”

Lesson
24

Alma 13–16

Purpose To help class members recognize the importance of honoring their foreordained roles, callings, and priesthood responsibilities and to help them understand that following the counsel of prophets helps us enter into the rest of the Lord.

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. Alma 13. Alma gives a powerful discourse on the priesthood and the doctrine of foreordination.
 - b. Alma 14. Alma, Amulek, and other faithful believers are persecuted for their righteousness. The Lord delivers Alma and Amulek from prison because of their faith in Christ.
 - c. Alma 15. Zeezrom is healed and baptized. Many people in Sidom are baptized.
 - d. Alma 16. The words of Alma are fulfilled as the Lamanites destroy Ammonihah. The Lord prepares people’s hearts to receive the word preached by Alma, Amulek, and others.
2. Additional reading: Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 14:25–40; Ether 12:12–13.
3. If you use the attention activity, bring to class a picture depicting a man receiving the priesthood, such as Christ Ordaining the Apostles (62557; Gospel Art Picture Kit 211) or Melchizedek Priesthood Restoration (62371; Gospel Art Picture Kit 408).

Suggestions for Lesson Development

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

Tell class members that you are going to write on the chalkboard one of the most important questions we can ask. Then write on the chalkboard *How?*

Explain that this question is important when it relates to our personal conduct. To illustrate this, ask class members to imagine the following:

- a. A young man knows that he needs to be at a certain place at a certain time, but he does not know how to get there.
- b. A woman knows that she needs to be baptized, but she does not know how to go about it.
- c. A man knows that Jesus is the Savior, but he does not know how to come unto Him. (As you share this example, you may want to ask class members to read 1 Nephi 15:14.)

Explain that when Alma taught the people in Ammonihah, he talked about one way we can know how to come unto Christ. Rather than using the word *how*, he used the phrase “in what manner.” Have a class member read Alma 13:1–2.

Display a depiction of a priesthood ordination (see “Preparation,” item 3). Explain that a portion of this lesson discusses how the order of the priesthood helps us “know in what manner to look forward to [the] Son for redemption” (Alma 13:2).

Scripture Discussion and Application

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

1. Alma gives a powerful discourse on the priesthood and foreordination.

Discuss Alma 13. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud. Explain that after Alma taught Zeezrom and others in Ammonihah about the plan of redemption, he testified of the priesthood and the doctrine of foreordination. Point out that the priests of whom Alma spoke in this discourse were high priests in the Melchizedek Priesthood (Alma 13:10).

- When are men first “called and prepared” to be ordained to the priesthood? (See Alma 13:3.)

The Prophet Joseph Smith said, “Every man who has a calling to minister to the inhabitants of the world was ordained to that very purpose in the Grand Council of heaven before this world was” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 365).

- How did men demonstrate in premortal life that they were worthy to be foreordained to receive the Melchizedek Priesthood? (See Alma 13:3–5.) What must men do in this life to remain worthy of their foreordination? (See Alma 13:8–10.)
- How should Alma’s teachings about foreordination affect the way we sustain those who are called to preside over us? How should these teachings affect our response when priesthood leaders extend callings or other assignments to us?

President Spencer W. Kimball taught: “Before we came here, faithful women were given certain assignments while faithful men were foreordained to certain priesthood tasks. While we do not now remember the particulars, this does not alter the glorious reality of what we once agreed to. You are accountable for those things which long ago were expected of you just as are those we sustain as prophets and apostles!” (“The Role of Righteous Women,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1979, 102).

- Alma said that men receive the Melchizedek Priesthood so they can “teach [God’s] commandments unto the children of men, that they also might enter into his rest” (Alma 13:6; see also verse 1). What opportunities do Melchizedek Priesthood holders have to teach? What does it mean to enter into the rest of the Lord? (See the quotation below.) Why do you think we need to teach and learn the gospel in order to enter into the rest of the Lord?

Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught: “The rest of the Lord, where mortals are concerned, is to gain a perfect knowledge of the divinity of the great latter-day work. [President Joseph F. Smith said,] ‘It means entering into the knowledge and love of God, having faith in his purpose and in his plan, to such an extent that we know we are right, and that we are not hunting for something else;

we are not disturbed by every wind of doctrine, or by the cunning and craftiness of men who lie in wait to deceive.' It is 'rest from the religious turmoil of the world; from the cry that is going forth, here and there—lo, here is Christ; lo, there is Christ.' (*Gospel Doctrine*, 5th ed., pp. 58, 125–126.) The rest of the Lord, in eternity, is to inherit eternal life, to gain the fulness of the Lord's glory (D. & C. 84:24.)" (*Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. [1966], 633).

- How do we become pure so we can be permitted to enter into the rest of the Lord? (See Alma 13:11–12.) How must we live so we can be sanctified through the blood of the Lamb and by the Holy Ghost? (See Alma 13:12–13, 16, 27–29; 3 Nephi 27:19–20.)

Have a class member read Alma 13:2, 16 aloud. Then review the verses listed below. Help class members see some ways in which the order of the priesthood can help us know how to look to the Savior for redemption. Give special emphasis to the words and phrases in italics.

- Alma 13:3–4. (Those foreordained to receive the Melchizedek Priesthood were "called and prepared . . . on account of their exceeding *faith* and *good works*.")
 - Alma 13:6. (They were "ordained [foreordained] . . . to teach [God's] *commandments* unto the children of men, that they also might enter into his rest.")
 - Alma 13:8. (In this life, they are "ordained with a *holy ordinance*.")
 - Alma 13:10. (They show that they are worthy of their foreordination through continued *faith* and *good works* and through *repentance*.)
- How do faith and repentance help us look to Jesus Christ for redemption? How do good works and obedience to the commandments help us look to Him? How do priesthood ordinances help us look to Him?
 - Alma spoke of Melchizedek as an example of a great high priest (Alma 13:14–15). What can we learn from Melchizedek's example? (See Alma 13:17–18; see also Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 14:25–40.)
 - What can we learn from Alma 13:27 about Alma's love for the people of Ammonihah?
 - Have a class member read Alma's plea to the people as recorded in Alma 13:27–29. Why is it important not to procrastinate repentance? (See Alma 34:32–36.) What blessings will we receive as we "watch and pray continually"? (See Alma 13:28.) How can we have "a hope that [we] shall receive eternal life"? (See Alma 13:29; Moroni 7:41.)

2. Alma, Amulek, and other believers are persecuted for their righteousness.

Read and discuss selected verses from Alma 14.

- Many people in Ammonihah believed Alma and Amulek's teachings and began to repent and search the scriptures (Alma 14:1). The majority of the people, however, became angry and persecuted Alma and Amulek (Alma 14:2–5). Why do some people become angry when they are called to repentance? (See 1 Nephi 16:1–3.)
- What did Zeezrom do when he saw what "he had caused among the people"? (See Alma 14:6–7.) How did the people respond when Zeezrom confessed his guilt and defended Alma and Amulek? (See Alma 14:7.)

- What did the wicked people in Ammonihah do to the people who believed in the word of God? (See Alma 14:7–9.) Why did the Lord allow this to happen? (See Alma 14:10–11; 60:13.) Why was it the will of the Lord that the lives of Alma and Amulek be spared? (See Alma 14:12–13.)
- After being persecuted in prison for many days, how were Alma and Amulek finally delivered? (See Alma 14:26–29; Ether 12:12–13. They were given strength and power “according to their faith which was in Christ.”) What are some things from which we need to be delivered? Why must our faith be centered in Christ to lead us to deliverance? (See Mosiah 3:17; Moroni 7:33.)

3. Zeezrom is healed and baptized.

Read and discuss selected verses from Alma 15. Explain that after the Lord delivered them from prison, Alma and Amulek went to the land of Sidom. There they met the men who had been cast out of Ammonihah and stoned because of their belief in the word of God (Alma 15:1; see also Alma 14:7). Zeezrom was one of these men (Alma 15:3).

- Zeezrom was suffering both spiritually and physically because of his wickedness, but “his heart began to take courage” when he heard that Alma and Amulek were in Sidom (Alma 15:3–4). What did he ask of Alma and Amulek? (See Alma 15:5.) What does this reveal about his trust in them? In whom did he need to place his trust in order to be healed? (See Alma 15:6–10.)
- What can we learn from Zeezrom’s actions after he was healed? (See Alma 15:11–12.)
- Unlike the people who remained in Ammonihah, the people in Sidom believed the message taught by Alma and Amulek and were baptized (Alma 15:12–15). Alma saw that they “were checked as to the pride of their hearts” (Alma 15:17; note that the word *check* means to slow or stop). What did the people do as they became more humble? (See Alma 15:17.) Why is it necessary to humble ourselves before God in order to truly worship Him?
- What did Amulek give up by choosing to live the gospel and serve as a missionary? (See Alma 15:16.) What did he gain? (See Alma 8:30; 34:1, 8; Ether 12:12–13.) What sacrifices have you made in choosing to live and teach the gospel? How have you been blessed for this?
- What did Alma do for Amulek once the Church was established in Sidom? (See Alma 15:18.) What does this act reveal about Alma? In what ways can we administer to others and strengthen them in the Lord?

4. The words of Alma are fulfilled as the Lamanites destroy Ammonihah.

Read and discuss selected verses from Alma 16.

- About one year after Alma and Amulek preached in Ammonihah, the Lamanites invaded Nephite lands (Alma 16:1–2). What happened to the Nephites in Ammonihah? (See Alma 16:2–3, 9–11.) How was this a fulfillment of Alma’s prophecies? (See Alma 9:4–5, 12, 18.)
- Why were Zoram and his followers able to scatter the Lamanites and rescue their brethren who had been taken captive? (See Alma 16:4–8.) What can we learn by comparing the destruction of Ammonihah to the success of Zoram’s

armies? (Compare Alma 9:1–8 and 15:15 with Alma 16:4–6; see also 2 Nephi 4:34. Emphasize that we should trust in God and His prophets rather than in worldly knowledge, power, or possessions.)

- After the destruction of Ammonihah, the Lord prepared people’s hearts to receive the word preached by Alma, Amulek, and others who were chosen for the work (Alma 16:13–21). How does the Lord prepare people’s hearts to receive His word? (See Alma 16:16.) How can we ensure that we preach the word of God “in its purity”? (See Alma 16:21; see also Mosiah 18:18–20; D&C 52:9.)

Conclusion

Invite class members to share insights and impressions they have received as they have discussed Alma 13–16.

Read Matthew 11:28–30 and Alma 13:27–29. Emphasize that in a world filled with doubt and confusion, it is comforting to know that through the priesthood we can “know in what manner to look forward to [the] Son for redemption” (Alma 13:2). As we look to the Lord, trust in Him, and follow the counsel of His prophets, we can enter into His rest.

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

Additional Teaching Idea

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use this idea as part of the lesson.

“According to the foreknowledge of God” (Alma 13:3)

Read the following statement by President Ezra Taft Benson to strengthen class members’ understanding of their foreordination:

“God has held you in reserve to make your appearance in the final days before the second coming of the Lord. . . . God has saved for the [final days] some of His strongest children, who will help bear off the kingdom triumphantly. That is where you come in, for you are the generation that must be prepared to meet your God. . . .

“In all ages prophets have looked down through the corridors of time to our day. Billions of the deceased and those yet to be born have their eyes on us. Make no mistake about it—you are a marked generation. There has never been more expected of the faithful in such a short period of time than there is of us” (*The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson* [1988], 104–5).

Lesson
25

“They Taught with Power and Authority of God”

Alma 17–22

Purpose To inspire class members to follow the example of the sons of Mosiah by sharing the gospel and ministering to others.

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. Alma 17:1–18. The sons of Mosiah preach the gospel to the Lamanites.
 - b. Alma 17:19–39; 18; 19. Ammon serves and teaches King Lamoni. The king and queen and many of the Lamanites are converted.
 - c. Alma 20–22. Ammon is led by the Spirit to deliver his brethren from prison. Lamoni’s father is converted.
2. Ask a class member to prepare to summarize Alma 17:19–39. Ask him or her to report on the events in the account rather than doctrine or personal application, which will be discussed in class after the report.
3. If the picture Ammon Defends the Flocks of King Lamoni is available, prepare to use it during the lesson (62535; Gospel Art Picture Kit 310).

Suggestions for Lesson Development

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

Write the following phrases on the chalkboard: *To Know, To Feel, To Do*

- How could these phrases relate to missionary work?

Elder Carlos E. Asay related the following experience:

“Not too long ago, I heard the testimony of a new convert—a young man obviously touched by the Spirit. Among other things, he indicated that it was his great desire to share the restored gospel with his family and friends. With tears in his eyes and a quiver in his voice, he said:

“ ‘I want them *to know* what I know.

“ ‘I want them *to feel* what I feel.

“ ‘I want them *to do* what I have done.’

“There is a missionary spirit—a spirit which urges us to live outside ourselves and to be concerned for the welfare of others. And anyone who has ever served an honorable mission, assisted in the conversion of a friend, supported a son or daughter in the mission field, or enjoyed close associations with missionaries will testify of its reality” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1976, 58; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1976, 42).

Explain that after the sons of Mosiah were converted, they felt a great desire to share the gospel with others. Their experiences provide some of the greatest

examples of missionary service in the scriptures. This lesson discusses how they were able to become instruments in the hands of God in bringing the Lamanites to a knowledge of the truth.

Scripture Discussion and Application

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

1. The sons of Mosiah preach the gospel to the Lamanites.

Explain that as Alma traveled to Manti, he met the sons of King Mosiah, who were returning from their 14-year mission to the Lamanites. Alma 17–26 records the experiences and preaching of the sons of Mosiah during their mission. Read and discuss Alma 17:1–18.

- Why were the sons of Mosiah such powerful and effective teachers? (See Alma 17:2–4. Write on the chalkboard the heading *Keys to Successful Missionary Work*. Under the heading, write *Study, fast, and pray*.) How does our personal worthiness and preparation affect our ability to be effective instruments for the Lord? How have you seen a missionary or someone else be blessed because of personal preparation?
- What sacrifices did the sons of Mosiah make to perform their missionary work? (See Alma 17:5–6.) Why were they willing to do this? (See Alma 17:9, 16; see also Mosiah 28:1–3. On the chalkboard write *Love God and others*.) How can we develop love and concern for others, as was demonstrated by the sons of Mosiah?
- The sons of Mosiah went to preach to “a hardened and a ferocious people” (Alma 17:14). What comfort and counsel did the Lord give them to help prepare them for their mission? (See Alma 17:10–11.) How did the sons of Mosiah feel after receiving comfort and direction from the Lord? (See Alma 17:12.) How can these verses help us as we face challenges in our callings?

2. Ammon serves and teaches King Lamoni, and many of the people are converted.

Ask the assigned class member to summarize the events described in Alma 17:19–39. Then read and discuss selected verses from Alma 17:19–39; 18; 19. If you are using the picture of Ammon defending the king's flocks, display it now.

- Why did Ammon's heart become “swollen . . . with joy” when the king's flocks were scattered? (See Alma 17:29.) How did Ammon turn this into a positive experience? (See Alma 17:30–39.)
- How did the king respond when his servants told him how Ammon had defended his flocks? (See Alma 18:2–5.) What was Ammon doing when the king asked where he was? (See Alma 18:8–9. On the chalkboard write *Give service and develop trust*.) How did this help prepare King Lamoni to be taught? (See Alma 18:10–11.)
- How did the king's servants address Ammon when he came to see the king? (See Alma 18:13.) How did Ammon's words to King Lamoni show that Ammon was still a humble servant? (See Alma 18:14–17.)

- Why do you think it was important for Ammon to serve the king before trying to teach him? How can serving and developing a relationship of trust with others help us present the gospel message to them? In what ways can we serve those we teach?
- As Ammon began teaching King Lamoni, how did he help him gain an understanding about God and heaven? (See Alma 18:24–33. He taught in a way that the king could understand.) How can we follow this example when teaching the gospel?
- After establishing a level of understanding with King Lamoni, what essential doctrines did Ammon teach him? (See Alma 18:34–39. On the chalkboard write *Teach the plan of redemption from the scriptures.*) Why is the Book of Mormon an important tool in teaching these truths today?
- What did King Lamoni do after hearing and believing Ammon’s words? (See Alma 18:40–41.) Why is it important for people to seek forgiveness when they are taught the principles of the gospel? Why is prayer necessary in the conversion process?
- After praying, King Lamoni fell to the earth. How did the queen demonstrate her faith when Lamoni appeared to be dead? (See Alma 19:1–5, 8–9.)
- What did Lamoni emphasize when he spoke to the queen after his conversion? (See Alma 19:12–13.)
- After speaking to the queen, Lamoni again fell to the earth, as did the queen and all of the servants except Abish (Alma 19:13, 15–16). Who was Abish? (See Alma 19:16–17. As class members discuss Abish, you may want to point out how she can serve as an example of remaining converted to the Lord even when those around us are not.) What did Abish do when she understood what had happened? (See Alma 19:17.) How can we better recognize and use opportunities to share the gospel?
- What were some of the different responses of the people when they arrived at the house of the king? (See Alma 19:18–28.) How did Abish try to resolve the contention among the people? (See Alma 19:28–29.) How did the king and queen demonstrate their conversion after they arose? (See Alma 19:29–31, 33.)
- What do you think Mormon wanted us to learn from the experiences of Ammon and King Lamoni and his people? (See Alma 19:36. Answers could include that the arm of the Lord is “extended to all people who will repent and believe on his name.”)

3. Ammon is led by the Spirit to deliver his brethren. Lamoni’s father is converted.

Read and discuss selected verses from Alma 20–22.

- What did Lamoni want to do after the Church was established in his kingdom? (See Alma 20:1.) Why is it important for new converts to share their testimonies with others? How can we continue to have such enthusiasm?
- How did the conversation between Lamoni and his father demonstrate the depth of Lamoni’s conversion? (See Alma 20:13–15.)
- What astonished King Lamoni’s father about Ammon? (See Alma 20:26–27.) Why are love and testimony so powerful in softening a person’s heart? (Invite

class members to share experiences of how the love and testimony of others have softened their hearts or the hearts of their family members or friends.)

Explain that Alma 21 begins the account of Ammon's brother Aaron and his brethren. They preached the gospel to the Amalekites and Amulonites in Jerusalem, but these apostate Nephites were extremely hard-hearted and refused to listen. Aaron and his brethren left and began preaching in the land of Middoni, where they were thrown into prison and mistreated.

- What did Aaron and his brethren do as soon as they were released from prison and fed and clothed? (See Alma 21:14–15. On the chalkboard write *Go forth despite tribulation.*) Why is it important for us to continue in our labors in God's kingdom even when we face suffering and affliction?
- How did Aaron and his brethren know where they should go to teach the gospel? (See Alma 21:16.) How were they blessed as they were led by the Spirit? (See Alma 21:17.) How have you been blessed by heeding the promptings of the Spirit?
- Aaron was led by the Spirit to the house of King Lamoni's father (Alma 22:1). How had Ammon's example helped prepare Lamoni's father to be taught? (See Alma 22:2–3. On the chalkboard write *Be a good example.*) How have you seen the examples of Church members influence others for good?
- How was Aaron's teaching of Lamoni's father similar to Ammon's teaching of Lamoni? (Compare Alma 18:24–39 and Alma 22:7–14.) What did Aaron say when Lamoni's father asked what he should do to obtain a hope of redemption? (See Alma 22:16. List class members' answers on the chalkboard. They might include those listed below.)
 - a. "Bow down before God."
 - b. "Repent of all thy sins."
 - c. "Call on [God's] name in faith."
- What sacrifices was the king willing to make to know God? (See Alma 22:15, 17–18.) What can we learn from the king's example?

Referring to Alma 22:15, 18, President Ezra Taft Benson said: "Each of us must surrender our sins if we are to really know Christ. For we do not know Him until we become like Him. There are some, like this king, who must pray until they, too, have 'a wicked spirit rooted' from them so they can find the same joy" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1983, 63; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1983, 43).

- Like his son Lamoni, the king was physically overcome by the Spirit. After the king had risen, he declared his testimony, and many were converted through this experience (Alma 22:18–26). What did the king do following his conversion that helped the missionaries bring thousands to a knowledge of the Lord? (See Alma 22:26; 23:1–6.) What experiences have you had or known of where the conversion of one person had a positive effect on many others?

Conclusion

Point out that our present approach to missionary work is similar to that of Ammon and Aaron: missionaries are encouraged to build relationships of trust, follow the Spirit, and teach the plan of redemption from the scriptures.

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

Purpose To encourage class members to strengthen their conversion and increase their desire to help others become converted.

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. Alma 23–24. Thousands of Lamanites are converted after being taught by the sons of Mosiah. The converted Lamanites call themselves the Anti-Nephi-Lehies. As a testimony to God that they will never again sin through the shedding of blood, the Anti-Nephi-Lehies bury their swords and refuse to take them up when an army of Lamanites attacks.
 - b. Alma 27–28. Ammon leads the Anti-Nephi-Lehies to seek safety among the Nephites. The Nephites give the Anti-Nephi-Lehies the land of Jershon and pledge to defend them against their enemies. The Lamanites come again to battle against the Nephites and are defeated.
 - c. Alma 26, 29. Ammon glories in the Lord as he reviews the success he and his brethren have had in preaching to the Lamanites. Alma wishes that joy might come to all through repentance and the plan of redemption.
2. If the picture *The Anti-Nephi-Lehies Burying Their Swords* is available, prepare to use it during the lesson (62565; Gospel Art Picture Kit 311).

Suggestions for Lesson Development

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

Ask class members:

- What characteristics or behaviors distinguish people who are truly converted?

Explain that this lesson discusses a group of people who were so deeply converted to the Lord that the scriptures record that they “never did fall away” (Alma 23:6).

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

1. The Anti-Nephi-Lehies are converted to the Lord.

Discuss Alma 23–24. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud. Remind class members that Lamoni’s father, who was king of all the Lamanites, was converted through the teachings of Aaron (Alma 22).

- What did the king of the Lamanites do after he became converted? (See Alma 23:1–2.) Why did he do this? (See Alma 23:3.) What resulted from this

proclamation and the subsequent actions of Aaron and his brethren?
(See Alma 23:4–7.)

- What actions of the converted Lamanites showed that their conversion was true and sincere? (Summarize class members' responses on the chalkboard. Some answers are listed below, with questions to encourage discussion.)
 - a. They “were converted unto the Lord” (Alma 23:6). Why is it essential that Jesus Christ be at the center of our conversion? For what other reasons might people be drawn to the Church? (Answers may include the personalities of missionaries, the influence of friends, or the appeal of social programs.) Why do these things alone fail to bring about true conversion?
 - b. They “were desirous . . . that they might be distinguished from their brethren” (Alma 23:16). In what ways did the converted Lamanites choose to distinguish themselves from their brethren who remained wicked? (See Alma 23:16–18; 27:27–30.) In what ways are we distinguished from the world when we are converted? Why is it important to distinguish ourselves in such ways?
 - c. They expressed gratitude to God even in times of trial and affliction (Alma 24:6–10, 23). What afflictions did the Anti-Nephi-Lehies face as a result of their conversion? (See Alma 24:1–2, 20–22; 27:1–3.) Despite these afflictions, what were they grateful for? (See Alma 24:7–10.) How can gratitude to God help us face trials and afflictions?
 - d. “They took their swords . . . and they did bury them up deep in the earth” (Alma 24:15–17). If you are using the picture of the Anti-Nephi-Lehies, display it now. Why did the Anti-Nephi-Lehies bury their swords and other weapons? (See Alma 23:7; 24:11–13, 18–19.) Why was it significant that they buried their weapons rather than simply promising not to use them? How might we sometimes “rebel against God”? What can we do to bury our “weapons of rebellion”?
 - e. They showed “great love” for their brethren (Alma 26:31). How did the Anti-Nephi-Lehies' decision to bury their weapons show their love for their fellow men as well as for God? (See Alma 24:18; 26:32–34.) In what ways can conversion increase a person's love for others?
- How did the unconverted Lamanites react when they saw that the Anti-Nephi-Lehies would not take up arms against them? (See Alma 24:20–27.) According to Mormon, what can we learn from this account? (See Alma 24:27; note Mormon's observation beginning with the phrase “thus we see.”)

2. The Anti-Nephi-Lehies seek safety among the Nephites.

Read and discuss selected verses from Alma 27–28.

- Why did Ammon and his brethren urge the Anti-Nephi-Lehies to go to the land of Zarahemla, where the Nephites lived? (See Alma 27:1–5.) Why was the king reluctant to take his people to Zarahemla? (See Alma 27:6.) What persuaded the king to go to Zarahemla? (See Alma 27:7–14.) How can our faith in the Lord help us when we face frightening situations?
- What did the Nephites do when Ammon asked them to admit the Anti-Nephi-Lehies into their land? (See Alma 27:20–26.) How did the Nephites help the Anti-Nephi-Lehies keep their covenant with the Lord? How can we help others stay converted to the Lord?

Point out that from the time the Anti-Nephi-Lehies settled in Jershon, they were known as the people of Ammon (Alma 27:26). Throughout the rest of the Book of Mormon—and throughout the rest of this Gospel Doctrine course—they are referred to as either the people of Ammon or the Ammonites.

- What great tragedy occurred after the people of Ammon were settled in the land of Jershon? (See Alma 28:1–3.) After this great battle, many people mourned for those killed in battle (Alma 28:4–6). Why did some mourners fear while others rejoiced? (See Alma 28:11–12.) What can we learn from these responses? (See Alma 28:13–14.)

3. Ammon and Alma rejoice in the accomplishment of the Lord’s work.

Read and discuss selected verses from Alma 26 and 29. Point out that Alma 26 records Ammon’s feelings about the success he and his brothers experienced in bringing the gospel to the Lamanites. Alma 29 records Alma’s feelings about the success of Ammon and his brothers and expresses Alma’s desire that all people might have the opportunity to hear and accept the gospel.

- What “great blessings” did the Lord give Ammon and his brethren? (See Alma 26:1–9.) How can we become effective “instruments in the hands of God to bring about [his] great work”? (See Alma 26:22.)
- How did Ammon respond when Aaron rebuked him for boasting? (See Alma 26:10–16, 35–37.) How can we “boast of [our] God” and “glory in the Lord”? In what ways has the Lord blessed you with strength beyond your own to help accomplish His work?
- How had the people of Zarahemla responded when Aaron and his brothers first announced their mission to the Lamanites? (See Alma 26:23–25.) What can we learn from this situation about prejudging people’s responses to the gospel instead of allowing them to accept or reject it on their own? How can we overcome this tendency?
- What can we learn from Ammon and his brethren about how we should respond to afflictions? (See Alma 26:27–30.) How have patience and trust in the Lord helped you experience a good outcome from a difficult situation?
- Why did Alma wish to be an angel? (See Alma 29:1.) What did Alma say would be the result if “every soul” repented and came unto God? (See Alma 29:2; see also Alma 28:14.) What experiences have taught you that living the gospel brings joy into our lives?
- Why did Alma feel that he sinned in his desire to be an angel? (See Alma 29:3, 6–7.) How can we be content with what the Lord has given us while still striving to grow and improve ourselves?
- Alma said that God “granteth unto men according to their desire, whether it be unto death or unto life” (Alma 29:4). What does this mean? (See 2 Nephi 2:27.)
- Alma rejoiced in what the Lord had done for him and his fathers (Alma 29:10–13). What has the Lord done for you and your family that causes you to rejoice? (Invite class members to ponder this question silently if they do not want to share their thoughts with the class.)

Conclusion Review the ways the Anti-Nephi-Lehies showed that they were truly converted. As directed by the Spirit, testify of the truths discussed during the lesson.

**Additional
Teaching Idea**

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use this idea as part of the lesson.

Missionary work fosters love and joy

Ammon emphasized the love and joy that are shared between missionaries and those whom they teach (Alma 26:1–4, 9, 11, 13, 30–31, 35). Invite class members to express the love they feel for the people who taught them the gospel or the joy they have experienced in sharing the gospel with others.

Lesson
27

“All Things Denote There Is a God”

Alma 30–31

Purpose To help class members learn how to recognize and refute false teachings and stay true to their testimonies of Jesus Christ.

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. Alma 30:1–18. Korihor, an anti-Christ, leads away the hearts of many in Zarahemla by preaching that “there should be no Christ” and that “whatsoever a man did was no crime.”
 - b. Alma 30:19–60. Korihor attempts to preach in the lands of Jershon and Gideon. The people refuse to listen, and they take him before their leaders. Korihor is then taken before Alma, who bears testimony of Christ’s coming and the existence of God. Korihor demands a sign and is struck dumb.
 - c. Alma 31. Alma leads a mission to reclaim the apostate Zoramites, who have adopted false beliefs and a prideful form of worship.
2. Ask one class member to prepare to read aloud Alma 31:15–18 and another class member to prepare to read aloud Alma 31:26–35.

Suggestions for Lesson Development

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

Ask class members to think of a place that exists but that they have never visited.

- Why do you believe that this place exists?

Explain that this lesson discusses a man who claimed that we cannot know of things we have not seen. Korihor argued that a person who had not seen God could not know of His existence. But just as we have others’ accounts to help us know of places we have not seen, we have the testimony of prophets, the scriptures, and the gift of the Holy Ghost to help us know that God does exist and that His gospel is true.

Point out that the teachings of Korihor are common in the world today. Understanding how the people responded to his falsehoods can help us when we are faced with similar false philosophies and ideas.

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

1. Korihor leads away the hearts of many in Zarahemla.

Discuss Alma 30:1–18. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud. Explain that after establishing the people of Ammon in the land of Jershon and driving

the warring Lamanites out of the land, the Nephites lived in peace during the 16th year of the reign of the judges and most of the 17th year.

- What happened near the end of the 17th year to disrupt the peace of the people? (See Alma 30:6, 12.) What is an anti-Christ? (See Bible Dictionary, “Antichrist,” 609, which says that an anti-Christ is “anyone or anything that counterfeits the true gospel or plan of salvation and that openly or secretly is set up in opposition to Christ.”)
- What were some of the false teachings Korihor spread among the people of Zarahemla? (Have class members read Alma 30:12–18 to find answers to this question. Some answers are shown below.)
 - a. There will be “no Christ. . . . Ye cannot know of things which ye do not see; therefore ye cannot know that there shall be a Christ” (Alma 30:12–15). If you used the attention activity, refer to it and briefly discuss some things that we know exist but that we may not have seen.
 - b. “No man can know of anything which is to come” (Alma 30:13). Point out that it was contradictory for Korihor to say that no one could know of things to come but also to declare that there would be no Christ.
 - c. Belief in the Atonement “is the effect of a frenzied mind” (Alma 30:16).
 - d. “Every man prosper[s] according to his genius, and . . . every man conquer[s] according to his strength” (Alma 30:17).
 - e. “Whatsoever a man [does is] no crime” (Alma 30:17).
 - f. “When a man [is] dead, that [is] the end thereof” (Alma 30:18).
- How did Korihor’s teachings affect the people who listened to him? (See Alma 30:18.) Why would these teachings lead people to sin? In what ways are our daily choices influenced by our knowledge of Jesus Christ, the Atonement, and life after death?

2. Korihor is taken before Alma, who testifies of Christ’s coming.

Read and discuss selected verses from Alma 30:19–60. Explain that after spreading his false teachings in Zarahemla, Korihor attempted to preach the same things among the people in Jershon and Gideon. Unlike the people in Zarahemla, however, these people provided good examples of how we should respond when we are confronted by people like Korihor. Write on the chalkboard the heading *Dealing with Modern-Day Korihors*. List underneath it the ideas provided in this section as you discuss them.

- What did the people of Ammon do when Korihor tried to spread his false teachings among them? (See Alma 30:19–21.) How did their actions demonstrate that they were “more wise” than the Nephites in Zarahemla? (The people of Zarahemla listened to Korihor’s false teachings; the people of Ammon and the people in Gideon would not.) How can we be wise and use discernment in similar situations? (Under the heading on the chalkboard, write *Be wise*.)
- What false accusations did Korihor make against the Church leaders? (See Alma 30:23–24, 27–28, 31.) Why do you think he did this? How does obeying our Church leaders actually help make us free rather than bring us into bondage as Korihor claimed?

- How did Alma respond to Korihor’s accusations against Church leaders? (See Alma 30:32–35. Write on the chalkboard *Know the truth.*) How can knowing the truth help us when we are confronted with false teachings?
- How did Alma respond to Korihor’s claim that there is no God? (See Alma 30:39. Write on the chalkboard *Bear personal testimony.*) How are we blessed when we bear testimony of Jesus Christ?
- What was Alma able to discern about Korihor? (See Alma 30:42.) How can we discern between true and false teachings? (See Moroni 10:5. Write on the chalkboard *Seek the guidance of the Holy Ghost.*)
- When Korihor asked for a sign of God’s existence, what signs did Alma put forth as evidence that God lives? (See Alma 30:44. Alma cited the testimony of “all these thy brethren,” the prophets, the scriptures, and “all things.” Write on the chalkboard *Teach the truth from the prophets and the scriptures.*) How have these evidences helped strengthen your faith?
- Even after Alma’s testimony, Korihor continued to demand to be shown a sign (Alma 30:45). What sign did Korihor receive? (See Alma 30:49–50.) Why was this sign given? (See Alma 30:47.) After Korihor acknowledged that he had been deceived, what did he say was the reason he had followed the devil? (See Alma 30:53.)
- What finally happened to Korihor? (See Alma 30:54–56, 58–59.) Why do you think Mormon included the account of Korihor in his abridgment of the plates? What does this account teach us about the fate of those who pervert the ways of the Lord? (See Alma 30:60.)

3. Alma leads a mission to reclaim the apostate Zoramites.

Read and discuss selected verses from Alma 31.

- Why did Alma decide to go on a mission to reclaim the Zoramites? (See Alma 31:1–6. He was grieved by their idol worship. In addition, the Nephites were concerned that the Zoramites would join with the Lamanites.) Why did Alma believe that he and his brethren should preach the word of God? (See Alma 31:5.) How have you seen the word of God bring about change in people’s lives?
- The Zoramites had been members of the Church, but they had “fallen into great errors” (Alma 31:8–9). Why did they fall into apostasy? (See Alma 31:9–11.) What can we do to guard against individual apostasy?
- What did Alma and his brethren learn about the Zoramites’ manner of worship? (See Alma 31:12–23. You may want to point out that in addition to having a perverse form of worship, the Zoramites “returned to their homes, never speaking of their God again until they had assembled themselves together again.”) How did Alma and his brethren respond when they witnessed this false worship? (See Alma 31:19, 24.)

Explain that chapter 31 contains two prayers—one by the Zoramites and one by Alma. Have the assigned class members read these prayers (see “Preparation,” item 2). Ask class members to think about the differences between the two prayers as they are read. Some of the main points of each prayer are listed on the next page.

Zoramites' Prayer

God was, is, and always will be a spirit (Alma 31:15).

"We do not believe in the tradition of our brethren" (Alma 31:16).

"There shall be no Christ" (Alma 31:16).

"We shall be saved," but everyone else will be "cast . . . to hell" (Alma 31:17).

Others are bound by "foolish traditions" (Alma 31:17).

"We are a chosen and a holy people" (Alma 31:18).

Alma's Prayer

"Give me strength, that I may bear with mine infirmities" (Alma 31:30).

"Wilt thou comfort my soul in Christ" (Alma 31:31).

"Give unto me success, and also my fellow laborers" (Alma 31:32).

"Wilt thou comfort [my fellow laborers'] souls in Christ" (Alma 31:32).

Help us bring the Zoramites "unto thee" (Alma 31:34–35).

"[The Zoramites'] souls are precious" (Alma 31:35).

"Give unto us . . . power and wisdom" (Alma 31:35).

- How was Alma's prayer different from the Zoramites' prayer? (You may want to contrast the pride, selfishness, and unbelief of the Zoramites with Alma's humility, love for others, and faith.)
- What attitudes of the Zoramites were the greatest barriers to their having faith in Christ? (See Alma 31:24–29.) How does pride affect our worship? (See Alma 15:17; 34:38; D&C 59:21.) Why is pride an obstacle to salvation?
- Alma's "heart was grieved" because of the Zoramites' wickedness. He prayed earnestly that he and his brethren might bring them "again unto . . . Christ" (Alma 31:24, 34). What responsibility do we have today to help those who have strayed from the teachings of Jesus Christ? (See 3 Nephi 18:32.) How can prayer help us when we serve a mission or as we perform our various callings?
- How were Alma and his brethren blessed? (See Alma 31:38.) How will the Lord help us if we pray in faith for that which is right? (Invite class members to share experiences in which the Lord blessed them when they prayed in faith.)

Conclusion

Point out that the philosophies of Korihor and the Zoramites are prevalent today. From the classroom to the workplace, in the media, in books, and sometimes in the home, there are those who preach the false doctrines of Korihor to "interrupt [our] rejoicings" (Alma 30:22). Also, like the Zoramites, many today set their hearts on "the vain things of the world" (Alma 31:27). Encourage class members to fortify themselves through diligent study of the Book of Mormon, daily prayer, and continued obedience to the commandments of God.

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

Lesson
28

“The Word Is in Christ unto Salvation”

Alma 32–35

Purpose

To help class members understand that the word of God will lead them to Jesus Christ and to encourage them to “nourish the word” in their hearts (Alma 32:40).

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. Alma 32:1–27. Alma encourages the humble Zoramites to exercise faith and give place in their hearts for the word of God.
 - b. Alma 32:28–43. Alma compares the word of God to a seed that is planted in people’s hearts. He teaches the people that they must nourish the word with great care so they may one day receive eternal life.
 - c. Alma 33. Alma cites prophets’ testimonies of Jesus Christ and exhorts the people to plant the word of God in their hearts.
 - d. Alma 34. Amulek testifies of the Atonement of Jesus Christ. He commands the people to pray and exercise faith unto repentance.
2. If you are using the attention activity, bring a seed to class.

**Suggestions for
Lesson Development**

Attention Activity

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

Display the seed that you have brought to class. Ask class members to imagine that someone has given them the seed and told them that it will grow into a tree that will bear delicious fruit.

- What would you do to find out if the seed will really produce delicious fruit?

Explain that this lesson begins with a discussion of Alma 32. This chapter contains a discourse in which Alma compares the word of God to a seed. He exhorts a group of humble Zoramites to “give place, that [this] seed may be planted” in their hearts (Alma 32:28). He promises that if they nourish this seed, it will grow until it becomes the tree of life, whose fruit is “most precious” and “sweet above all that is sweet” (Alma 32:40–42).

**Scripture Discussion
and Application**

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

**1. Alma teaches the humble Zoramites to exercise faith and give place
in their hearts for the word of God.**

Read and discuss selected verses from Alma 32:1–27. Remind class members that Alma, Amulek, and their brethren had entered one of the Zoramites’

synagogues. There they heard the Zoramites declare that “there [would] be no Christ” (Alma 31:16–17). After hearing this false teaching, Alma, Amulek, and their brethren separated to preach the word of God and testify of Christ (Alma 31:36–37; 32:1).

- As Alma was preaching, a great multitude of Zoramites approached him. Why did Alma have great joy when these Zoramites came to him? (See Alma 32:6–8.) What had happened to prepare these people to hear the word of God? (See Alma 32:2–5.)
- Why was it a blessing to these Zoramites that they had been compelled to be humble? (See Alma 32:12–13.) Why is it better to humble ourselves than to be compelled to be humble? (See Alma 32:14–16.) How can the word of God lead us to humble ourselves?
- What did Alma teach the Zoramites about what it means to have faith? (See Alma 32:17–18, 21.) What did Alma say is the first thing we need to do to develop faith in God? (See Alma 32:22.) In what ways may we receive God’s word? (See Alma 17:2; 32:23; D&C 1:38; 18:33–36.)
- What did Alma encourage his listeners to do so they could know that his words were true? (See Alma 32:26–27.) What does it mean to “awake and arouse [our] faculties”? How can we “experiment” on the word of God? (See John 7:17.) What experiences have you had as you have experimented on the word?

2. Alma teaches the people to nourish the word of God in their hearts.

Read and discuss Alma 32:28–43.

- Comparing the word of God to a seed, Alma counseled the Zoramites to “give place, that a seed may be planted” in their hearts (Alma 32:28). What must we do to “give place” in our hearts for the word of God?
- According to Alma, what do people begin to experience when the word of God has been planted in their hearts? (See Alma 32:28–31, 33–35. You may want to list class members’ responses on the chalkboard.) What do you think it means to feel the word “swell within [our] breasts”? How do the scriptures enlarge our souls, enlighten our understanding, and expand our minds? (See Alma 37:8–9.) In what ways has the word of God been delicious to you?
- What must we continue to do as the word of God begins to grow in our hearts? (See Alma 32:37.) How can we “nourish [the word] with great care”? (See Alma 32:41.) What do you think it means for the word to “get root” in our hearts and grow? (Alma 32:37).
- What will happen if we neglect the word and do not nourish it after it has begun to grow in our hearts? (See Alma 32:38–40.) What might we do that would cause our ground, or our hearts, to be barren?
- Toward the end of his discourse, Alma compared the word to a tree that has grown from a seed (Alma 32:37). What tree did he refer to? (See Alma 32:40–42.)

Refer briefly to the vision of the tree of life seen by Lehi and Nephi. Remind class members that the tree of life is a symbol of Jesus Christ (see page 12 in this manual). Point out that the word of God, represented by the rod of iron

in that vision and by the seed in Alma's discourse, leads to the Savior, represented by the tree of life.

Referring to Alma 32, Elder Jeffrey R. Holland taught, "In this brilliant discourse, Alma moves the reader from a general commentary on faith in the seedlike word of God to a focused discourse on faith in Christ as the Word of God" (*Christ and the New Covenant* [1997], 169).

- What is the fruit of the tree of life? (Everlasting life. See Alma 32:41; 33:23; see also 1 Nephi 15:36; D&C 14:7.)

3. Alma cites prophets' testimonies of Jesus Christ and exhorts the people to plant the word of God in their hearts.

Read and discuss selected verses from Alma 33. Explain that after hearing Alma's discourse, the people desired to know "in what manner they should begin to exercise their faith" (Alma 33:1). Alma responded by citing teachings of the prophets Zenos, Zenock, and Moses concerning Jesus Christ.

- What teaching of Zenos did Alma relate to the Zoramites? (You may want to have class members take turns reading verses from Alma 33:3–11.) What was Alma's purpose in citing Zenos's teaching about prayer? (See Alma 33:11–14. He wanted to teach the Zoramites to exercise faith in the Son of God. Note that it is "because of [His] Son" that Heavenly Father hears our prayers and turns His judgments away from us.)
- Alma told the Zoramites that the prophet Zenock had also testified of Christ (Alma 33:15). What did Zenock teach? (See Alma 33:16.) Why was this an important teaching to relate to the Zoramites? (See Alma 31:12, 16–17.)
- Alma spoke of a brass serpent that Moses made and raised in the wilderness (Alma 33:19; see also Numbers 21:9). How was the serpent a type, or symbol, of Jesus Christ? (See Alma 33:19; see also John 3:14–16; Helaman 8:13–15.) What does Alma's account of the brass serpent teach about exercising faith in Jesus Christ? (See Alma 33:20–23; see also Alma 37:46.)

4. Amulek testifies of the Atonement of Jesus Christ. He commands the people to pray and exercise faith unto repentance.

Read and discuss selected verses from Alma 34. Explain that after Alma had spoken, Amulek stood and began to teach the people.

- Alma and Amulek perceived that the people still questioned whether they should believe in Christ (Alma 34:2–5). How did Amulek answer this question? (See Alma 34:6–8.) How can we receive such a strong testimony of Christ? How have the scriptures, prophets, and other witnesses of Christ strengthened your testimony of Him?
- Why would "all mankind . . . perish" without the Atonement of Jesus Christ? (See Alma 34:8–9; see also Alma 22:14.) Why was Jesus the only one who could atone for the sins of the world and save us from the effects of the Fall? (See Alma 34:10–12.) What is the meaning of Amulek's teaching that the Atonement is an "infinite and eternal sacrifice"? (See Alma 34:14–16.)

Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught: "Man cannot resurrect himself; man cannot save himself; human power cannot save another; human power cannot atone

for the sins of another. The work of redemption must be infinite and eternal; it must be done by an infinite being; God himself must atone for the sins of the world" (*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* [1985], 111–12).

- How do you think Amulek's counsel in Alma 34:17–29 helped the Zoramites, who had believed that they could worship only in synagogues and only once a week? What can we learn from this counsel?
- What did Amulek command the people to do after they had received so many witnesses of the Savior? (See Alma 34:30–31; see also verses 15–17, in which the phrase "faith unto repentance" appears four times.) Why is faith in Christ an essential part of repentance?
- Amulek warned against procrastinating, or delaying, the day of our repentance (Alma 34:31–36). Why do people sometimes procrastinate repentance? How can the counsel in Alma 34:32 affect the way we live each day?

Conclusion

Point out that the purpose of planting a fruit tree is to be able to partake of its fruit. When we "give place, that [the word] may be planted" in our hearts, we can "[look] forward to the fruit thereof" (Alma 32:28, 41). Read Alma's description of this fruit in Alma 32:41–42. Remind class members that the fruit is eternal life and that it is only through the Atonement of Jesus Christ that we can partake of this fruit (Alma 34:14–16).

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

Additional Teaching Ideas

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

1. "I desire that ye should remember these things" (Alma 34:37)

As a conclusion to the lesson, invite a class member to read aloud Amulek's closing words to the Zoramites, in Alma 34:37–41.

2. Strengthening new members of the Church

- The "more popular part of the Zoramites" cast out the people who believed in the words of Alma and his brethren (Alma 35:1–6). How did the people of Ammon receive the Zoramites who had been cast out? (See Alma 35:7–9.) What does this example teach about strengthening new converts?

Purpose

To teach class members Alma’s counsel for remaining faithful in the gospel and to help parents understand how to teach and counsel both righteous and unrighteous children.

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. Alma 36–37. Alma recounts his conversion and bears his testimony to his son Helaman. He instructs Helaman to preserve the sacred records.
 - b. Alma 38. Alma praises his son Shiblon for his faithfulness and encourages him to continue in righteousness, enduring to the end.
 - c. Alma 39. Alma admonishes his son Corianton for immoral actions and counsels Corianton about the consequences of such sin.
2. If the picture *The Gold Plates* is available, prepare to use it during the lesson (Gospel Art Picture Kit 325).

**Suggestions for
Lesson Development**

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

Ask class members:

- What is the best advice or counsel your parents ever gave you? Why was this advice or counsel so valuable?

Allow time for class members to think, and then invite them to share their answers.

Explain that the chapters discussed in this lesson consist of Alma’s words of counsel to his sons Helaman, Shiblon, and Corianton. These words of counsel are applicable to us as well.

**Scripture Discussion
and Application**

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

1. Alma shares his testimony and gives the records to his son Helaman.

Discuss Alma 36–37. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud.

- Alma 36 contains Alma’s testimony as expressed to his son Helaman (see especially verses 3–5 and 26–28). Why is it important for children to hear their parents bear their testimonies? In what ways have your parents’ testimonies influenced your life?

- As part of his testimony, Alma told Helaman of his conversion (Alma 36:6–24; see also Alma 38:7–9, where Alma tells his son Shiblon of his conversion, and lesson 20, which discusses Alma’s conversion in greater detail). Why do you think Alma shared his conversion story with his sons? How have you benefited from hearing about how other people have become converted?
- Many times Alma encouraged Helaman to follow his example. (You may want to review with class members some of the phrases in the list below, showing Alma’s charge to Helaman.) Why is it important for parents to set a righteous example for their children?
 - a. “Ye should do as I have done” (Alma 36:2).
 - b. “I beseech of thee that thou wilt hear my words and learn of me” (Alma 36:3).
 - c. “Ye also ought to retain in remembrance, as I have done” (Alma 36:29).
 - d. “Ye ought to know as I do know” (Alma 36:30).
- If you are using the picture of the gold plates, display it now. How did Alma emphasize to Helaman the importance of keeping the records? (See Alma 37:1–2, 6–12.) In what ways was keeping the records a “small and simple thing” that would bring about “great things”? (Alma 37:6–7). What “great things” will the scriptures do for us if we study them diligently? (See Alma 37:8–10.)
- What did Alma tell Helaman to teach the people? (See Alma 37:32–34.) How can parents, teachers, and other adults help young people today “learn wisdom in [their] youth”? (Alma 37:35).
- Have a class member read Alma 37:36–37 aloud. How has your life been affected as you have endeavored to follow this counsel? How can we better heed this counsel?
- What comparisons did Alma make between the word of God and the Liahona? (See Alma 37:38–45.) What must we do so that the word of God becomes a Liahona for each of us?
- Alma counseled Helaman, “Do not let us be slothful because of the easiness of the way” (Alma 37:46; see also Numbers 21:5–9; 1 Nephi 17:41). In what sense is the way to eternal life easy? Why is the easiness of the way a stumbling block to some people? How can we keep our focus on simple, saving faith in Christ? How do we “look to God and live”? (Alma 37:47).

2. Alma praises and encourages his son Shiblon.

Read and discuss selected verses from Alma 38. Point out that Alma also bore his testimony to his son Shiblon and told Shiblon of his conversion (Alma 38:6–9).

- What qualities in Shiblon brought great joy to his father? (See Alma 38:2–4.) Why is it important for parents to recognize and praise their children for their good qualities and righteous living?
- Have a class member read Alma 38:5 aloud. How has putting your trust in God helped you in times of trial or affliction?
- Even though Shiblon was faithful, Alma concluded his words to his son with an admonition (Alma 38:10–15). Why is it important for even the righteous to receive counsel and warning? How can we learn to receive such counsel and warning in humility?

- Alma counseled Shiblon to continue teaching the word of God, being “diligent and temperate,” using “boldness, but not overbearance” (Alma 38:10, 12.) How can we follow this counsel as we share our beliefs with others?
- Alma warned Shiblon not to boast of his own wisdom or strength (Alma 38:11). How can pride in our own wisdom or strength lead to greater sins? How can we overcome such pride? (See Alma 38:13–14. We can “acknowledge [our] unworthiness before God at all times.”)
- Alma counseled Shiblon to “bridle all [his] passions” (Alma 38:12). What does it mean to bridle our passions? (You may want to point out that the purpose of a horse’s bridle is to control and direct the horse.) Why must we bridle our passions in order to “be filled with love”?

3. Alma admonishes his son Corianton to repent.

Read and discuss selected verses from Alma 39. Point out that Alma’s counsel to his son Corianton was somewhat different from his counsel to his other sons. Helaman and Shiblon had been living righteously, but Corianton had committed serious sins.

- What sins had Corianton committed? (See Alma 39:2–3.) Why is sexual immorality such a grievous sin?

Elder Boyd K. Packer taught:

“There was provided in our bodies—and this is sacred—a power of creation, a light, so to speak, that has the power to kindle other lights. This gift was to be used only within the sacred bonds of marriage. Through the exercise of this power of creation, a mortal body may be conceived, a spirit enter into it, and a new soul born into this life.

“This power is good. It can create and sustain family life, and it is in family life that we find the fountains of happiness. . . .

“The power of creation—or may we say procreation—is not just an incidental part of the plan: it is essential to it. Without it the plan could not proceed. The misuse of it may disrupt the plan.

“Much of the happiness that may come to you in this life will depend on how you use this sacred power of creation. . . . If [Satan] can entice you to use this power prematurely, to use it too soon, or to misuse it in any way, you may well lose your opportunities for eternal progression. . . .

“Protect and guard your gift. Your actual happiness is at stake. Eternal family life . . . can be achieved because our Heavenly Father has bestowed this choicest gift of all upon you—this power of creation. It is the very key to happiness” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1972, 136–39; or *Ensign*, July 1972, 111–13).

- Why did Alma feel it necessary to discuss Corianton’s sin with him? (See Alma 39:7–8, 12–13.) What can parents learn from Alma about how to counsel children who have made mistakes or committed sin? (Answers may include those listed below.)
 - a. Alma reminded Corianton of what led to Corianton’s sin (Alma 39:2–4).
 - b. He explained the consequences of Corianton’s sin (Alma 39:7–9, 11).

- c. He taught Corianton how to repent and avoid the sin in the future (Alma 39:9–14).
- d. He taught Corianton about God’s love and forgiveness (Alma 39:15–19).
- What actions or attitudes in Corianton led to his sin? (See Alma 39:2–3.) What can we do to strengthen ourselves against Satan’s enticements to be immoral? (See Alma 39:4, 13; D&C 121:45.)
- How did Corianton’s sinfulness influence others? (See Alma 39:11, 13.) Why do you think Corianton’s actions had more influence on the Zoramites than Alma’s words did? Why is it important for Church members to set good examples? How have you been blessed by people who set good examples? (Invite class members to silently consider how their actions might influence others’ opinions of the Church.)
- What counsel did Alma give to Corianton on how to repent of his sin and avoid such sins in the future? (See Alma 39:9–14. List class members’ answers on the chalkboard. Some answers are listed below, with discussion questions to encourage participation.)
 - a. “Go no more after the lusts of your eyes” (Alma 39:9). How can the things we choose to look at or pay attention to influence our determination to stay morally clean?
 - b. “Take it upon you to counsel with your elder brothers” (Alma 39:10). How can counseling with righteous family members or friends help strengthen our resistance to temptation?
 - c. “Suffer not yourself to be led away by any vain or foolish thing” (Alma 39:11). What are some vain or foolish things that Satan uses to try to lead us away?
 - d. “Turn to the Lord with all your mind, might, and strength” (Alma 39:13). How can we turn to the Lord for help when we face temptation?
 - e. “Acknowledge your faults and that wrong which ye have done” (Alma 39:13). Why is acknowledging that we have done wrong an essential part of repentance?
 - f. “Seek not after riches nor the vain things of this world” (Alma 39:14). How can seeking riches or “the vain things of this world” tempt us to sin?
- What did Alma teach Corianton about Christ? (See Alma 39:15–19. List class members’ responses on the chalkboard.) How can understanding these things help us when we are tempted to sin?

Conclusion

Point out that Alma taught Corianton how to repent and return to faithfulness, and he gave counsel to Helaman and Shiblon on how to remain faithful. Encourage class members to apply Alma’s counsel in their lives. Encourage class members who are parents to follow Alma’s example in teaching and counseling their children.

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

Additional Teaching Ideas

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

1. Counseling children individually

Have a class member read Alma 35:16 aloud.

- What can we learn from this verse about teaching children who have different personalities, challenges, and needs? (Point out that Alma spoke to each son “separately.” He did not speak to his sons together or give each of them the same message; he spoke to each son alone and told him what he specifically needed to hear.) How can it be helpful to frequently teach children individually?

2. Parents’ responsibility to their children

- What responsibilities do parents have in raising children? (See Mosiah 4:14–15; D&C 68:25–28.)

Invite class members to identify righteous parents in the scriptures who had both righteous and unrighteous children. Answers may include the following:

Adam and Eve (Abel and Cain)

Isaac and Rebekah (Jacob and Esau)

Lehi and Sariah (Nephi, Sam, Jacob, Joseph, Laman, and Lemuel)

Alma the Younger (Helaman, Shiblon, and Corianton)

Point out that even righteous parents can face the challenges of dealing with unrighteous children. Emphasize that parents are obligated to teach their children the gospel and encourage them to live by gospel principles, but they must also respect their children’s agency. Parents cannot force children to live righteously.

3. “So great a crime” (Alma 39:7)

You may wish to emphasize Alma’s teachings on the law of chastity. Make sure class members understand what the law of chastity is, why it is important, and how to remain steadfast in keeping it. In teaching youth about keeping the law of chastity, you may want to use the pamphlet *For the Strength of Youth* (34285). Consult with the bishop about obtaining copies of this pamphlet for class members who do not already have them.

The following statement by President Gordon B. Hinckley may also be useful:

“You live in a world of terrible temptations. Pornography, with its sleazy filth, sweeps over the earth like a horrible, engulfing tide. It is poison. Do not watch it or read it. It will destroy you if you do. . . . Stay away from it. Shun it as you would a foul disease, for it is just as deadly. Be virtuous in thought and in deed. God has planted in you, for a purpose, a divine urge which may be easily subverted to evil and destructive ends. When you are young, do not get involved in steady dating. When you reach an age where you think of marriage, then is the time to become so involved. But you boys who are in high school don’t need this, and neither do the girls” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1997, 71–72; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 51).

“The Great Plan of Happiness”

Lesson 30

Alma 40–42

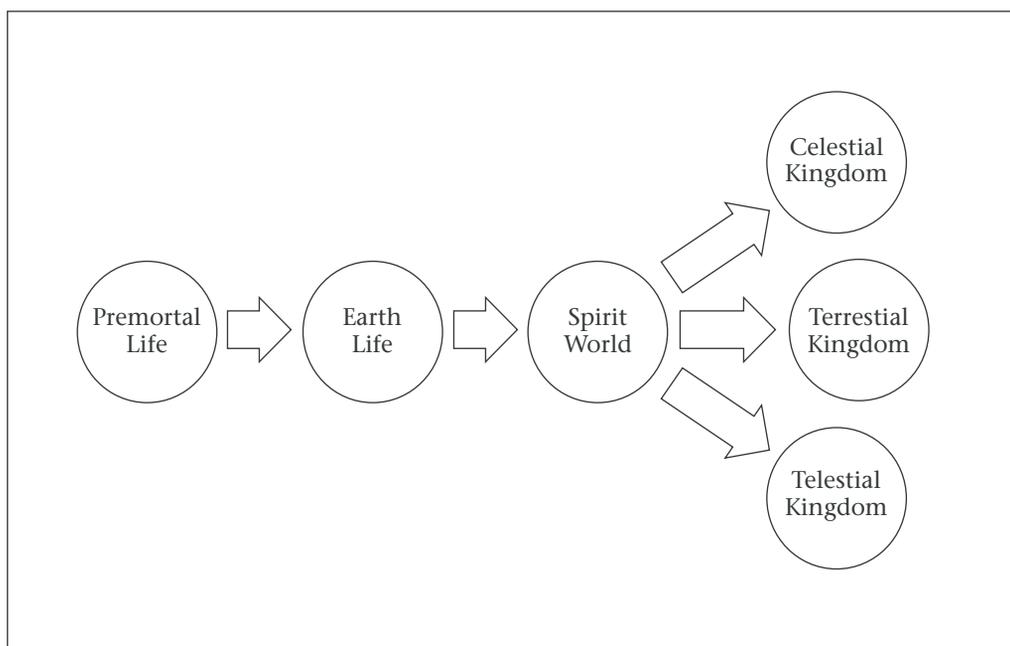
Purpose To help class members gain a greater understanding of life after death and the mercy that is available to them through the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. Alma 40:1–23. Alma teaches Corianton about death and resurrection.
 - b. Alma 40:24–26; 41. Alma teaches Corianton that after we are resurrected, the righteous will be restored to happiness and the wicked will be restored to misery.
 - c. Alma 42. Alma teaches Corianton about justice and mercy in the great plan of happiness.
2. Additional reading: Doctrine and Covenants 138.
3. If *Book of Mormon Video Presentations* (53911) is available, prepare to show “The Mediator,” an eleven-minute segment. If the videocassette is not available, you may want to prepare to read or tell this parable, which can be found in the following printed sources: *Gospel Principles* (31110), chapter 12; Conference Report, Apr. 1977, pages 79–80; or *Ensign*, May 1977, pages 54–55.

Suggestions for Lesson Development

Attention Activity As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. Draw the following diagram on the chalkboard:



Explain that we often draw diagrams like this one to teach about the plan of salvation. However, if this is all we do to explain the plan, we fail to mention Jesus Christ, who plays the central role in the plan. We also fail to mention doctrines that are central to the plan, such as the Fall, the Atonement, and agency.

Read the following statement by Elder Neal A. Maxwell:

“The Lord has described his plan of redemption as the Plan of Happiness. . . . Conversationally, we reference this great design almost too casually at times; we even sketch its rude outlines on chalkboards and paper as if it were the floor plan for an addition to one’s house. However, when we really take time to ponder the Plan, it is breathtaking and overpowering!” (“Thanks Be to God,” *Ensign*, July 1982, 51).

Explain that today you will discuss some of Alma’s counsel to his son Corianton. In teaching Corianton, Alma referred to Heavenly Father’s plan as “the plan of restoration” (Alma 41:2), “the great plan of salvation” (Alma 42:5), “the great plan of happiness” (Alma 42:8), “the plan of redemption” (Alma 42:11), and “the great plan of mercy” (Alma 42:31). As Alma taught about the plan, he emphasized the centrality of the Fall, the Atonement of Jesus Christ, and individual agency.

Scripture Discussion and Application

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

1. Alma teaches Corianton about death and resurrection.

Explain that chapters 40–42 of the book of Alma continue Alma’s counsel to his wayward son, Corianton. Alma saw that Corianton’s misconduct was caused in part by a lack of testimony and a misunderstanding of some basic gospel doctrines. Alma helped Corianton understand what happens to us after death.

Discuss Alma 40:1–23. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud.

- How did Alma decide which subjects he should talk to Corianton about? (See Alma 40:1; see also 41:1; 42:1.) How do you think Alma was able to “perceive” Corianton’s concerns? How can we better perceive the needs of those we teach?
- What happens to our spirits between death and resurrection? (See Alma 40:11–13. They go to either paradise or spirit prison. Explain that “outer darkness” in verse 13 refers to the place we usually call spirit prison.) How did Alma describe paradise and spirit prison? (Have class members read Alma 40:11–15, 21 to find answers to this question. You may want to summarize class members’ responses on the chalkboard in a chart like the one on the next page.)

PARADISE	SPIRIT PRISON
State of happiness	State of misery
State of rest and peace	State of darkness, with weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth
No troubles or sorrow	Awful, fearful waiting for the wrath of God

Explain that in 1918 President Joseph F. Smith received a revelation that helps us understand more about the state of our spirits between death and resurrection (D&C 138). In this revelation, President Smith saw the Savior’s ministry in paradise and the teaching of the gospel to those in spirit prison. President Smith learned that the spirits in spirit prison will be taught the gospel and that they will have the opportunity to repent before the final judgment (D&C 138:29–34, 57–59).

- Alma said that at an appointed time, we will be resurrected (Alma 40:21). What does it mean to be resurrected? (See Alma 40:21, 23. The spirit and body are reunited, and the body is restored to its “perfect frame.”) Who will be resurrected? (See Alma 40:5; see also 11:42–44.)
- Alma mentioned several things that he did *not* know about death and resurrection (Alma 40:2–5, 8, 19–21). What can we learn from the fact that Alma testified of the doctrine of resurrection even though he did not know all the details about it? (Help class members see that it is not necessary to understand every detail of a doctrine or event before receiving a testimony of its truthfulness.)

2. Alma teaches that after we are resurrected, the righteous will be restored to happiness and the wicked will be restored to misery.

Read and discuss selected verses from Alma 40:24–26; 41.

- Alma referred to resurrection as a restoration because the spirit and body are reunited and the body is restored to its “perfect frame” (Alma 40:23; 41:2). What further restoration will take place when we are resurrected and “judged according to [our] works”? (See Alma 41:3–6. The righteous will be restored to happiness, and the wicked will be restored to misery.) What does it mean to be restored unto good or evil?

Elder Bruce R. McConkie stated, “The resurrection is a restoration, both a restoration of body and spirit and a restoration to the individual of the same mental and spiritual acquirements and attitudes he had in this life” (*Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. [1966], 641).

- In what sense are we “[our] own judges”? (See Alma 41:7–8. We choose whether to do good or evil and thus choose what we will be restored to after death.)

- Alma explained that Corianton could not be restored from sin to happiness because “wickedness never was happiness” (Alma 41:10). Why can’t wickedness bring happiness? (See Alma 41:10–13; Helaman 13:38.) How would you respond to the argument that some people seem to find happiness in activities that are against the commandments?

President Ezra Taft Benson said: “While [people] may take some temporary pleasure in sin, the end result is unhappiness. . . . Sin creates disharmony with God and is depressing to the spirit” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1974, 91; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1974, 65–66).

- What did Alma say that Corianton needed to do to have good restored to him? (See Alma 41:14–15.) What experiences have shown you the truth of the statement that “that which ye do send out shall return unto you again”?

3. Alma teaches Corianton about justice and mercy.

Read and discuss selected verses from Alma 42. Explain that Corianton was troubled by his father’s teachings. He did not understand why “the sinner should be consigned to a state of misery” (Alma 42:1). In response to this concern, Alma taught about the justice of God. He also taught that Jesus Christ atoned for the sins of the world “to bring about the plan of mercy, to appease the demands of justice” (Alma 42:15).

To help class members understand Alma’s teachings about justice, have them read Alma 42:6–7, 10, 18 aloud. As they read, help them understand the truths listed below:

- a. Because of the Fall of Adam and Eve, we are in a fallen state. We are mortal—subject to death—and imperfect. In this fallen state, we cannot dwell in the presence of God, who is immortal and perfect. Justice demands that we be cut off from God’s presence temporally and spiritually.
 - b. When we sin, we separate ourselves further from God because “no unclean thing can dwell with God” (1 Nephi 10:21). Justice demands that we be punished for our sins.
- What would happen to us if we were subjected only to justice? (See Alma 42:14.) What is required to satisfy the demands of justice so we can return to dwell in Heavenly Father’s presence? (See Alma 42:15.)

If you are using the video presentation “The Mediator,” show it now. If you are reading or telling the parable yourself, do so now. Point out that the debtor represents each of us, the creditor represents justice, and the debtor’s friend represents the Savior.

- How did the Atonement of Jesus Christ “appease the demands of justice”? (See Mosiah 15:7–9. He subjected Himself to death and took upon Himself the sins of all mankind.)
- Alma testified that “mercy cometh because of the atonement” (Alma 42:23). What must we do to be able to receive the fulness of God’s mercy? (See Alma 42:13, 23, 27, 29–30; see also Alma 41:14; D&C 19:15–18.)

Conclusion

Point out that after receiving this counsel from his father, Corianton repented and returned to missionary service (Alma 43:1; 49:30). Emphasize that as we follow God's commandments and repent of our sins, we are able to partake of the mercy that is available through the Savior's Atonement.

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

Lesson
31

“Firm in the Faith of Christ”

Alma 43–52

Purpose

To help class members see how the Nephites’ attitudes and actions in times of war can serve as a pattern for dealing with our earthly conflicts and the battle against Satan.

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. Alma 43–44. Led by Zerahemnah, the Lamanites come to battle against the Nephites, seeking to bring them into bondage. The Nephites, led by Moroni, fight to defend their families and their liberty. The Nephites prevail because they are “inspired by a better cause” and because they exercise faith in Jesus Christ.
 - b. Alma 45:20–24; 46. Amalickiah desires to be king and causes dissension among the Nephites. Captain Moroni raises the “title of liberty” to inspire the people, and they covenant to follow God. Amalickiah and a few of his followers join the Lamanites.
 - c. Alma 47–48. Through treachery, Amalickiah becomes king of the Lamanites. He incites the Lamanites to fight against the Nephites. Captain Moroni prepares the Nephites to defend themselves righteously.
 - d. Alma 49–52. War continues between the Nephites and the Lamanites. The king-men desire to set up a king over the Nephites, but they are defeated. Teancum kills Amalickiah, who is succeeded as king of the Lamanites by his brother Ammoron.
2. If the picture *Captain Moroni Raises the Title of Liberty* is available, prepare to use it during the lesson (62051; Gospel Art Picture Kit 312).

Suggestions for Lesson Development

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

Ask class members:

- Why do you think Mormon included so much information about war in the Book of Mormon?

In addition to class members’ answers, you may want to suggest the following:

1. Mormon knew that the Book of Mormon would be read and studied in a time when war would be common throughout the world. These writings teach us how to remain Christlike during times of conflict.
2. Mormon recorded Nephite history preceding the Savior’s appearance in great detail. We can read of the Nephites’ experiences and be prepared for similar events occurring in our day prior to the Second Coming of Christ.

Explain that this lesson will discuss what the battles between the Nephites and their enemies can teach us about how to handle earthly conflicts and how to defend ourselves and our families in the battle against Satan.

Scripture Discussion and Application

Prayerfully select the scripture passages, questions, and other lesson material that will best meet class members' needs. Help class members understand how these scriptures can apply to daily life in times of peace as well as times of war. Encourage class members to share appropriate experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

1. The Nephites fight to defend their families and their liberty.

Discuss Alma 43–44. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud.

- Why did the Nephites fight against the Lamanites? (See Alma 43:3–4, 9–11, 45–47; 48:14.) Under what circumstances does the Lord approve of people going to war?

President Charles W. Penrose, who was a member of the First Presidency, said: “It is not right for us to engage in the shedding of human blood, for vengeance or retaliation. But when the Lord commands or inspires his servants to counsel the sons and daughters of Israel to lend their aid in the work of righteous warfare, that is different. . . . We are to arise in our might and in our strength and go forth to victory; not with a desire to shed blood, not with the desire to destroy our fellow creatures, but in self defense and because we do want to maintain and hand down to our posterity those sacred principles of liberty that have been revealed from on high” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1917, 21).

Elder David O. McKay said: “There are . . . two conditions which may justify a truly Christian man to enter—mind you, I say *enter*, not *begin*—a war: (1) An attempt to dominate and to deprive another of his free agency, and, (2) Loyalty to his country. Possibly there is a third, [namely], Defense of a weak nation that is being unjustly crushed by a strong, ruthless one” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1942, 72).

- When Moroni confronted Zerahemnah, to what did he attribute the Nephites' success in battle? (See Alma 44:3–4.) How had the Nephites demonstrated their faith in Christ? (See Alma 43:23, 49–50.)
- What can we do in our families and communities to help preserve the freedoms the Nephites cherished?
- Discuss the following principles that governed the attitudes and actions of the righteous Nephites in times of war. How might understanding and applying these principles today help bring about greater peace in the world? How can we apply these principles in dealing with conflict in our personal lives?
 - a. Fight only for righteous reasons, such as self-defense (Alma 43:8–10, 29–30, 45–47; 48:14; you may want to point out that the first record of the Nephites initiating a battle is in Mormon 4:1–4).
 - b. Have no hate toward your enemies; seek their best interests as well as your own (Alma 43:53–54; 44:1–2, 6).

- c. Live righteously and trust in God (Alma 44:3–4; 48:15, 19–20).
- d. Follow righteous and wise leaders (Alma 43:16–19; 48:11–13, 17–19; see also D&C 98:10).

2. Captain Moroni raises the “title of liberty” to inspire the people.

Read and discuss selected verses from Alma 45:20–24; 46. Explain that after the battles with the Lamanites, Helaman and his brethren went throughout the land, preaching and reestablishing the organization of the Church (Alma 45:20–22). However, some of the Nephites grew proud and rebelled against the Church. The leader of this group of dissenters was Amalickiah, who wanted to be king over the Nephites (Alma 45:23–24; 46:1–4).

- How was Amalickiah able to persuade others to follow him? (See Alma 46:1–7, 10.) What was the motive of the people who supported him? (See Alma 46:4–5.) What can we learn from the account of Amalickiah and his followers? (See Alma 46:8–9.)
- If you are using the picture of Captain Moroni raising the title of liberty, display it now. Why did Moroni create the title of liberty? (See Alma 46:11–13, 18–20.) How did the people respond to the title of liberty? (See Alma 46:21–22.) How does making and keeping covenants affect our lives?

3. Amalickiah becomes king of the Lamanites and incites them to battle.

Read and discuss selected verses from Alma 47–48.

- What did Amalickiah do when he failed to become king over the Nephites? (See Alma 46:33; 47:1, 4. Have class members summarize the account of how Amalickiah became king over the Lamanites [Alma 47:1–35], or summarize this account yourself.)
- Some of the strongest opponents of the Nephites had once been Nephites themselves, including the Amalekites (Alma 24:29–30; 43:6–7), the Zoramites (Alma 30:59; 31:8–11; 43:4), Amalickiah (Alma 46:1–7), Morianton (Alma 50:26, 35), and Amalickiah’s brother Ammoron (Alma 52:3). Why do those who have left the Church often fight so strongly against it? (See Mosiah 2:36–37; Alma 47:35–36.)

The Prophet Joseph Smith made the following statement to a man who wondered why those who had left the Church often fought so fiercely against it: “Before you joined this Church you stood on neutral ground. When the gospel was preached good and evil were set before you. You could choose either or neither. There were two opposite masters inviting you to serve them. When you joined this Church you enlisted to serve God. When you did that you left the neutral ground, and you never can get back on to it. Should you forsake the Master you enlisted to serve it will be by the instigation of the evil one, and you will follow his dictation and be his servant” (in “Recollections of the Prophet Joseph Smith,” *Juvenile Instructor*, 15 Aug. 1892, 492).

- Contrast Amalickiah and Moroni (Alma 48:1–17). Emphasize that just as one wicked person can cause much wickedness among the people (Alma 46:9), one righteous person, like Moroni, can inspire much righteousness. How can we encourage and support righteous leaders? How can each of us inspire righteousness among others?

4. War continues between the Nephites and the Lamanites.

Read and discuss selected verses from Alma 49–52. Explain that these chapters continue the account of the ongoing battles between the Nephites and the Lamanites. This account can help us in our ongoing battle against Satan and his hosts, who are waging a war against truth and righteousness, fighting to destroy our opportunities for eternal life.

- How can the accounts of war in the Book of Mormon apply to our fight against the influence of Satan? (Some examples are given below, with application questions to encourage discussion. Class members may suggest other examples as well.)
 - a. The Nephites built walls to protect their cities from the Lamanites' attacks (Alma 48:7–9; 49:2–4, 13, 18). What defenses can protect us from Satan's influence?
 - b. The Nephites continually strengthened their defenses (Alma 50:1–6). Why must we continually strengthen our defenses against Satan?
 - c. The Nephites kept the commandments of God and followed their Church leaders (Alma 44:3–4; 49:30; 50:20–22). How do the commandments of God and the counsel of our Church leaders help us fight wickedness?
 - d. The Nephites thanked God for protecting them in battle (Alma 45:1; 49:28). How can gratitude to the Lord protect us against Satan?
 - e. Contention caused the Nephites to fight among themselves and allowed the Lamanites to gain power over them (Alma 51:2–7, 12–23; 53:8–9). How does contention allow Satan to gain power over us? How can unity and support from other people help us as we fight against wickedness?
 - f. The righteous Nephites were prosperous and happy even in times of war (Alma 49:30; 50:23). How can we find peace and happiness even during times of terrible wickedness?

Conclusion

Point out that the principles taught in these chapters of the Book of Mormon can help protect us and our families from the onslaught of evil. They can also help us have peace in our souls during times of war and tribulation.

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

Additional Teaching Idea

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use this idea as part of the lesson.

Video presentation

If *Book of Mormon Video Presentations* (53911) is available, show “Firm in the Faith of Christ,” a fifteen-minute segment.

Lesson
32

“They Did Obey . . . Every Word of Command with Exactness”

Alma 53–63

Purpose

To help class members see that the Lord will strengthen them as they follow the example of Helaman’s valiant young soldiers.

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. Alma 53:10–19; 56:1–8. Two thousand valiant young Ammonites covenant to fight for the liberty of the Nephites. They ask Helaman to be their leader.
 - b. Alma 56:9–58:41. True to their mothers’ teachings, the young soldiers exercise faith in God and fight courageously. They are joined by 60 other young Ammonites. All 2,060 young soldiers are wounded, but not one of them is killed.
2. If the picture Two Thousand Young Warriors is available, prepare to use it during the lesson (62050; Gospel Art Picture Kit 313).

Suggestions for Lesson Development

Attention Activity

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

Display the picture of the young warriors. Read aloud Alma 57:25–26, stopping after the word *slain* in verse 26.

Point out that in the battles between the Nephites and the Lamanites, there were surely other Nephite warriors whose lives were miraculously preserved. However, there were also many righteous Nephites who were killed (Alma 56:10–11; 57:36). Helaman’s army of young warriors is the only military army mentioned in the Book of Mormon in which not one soldier was killed in battle.

Tell class members that we, like Helaman’s young warriors, are part of a great army. Then read the following statement by President Ezra Taft Benson. Explain that although the statement was directed to Aaronic Priesthood holders, it applies to all members of the Church.

“You have been born at this time for a sacred and glorious purpose. It is not by chance that you have been reserved to come to earth in this last dispensation of the fulness of times. Your birth at this particular time was foreordained in the eternities.

“You are to be the royal army of the Lord in the last days. . . .

“In the spiritual battles you are waging, I see you as today’s sons of Helaman. Remember well the Book of Mormon account of Helaman’s two thousand stripling warriors” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1986, 55; or *Ensign*, May 1986, 43; note that *stripling* means young man).

- What does it mean to be “the royal army of the Lord”? (See Ephesians 6:11–18; 1 Peter 2:9; D&C 138:55–56.) What are the “spiritual battles [we] are waging” as part of the Lord’s army?

Explain that this lesson discusses the principles and characteristics that helped the 2,060 Ammonite warriors receive so much strength from the Lord. As we live according to these principles and develop these characteristics, our spiritual strength will increase. We will be more effective as servants in “the royal army of the Lord.”

Scripture Discussion and Application

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

1. Two thousand valiant young Ammonites covenant to fight for the liberty of the Nephites.

Read and discuss selected verses from Alma 53:10–19; 56:1–8. Before discussing this account, invite class members to briefly review the covenant of peace that the Ammonites (the Anti-Nephi-Lehies) made at the time of their conversion (Alma 24:15–18; 53:10–11).

- The Nephites had promised to protect the Ammonites from the Lamanites (Alma 27:22–24; 53:12). What did the Ammonites want to do when they saw the afflictions of the Nephites? (See Alma 53:13.) Why did Helaman persuade the people not to break their covenant? (See Alma 53:14–15; 56:8.) What does this teach about keeping covenants?
- What did the Ammonites’ sons do to help the Nephites? (See Alma 53:16.) How did the young Ammonites show the strength of their commitment to help the Nephites? (See Alma 53:17. They entered into a covenant and were determined to keep their covenant “in all cases.” Write on the chalkboard *Make and keep sacred covenants.*)
- How will the Lord strengthen us as we make covenants with Him and keep these covenants “in all cases”?

President Ezra Taft Benson said: “Men and women who turn their lives over to God will discover that He can make a lot more out of their lives than they can. He will deepen their joys, expand their vision, quicken their minds, strengthen their muscles, lift their spirits, multiply their blessings, increase their opportunities, comfort their souls, raise up friends, and pour out peace. Whoever will lose his life in the service of God will find eternal life” (*The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson* [1988], 361).

- The young Ammonites asked Helaman to be their leader (Alma 53:19; 56:1, 5). Helaman was a prophet and a high priest over the Church (Alma 37:1–2, 14; 46:6). Why would the decision to follow a prophet increase the young Ammonites’ effectiveness in the battles they would fight? What kinds of leaders might weaken people in their spiritual battles?
- How did the young Ammonites respond to the commands they received? (See Alma 57:21. Write on the chalkboard *Follow the prophet “with exactness.”*) Why is it important to be exactly obedient to the teachings of the Lord’s prophet? (See the quotation on the next page.) What are some specific things we must do today to follow the prophet “with exactness”?

President Harold B. Lee taught:

“The power of Satan will increase; we see it in evidence on every hand. . . .

“Now the only safety we have as members of this church is to do exactly what the Lord said to the Church in that day when the Church was organized. We must learn to give heed to the words and commandments that the Lord shall give through his prophet, ‘as he receiveth them, walking in all holiness before me; . . . as if from mine own mouth, in all patience and faith.’ (D&C 21:4–5.) There will be some things that take patience and faith. You may not like what comes from the authority of the Church. It may contradict your political views. It may contradict your social views. It may interfere with some of your social life. But if you listen to these things, as if from the mouth of the Lord himself, with patience and faith, the promise is that ‘the gates of hell shall not prevail against you; yea, and the Lord God will disperse the powers of darkness from before you, and cause the heavens to shake for your good, and his name’s glory.’ (D&C 21:6.)” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1970, 152; or *Improvement Era*, Dec. 1970, 126).

2. The young soldiers exercise faith in God and fight courageously.

Discuss Alma 56:9–58:41. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud. If you are using the picture of the young warriors, display it now.

- The first army that the young Ammonites faced was the Lamanites’ strongest and most numerous army (Alma 56:34–43). What was the young soldiers’ response when Helaman asked if they wanted to go against this army? (See Alma 56:44–47.) From whom had these warriors learned to have such great faith and courage? (See Alma 56:47–48; see also Alma 53:21; 57:21. If you are teaching adults, write on the chalkboard *Teach our children to believe in God*. If you are teaching youth, write *Follow parents’ righteous teachings*.)

To emphasize the influence that mothers can have on their children, you may want to read the following statement by President Spencer W. Kimball:

“To be a righteous woman during the winding-up scenes on this earth, before the Second Coming of our Savior, is an especially noble calling. The righteous woman’s strength and influence today can be tenfold what it might be in more tranquil times. She has been placed here to help to enrich, to protect, and to guard the home—which is society’s basic and most noble institution. Other institutions in society may falter and even fail, but the righteous woman can help to save the home, which may be the last and only sanctuary some mortals know in the midst of storm and strife” (*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball [1982], 326–27).

- The young soldiers did not doubt their mothers’ testimonies (Alma 56:48). Why is it important for children to know the strength and certainty of their parents’ testimonies? In what ways can parents share their testimonies with their children?
- During one difficult battle, many Nephites “were about to give way” (Alma 57:20; see also verses 12–19). What was the response of the young Ammonites during this battle? (See Alma 57:19–20. Write on the chalkboard *Be “firm and undaunted,” even when others “give way.”*)
- What were the results of the young Ammonites’ faith and courage? (See Alma 57:22–25; 58:31–33, 39.) How can we remain “firm and undaunted,” even

when friends, associates, and others are “about to give way”? How can we strengthen those who are “about to give way”?

- In what ways were the young Ammonites “firm and undaunted”? (For some examples, see Alma 53:20–21; 57:26–27; 58:40.)
 - a. “They were exceedingly valiant for courage” (Alma 53:20).
 - b. “They were . . . true at all times in whatsoever thing they were entrusted” (Alma 53:20).
 - c. “They were men of truth and soberness” (Alma 53:21).
 - d. They had “exceeding faith in that which they had been taught to believe” (Alma 57:26).
 - e. They “put their trust in God continually” (Alma 57:27).
 - f. They “[stood] fast in that liberty wherewith God [had] made them free” (Alma 58:40).
 - g. They were “strict to remember the Lord their God from day to day” (Alma 58:40).
 - h. They kept God’s “statutes, and his judgments, and his commandments continually” (Alma 58:40).
 - i. “Their faith [was] strong in the prophecies” (Alma 58:40).

Emphasize that the young Ammonites had developed these characteristics in their youth, before they became soldiers. If you are teaching youth, write on the chalkboard *Develop righteous qualities in our youth.*

- In one battle, the Nephite armies led by Helaman, Gid, and Teomner faced “an enemy which was innumerable,” but they received very little assistance from the land of Zarahemla (Alma 58:1–9). To what source did the Nephites turn for strength? (See Alma 58:10. Write on the chalkboard *Pray for strength and deliverance.*)
- How did the Lord answer the Nephites’ prayers? (See Alma 58:11–12.) In what ways can such answers to prayer help us “take courage”?

Conclusion

Read the statement by President Ezra Taft Benson on page 142. In connection with this statement, review the principles that you have written on the chalkboard.

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

Additional Teaching Idea

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use this idea as part of the lesson.

Insights from Alma 60–61

Discuss Alma 60 and 61, which contain Moroni’s letter to Pahoran, the governor of the land, and Pahoran’s response. Included in these chapters are lessons on:

- a. Making use of all the means the Lord has provided (Alma 60:21).
- b. Cleansing “the inward vessel” (Alma 60:23).
- c. Being “constrained according to the covenant [we] have made to keep the commandments” (Alma 60:34).
- d. Seeking God’s glory, not the “honor of the world” (Alma 60:36).
- e. Not taking offense (Alma 61:9).

Lesson
33

“A Sure Foundation”

Helaman 1–5

Purpose To encourage class members to build their testimonies on the foundation of Jesus Christ.

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. Helaman 1–2. Internal strife develops among the Nephites as secret works and wickedness increase. Gadianton becomes the leader of Kishkumen’s secret band of robbers.
 - b. Helaman 3. Thousands join the Church and begin to prosper. Some Church members are lifted up in pride.
 - c. Helaman 4. Lamanites and Nephite dissenters defeat the Nephites because of the Nephites’ wickedness and pride.
 - d. Helaman 5. Nephi and Lehi remember their father’s counsel to build their foundation on the rock of Christ. Miracles attend their ministry as they preach repentance.
2. If you are using the attention activity, select one of the following options:
 - a. Ask a small group of class members to prepare to sing verses 1, 2, 3, and 7 of the hymn “How Firm a Foundation” (*Hymns*, no. 85) in class.
 - b. Prepare to sing or read the words to verses 1, 2, 3, and 7 of “How Firm a Foundation” with class members.
 - c. Ask a small group of Primary children to come to the class and sing “The Wise Man and the Foolish Man” (*Children’s Songbook*, 281). Arrange this with the children’s parents and with Primary leaders and teachers.

Suggestions for Lesson Development

Attention Activity As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. Introduce the presentation that you have prepared (see “Preparation,” item 2). After the hymn or song, explain that today’s lesson shows the difference between people who build on weak foundations, such as people who place their trust in wealth or physical strength, and people who build their foundations on “the rock of [their] Redeemer, . . . which is a sure foundation” (Helaman 5:12).

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

1. Internal strife develops among the Nephites.

Discuss Helaman 1–2. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud.

Explain that Pahoran, the chief judge, had died, and three of his sons—Pahoran, Paanchi, and Pacumeni—contended for the judgment seat (Helaman 1:1–4).

- How did Paanchi and Pacumeni each respond when Pahoran was chosen to be chief judge? (See Helaman 1:5–7.) What happened because of Paanchi’s rebellion? (See Helaman 1:8–13.)
- After Pacumeni became chief judge, the Lamanites came to battle against the Nephites (Helaman 1:13–17). Why were the Nephites unprepared to defend themselves against an outside attack from the Lamanites? (See Helaman 1:18.) How does contention weaken nations and communities? wards and stakes? families and individuals? What can we do to avoid or overcome contention?
- Gadianton, who was “exceedingly expert in many words, and also in his craft,” became the leader of the band of Kishkumen (Helaman 2:4). What did Gadianton promise the followers of Kishkumen in order to persuade them to follow him? (See Helaman 2:5; see also Helaman 5:8.) In what ways are people sometimes influenced by flattery and the promise of power? How can we avoid this influence?

2. Thousands join the Church; some Church members are lifted up in pride.

Read and discuss selected verses from Helaman 3.

- Helaman 3 covers about 11 years of Nephite history. During those 11 years, the Nephites experienced periods of peace and periods of contention. What disturbed the peace of the Nephites during those years? (See Helaman 3:1, 33–34.) What was the cause of the Nephites’ pride? (See Helaman 3:36.) How can pride disturb the peace in our lives? What can we do to guard against pride? (See Helaman 3:27–30; see also Deuteronomy 8:11, 17–18; Alma 62:48–51.)
- Have a class member read Helaman 3:29 aloud. What does it mean to “lay hold upon the word of God”? How will we be blessed as we “lay hold upon the word of God”? (See Helaman 3:27–30; see also 1 Nephi 11:25; 15:24.)
- In the 51st year, some Church members began to persecute others (Helaman 3:33–34). How did the humble followers of Christ respond to the persecution from the proud members of the Church? (See Helaman 3:35.) How can their example help us when we face persecution, criticism, or affliction?
- Humble Church members were sanctified because they “[yielded] their hearts unto God” (Helaman 3:35). What is sanctification? (The process of becoming clean, pure, and free from sin through the Atonement of Jesus Christ. See D&C 76:41; 88:74–75.) What does it mean to yield our hearts to God?

3. Lamanites and Nephite dissenters defeat the Nephites.

Read and discuss selected verses from Helaman 4.

- Nephite dissenters convinced the Lamanites to go to war against the Nephites. The Lamanites defeated the Nephites and obtained many of their lands (Helaman 4:5). What did Mormon, who abridged the book of Helaman, observe was the cause of the Nephites’ weakness? (See Helaman 4:11–13.) What parallels exist

between the Nephites' actions and the actions of some people today? How can acknowledging our dependence on the Lord strengthen us?

- Moronihah, Lehi, and Nephi prophesied “many things unto the people . . . concerning their iniquities, and what should come unto them if they did not repent of their sins” (Helaman 4:14). What happened when the people began to repent? (See Helaman 4:15–16; see also verses 21–26.)

4. Nephi and Lehi remember their father’s counsel. Miracles attend their ministry.

Read and discuss selected verses from Helaman 5.

- Why did Nephi give up the judgment seat to preach the word of God? (See Helaman 5:1–4.) What did Nephi and Lehi remember that their father had told them about their names? (See Helaman 5:5–7.) How have the examples of prophets, other Church leaders, and other righteous people helped you?
- What did Helaman teach his sons about the Atonement of Jesus Christ? (See Helaman 5:9–11.)
- Have a class member read Helaman 5:12 aloud. What does it mean to build on the rock of Christ? (See also 3 Nephi 14:24–27.) What are some of the mighty winds and storms that Satan sends upon us? How can Christ help us withstand these winds and storms?
- Why do we refer to Christ as our rock? What foundations other than Christ do people sometimes build their lives upon? How have you been blessed as you have built your life on the rock of Christ?
- What great miracles occurred in Zarahemla as Nephi and Lehi preached the gospel? (See Helaman 5:17–19.) Why was it important that the Lamanites reject “the wickedness of the traditions of their fathers”? (See Helaman 5:19, 51; see also Mosiah 1:5.)

Elder Richard G. Scott said: “I testify that you will remove barriers to happiness and find greater peace as you make your first allegiance your membership in the Church of Jesus Christ, and His teachings the foundation of your life. Where family or national traditions or customs conflict with the teachings of God, set them aside. Where traditions and customs are in harmony with His teachings, they should be cherished and followed to preserve your culture and heritage. There is one heritage that you need never change. It is that heritage that comes from your being a daughter or son of Father in Heaven” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1998, 114; or *Ensign*, May 1998, 87).

- Have a class member read Helaman 5:21–32 aloud. What happened after the people began to repent? (See Helaman 5:43–45.) How did the Holy Ghost testify to the people? (See Helaman 5:45–47.) How has the Holy Ghost testified of truth in your life?
- What did the people do once they had received a witness of the Savior? (See Helaman 5:49–52.) What is our responsibility once we receive a witness of the divinity and saving power of Jesus Christ? (See D&C 33:9; 88:81.)

Conclusion Have a class member again read Helaman 5:12 aloud. Emphasize that we can protect ourselves against pride, contention, and Satan’s “mighty storm” by building our foundation on the rock of Jesus Christ.

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

Additional Teaching Ideas

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

1. “Remember, remember, my sons” (Helaman 5:5–14)

- In the Book of Mormon there are over 240 instances of the word *remember* or forms of the word (such as *remembered*, *remembrance*, or *forget not*). Fifteen of these instances are in Helaman 5. What must we remember? (See Helaman 5:9; see also Mosiah 3:17.) Why is it important to remember?

Elder Spencer W. Kimball said:

“When you look in the dictionary for the most important word, do you know what it is? It could be ‘remember.’ Because all of [us] have made covenants . . . our greatest need is to remember. That is why everyone goes to sacrament meeting every Sabbath day—to take the sacrament and listen to the priests pray that [we] ‘ . . . may always remember him and keep his commandments which he has given [us].’ . . . ‘Remember’ is the word” (“Circles of Exaltation” [address to religious educators, Brigham Young University, 28 June 1968], 8).

2. “Yielding [our] hearts unto God” (Helaman 3:35)

As you discuss Helaman 3:35, share the following statement by Elder Neal A. Maxwell:

“It is only by yielding to God that we can begin to realize His will for us. And if we truly trust God, why not yield to His loving omniscience? After all, He knows us and our possibilities much better than do we” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1985, 91; or *Ensign*, May 1985, 72).

Lesson
34

“How Could You Have Forgotten Your God?”

Helaman 6–12

Purpose To help class members recognize the cycle that leads from righteousness to wickedness and back to righteousness.

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. Helaman 6:1–14. The Lamanites become more righteous than the Nephites. The people are blessed with peace and prosperity.
 - b. Helaman 6:15–10:1. The Nephites become proud and wicked. Nephi calls the people to repentance. After witnessing the events surrounding the murder of the chief judge, some accept Nephi as a prophet, but most remain unrepentant.
 - c. Helaman 10:2–11:6. The Lord gives Nephi the sealing power. Nephi asks the Lord to chasten the Nephites by sending a famine.
 - d. Helaman 11:7–38; 12. The Nephites humble themselves and repent. The Lord sends rain at Nephi’s request and again blesses the Nephites with peace and prosperity. Mormon identifies the cycle of righteousness and wickedness and tells how to break the cycle.

2. Prepare the following wordstrips:

Righteousness and Prosperity

Pride and Wickedness

Destruction and Suffering

Humility and Repentance

If you do not want to use wordstrips, write the words on the chalkboard when the lesson calls for the wordstrips.

3. If *Book of Mormon Video Presentations* (53911) is available, prepare to show “The Pride Cycle,” a fifteen-minute segment. If the videocassette is not available, assign a class member to prepare to briefly explain the events described in Helaman 7:13–29; 8; 9.

**Suggestions for
Lesson Development**

Attention Activity As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. Write the following numbers on the chalkboard: 2, 3, 5, 8, 12

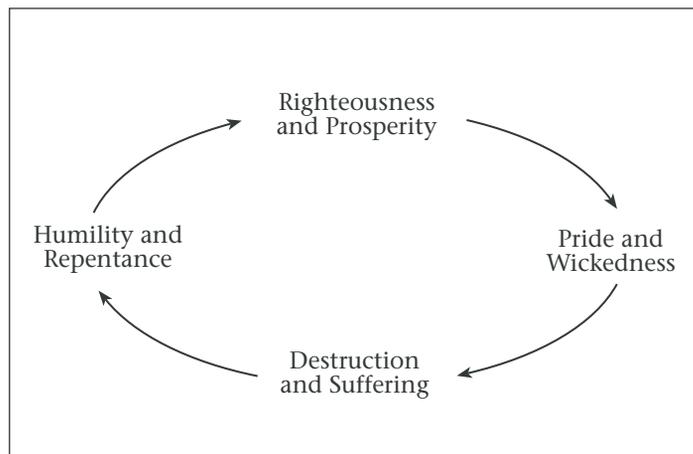
Point out that these numbers follow a particular sequence. Ask class members what the next three numbers of the sequence will be. (The next three numbers are 17, 23, and 30. You may need to explain that the pattern is formed by adding 1 to the first number, 2 to the second number, 3 to the third number, and so on.)

Explain that in the Book of Mormon there is a pattern that is almost as predictable as this sequence. The pattern is repeated many times. By recognizing this pattern, we can avoid doing what led to the destruction of the Nephites.

Scripture Discussion and Application

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

This lesson is divided into four sections. Each section deals with one stage of the pride cycle. At the times indicated, place on the chalkboard the wordstrips that correspond with each section. Draw arrows to connect the wordstrips, as shown below:



1. The people are righteous and are blessed with peace and prosperity.

Read and discuss selected verses from Helaman 6:1–14. Remind class members that Nephi and Lehi had been missionaries to the Lamanites and had helped many of them repent and be baptized. The Lamanites soon became more righteous than the Nephites.

- What characteristics did the Lamanites have that helped them become more righteous than many of the Nephites? (See Helaman 6:1.) How did the converted Lamanites try to help the Nephites? (See Helaman 6:4–6.) What was the result? (See Helaman 6:7–14.)

Place the wordstrip *Righteousness and Prosperity* on the chalkboard.

2. The Nephites become proud and wicked. Nephi calls them to repentance.

Discuss Helaman 6:15–10:1. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud. Point out that after the Nephites became prosperous, many of them began to forget God and seek after riches and other worldly things.

Place the wordstrip *Pride and Wickedness* on the chalkboard.

- Why does prosperity often lead to wickedness? (See Helaman 6:17; 7:20–21.)

- Have class members read Helaman 6:21–24 and 7:4–5 and identify the characteristics of the Gadianton robbers. Which of these elements exist today? How can we appropriately fight evil influences in our communities?
- Who was the source of the secret combinations? (See Helaman 6:25–30.) What did the Nephites do as Satan “got great hold upon [their] hearts”? (See Helaman 6:31.)

Have class members read Helaman 6:34–38, looking for contrasts between the Nephites and the Lamanites. You may want to summarize class members’ responses on the chalkboard in a chart like the one below:

NEPHITES	LAMANITES
Dwindled in unbelief (verse 34).	Grew in the knowledge of God (verse 34).
Grew in wickedness and sin (verse 34).	Walked in truth and righteousness before God (verse 34).
Lost the guidance of the Spirit of the Lord (verse 35).	Received the Spirit (verse 36).
Built up and supported the Gadianton robbers (verse 38).	Preached the word of God to the Gadianton robbers (verse 37).

- Why did the Spirit “withdraw from the Nephites”? (See Helaman 6:35.) Why did the Lord “pour out his Spirit upon the Lamanites”? (See Helaman 6:36.) What can this teach us about how we can receive the influence of the Holy Ghost?

Explain that when the Nephites continued in their wickedness, the Lord sent Helaman’s son Nephi to call them to repentance. When Nephi saw the wickedness of the people, “his heart was swollen with sorrow” (Helaman 7:6). He knelt on his garden tower to pray. As he poured out his soul to God, a group of people gathered, curious to know why he mourned for the wickedness of the people (Helaman 7:11).

If you are using the video presentation “The Pride Cycle,” show it now. If you are not using the video presentation, ask the assigned class member to give a brief report of the events described in Helaman 7:13–29; 8; 9.

- How did the people react when Nephi rebuked them for their wickedness? (See Helaman 8:1–10.) Why did so many remain unrepentant?
- How did the people react after Seantum confessed to murdering his brother, the chief judge? (See Helaman 9:39–10:1.) After the people debated whether Nephi was a prophet or a god, they left him standing alone. What can keep us from listening to latter-day prophets?

President Ezra Taft Benson said: “The two groups who have the greatest difficulty in following the prophet are the proud who are learned and the

proud who are rich. The learned may feel the prophet is only inspired when he agrees with them; otherwise, the prophet is just giving his opinion—speaking as a man. The rich may feel they have no need to take counsel of a lowly prophet” (*The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson* [1988], 138).

3. The Lord gives Nephi the sealing power. The unrepentant Nephites face warfare and famine.

Read and discuss selected verses from Helaman 10:2–11:6. Point out that the Nephites forgot the Lord and continued in wickedness. Because of their wickedness, the people experienced devastating destruction and suffering.

- The Lord gave Nephi the sealing power, saying that “all things [would] be done according to [Nephi’s] word” (Helaman 10:5–10). Why did the Lord entrust Nephi with such great power? (See Helaman 10:4–5.)
- What happened to the people after they rejected Nephi and disobeyed God? (See Helaman 10:18–11:2.) What did Nephi pray for to help the people remember the Lord and repent? (See Helaman 11:4.) Why did Nephi pray for famine instead of war? (See Helaman 11:4.) How was Nephi’s prayer answered? (See Helaman 11:5–8.)

Place the wordstrip *Destruction and Suffering* on the chalkboard.

4. The Nephites humble themselves and repent.

Read and discuss selected verses from Helaman 11:7–38; 12. Explain that the destruction and suffering of the famine influenced the Nephites to turn to the Lord for relief. They humbled themselves and repented.

Place the wordstrip *Humility and Repentance* on the chalkboard.

- What can we learn from the Lord’s answer to Nephi’s prayer to end the famine? (See Helaman 11:10–17.) What did the Lord require of the people before He would end the famine? (See Helaman 11:14–15.)
- How were the people once again blessed for their faithfulness? (See Helaman 11:20–21.)
- What was the first sign that the short-lived period of humility and righteousness was ending? (See Helaman 11:22.) How did Nephi, Lehi, and their brethren put an end to this contention? (See Helaman 11:23.) In what ways can teaching “true points of doctrine” help us put an end to contention?
- Following another period of wickedness and destruction by warfare, what helped the people repent and turn to the Lord? (See Helaman 11:28–34.) As we are surrounded by similar conditions of wickedness, what can we do to always remember the Lord?
- Two years later, the Nephites “began again to forget the Lord their God” (Helaman 11:36). Why do you think people are so quick to forget the Lord? In what ways might we be forgetting the Lord today?
- Mormon said that “the children of men . . . are less than the dust of the earth” (Helaman 12:7). On what basis did he make this statement? (Have class members take turns reading verses from Helaman 12:1–6, 8.)
- We have the freedom to obey or disobey God’s commandments but not to choose the consequences of our actions. What did Mormon say will be the

fate of those who disobey? (See Helaman 12:25–26.) What will be the fate of those who repent and obey the Lord? (See Helaman 12:23–24, 26.)

- Direct class members' attention to the cycle on the chalkboard. How can people break away from this cycle? (See Alma 62:48–51; Helaman 12:23–24.)

President Gordon B. Hinckley said: "Seek for the real things, not the artificial. Seek for the everlasting truths, not the passing whim. Seek for the eternal things of God, not for that which is here today and gone tomorrow. Look to God and live" (*Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley* [1997], 494).

Conclusion

Read the following statement by Elder Gordon B. Hinckley, in which he spoke of the Book of Mormon:

"No other written testament so clearly illustrates the fact that when men and nations walk in the fear of God and in obedience to his commandments, they prosper and grow, but when they disregard him and his word, there comes a decay that, unless arrested by righteousness, leads to impotence and death" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1979, 10; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1979, 8).

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

Additional Teaching Ideas

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

1. Avoiding the pride cycle

Ask class members to think about an embarrassing or foolish mistake or choice they have made. Then ask them to think about what they have done to avoid repeating that mistake. Give class members the opportunity to share these experiences.

Discuss why the Nephites continued making decisions that led them from righteousness to wickedness, resulting in destruction and suffering.

- What can we learn from the Nephites to help us avoid making the same mistakes that they made?

2. "They have testified of the coming of Christ" (Helaman 8:22)

Explain that prophets testify of Jesus Christ, as do all things in heaven and on the earth. Then have class members take turns reading verses from Helaman 8:11–24, looking for the many witnesses of the Savior in those verses. As part of this discussion, you may want to give particular attention to the account of Moses' brazen serpent:

- What did the brazen serpent symbolize? (See Helaman 8:13–15; see also Numbers 21:6–9; John 3:14–16.) How can we increase our faith in Christ? How has your faith in Christ and His Atonement affected your life?

As a conclusion to this discussion, you may want to read the testimony of the current President of the Church from a current conference issue of the *Ensign*.

“Repent and Return unto the Lord”

Lesson
35

Helaman 13–16

Purpose To remind class members of the importance of repenting, turning to the Lord, and following the prophets.

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. Helaman 13. A Lamanite prophet named Samuel prophesies that the Nephites will be destroyed unless they repent.
 - b. Helaman 14. Samuel prophesies of the signs that will precede the birth and death of the Savior. He continues to call the people to repentance.
 - c. Helaman 15–16. Samuel tells the Nephites of the conversion of the Lamanites. Some Nephites believe Samuel and are baptized. Others harden their hearts and try to kill Samuel, but he is spared by the power of God.
2. If the picture Samuel the Lamanite on the Wall is available, prepare to use it during the lesson (62370; Gospel Art Picture Kit 314).

Suggestions for Lesson Development

Attention Activity As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. Ask class members to imagine a salesman who has only one product to sell: misery.

- What could this salesman do to sell his product? (Answers may include that he could make misery look appealing or that he could trick people into thinking that his product will bring happiness instead of misery.)
- Satan has nothing to offer but misery (2 Nephi 2:17–18, 27). How does Satan make misery and sin look desirable? How does he try to persuade people that happiness and righteousness are undesirable?

Explain that in this lesson you will discuss the prophecies of Samuel, a Lamanite prophet. Samuel preached to a group of Nephites who had allowed themselves to be overcome by Satan’s temptations. They had “sought for happiness in doing iniquity,” which is contrary to the nature of God (Helaman 13:38).

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

1. Samuel warns the Nephites that they will be destroyed unless they repent.

Discuss Helaman 13. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud. Explain that a Lamanite prophet named Samuel went to preach in Zarahemla, but the

Nephites cast him out of the land. The Lord commanded Samuel to return to Zarahemla and prophesy. When the Nephites did not allow Samuel to enter the city, he stood on the city wall and prophesied to them (Helaman 13:1–4). If you are using the picture of Samuel, display it throughout the lesson.

- Samuel warned the people that because of the hardness of their hearts, the Lord would take His word from them and withdraw His Spirit from them (Helaman 13:8). Why do these consequences come to people who harden their hearts? (See Mosiah 2:36–37.) What can we do to soften our hearts?
- Through the prophet Samuel, the Lord said, “Blessed are they who will repent and turn unto me” (Helaman 13:11). How might some people attempt to repent without turning to the Lord? Why is turning to the Lord an essential part of repentance?

President Ezra Taft Benson taught:

“Repentance means more than simply a reformation of behavior. Many men and women in the world demonstrate great will-power and self-discipline in overcoming bad habits and the weaknesses of the flesh. Yet at the same time they give no thought to the Master, sometimes even openly rejecting Him. Such changes of behavior, even if in a positive direction, do not constitute true repentance. . . .

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

- The Nephites had “set their hearts upon riches” (Helaman 13:20–21). In addition, they had not hearkened to the words of the Lord, who had given them their riches (Helaman 13:21). Because of this, the Nephites and their riches were cursed (Helaman 13:17–22). In what ways do people give more time and attention to worldly concerns than to spiritual concerns? How can we assess whether we are giving enough attention to our spiritual welfare?
- Samuel said that the Nephites always remembered their riches but did not remember to thank the Lord for them (Helaman 13:22). Why is it difficult for some people to remain grateful when they are blessed with abundance? How does gratitude counteract pride? In what ways can we show gratitude to the Lord?
- The Nephites persecuted and killed the prophets of their day, but they said, “If our days had been in the days of our fathers of old, we would not have slain the prophets” (Helaman 13:24–25; compare with Matthew 23:29–39). Why do people sometimes praise past prophets and reject living prophets? (See Helaman 13:26.) How do some people allow themselves to “be led by foolish and blind guides”? (See Helaman 13:27–29.)
- According to Samuel, the Nephites had “sought for happiness in doing iniquity” (Helaman 13:38). Why is it impossible to find true happiness in sin? (See Helaman 13:38; see also Alma 41:10–11.) How can we find true happiness? (In addition to asking for class members’ responses, you may want to read the quotation on the next page.) How can we help others find true happiness?

The Prophet Joseph Smith said, “Happiness is the object and design of our existence; and will be the end thereof, if we pursue the path that leads to it; and this path is virtue, uprightness, faithfulness, holiness, and keeping all the commandments of God” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 255–56).

2. Samuel prophesies of the signs that will precede the birth and death of the Savior. He continues to call the people to repentance.

Read and discuss selected verses from Helaman 14.

- Samuel prophesied of the Savior’s birth and death (Helaman 14:2, 15). What signs did Samuel say would attend the Savior’s birth and death? (See Helaman 14:3–7, 20–28. These prophecies are mentioned in the additional teaching idea. The fulfillment of the prophecies will be discussed in lesson 36.)
- Samuel said that if the people would repent, they would receive a remission of their sins through the merits of Christ (Helaman 14:13). Merits are qualities or actions that entitle a person to claim rewards. Why is it only through the Savior’s merits that we can be forgiven of our sins? (See 2 Nephi 2:7–9; Alma 22:14.)

President Ezra Taft Benson taught, “Even the most just and upright man cannot save himself solely on his own merits” (*The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson*, 71).

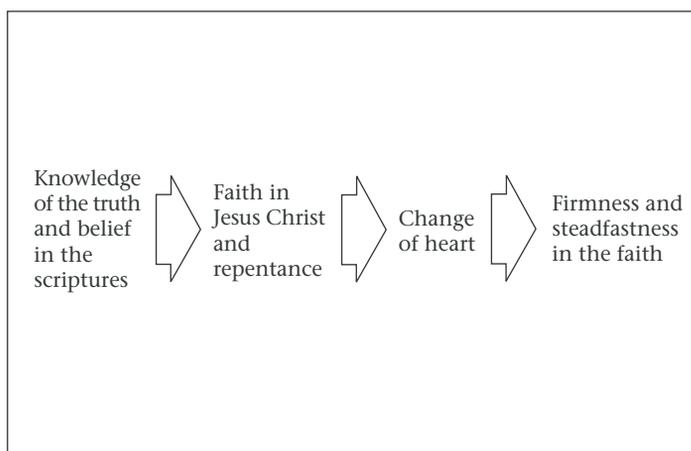
- According to Samuel, why did Jesus have to die? (See Helaman 14:15–18.) How does knowing of the Savior’s sacrifice affect you?
- Samuel said, “If [people] are condemned they bring upon themselves their own condemnation” (Helaman 14:29). Why is this so? (See Helaman 14:30–31.) Why is it essential that we be “permitted to act for [our]selves”?

3. Some believe Samuel and are baptized. Others harden their hearts and try to kill Samuel.

Read and discuss selected verses from Helaman 15–16.

- Why did the Lord chasten the Nephites? (See Helaman 15:3; see also Hebrews 12:6.) How does the Lord’s chastening show His love for us? What can we learn from the Lord’s chastening?

Have a class member read Helaman 15:7–8 aloud. As he or she reads, draw the following diagram on the chalkboard:



- In what ways do knowledge of the truth and belief in the scriptures lead to faith and repentance? In what ways do faith and repentance lead to a change of heart?
- The Lamanites who experienced a change of heart remained “firm and steadfast in the faith” (Helaman 15:8). When we experience a change of heart, what must we do to ensure that the change is lasting? (See 2 Nephi 31:19–20.)
- How did the Nephites respond to Samuel’s prophecies and warning? (See Helaman 16:1–7.) Why do you think many of the people did not believe Samuel even when they saw that he was miraculously protected?
- Although they saw that the words of the prophets were being fulfilled, the majority of the Nephites began to harden their hearts and depend on their own strength and wisdom (Helaman 16:13–15). How did these unbelieving Nephites explain away the signs that they had seen? (See Helaman 16:16–23.) What are the dangers of trying to understand the gospel with only our intellect?

Conclusion

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

You may want to use the additional teaching idea to review Samuel’s prophecies and to show how a study of these prophecies can help us prepare for the Savior’s Second Coming.

Additional Teaching Idea

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use this idea as part of the lesson.

Preparing for the Second Coming

Read the following statement by President Ezra Taft Benson:

“The record of the Nephite history just prior to the Savior’s visit reveals many parallels to our own day as we anticipate the Savior’s second coming” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1987, 3; or *Ensign*, May 1987, 4).

In this statement, the “record of the Nephite history” referred to by President Benson was the book of 3 Nephi—the account of the Nephites before they were visited by the resurrected Lord. The chart on the following page applies President Benson’s statement to the book of Helaman—the account of the Nephites before they saw the signs of the Savior’s birth.

Use the chart to show that Helaman 13–16 contains accounts of prophecies and events that parallel signs and events that will precede the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. An excerpt from the chart is also in the *Book of Mormon Class Member Study Guide*.

Prophecies and Events Recorded in Helaman 13–16	Prophecy or Event	Signs and Events that Will Precede the Second Coming
Helaman 16:1, 3, 6, 10	Strong righteous minority	1 Nephi 14:12; Jacob 5:70
Helaman 16:13–14	Spiritual outpourings and miracles	Joel 2:28–30; D&C 45:39–42
Helaman 13:22; 16:12, 22–23	Great wickedness	2 Timothy 3:1–5; D&C 45:27
Helaman 13:2, 6, 8, 10–11; 14:9, 11; 15:1–3, 17; 16:2	Rejection of the Lord’s prophets and their call to repentance	D&C 1:14–16
Helaman 15:4–11	Conversion of many Lamanites	D&C 49:24
Helaman 14:3–4	Prophecy of a night with no darkness	Zechariah 14:7; see also <i>Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith</i> , sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 287
Helaman 14:5–6, 20	Prophecies of signs and wonders in the heavens	Joel 2:30–31; D&C 45:40
Helaman 16:13–18	Denial of signs, wonders, and Christ’s coming	2 Peter 3:3–4; D&C 45:26
Helaman 14:21, 23, 26	Prophecies of great storms and other natural destruction	Revelation 16:18, 21; D&C 88:88–90
Helaman 14:24; 15:1	Prophecy of the destruction of the wicked	Isaiah 26:21; Malachi 4:1; D&C 1:9; 133:41

- What similarities exist between people today and the Nephites who lived just before Christ’s birth?

Read the following statement by President Ezra Taft Benson:

“In the Book of Mormon we find a pattern for preparing for the Second Coming. A major portion of the book centers on the few decades just prior to Christ’s coming to America. By careful study of that time period, we can determine why some were destroyed in the terrible judgments that preceded His coming and what brought others to stand at the temple in the land of Bountiful and thrust their hands into the wounds of His hands and feet. . . . Can anyone doubt that this book was meant for us and that in it we find great power, great comfort, and great protection?” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1986, 5–6; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 6–7).

Invite class members to share insights and impressions they have received as they have discussed Helaman 13–16. Ask them how these things can help them prepare for the Savior’s Second Coming.

Lesson
36

“On the Morrow Come I into the World”

3 Nephi 1–7

Purpose To help class members understand the need to endure faithfully in times of trial and temptation.

Preparation Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:

- a. 3 Nephi 1:1–22. Despite signs and miracles in the land, unbelievers claim that the time for the Savior’s coming has passed. The wicked plan to slay the believers. The signs of the Savior’s birth appear and vindicate those who have endured in faith.
- b. 3 Nephi 2–4. Wickedness increases in the land. The Gadianton robbers become more powerful and come to battle against the Nephites. The Nephites repent of their wickedness, and the Lord helps them defeat the Gadianton robbers.
- c. 3 Nephi 5–7. The Nephites forsake their sins and live righteously. As they prosper, pride and dissensions arise in the Church. The people are soon living “in a state of awful wickedness.” Nephi preaches repentance and faith in Christ, and a few of the people are converted.

**Suggestions for
Lesson Development**

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

Share with class members the following fable related by Elder George A. Smith, who was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“A man, traveling through the country, came to a large city, very rich and splendid; he looked at it and said to his guide, ‘This must be a very righteous people, for I can only see but one little devil in this great city.’

“The guide replied, ‘You do not understand, sir; this city is so perfectly given up to wickedness, corruption, degradation and abomination of every kind that it only requires one devil to keep them all in subjection.’

“Traveling on a little further he came to a rugged path and saw an old man trying to get up the hill side, surrounded by seven great, big, coarse looking devils.

“‘Why,’ says the traveller, ‘this must be a tremendously wicked old man, only see how many devils there are around him!’

“‘This,’ replied the guide, ‘is the only righteous man in the country and there are seven of the biggest devils trying to turn him out of his path and they all cannot do it’” (in *Deseret News*, 11 Nov. 1857, 7:287).

Explain that as we strive to faithfully keep the commandments, we will face opposition. Today’s lesson discusses the opposition faced by the believers among the Nephites. Some people endured in spite of all opposition, while others received

great blessings yet quickly “turned from their righteousness” (3 Nephi 7:8). From these chapters we can learn the importance of remaining faithful in spite of trials and temptation.

Scripture Discussion and Application

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

1. The signs of the Savior’s birth vindicate those who have endured in faith.

Read and discuss selected verses from 3 Nephi 1:1–22. Explain that the events in this chapter occurred five years after Samuel prophesied of Jesus’ birth. Samuel had said, “Five years more cometh, and behold, then cometh the Son of God” (Helaman 14:2). You may wish to briefly review Samuel’s prophecies of the signs that would accompany Jesus’ birth (Helaman 14:2–7).

- While waiting for Samuel’s prophecies to be fulfilled, “the people who believed began to be very sorrowful” (3 Nephi 1:7). What were some of the reasons for their sorrow? (See 3 Nephi 1:5–9.)
 - a. Some unbelievers said that the time was past for the prophecies to be fulfilled and that the believers’ faith was in vain (3 Nephi 1:5–6).
 - b. Unbelievers made “a great uproar throughout the land” (3 Nephi 1:7).
 - c. A day was selected to put to death all believers (3 Nephi 1:9).
- In spite of these challenges to their faith, what did the believers do? (See 3 Nephi 1:8.) What can we do to remain steadfast when our faith is challenged?
- When Nephi saw the wickedness of the unbelievers, he prayed to the Lord for his people (3 Nephi 1:10–11). What message was revealed to Nephi after he had prayed all day for his people? (See 3 Nephi 1:12–14. You may want to have a class member read these verses aloud.) How were Samuel’s prophecies fulfilled? (See 3 Nephi 1:15–21.) How does this account help strengthen your faith in Jesus Christ?

2. The Gadianton robbers come to battle against the Nephites.

Discuss 3 Nephi 2–4. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud.

- How did Satan try to turn people away from their belief in the Savior and His birth? (See 3 Nephi 1:22; 2:1–3. Point out that Satan gradually gained possession of the hearts of the people, and soon the people “began to forget those signs and wonders.”) Which of these tactics have you seen the adversary use today? What can we do to remember and preserve our spiritual experiences?
- As the people began to increase in wickedness, what dangers did they face? (See 3 Nephi 2:11–13, 17–19.) What kinds of behavior and attitudes threaten our safety today?
- In the 16th year from the time of Christ’s birth, Lachoneus, the governor and chief judge of the Nephites, received a letter from Giddianhi, the leader of the Gadianton robbers (3 Nephi 3:1). What did Giddianhi desire of Lachoneus? (See 3 Nephi 3:6–8.)

- When the Gadianton robbers announced their intention to destroy the Nephites, the people began at once to prepare to protect themselves, under the direction of Lachoneus and Gidgiddoni. What can we learn from their actions that can help protect us in times of temptation and fear? (Have class members read 3 Nephi 3:12–26 to find answers to this question. Summarize class members' responses on the chalkboard. Some answers are listed below, with questions to encourage discussion.)
 - a. “Lachoneus, the governor, was a just man, and could not be frightened” (3 Nephi 3:12). How might fear cause someone to give in to temptation? How can personal righteousness help us remain courageous when we face temptation or affliction?
 - b. Lachoneus told the people to “cry unto the Lord for strength” (3 Nephi 3:12). Why is it important to pray for strength to face temptations or challenges?
 - c. Lachoneus caused the people to “gather themselves together” (3 Nephi 3:13, 22). Why was it important for the Nephites to gather into one place to defend themselves? (See 3 Nephi 4:3–4.) How can our association with other members of the Church increase our ability to withstand the forces of evil? (See Moroni 6:4–6.)
 - d. “He caused that fortifications should be built” and placed “guards round about” (3 Nephi 3:14). How can we fortify ourselves and guard against temptation?
 - e. The Nephites did “exert themselves . . . to do according to the words of Lachoneus” (3 Nephi 3:16). How are we blessed when we follow inspired leaders?
 - f. “They did repent of all their sins” (3 Nephi 3:25). How does repentance help us receive greater strength from the Lord?
 - g. They were “strong with armor” (3 Nephi 3:26). What armor have we been counseled to put on? (See D&C 27:15–18.) Why are we taught to put on the whole armor of God? How can we wear this armor each day?
- What was the result of these preparations when the Gadianton robbers came against the Nephites? (See 3 Nephi 4:11–13, 16–29.) How did the Nephites rejoice after their victory? (See 3 Nephi 4:30–33.) In what ways can we show our gratitude to the Lord for protecting and blessing us?

3. The Nephites live righteously and prosper, but pride and dissensions arise.

Read and discuss selected verses from 3 Nephi 5–7. Explain that the Nephites defeated the Gadianton robbers in the 21st year after the birth of Christ. In 13 more years, the Savior would visit the Nephites and minister to them.

- For several years after the defeat of the Gadianton robbers, the Nephites enjoyed great peace and prosperity (3 Nephi 5:1–26; 6:1–9). What happened to disrupt their peace? (See 3 Nephi 6:10–15. You may also want to review briefly the pride cycle discussed in lesson 34.)
- As the people continued in their wickedness, prophets came to call them to repentance, but the people rejected and killed them (3 Nephi 6:17–23). Secret combinations increased, and the people were soon divided into tribes (3 Nephi 6:27–30; 7:1–5). What did Nephi do in response to this wickedness? (See 3 Nephi 7:15–19.) What was the result of his work? (See 3 Nephi 7:21–26.)

Write on the chalkboard the dates that are listed below. Assign different class members to read the corresponding passages aloud. As each passage is read, ask class members to describe the spiritual condition of the people.

- A.D. 21–26 3 Nephi 5:1–3 (The people served God “with all diligence.”)
 A.D. 26–27 3 Nephi 6:4–5 (There was great order and prosperity.)
 A.D. 28 3 Nephi 6:9 (There was continual peace.)
 A.D. 29 3 Nephi 6:10–16 (There were disputings, pride, and boasting.)
 A.D. 30 3 Nephi 6:17–18 (“They were in a state of awful wickedness.”)
 A.D. 31 3 Nephi 7:21 (A few people were converted to the Lord.)
 A.D. 32–33 3 Nephi 7:23 (Nephi continued to cry repentance.)

- What blessings could all the people have enjoyed if they had remained faithful? (See 3 Nephi 10:18–19. The more righteous part of the people were spared during the destruction that accompanied the Crucifixion of the Savior. They received great blessings when the Savior visited them after His Resurrection. The more wicked part of the people were destroyed. These events will be discussed in the next lesson.)

Conclusion

Explain that we also wait for the coming of the Savior. While we wait, Satan will try to turn us toward wickedness as he did the Nephites. If we prepare ourselves as did the people in the time of Lachoneus, and if we endure in righteousness, we will be worthy to receive all that the Lord desires to bestow upon us.

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

Additional Teaching Idea

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use this idea as part of the lesson.

“I am a disciple of Jesus Christ” (3 Nephi 5:13)

Have a class member read 3 Nephi 5:13 aloud. Explain that this verse contains words of the prophet Mormon.

- What does it mean to be a disciple of Jesus Christ today?

Lesson
37

“Whosoever Will Come, Him Will I Receive”

3 Nephi 8–11

Purpose

To help class members understand the fulfillment of Samuel’s prophecies and the blessings available to those who come unto the Savior.

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. 3 Nephi 8. Great destruction occurs in the Americas at the time of Christ’s death. Many cities are destroyed.
 - b. 3 Nephi 9–10. Survivors hear the voice of the Lord inviting them to return to Him, repent, and be converted.
 - c. 3 Nephi 11. The resurrected Savior descends from heaven and teaches the people.
2. If the following pictures are available, prepare to use them during the lesson: Christ Appears to the Nephites (62047; Gospel Art Picture Kit 315) and Jesus Teaching in the Western Hemisphere (62380; Gospel Art Picture Kit 316).
3. Before class begins, write on the chalkboard the chart on page 165.

**Suggestions for
Lesson Development**

Attention Activity

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

Explain that 3 Nephi 11 is often the first chapter that people are invited to read when they receive a copy of the Book of Mormon from the missionaries. This chapter contains the account of the resurrected Savior visiting the Nephites.

- Why do you think 3 Nephi 11 would be an effective way to introduce the Book of Mormon to someone? What feelings or experiences have you had as you have read this chapter?

Point out that the chapters describing the Savior’s visit to the Nephites are some of the most powerful passages in the Book of Mormon. This lesson discusses the calamities that occurred in the Americas when Jesus was crucified. It includes the account of the beginning of His ministry among the Nephites.

**Scripture Discussion
and Application**

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

1. Great destruction occurs in the Americas at the time of Jesus’ death.

Discuss 3 Nephi 8. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud. Remind class members that Samuel the Lamanite had prophesied of terrible destructions that would take place when Jesus was crucified (Helaman 14:20–27). About 33

years after the sign of Jesus' birth, the people "began to look with great earnestness" for the fulfillment of Samuel's words (3 Nephi 8:3).

Direct class members' attention to the chart you have written on the chalkboard:

SAMUEL'S PROPHECIES	FULFILLMENT
Helaman 14:21, 23	3 Nephi 8:5-7, 17-18; 9:8
Helaman 14:24	3 Nephi 8:8-10, 14
Helaman 14:20, 27	3 Nephi 8:20-21

Have class members read each passage listed under "Samuel's Prophecies" and then read the corresponding passage listed under "Fulfillment."

- When the destruction ceased, the earth was covered with thick darkness (3 Nephi 8:19-23). Why is total darkness an appropriate sign for the death of the Savior? (See 3 Nephi 9:18; see also John 8:12; D&C 11:28.) In what ways has the Savior brought light to your life?
- What was the reaction of those who survived the destruction? (See 3 Nephi 8:23-25.) How can reading about their experience help us prepare for the Second Coming?

2. Survivors hear the voice of the Lord inviting them to return to Him.

Read and discuss selected verses from 3 Nephi 9-10.

- After the destruction, the surviving Nephites heard the voice of Christ describing how different cities were destroyed (3 Nephi 9:1-12). What reason did the Lord give for the destruction? (See 3 Nephi 9:12. You may want to point out how often He repeated this reason in verses 2-12.) What invitation did He extend to those who had survived? (See 3 Nephi 9:13-14. You may want to point out that the word *come* appears three times in verse 14. See also the quotation below.) What do we need to do today to accept this invitation?
Elder Jeffrey R. Holland said: "'Come,' [Christ] says lovingly. 'Come, follow me.' Wherever you are going, first come and see what I do, see where and how I spend my time. Learn of me, walk with me, talk with me, believe. Listen to me pray. In turn you will find answers to your own prayers. God will bring rest to your souls. Come, follow me" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1997, 88; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 65).

You may want to have class members sing or read the words to "Come unto Jesus" (*Hymns*, no. 117) now or at the end of the lesson.

- Jesus declared that the law of Moses was fulfilled in Him and that He would no longer accept burnt offerings and sacrifices (3 Nephi 9:17, 19). What sacrifice did He say we must offer? (See 3 Nephi 9:20.) What does it mean to offer a "broken

heart and a contrite spirit”? (See the quotation below.) What did the Savior promise to those who make this offering? (See 3 Nephi 9:20.)

President J. Reuben Clark Jr., who was a member of the First Presidency, said: “Under the new covenant that came in with Christ, the sinner must offer the sacrifice out of his own life, not by offering the blood of some other creature; he must give up his sins, he must repent, he himself must make the sacrifice” (*Behold the Lamb of God* [1962], 107).

- For whom did Jesus say He had given His life? (See 3 Nephi 9:22.) What childlike qualities do we need in order to come unto the Savior? (See Mosiah 3:19.)
- After Jesus announced the extent of the destruction and promised redemption to those who would believe, many hours of silence passed. When Jesus spoke again, what analogy did He use to describe His yearning to gather His people? (See 3 Nephi 10:4–6. Point out that Jesus used this analogy three times but changed it slightly in each verse.) Why does He want to gather us? (See the quotation below.) How can we assist in this gathering? (See D&C 4:1–7.)

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught: “What was the object of gathering . . . the people of God in any age of the world? . . . The main object was to build unto the Lord a house whereby He could reveal unto His people the ordinances of His house and the glories of His kingdom, and teach the people the way of salvation. . . . It is for the same purpose that God gathers together His people in the last days” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 307–8).

- After calling the people to repent and come unto Him, Christ ceased speaking to the people. Three days of mourning passed. Then the darkness dispersed, the noise and destruction stopped, and the people’s sadness turned into joy (3 Nephi 10:9–10). Why had the people been spared? (See 3 Nephi 10:12–13.) What blessings did they receive? (See 3 Nephi 10:18–19.)
- What is Mormon’s counsel to us, the readers of this account? (See 3 Nephi 10:14.)

3. Jesus Christ descends from heaven and teaches the people.

Read and discuss selected verses from 3 Nephi 11. Explain that the people had gathered around the temple in the land Bountiful, marveling about the changes that had occurred and “conversing about this Jesus Christ, of whom the sign had been given concerning his death” (3 Nephi 11:1–2).

- While the people were conversing about what had happened, they heard the voice of God the Father. What was the voice like? (See 3 Nephi 11:3.) How many times did the people hear the voice before they understood it? (See 3 Nephi 11:4–6.)
- How were the people finally able to understand the voice? (See 3 Nephi 11:5.) What do you think it means that they “did open their ears to hear it”? (3 Nephi 11:5). What can we do to better hear and understand God’s words to us?
- How did God the Father introduce the Savior? (Have a class member read 3 Nephi 11:7 aloud.) How did the Savior introduce Himself? (Have a class member read 3 Nephi 11:8–11 aloud. If you are using the picture of Jesus appearing to the Nephites, display it now.)

- What invitation did Jesus extend to all the people in the multitude? (See 3 Nephi 11:13–15; see also 3 Nephi 17:25, which says that there were 2,500 people in the multitude. If you are using the picture of Jesus teaching, display it now.) What can we learn from this example of the Savior’s love?
- After the Savior had given Nephi and others the authority to baptize, what did He teach them about baptism? (See 3 Nephi 11:22–27.) Why is it important to be baptized in the correct manner and by someone who has the authority to baptize?
- Jesus taught that there should be “no disputations” among the people concerning baptism or any other points of His doctrine (3 Nephi 11:22, 28). Why is contention about gospel doctrines dangerous? (See 3 Nephi 11:29; D&C 10:62–63.) How can we be unified in true doctrine?
- What did the Savior teach as His doctrine? (See 3 Nephi 11:30–38. Answers should include believing in Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, repenting and becoming as a child, being baptized, and receiving the Holy Ghost.) What promise did He give to those who build their lives on His doctrine? (See 3 Nephi 11:39.)
- How can we more fully obey the Savior’s instructions to declare these words “unto the ends of the earth”? (3 Nephi 11:41).

Conclusion

Read 3 Nephi 10:14, and remind class members of the importance of understanding and searching the scriptures. Although persecution will increase as the separation between the righteous and the wicked grows, we will be strengthened as we study the scriptures and follow the prophets.

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

Additional Teaching Idea

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use this idea as part of the lesson.

Review activity

As a review activity, show the picture *Jesus Teaching in the Western Hemisphere* (62380; Gospel Art Picture Kit 316). Read the following statements, and have class members identify each statement as true or false. Ask class members to read the scripture passage listed for each statement.

1. The events in this picture took place in the city of Zarahemla. (False; see 3 Nephi 11:1.)
2. The people had already heard the Lord’s voice. (True; see 3 Nephi 9:1–2.)
3. The Lord asked them not to touch Him. (False; see 3 Nephi 11:14.)
4. Jesus Christ had a resurrected body when He visited the Nephites. (True; see 3 Nephi 11:15.)
5. Those who survived the destruction were free from sin. (False; see 3 Nephi 9:13.)
6. Jesus taught the people about the correct mode of baptism. (True; see 3 Nephi 11:21–26.)

Lesson
38

“Old Things Are Done Away, and All Things Have Become New”

3 Nephi 12–15

Purpose

To encourage class members to be true disciples of Jesus Christ by following His example and by living the higher law that He taught to the Nephites.

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. 3 Nephi 12:1–12. Jesus teaches the Beatitudes to the Nephites.
 - b. 3 Nephi 12:13–16. Jesus declares that His followers are to be the salt of the earth and a light to other people.
 - c. 3 Nephi 12:17–48; 15:1–10. Jesus declares that He has fulfilled the law of Moses. He teaches the people a higher law.
 - d. 3 Nephi 13–14. Jesus teaches the Nephites how they must live to be His true disciples. He tells them that those who hear and do His sayings are like a wise man who builds a house on a rock.
 2. Additional reading: Matthew 5–7; D&C 101:39–40; 103:9–10.
 3. If you use the attention activity, bring pictures of Jesus Christ to class (from the meetinghouse library or the Gospel Art Picture Kit).
 4. If you use the activity on page 170, bring two clear containers to class—one filled with clean salt and the other filled with a mixture of salt and dirt.
-

**Suggestions for
Lesson Development**

Attention Activity

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

Display a few pictures of Jesus Christ. Point out that in providing representations of Jesus’ character, different artists have portrayed Jesus in many different ways. Then ask class members to think about the following question without answering aloud:

- If someone asked you to describe Jesus’ character, what would you say?

Explain that President Harold B. Lee spoke of one accurate description of Jesus’ character. Then read the following statement by President Lee:

“In His Sermon on the Mount the Master has given us somewhat of a revelation of His own character, which was perfect, or what might be said to be ‘an autobiography, every syllable of which He had written down in deeds,’ and in so doing has given us a blueprint for our own lives” (*Stand Ye in Holy Places* [1974], 342).

Explain that when Jesus visited the Nephites, He gave a discourse similar to the Sermon on the Mount. As we study and apply the teachings in this discourse, we will learn more about the Savior’s character. We will also be able to develop a blueprint, or plan, to pattern our lives after the life of the Master.

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

1. Jesus teaches the Beatitudes to the Nephites.

Read and discuss selected verses from 3 Nephi 12:1–12, as outlined below. You may want to have class members compare 3 Nephi 12:3–12 with the similar teachings in the Sermon on the Mount, found in Matthew 5:3–12.

- *3 Nephi 12:3.* What does it mean to come unto Christ? (As class members discuss this question, you may want to refer to 3 Nephi 9:13–14, 20–22 and Ether 12:27.) How does being “poor in spirit,” or humble, help us come unto Christ?
- *3 Nephi 12:4.* What are some ways the Lord provides for us to be comforted? (For some examples, see John 14:26–27; Mosiah 18:8–9.)
- *3 Nephi 12:5.* What does it mean to be meek?

President Gordon B. Hinckley said, “Meekness implies a spirit of gratitude as opposed to an attitude of self-sufficiency, an acknowledgment of a greater power beyond oneself, a recognition of God, and an acceptance of his commandments” (“With All Thy Getting Get Understanding,” *Ensign*, Aug. 1988, 3–4).

- *3 Nephi 12:6.* What do you think it means to “hunger and thirst after righteousness”? What will we be filled with as we “hunger and thirst after righteousness”?
- *3 Nephi 12:7.* Why is it important that we be merciful? Why do we need the Lord’s mercy? (See 2 Nephi 2:8–9.)
- *3 Nephi 12:8.* Why must we be pure in heart to be able to see God? (See 1 Nephi 10:21.) In what ways can we purify our hearts? (See D&C 93:1 for some answers to this question.)
- *3 Nephi 12:9.* How can we be peacemakers in our homes and communities?
- *3 Nephi 12:10–12.* Why are the righteous sometimes persecuted? How should we respond to persecution? (See 3 Nephi 12:44; Luke 6:35.)

2. Jesus declares that His followers are to be the salt of the earth and a light to other people.

Read and discuss 3 Nephi 12:13–16.

Jesus said, “I give unto you to be the salt of the earth” (3 Nephi 12:13). To help class members understand what it means to be “the salt of the earth,” read or have a class member read the following statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie:

“Among the ancient Hebrews *salt* . . . was used as a preservative, in seasoning food, and in all animal sacrifices. (Lev. 2:13; Ezek. 43:24; Mark 9:49–50.) So essential was it to the sacrificial ordinance that it was the symbol of the covenant made between God and His people in connection with that sacred performance. (Lev. 2:13; Num. 18:19; 2 Chron. 13:5.)

“Accordingly, our Lord’s statement, made first to the Jews and then to that other great body of Hebrews, the Nephites, that they had power ‘to be the *salt of the earth,*’ takes on great significance. . . . They had power, in other words, to be the seasoning, savoring, preserving influence in the world, the influence which would bring peace and blessings to all others” (*Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. [1966], 667–68).

- How can our influence help others receive peace and other blessings?

Display the containers of salt (see “Preparation,” item 4). Ask class members which salt they would rather use. Then read the following statement by Elder Carlos E. Asay: “A world-renowned chemist told me that salt will not lose its savor with age. Savor is lost through mixture and contamination” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1980, 60; or *Ensign*, May 1980, 42).

- How can we avoid being “contaminated” by the things of the world?
- Have class members read Doctrine and Covenants 101:39–40 and 103:9–10 aloud. What do these passages teach about being “the salt of the earth” and “the light of [the] people”? How can Latter-day Saints be “saviors of men”? (Answers may include sharing the gospel and doing temple work.)
- How can we let our light “shine before [the] people”? (See 3 Nephi 12:16; 18:24.) What should be the result of our letting our light shine? (See 3 Nephi 12:16.)

3. Jesus declares that He has fulfilled the law of Moses. He teaches the people a higher law.

Read and discuss selected verses from 3 Nephi 12:17–48; 15:1–10. Explain that the law mentioned in these verses is the law of Moses. The law of Moses was a strict system of performances and ordinances, including animal sacrifice (Mosiah 13:29–30). It had been given to help the Israelites look forward to the Atonement of Jesus Christ (2 Nephi 25:24; Mosiah 13:31–33; Alma 34:13–14).

- Who gave the law of Moses to the Israelites? (See 3 Nephi 15:4–5.)
- Jesus declared to the Nephites that He had fulfilled the law of Moses (3 Nephi 12:17–19; 15:2–5). How did Jesus fulfill this law?

The Savior fulfilled the law of Moses when He atoned for our sins (Alma 34:13–16). After His Atonement, the people were no longer commanded to make animal sacrifices, which had been required as part of the law of Moses to point toward the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Instead, the people were commanded to “offer for a sacrifice . . . a broken heart and a contrite spirit” (3 Nephi 9:20; see also verse 19).

Explain that after Jesus declared that He had fulfilled the law of Moses, He gave the Nephites a higher law. Write the following chart on the chalkboard, listing the scripture passages that you feel will be most helpful for class members. Have class members read each passage listed under “The Law of Moses” and then read the corresponding passage listed under “The Higher Law.” Ask them to discuss the differences between these laws. Invite them to share ways that the higher law can help us draw closer to the Lord.

THE LAW OF MOSES	THE HIGHER LAW
3 Nephi 12:21	3 Nephi 12:22–24
3 Nephi 12:27	3 Nephi 12:28–30
3 Nephi 12:31	3 Nephi 12:32; see also the first additional teaching idea
3 Nephi 12:33	3 Nephi 12:34–37
3 Nephi 12:38	3 Nephi 12:39–42
3 Nephi 12:43	3 Nephi 12:44–45

- After teaching the Nephites that they should love their enemies, Jesus said, “Therefore I would that ye should be perfect even as I, or your Father who is in heaven is perfect” (3 Nephi 12:48). Why do we need the Atonement of Jesus Christ in order to be perfected? (See 2 Nephi 2:7–9; 3 Nephi 19:28–29; Moroni 10:32–33.)

4. Jesus teaches the Nephites how they must live to be His true disciples.

Read selected verses from 3 Nephi 13–14. Explain that these chapters contain teachings on how we can be true disciples of Jesus Christ. Discuss some or all of these teachings, as outlined below.

- *3 Nephi 13:1–8, 16–18.* Why did Jesus condemn some people who did good things such as doing alms (giving to the poor), praying, and fasting? What should our motives be when we give service and do other good works?
- *3 Nephi 13:9–13; 14:7–11.* What do Jesus’ words in these verses teach about how we should pray?
- *3 Nephi 13:14–15.* Why is it important that we forgive others? How can we become more forgiving?
- *3 Nephi 13:19–24.* What does it mean to have an eye that is “single”? (See D&C 88:67–69.) Why is it impossible for us to serve both God and mammon (worldliness)?
- *3 Nephi 13:25–34.* To whom did the Savior direct the words recorded in these verses? (See 3 Nephi 13:25.) How can we apply these words in our lives, even though we have not received the command to “take no thought” for food, drink, or clothing? (See 3 Nephi 13:33.) What blessings come to people who put the things of God first in their lives?
- *3 Nephi 14:1–5.* How can we avoid improperly judging or criticizing others?
- *3 Nephi 14:6.* This same teaching is found in Matthew 7:6. In the Joseph Smith Translation of that verse, Jesus commands His disciples to preach repentance rather than teach the mysteries of the kingdom (Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 7:9–11). Why is it important to focus our gospel teaching on basic doctrines?
- *3 Nephi 14:12.* How does following this principle make us better disciples of Christ?

- *3 Nephi 14:13–14*. Why is it significant that the way to eternal life is narrow, while the way to destruction is broad?
- *3 Nephi 14:15–20*. Why is this teaching particularly important today? (See Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:22, which describes the last days.)
- *3 Nephi 14:21–23*. Why must we do the will of Heavenly Father to be able to enter the kingdom of heaven? (See D&C 130:20–21.)
- *3 Nephi 14:24–27*. In what ways does Jesus’ parable about building a house on rock or sand apply in our lives? (See Helaman 5:12.)

Conclusion

Have a class member read 3 Nephi 15:1 aloud. Explain that as we live according to the Savior’s teachings, we will have a sure foundation and be strengthened to withstand whatever trials or temptations we may experience. We will become “the salt of the earth” and “the light of [the] people,” and we will be able to help others draw nearer to the Savior (3 Nephi 12:13–16).

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

Additional Teaching Ideas

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

1. Jesus’ teaching about divorce

As you discuss the Savior’s teaching recorded in 3 Nephi 12:32, you may want to share the following information:

In ancient Israel a man could put away, or divorce, his wife for insignificant reasons. However, in a perfect world, such as the celestial kingdom, divorce does not exist. Because the earth is not yet perfect, divorce is allowed but should not happen except for the most serious reasons. In Matthew 19:9 Jesus indicates that a man who divorced his wife for a frivolous reason was still married to her in the eyes of God, and the man thus committed adultery if he married another woman. (See James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 3rd ed. [1916], 473–75, 484; see also Bruce R. McConkie, *The Mortal Messiah*, 4 vols. [1979–81], 2:138–39.)

2. “Ye are they of whom I said: Other sheep I have” (3 Nephi 15:21)

- Have a class member read John 10:16 aloud. Who were these “other sheep”? (See 3 Nephi 15:21; 16:1–3.) Why were the disciples in Jerusalem unable to understand Jesus’ teaching about “other sheep”? (See 3 Nephi 15:14–19.) How does unbelief prevent people from understanding the word of God in its fulness?

“Behold, My Joy Is Full”

Lesson 39

3 Nephi 17–19

Purpose To help class members feel the love of the Lord Jesus Christ and develop a greater desire to exercise faith in Him and bear testimony of Him.

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. 3 Nephi 17. After teaching the Nephites, Jesus commands them to return to their homes to ponder, pray, and prepare for His return the following day. Perceiving the people’s desire for Him to stay, He remains for a time and heals the sick, blesses the children, and prays for the people.
 - b. 3 Nephi 18. Jesus institutes the sacrament among the Nephites and gives them additional counsel before ascending into heaven.
 - c. 3 Nephi 19. The Nephites spread the news of Jesus’ visit, and a large multitude gathers in anticipation of His return. The disciples teach and minister to the multitude. The Savior’s 12 disciples are baptized and receive the Holy Ghost and the ministering of angels. The Savior returns to teach the people and pray for them.
2. If you use the attention activity, prepare to show “My Joy Is Full,” a four-minute segment of *Book of Mormon Video Presentations* (53911). If this video presentation is not available, prepare to show the pictures Jesus Healing the Nephites (62541; Gospel Art Picture Kit 317) and Jesus Blesses the Nephite Children (Gospel Art Picture Kit 322) and have a class member prepare to read aloud 3 Nephi 17:5–13, 17–24.
3. To set a reverent mood, you may want to have hymns about the Savior playing as class members enter the room.

Suggestions for Lesson Development

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

Show the video presentation “My Joy Is Full.” If the video presentation is not available, display the pictures of Jesus healing the Nephites and blessing the children and have the assigned class member read aloud 3 Nephi 17:5–13, 17–24.

Invite class members to share their thoughts on what it might have been like to be among the multitude that experienced these events. Explain that this lesson discusses these events and more of what the resurrected Savior did and taught when He visited the Nephites after His death and Resurrection.

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

1. Jesus commands the Nephites to ponder and pray about what He has taught. He heals the sick, blesses the children, and prays for the people.

Discuss 3 Nephi 17. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud.

- As Jesus prepared to leave the Nephites, He recognized that the people did not understand all that He had been teaching them (3 Nephi 17:1–2). What did He instruct the people to do? (See 3 Nephi 17:3.) What does it mean to ponder? How would pondering help the Nephites prepare for further instruction from the Savior? How can pondering help us better understand gospel principles?

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin taught: “Pondering, which means to weigh mentally, to deliberate, to meditate, can achieve the opening of the spiritual eyes of one’s understanding. Also, the Spirit of the Lord may rest upon the ponderer” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1982, 33; or *Ensign*, May 1982, 23).

- Jesus also told the people to pray about what He had taught them. How does prayer help us better understand gospel principles? What are some other ways we can “prepare [our] minds” to receive the Lord’s truths?
- Why did Jesus “tarry a little longer” with the people? (See 3 Nephi 17:5–6.) How did this show His feelings for the people? How have you felt Jesus’ love and concern for you?

If you did not use the attention activity, you may want to show the video presentation “My Joy Is Full” now. Or have class members summarize the actions of the Savior as He tarried with the Nephites (3 Nephi 17:7–25).

- What enabled the sick and lame among the Nephites to be healed by the Savior? (See 3 Nephi 17:7–9, 20.) What did the people do after the sick and lame were healed? (See 3 Nephi 17:10.) How can we show our gratitude to the Savior for the blessings He has given us?
- How were the Nephite children blessed? (See 3 Nephi 17:21. Emphasize that the Savior blessed them one by one, showing the depth of His love for little children. You may also want to read Matthew 19:13–15.)
- The Savior had commanded the Nephites to become as little children (3 Nephi 11:37–38). What childlike qualities does Jesus want us to have? (See Mosiah 3:19.) What can we do to develop these qualities?

2. Jesus institutes the sacrament among the Nephites.

Read and discuss selected verses from 3 Nephi 18.

- After Jesus blessed the children, He instituted the sacrament among the Nephites (3 Nephi 18:1–4). What do we learn about the ordinance of the sacrament from 3 Nephi 18:1–11? (Answers may include those listed below.)
 - a. The sacrament must be blessed and passed by those who have been ordained to do so (3 Nephi 18:5).
 - b. The sacrament is to be administered to all worthy members of the Church (3 Nephi 18:5, 11).
 - c. The bread and wine represent the body and blood of the Savior (3 Nephi 18:7, 11; see also D&C 27:2, noting that today we use water instead of wine).

- Of what do we testify by partaking of the sacrament? (See 3 Nephi 18:7, 10–11.) What blessing is promised to those who remember and follow Christ? (See 3 Nephi 18:7, 11.) What can we do to prepare ourselves to partake of the sacrament each week? How has partaking of the sacrament been a blessing to you?
- What did the Savior teach the disciples about the importance of partaking of the sacrament worthily? (See 3 Nephi 18:26–29; see also 1 Corinthians 11:28–29.) Why would partaking of the sacrament unworthily bring condemnation upon us?
- What did the Savior tell His disciples to do for those who were not worthy to partake of the sacrament? (See 3 Nephi 18:29–32.) Why did He instruct them not to cast out those who were not worthy to partake of the sacrament? (See 3 Nephi 18:32.) Why is it important to continue to minister to those who have turned away from the gospel? In what ways can we do this?
- For what reason did the Lord command the people to come to Him? (See 3 Nephi 18:25.) Why is it important for us to bear testimony of Jesus Christ?

3. The disciples teach and minister to the people. The Savior returns to teach the people and pray for them.

Read and discuss selected verses from 3 Nephi 19.

- What did the Nephites who had seen the Savior do after He ascended into heaven? (See 3 Nephi 19:1–3.) How did those who heard the Nephites' testimonies of the Savior respond to those testimonies? (See 3 Nephi 19:3.) What opportunities do we have to bear witness of the Savior?
- While the multitude was waiting for the Savior's arrival the next day, the twelve disciples taught the people, prayed with them, and ministered to them (3 Nephi 19:4–8; note that this fulfilled the Savior's instruction to them the previous day, as recorded in 3 Nephi 18:16). What did the disciples pray for? (See 3 Nephi 19:9; see also verses 10–15 and the second additional teaching idea.) Why do you think the disciples so fervently desired "that the Holy Ghost should be given unto them"? (3 Nephi 19:9). Why is it vital that we receive the Holy Ghost?
- After instructing the disciples to pray, Jesus "went a little way off from them" to pray alone (3 Nephi 19:17, 19). For what did Jesus pray? (See 3 Nephi 19:21, 23. You may want to compare this prayer to part of Jesus' great intercessory prayer before His Crucifixion, as recorded in John 17:20–23.) Why is it important that followers of Jesus Christ "be one" with Him and the Father? How can we become one with Them?
- Why were the prayers of the Nephite disciples pleasing to the Lord? (See 3 Nephi 19:24–25. You may want to write class members' responses on the chalkboard.) How can we follow the disciples' examples in our own prayers?
- Why was the multitude able to hear and understand Jesus' words the third time He prayed? (See 3 Nephi 19:31–33.) What does it mean to have an open heart? What must we do to open our hearts so the Spirit can teach us?

Conclusion

Remind class members that the Nephites were blessed to see and hear marvelous things because of their great faith (3 Nephi 17:20; 19:35) and their fervent prayers (3 Nephi 19:6–9). Point out that as we exercise faith in Jesus Christ and

pray fervently in our personal and family prayers, the Spirit of the Lord will be with us to bless and help us in all that we do.

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

**Additional
Teaching Ideas**

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

1. “Watch and pray always” (3 Nephi 18:15)

Have class members read 3 Nephi 18:15, 18–19, 21.

- How can prayer help protect us from Satan’s temptations? How has family prayer influenced your family? How can we increase our commitment to daily family prayer?

2. “And they did pray for that which they most desired” (3 Nephi 19:9)

Before you discuss 3 Nephi 19:9, give class members paper and pens or pencils, and ask them to make a list of the six things they desire most. (If paper and pens or pencils are not available, invite class members to simply think about the six things they desire most.) Then ask them to cross off the items on the list that they would not feel comfortable praying for. Invite a class member to read 3 Nephi 19:9.

- What did the Nephite disciples desire most? How can we increase our desire for righteousness and spirituality?

3. “And they did pray unto Jesus” (3 Nephi 19:18)

To clarify why the Nephite disciples prayed to Jesus (3 Nephi 19:18, 24–25, 30), have class members read 3 Nephi 19:22. You may also want to read the following statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie:

“The only scriptural instances in which prayers were addressed directly to the Son were when—and because!—that Holy Being, as a resurrected personage, was standing before the petitioners” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1966–73], 2:79).

Point out that Jesus Himself prayed to the Father at this time (3 Nephi 19:19–24, 27–29, 31). All our prayers should be addressed to our Father in Heaven and closed in the name of Jesus Christ.

“Then Will I Gather Them In”

Lesson 40

3 Nephi 16; 20–21

Purpose To help class members understand the latter-day work of gathering Israel and establishing Zion.

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about 3 Nephi 16, 20, and 21. These chapters contain part of the resurrected Savior’s teachings to the Nephites. In these chapters, the Lord teaches and prophesies of the Restoration of the gospel and the gathering of the house of Israel in the last days.
2. Additional reading: 3 Nephi 29–30; Mormon 5:9–24; Articles of Faith 1:10; Bible Dictionary, “Gentile,” 679–80; “Israel,” 708.
3. Before class, write the following questions on the chalkboard:

What is the house of Israel?
Why was Israel scattered?
Who are the Gentiles?
What do the Gentiles have to do with the scattering and gathering of Israel?
What is the gathering of Israel?
What sign has been given to show that the latter-day gathering of Israel has begun?
As members of the Church, what are our responsibilities in the gathering of Israel?

4. If you use the attention activity, bring to class some or all of the following items:
 - a. The pictures Jacob Blessing His Sons (Gospel Art Picture Kit 122); Joseph Smith (62449; Gospel Art Picture Kit 400); and Boy Being Baptized (62018) or Baptism (Gospel Art Picture Kit 601).
 - b. A copy of the Book of Mormon.
 - c. A missionary name tag or another object that represents missionary work.
 - d. A photograph of yourself and your family.

Suggestions for Lesson Development

Attention Activity As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. Display the objects that you have brought to class (see “Preparation,” item 4). Explain that each of these objects represents an important part of today’s lesson. Ask class members to remember these objects during the lesson and look for ways in which the objects relate to 3 Nephi 16, 20, and 21.

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

1. The Savior prophesies of the scattering of the house of Israel.

Direct class members' attention to the first question on the chalkboard (see "Preparation," item 3):

- What is the house of Israel?

Explain that the titles *house of Israel* and *Israel* refer to the descendants of Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel (if you used the attention activity, you may want to display the picture of Jacob blessing his sons as part of this explanation). Members of the house of Israel have been referred to in scripture as "the covenant people of the Lord" (1 Nephi 15:14) and "the children of the covenant" (3 Nephi 20:25–26). The Nephites were of the house of Israel, as descendants of Jacob's son Joseph (1 Nephi 5:14).

Explain that the Savior taught of the scattering of Israel. Then direct class members' attention to the second question on the chalkboard:

- Why was Israel scattered?

Invite a class member to read 3 Nephi 16:4 aloud. Encourage the other class members to read along, looking for the answer to the question. As class members discuss the question, ensure that they understand that the members of the house of Israel were "scattered forth upon the face of the earth because of their unbelief."

2. The Savior prophesies of the spiritual gathering of the house of Israel.

Direct class members' attention to the third question on the chalkboard:

- Who are the Gentiles?

Explain that in the scriptures, the term *Gentiles* is used to designate either people who were not born into the house of Israel or nations that are without the gospel. In the chapters discussed in this lesson, the term *Gentiles* refers to nations that are without the gospel, even though some individuals in those nations may be descendants of Jacob (Bible Dictionary, "Gentile," 679).

Direct class members' attention to the fourth question on the chalkboard:

- What do the Gentiles have to do with the scattering and gathering of Israel?

Invite a class member to read 3 Nephi 16:7–9 and 21:1–5. Encourage the other class members to read along, looking for answers to the question.

Emphasize the Savior's prophecy that the Gentiles would play a part in the scattering of Israel. Also emphasize the prophecy that it would be through the Gentiles that Israel would eventually receive the restored gospel and be gathered.

Direct class members' attention to the fifth question on the chalkboard:

- What is the gathering of Israel?

Invite a class member to read 3 Nephi 16:4, 12; 20:10–13. Encourage the other class members to read along, looking for answers to the question. As class members discuss the question, ensure that they understand the following:

Israel is gathered as people gain a testimony of the Redeemer and His restored gospel and join His Church (if you used the attention activity, you may want to display the picture of a baptism as part of this discussion).

In the early days of the restored Church, part of the gathering of Israel was the Lord's command that members of His Church join the body of Saints in North America, whether in Missouri, Illinois, or the Salt Lake Valley. In the future, another temporal gathering will occur, as members of the house of Israel are gathered to the lands of their inheritance (see section 3 of this lesson). However, the gathering now taking place is a spiritual gathering.

President Spencer W. Kimball explained: "The 'gathering of Israel' is effected when the people of the faraway countries accept the gospel and remain in their native lands. The gathering of Israel for Mexicans is in Mexico; in Scandinavia, for those of the northern countries; the gathering place for the Germans is in Germany; and the Polynesians, in the islands; for the Brazilians, in Brazil; for the Argentines, in Argentina" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1975, 4; or *Ensign*, May 1975, 4).

Direct class members' attention to the sixth question on the chalkboard:

- What sign has been given to show that the latter-day gathering of Israel has begun?

Invite a class member to read 3 Nephi 21:2–7 and 29:1–2. Encourage the other class members to read along, looking for the answer to the question.

- How have the "sayings" and "works" of the Nephites come forth to the Gentiles? (Through the translation of the Book of Mormon. If you used the attention activity, you may want to use the copy of the Book of Mormon as part of this discussion.) What are some roles that the Book of Mormon plays in the gathering of Israel? (For some examples, compare 3 Nephi 16:4, 12 and 20:10–13 with 1 Nephi 6:3–4 and the title page of the Book of Mormon. Emphasize that the Book of Mormon was written to teach of the covenants of the Lord and to convince all people that Jesus is the Christ.)
- The Lord spoke of a servant who would help in the "great and . . . marvelous work" of bringing forth the Book of Mormon (3 Nephi 21:9–10). Who was this servant? (Joseph Smith. If you used the attention activity, you may want to display the picture of Joseph Smith as part of this discussion.)

You may want to point out that Joseph Smith was a literal descendant of Jacob (2 Nephi 3:3–8, 11–12), but he lived in a Gentile nation. His work in restoring the gospel and bringing forth the Book of Mormon was thus part of the fulfillment of the Lord's promise that "the truth [would] come unto the Gentiles" (3 Nephi 16:7).

- Have a class member read 3 Nephi 16:11–12 aloud. What did the Lord promise to do after the fulness of the gospel was restored through the Gentiles? (He promised to remember His covenant with the house of Israel.)
- The covenant that the Lord promised to remember was the Abrahamic covenant (3 Nephi 20:25, 27, 29; 21:4; Mormon 5:20). What are the

blessings and responsibilities of the Abrahamic covenant? (See Genesis 17:1–8; Abraham 2:6, 9–11.)

- What will happen to Gentiles who repent and turn to God? (See 2 Nephi 30:2; 3 Nephi 16:13; 21:6, 22. All people who repent and come unto the Lord through baptism will be numbered among His covenant people.)

President Joseph Fielding Smith said: “*Every person who embraces the gospel becomes of the house of Israel.* In other words, they become members of the *chosen lineage*, or Abraham’s children through Isaac and Jacob unto whom the promises were made. The great *majority* of those who become members of the Church are *literal descendants* of Abraham through Ephraim, son of Joseph. Those who are not literal descendants of Abraham and Israel must *become* such, and *when they are baptized and confirmed they are grafted into the tree and are entitled to all the rights and privileges as heirs*” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. [1954–56], 3:246).

Invite a class member to read the seventh question on the chalkboard:

- As members of the Church, what are our responsibilities in the gathering of Israel?

Give class members the opportunity to answer the question. You may also want to ask the question below to encourage more discussion. If you used the attention activity, you may want to display the photograph and the missionary name tag (or other object) during this discussion.

- The mission of the Church is to invite all people to come unto Christ. We accomplish this mission by proclaiming the gospel, redeeming the dead, and perfecting the Saints. How does the mission of the Church contribute to the gathering of Israel?

3. The Savior prophesies of the temporal gathering of the house of Israel.

- Have a class member read 3 Nephi 16:16 and 20:14 aloud. According to these verses, what specific promise did the Lord extend to the Nephites? (They would be given the lands of the Americas as an inheritance. See also 2 Nephi 1:5–7.) What responsibilities accompany this promise? (See Enos 1:10; Ether 2:8–9.)
- Have class members take turns reading verses from 3 Nephi 21:22–29. According to these verses, what will happen in this land of inheritance in the last days? (A city called New Jerusalem will be built.)

Point out that the original city of Jerusalem will also be restored (3 Nephi 20:29–34). The Jews will be given this land as an inheritance.

- The Savior said that He would gather His people and establish Zion again among them (3 Nephi 21:1). While the word *Zion* often refers to specific places, it is also a condition of heart and mind. How has Zion been described in the scriptures? (See D&C 97:21 and Moses 7:18–19 for some examples.) How can we begin to establish Zion in our homes, wards, and stakes today?

Conclusion

Remind class members that in the last days, the title *house of Israel* encompasses all those who repent, follow Jesus Christ, and are baptized into His Church. Encourage class members to live so as to be worthy to be part of the Lord’s covenant people. As directed by the Spirit, testify of the truths discussed during the lesson.

“He Did Expound All Things unto Them”

Lesson
41

3 Nephi 22–26

Purpose To help class members earnestly desire to search the words of the prophets.

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. 3 Nephi 22; 23:1–5. The Savior quotes some of Isaiah’s prophecies about the house of Israel during the last days. He commands the people to search the words of Isaiah and other prophets.
 - b. 3 Nephi 23:6–14; 24; 25. The Savior commands the people to add to their records some of the words of Samuel the Lamanite and Malachi.
 - c. 3 Nephi 26. The Savior expounds all things from the beginning until the time that He will come in His glory.
2. Additional reading: Isaiah 54; Malachi 3–4.
3. If the picture Christ Asks for the Records is available, prepare to use it during the lesson (Gospel Art Picture Kit 323).
4. If you use the attention activity, ask one or more Primary children or one or more class members to prepare to sing “Search, Ponder, and Pray” (*Children’s Songbook*, 109). Or you could prepare to play a recording of the song or ask a class member to prepare to read the words of the song.

Suggestions for Lesson Development

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

Write the following words on the chalkboard: *Search, Ponder, Pray*

Invite the assigned people to sing or read “Search, Ponder, and Pray.” Ask class members to listen carefully and ponder the message of the song and how it relates to our study of the scriptures.

When the song is over, explain that this lesson illustrates how the Savior used the scriptures to teach valuable truths. As we search, ponder, and pray about the scriptures, we will have a greater understanding of these truths.

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

1. The Savior quotes some of Isaiah’s prophecies about the house of Israel.

Discuss 3 Nephi 22; 23:1–5. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud. Explain that chapter 22 records the Savior quoting an entire chapter of Isaiah’s teachings (Isaiah 54) concerning the glory of Zion in the latter days.

- Isaiah exhorted the house of Israel, “Enlarge the place of thy tent . . . [and] lengthen thy cords and strengthen thy stakes” (3 Nephi 22:2). What do the tent and the stakes symbolize? (See the quotation below.) What do you think it means to “enlarge the place of thy tent” and “strengthen thy stakes?”

President Ezra Taft Benson said:

“The prophets likened latter-day Zion to a great tent encompassing the earth. That tent was supported by cords fastened to stakes. Those stakes, of course, are various geographical organizations spread out over the earth. Presently, Israel is being gathered to the various stakes of Zion. . . .

“ . . . Stakes are a defense for the Saints from enemies both seen and unseen. The defense is direction provided through priesthood channels that strengthens testimony and promotes family solidarity and individual righteousness” (“Strengthen Thy Stakes,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1991, 2, 4).

- What can we do individually and as families to ensure that our stakes are a refuge and a defense against evil?
- How did Isaiah describe the relationship between the Lord and the house of Israel? (See 3 Nephi 22:4–10. He described the Lord as the husband and Israel as the wife.) What can this description teach us about the Lord’s devotion to His people?

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland taught: “The imagery of Jehovah as bridegroom and Israel as bride is among the most commonly used metaphors in scripture, being used by the Lord and his prophets to describe the relationship between Deity and the children of the covenant. . . . Christ has, on occasion, been rightfully angry with backsliding Israel, but that has always been brief and temporary—‘a small moment.’ Compassion and mercy always return and prevail in a most reassuring way. The mountains and the hills may disappear. The water of the great seas may dry up. . . . But the Lord’s kindness and peace will never be taken from his covenant people. He has sworn with a heavenly oath that he will not be wroth with them forever” (*Christ and the New Covenant* [1997], 290).

- How did the Lord describe the place to which the house of Israel would be gathered in the last days? (See 3 Nephi 22:11–12; see also Revelation 21:18–21.) What are the promises made to those who will live in this place? (See 3 Nephi 22:13–17.) How can these promises give strength to those who are afflicted?
- After Jesus had quoted these prophecies, He said to the people, “Ye ought to search these things” (3 Nephi 23:1). What does it mean to search the scriptures instead of merely read them?

Elder Henry B. Eyring said: “We treasure the word of God not only by reading the words of the scriptures but by studying them. We may be nourished more by pondering a few words, allowing the Holy Ghost to make them treasures to us, than by passing quickly and superficially over whole chapters of scripture” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1997, 115; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 84).

- How have you been blessed as you have studied the scriptures? (You may want to invite class members to share experiences in which particular passages of scripture have provided inspiration or insight or become meaningful as answers to personal problems.)

- Why was it important that the people record the Savior's words? (See 3 Nephi 23:3–5.)
- The Savior commanded the people, "Search the prophets, for many there be that testify of these things" (3 Nephi 23:5). Of what do the prophets testify? How have you been strengthened by the testimonies of ancient and modern prophets?

2. The Savior commands the people to add to their records.

Read and discuss selected verses from 3 Nephi 23:6–14; 24; 25. Explain that after commanding the people to write the things He had taught them, Jesus continued to teach the people concerning other scriptures. If you are using the picture of Jesus asking for the records, display it now.

- Jesus commanded the Nephites to add to their records a prophecy made by Samuel the Lamanite. In this prophecy, Samuel said that "many saints [would] arise from the dead, and [would] appear to many, and [would] minister unto them" (3 Nephi 23:6–13). Why do you think this particular record was important? (Answers could include that the fulfillment of Samuel's prophecy bore witness of the reality of the Resurrection.)
- After Jesus told the people to write Samuel's prophecy, what did He command them to do? (See 3 Nephi 23:14.) In what specific ways can we more effectively teach the words of the Savior?
- Jesus also commanded the people to write some of the words of the prophet Malachi (3 Nephi 24:1). Why were the words of Malachi absent from the Nephites' records? (Malachi was an Old Testament prophet whose words were not included on the plates of brass because he did not live until nearly 200 years after Lehi left Jerusalem. See Bible Dictionary, "Malachi," 728.)
- What teachings of Malachi are of special importance to us? (Have class members read 3 Nephi 24:1, 8–18 and 25:1–6 to find answers to this question. You may want to divide the class into four groups. Invite each group to look up one of the following passages and describe what Malachi taught. Then discuss the passages as shown.)
 - 3 Nephi 24:1; compare Malachi 3:1. What is the messenger sent to prepare the way for the Lord's Second Coming? (See D&C 45:9. The restored gospel, including the keys and powers restored by heavenly messengers.) In what manner might Joseph Smith be considered a messenger for the last dispensation?
 - 3 Nephi 24:8–12; compare Malachi 3:8–12. What blessings are promised in these verses to those who pay tithes and offerings? How have you been blessed as you have paid tithes and offerings?
 - 3 Nephi 24:13–18; compare Malachi 3:13–18. Why might some people believe that "it is vain to serve God"? (See 3 Nephi 24:14–15.) How can we remain steadfast in our faith even when evil seems to be prospering?
 - 3 Nephi 25:1–6; compare Malachi 4:1–6. What does it mean to be left without root or branch? (Consider your *roots* to be your parents and ancestors and your *branches* to be your children and posterity. To be united with our roots and branches, we must receive temple ordinances.) Whom did the Lord say He would send before the Second Coming? When and where did Elijah

return? (See D&C 110:13–16.) What keys did he restore? (The keys of the sealing power, which provide the way for us to be united with our ancestors and our posterity.)

3. The Savior expounds all things from the beginning.

Read and discuss selected verses from 3 Nephi 26.

- What reason did the Savior give for teaching the prophecies of Malachi to the Nephites? (See 3 Nephi 26:2.) Which teachings of Malachi have been of special significance to you?
- What did the Savior teach the people after discussing the prophecies of Malachi? (See 3 Nephi 26:1, 3–5. If necessary, explain that to *expound* means to explain carefully and in detail.) Why should we teach the gospel “from the beginning,” as Jesus did?
- In his record, Mormon included only “the lesser part” of what Jesus taught the people (3 Nephi 26:8). How does having only this small part try our faith? How can we receive “the greater things”? (See 3 Nephi 26:9.)

President Spencer W. Kimball said: “I have had many people ask me through the years, ‘When do you think we will get the balance of the Book of Mormon records?’ And I have said, ‘How many in the congregation would like to read the sealed portion of the plates?’ And almost always there is a 100-percent response. And then I ask the same congregation, ‘How many of you have read the part that has been opened to us?’ And there are many who have not read the Book of Mormon, the unsealed portion. We are quite often looking for the spectacular, the unobtainable. I have found many people who want to live the higher laws when they do not live the lower laws” (*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball [1982], 531–32).

- Invite a class member to read 3 Nephi 26:14, 16. What do these verses indicate about how the Savior regards children?
- How did the Nephites who had witnessed these events treat each other? (See 3 Nephi 26:19–21.) How can we follow their example in our marriages, families, wards, and stakes?

Conclusion

Explain that the Savior showed us the importance of the scriptures by quoting them, commanding the people to search them, and adding to them. As we search, ponder, and pray about the scriptures, we will understand them more deeply and be able to teach them to others more effectively.

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

“This Is My Gospel”

Lesson 42

3 Nephi 27–30; 4 Nephi

Purpose To help class members understand the fundamental doctrines of the gospel of Jesus Christ and to teach them that living the gospel is the only way to true and eternal happiness.

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. 3 Nephi 27. The Savior commands His twelve Nephite disciples to call the Church after His name. He expounds His gospel.
 - b. 3 Nephi 28. One by one, the Savior grants His twelve Nephite disciples the desires of their hearts. Three of the disciples desire and are given power to remain on earth to preach the gospel until the Savior returns in His glory.
 - c. 4 Nephi 1. All the people are converted, and they establish a society of perfect peace. Many years later, the majority of the people dwindle in unbelief and reject the gospel.
2. Additional reading: Doctrine and Covenants 39:1–6.
3. If the picture Christ with the Three Nephites is available, prepare to use it during the lesson (Gospel Art Picture Kit 324).

Suggestions for Lesson Development

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

Write on the chalkboard *Mormon Church*. Ask class members to silently consider their feelings about this nickname. Then read the following statement by President Boyd K. Packer:

“Others refer to us as Mormons. I do not mind if they use that title. However, sometimes we are prone ourselves to say ‘Mormon Church.’ I do not think it best for us to do so” (“The Peaceable Followers of Christ,” *Ensign*, Apr. 1998, 64).

- Why is it best not to refer to ourselves as the “Mormon Church”?

The First Presidency stated: “Keep in mind that this is the Church of Jesus Christ; please emphasize that fact in making contacts with others. . . . We feel that some may be misled by the too frequent use of the term ‘Mormon Church’ ” (“Policies and Announcements,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1983, 79).

Erase *Mormon Church* from the chalkboard. Tell class members that 3 Nephi 27 includes Jesus’ instructions to His Nephite disciples concerning the name of His Church.

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

1. The Savior commands His Nephite disciples to call the Church after His name. He expounds His gospel.

Read and discuss selected verses from 3 Nephi 27.

- Jesus' Nephite disciples were "united in mighty prayer and fasting" when Jesus came to them and asked, "What will ye that I shall give unto you?" (3 Nephi 27:1–2). What did the disciples ask of Him? (See 3 Nephi 27:3.) What was His answer to their question? (See 3 Nephi 27:4–9.)
- The Lord has commanded that His restored Church, like His Church among the Nephites, be called after His name (D&C 115:4). Why is it important for us to remember that the Church is called after the name of Jesus Christ?
- Jesus said, "Whatsoever ye shall do, ye shall do it in my name" (3 Nephi 27:7). What are some things we do in the name of Christ? (In addition to asking for class members' responses, you may want to read the quotation below.)

President Boyd K. Packer said:

"Every prayer we offer is in His name. Every ordinance performed is in His name. Every baptism, confirmation, blessing, ordination, every sermon, every testimony is concluded with the invocation of His sacred name. It is in His name that we heal the sick and perform other miracles of which we do not, cannot, speak.

"In the sacrament we take upon ourselves the name of Christ. We covenant to remember Him and keep His commandments. He is present in all that we believe" ("The Peaceable Followers of Christ," *Ensign*, Apr. 1998, 64).

- Jesus taught that in addition to being called after His name, His Church must be "built upon [His] gospel." He said, "If it so be that the church is built upon my gospel then will the Father show forth his own works in it" (3 Nephi 27:10). What are the works of the Father? (For some answers, see 3 Nephi 21:1–9, 24–29; Moses 1:39.) How have you seen these works in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints?

Point out that when Latter-day Saints bear their testimonies, they often say that they know the gospel is true. Ask class members to silently consider how they would respond if, after saying "I know the gospel is true," they were asked, "What is the gospel?"

Write "*This is my gospel*" on the chalkboard. Explain that after Jesus said that His Church must be built on His gospel, He gave His disciples a concise, complete definition of His gospel. Have class members take turns reading verses in 3 Nephi 27:13–22, looking for different aspects of the gospel of Jesus Christ. You may want to invite a class member to list the responses on the chalkboard. Some possible responses follow:

- a. Jesus' submission to the will of the Father (3 Nephi 27:13)
- b. The Atonement (3 Nephi 27:14)
- c. Resurrection (3 Nephi 27:14–15)
- d. Judgment (3 Nephi 27:14–15)
- e. Repentance (3 Nephi 27:16, 19–20)
- f. Baptism (3 Nephi 27:16, 20)

- g. Faith in Jesus Christ (3 Nephi 27:19)
- h. The gift of the Holy Ghost (3 Nephi 27:20)
- i. Enduring to the end (3 Nephi 27:16–17, 19)

- What did the Savior promise to those who live according to His gospel? (See 3 Nephi 27:21–22.)
- Jesus asked His disciples, “What manner of men ought ye to be?” What was the answer to this question? (See 3 Nephi 27:27. Invite class members to silently consider what they can do to be more like the Savior.)

2. The Savior grants the desires of His twelve disciples. Three of the disciples choose to remain on the earth until His Second Coming.

Read and discuss selected verses from 3 Nephi 28. Explain that before the Savior returned to His Father, He spoke to His disciples one by one and asked what each desired of Him. Nine asked that their ministries might end when they reached a certain age and that they might then go speedily to Him in His kingdom. The other three were hesitant to express their desire, but the Savior knew their thoughts (3 Nephi 28:1–5). If you are using the picture of Jesus with the three Nephites, display it now.

- What was the desire of the last three Nephite disciples? (See 3 Nephi 28:7–9. They wanted to remain on earth and bring souls to Christ until the end of the world.) Jesus said that these disciples were “more blessed” because of their desire (3 Nephi 28:7). What can we learn from this statement? (See D&C 15:6; 16:6; 18:10–16.)
- In response to their request, the three disciples were transfigured, meaning that their bodies were changed so they “could behold the things of God” (3 Nephi 28:13–15). Then they were translated. What does the account in 3 Nephi 28 teach about translated beings? (See 3 Nephi 28:7–40 and the list below. You may want to divide the class into three groups, assigning one group to read verses 7–17, a second group to read verses 18–28, and a third group to read verses 29–40. Have each group report on the things that their assigned verses teach about translated beings.)
 - a. Translated beings never taste of death or endure the pains of death (3 Nephi 28:7–8, 38).
 - b. When the Savior comes in His glory, they will be “changed in the twinkling of an eye from mortality to immortality” (3 Nephi 28:8).
 - c. Except for the sorrow they feel for the sins of the world, they do not experience pain or sorrow (3 Nephi 28:9, 38).
 - d. They help people become converted to the Lord (3 Nephi 28:9, 18, 23, 29–30).
 - e. They cannot be killed or harmed in any way (3 Nephi 28:19–22).
 - f. Satan cannot tempt them or have any power over them (3 Nephi 28:39).
 - g. They remain in a translated state until the Judgment Day, when they will be resurrected and received into the kingdom of God (3 Nephi 28:40).

Note: Stories often circulate about the three Nephites who were translated. Members of the Church should be careful about accepting or retelling these stories. You should not discuss them in class.

3. After many years of peace, the majority of the people dwindle in unbelief and reject the gospel.

Read and discuss selected verses from 4 Nephi. Explain that the short book of 4 Nephi contains Mormon's abridgment of about 300 years of history. The history was originally written by four men: Nephi, who was one of the Savior's twelve Nephite disciples; Nephi's son Amos; and Amos's sons Amos and Ammaron. The first part of the book describes a period of great righteousness and happiness, and the second part of the book tells of the people's decline into wickedness.

To begin your discussion of 4 Nephi, you may want to have class members take turns reading verses from 4 Nephi 1:1–18. Ask them to look for characteristics of the people described in these verses. List the characteristics on the chalkboard as class members mention them.

- For many years after Jesus' visit, there was no contention among the people (4 Nephi 1:2, 4, 13, 15–18). Why was there no contention? (See 4 Nephi 1:15.) How can we become like the righteous people described in 4 Nephi? What can we do so that the love of God will dwell in our hearts?

President Gordon B. Hinckley said: "If the world is to be improved, the process of love must make a change in [our] hearts. . . . It can do so when we look beyond self to give our love to God and others, and do so with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our mind" ("And the Greatest of These Is Love," *Ensign*, Mar. 1984, 5).

- During this period of peace, there was not "any manner of -ites" (4 Nephi 1:17). What does this mean? (See 4 Nephi 1:2–3, 15–17.) What problems exist today because of distinctions between groups of people? In what ways can the gospel help us become united, despite our differences?
- What contributed to the end of this long era of peace? (Have class members scan 4 Nephi 1:20–46 to find answers to this question. Summarize their answers on the chalkboard. Some possible responses are shown below.)
 - a. Division and the creation of classes (4 Nephi 1:20, 26, 35)
 - b. Pride and greed because of riches (4 Nephi 1:23–25, 41, 43; see also 3 Nephi 27:32)
 - c. Churches that professed to know Christ but denied most of His gospel (4 Nephi 1:26–29, 34)
 - d. Churches built up to help people get gain (4 Nephi 1:26–29, 41)
 - e. Hard-heartedness (4 Nephi 1:31)
 - f. Persecution of Christ's followers (4 Nephi 1:29–34)
 - g. Parents teaching children not to believe in Christ (4 Nephi 1:38)
 - h. Parents teaching children to hate (4 Nephi 1:39)
 - i. Secret combinations (4 Nephi 1:42, 46)
- The attitudes and actions described in 4 Nephi 1:40–46 led to the Nephites' destruction. Why is it important for us to examine this account?

Conclusion

Have a class member read aloud the Lord's promises in 3 Nephi 27:10, 22, 28–29. Point out that when the people remained faithful to the gospel, "there could not [have been] a happier people" (4 Nephi 1:16).

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

**Additional
Teaching Ideas**

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

1. Responding to persecution

- How did “the people of Jesus” respond when they were persecuted? (See 4 Nephi 1:34.) How did this response show that they were indeed Jesus’ people? (See 3 Nephi 12:10–12, 38–39.) How should we respond if we are persecuted?

President Gordon B. Hinckley said: “Let us reach out with love and kindness to those who would revile against us. . . . In the spirit of the Christ who advised us to turn the other cheek, let us try to overcome evil with good” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1982, 112; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1982, 77).

2. Insights from 3 Nephi 29–30

Discuss 3 Nephi 29–30. Chapter 29 teaches of the relationship between the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and the fulfillment of the Lord’s covenant with Israel (3 Nephi 29:1–4, 8–9). Chapter 30 contains words that the Lord commanded Mormon to write to latter-day Gentiles.

Lesson
43

“How Could Ye Have Departed from the Ways of the Lord?”

Mormon 1–6; Moroni 9

Purpose

To help class members see the importance of living according to gospel principles despite the increasing wickedness in the world.

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. Mormon 1. As a boy, Mormon is given responsibility for the sacred records. Wickedness prevails throughout the land, but Mormon is righteous. He is visited by the Savior but is forbidden to preach to the people.
 - b. Mormon 2; 3:1–16. Mormon becomes the leader of the Nephite armies and leads the Nephites in many battles against the Lamanites. The Nephites suffer in battle because of their wickedness. Mormon obtains the plates of Nephi and continues the record. Eventually, because of the wickedness of the Nephites, Mormon refuses to lead them.
 - c. Mormon 3:17–22; 5:8–24. Mormon speaks to people in the latter days, explaining the purposes for the records he has abridged and written.
 - d. Mormon 4; 5:1–7; 6; Moroni 9. The Nephites continue battling the Lamanites. Mormon agrees to lead the armies once again. He takes the records from the Hill Shim and hides them in the Hill Cumorah. In a final great battle, all but 24 of the Nephites are killed.
2. If *Book of Mormon Video Presentations* (53911) is available, prepare to show “O Ye Fair Ones,” a five-minute segment. If this videocassette is not available, prepare to show the picture *Mormon Bids Farewell to a Once Great Nation* (62043; Gospel Art Picture Kit 319) and have a class member read Mormon 6:16–22 aloud.

Suggestions for Lesson Development

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

Ask class members:

- If you were sailing a boat, what equipment would you want it to have?

Accept all answers, and then explain that Mormon compared his people, the Nephites, to a boat that was lacking some essential pieces of equipment. Have a class member read Mormon 5:17–18 aloud.

- In what ways are people who do not follow the Savior “as a vessel without sail or anchor”?

Point out that unlike the rest of the Nephites, Mormon used the gospel as both a sail and an anchor in his life. He lived righteously even when it seemed that everyone around him was wicked. This lesson will discuss what happened to Mormon and his people and how we can use the gospel as a sail and an anchor in our lives.

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

1. Mormon is given responsibility for the sacred records.

Discuss Mormon 1. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud. Explain that Mormon was responsible for abridging all of the plates into the record we know as the Book of Mormon. Mormon 1–6 contains Mormon's record of his own time and people.

- How old was Mormon when he was given responsibility for the sacred records? (See Mormon 1:2–3; see also the first additional teaching idea.) What did Ammaron instruct Mormon to do with the plates? (See Mormon 1:3–4.) What characteristics did young Mormon possess that prepared him for his role in preserving and abridging the sacred records?
- When Mormon was 15 years old, he “was visited of the Lord, and tasted and knew of the goodness of Jesus” (Mormon 1:15). How can we come to know of the goodness of Jesus?
- Why did the Lord forbid Mormon to preach to the Nephites? (See Mormon 1:16–17.) What other losses did the Nephites experience because of the hardness of their hearts? (See Mormon 1:13–18. Note that the “beloved disciples” who were taken away were the three Nephite disciples who desired to remain on the earth until the Savior's Second Coming; see 3 Nephi 28:1–9.) What losses might we experience if we harden our hearts against the Lord and His servants?

2. Mormon becomes the leader of the Nephite armies. The Nephites suffer in battle because of their wickedness.

Read and discuss selected verses from Mormon 2; 3:1–16.

- What conditions existed in Nephite society during Mormon's lifetime? (See Mormon 1:19; 2:1, 8, 10, 18.) How did these conditions fulfill the words of earlier prophets? (See Mormon 1:19; Mosiah 12:4–8; Helaman 13:5–10.) Even though we, like Mormon, live in a time of much wickedness, what can we do to maintain our faith and personal righteousness? (For some possible answers, see Alma 17:2–3; Helaman 3:35; D&C 121:45–46.)
- Why did Mormon rejoice when he saw the people mourning? (See Mormon 2:10–12.) Why was his rejoicing in vain? (See Mormon 2:13–14.) What is the difference between “sorrowing . . . unto repentance” and “the sorrowing of the damned?” (See also 2 Corinthians 7:9–10.)
- What does it mean to “come unto Jesus with broken hearts and contrite spirits”? (Mormon 2:14; see also 3 Nephi 9:20; D&C 59:8).
- What gave Mormon hope and peace even when he viewed the wickedness of his people? (See Mormon 2:19.) How can we maintain hope and peace amid the wickedness of the world today?
- Mormon said that when his people defeated the Lamanites in battle, “they did not realize that it was the Lord that had spared them” (Mormon 3:3). Why is it

important that we recognize that the blessings we receive are from the Lord?

- After more than 30 years of leading the Nephite armies, Mormon refused to lead them because of their wickedness and their desire to seek revenge (Mormon 3:9–13). The Lord had commanded them not to seek revenge, and He declared, “Vengeance is mine” (Mormon 3:14–15). What are the consequences when people seek vengeance? How can we overcome feelings of vengeance if they arise in our hearts?
- What can we learn from Mormon about responding to people who are hard-hearted? (See Mormon 3:12.) How can we develop greater love for such people? Why is it important to continue to pray for the hard-hearted?

3. Mormon explains the purposes for the records he has abridged and written.

Read and discuss selected verses from Mormon 3:17–22; 5:8–24. Point out that after refusing to lead the Nephite armies, Mormon said he would “stand as [a] witness,” recording the events that were taking place among the Nephites (Mormon 3:16). In these verses, Mormon directly addresses those for whom his record is intended.

- For whom was Mormon’s record intended? (See Mormon 3:17–19; 5:9–10, 14. List class members’ responses on the chalkboard.)
- For what purposes was the record kept and preserved? (See Mormon 3:20–22; 5:14–15. Answers may include those listed below.) How have Mormon’s writings helped fulfill these purposes in your life?
 - a. “That ye may know that ye must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ . . . to be judged of your works” (Mormon 3:20).
 - b. “That ye may believe the gospel of Jesus Christ” (Mormon 3:21; see also Mormon 5:15).
 - c. To provide a witness “that Jesus [is] the very Christ and the very God” (Mormon 3:21; see also Mormon 5:14).
 - d. To “persuade all ye ends of the earth to repent” (Mormon 3:22).

4. In a final great battle, all but 24 of the Nephites are killed.

Read and discuss selected verses from Mormon 4; 5:1–7; 6; Moroni 9.

- In commenting on the Nephites’ losses against the Lamanites, Mormon explained that “it is by the wicked that the wicked are punished” (Mormon 4:5). What do you think this means? How do you see this happening in the world today?
- How did Mormon feel when he agreed to lead the armies again? (See Mormon 5:2.) What did Mormon understand about who could bring the Nephites victory in battle? How did this differ from the Nephites’ belief about how they could be victorious? (See Mormon 5:1.)
- Why did Mormon take the plates from the Hill Shim? (See Mormon 4:23; see also Mormon 1:3–4.) Why did he hide them in the Hill Cumorah? (See Mormon 6:6.) Why was it important to protect the plates?
- What was the result of the final battle at Cumorah? (See Mormon 6:7–15.)

If you are using the video presentation “O Ye Fair Ones,” show it now. If the videocassette is not available, show the picture of Mormon bidding farewell to the Nephite nation and have a class member read Mormon 6:16–22 aloud.

- After the battle of Cumorah, the Lamanites hunted down the remaining 24 Nephites and killed all but Moroni (Mormon 8:2–3). The Nephite nation was thus completely destroyed. Why did such “great calamity” come upon the Nephites? (See Mormon 1:13, 16; 2:26–27; 3:2–3; 4:12; 5:2, 16–19; Moroni 9:3–5, 18–20.)
- We also live among much wickedness. How can individual righteousness make a difference in an unrighteous society?

Elder Neal A. Maxwell warned: “Only reform and self-restraint, institutional and individual, can finally rescue society! Only a sufficient number of sin-resistant souls can change the marketplace. As Church members we should be part of that sin-resistant counterculture” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1993, 96; or *Ensign*, May 1993, 77).

Conclusion

Emphasize that the Nephite society was destroyed because of great wickedness. Although we also live in a time of great wickedness, we must not be part of it. By following Mormon’s example of steadfastness and faith, and by studying the records he so carefully preserved, we can withstand the evil influences of our day and provide an example of courage and hope for others.

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

Additional Teaching Ideas

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

1. Righteous youth

- How old was Mormon when Ammaron entrusted him with the records? (See Mormon 1:2–4.) How old was Mormon when he saw Jesus Christ? (See Mormon 1:15.) Point out that Joseph Smith was 14 years old when he received the First Vision of the Father and the Son, and he was 21 when he received the gold plates from the angel Moroni.

Emphasize that righteousness and wisdom are not limited by age or other circumstances. The Lord will bless those who serve Him at any age.

2. Youth discussion

Remind class members that Mormon remained righteous and faithful even when the people around him were wicked.

- How can we remain faithful despite pressure from an unrighteous society? What will be the benefits of doing so?
- How can we help those around us who are not living in accordance with the gospel? How did Mormon respond to those around him who were unrighteous? (See, for example, Mormon 3:12.) How can we reach out in love and friendship without being pulled into situations that would compromise our standards?

Lesson
44

“I Speak unto You As If Ye Were Present”

Mormon 7–9

Purpose To help class members understand the warnings and counsel given by Mormon and Moroni to people living in the latter days.

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. Mormon 7. Mormon exhorts the latter-day descendants of Lehi to repent, believe in Christ, and be baptized.
 - b. Mormon 8. Moroni prophesies that the Book of Mormon will come forth in a day of great wickedness.
 - c. Mormon 9. Moroni calls on people in the latter days to believe in Christ. He proclaims that the Lord is a God of miracles.
2. Additional reading: Bible Dictionary, “Miracles,” 732–33; title page of the Book of Mormon.
3. You may want to speak with four class members in advance, asking each of them to prepare to read aloud one of the following passages: 2 Nephi 28:2–6; Mormon 9:7; Joseph Smith—History 1:17–19, 21–22; and Articles of Faith 1:7.
4. If you are using the attention activity, write the following statements on the chalkboard before class begins:

“I speak unto you as if ye were present, and yet ye are not.”

“Jesus Christ hath shown you unto me, and I know your doing.”

Suggestions for Lesson Development

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

Explain that teachers often use stories, object lessons, or interesting questions at the beginning of lessons to catch people’s attention. Then refer to the statements that you have written on the chalkboard (see “Preparation,” item 4).

- Why should these statements catch our attention? (In about A.D. 400, when Moroni made these statements, he was talking directly to us. See Mormon 8:35.)

Point out that all the teachings in Mormon 7–9 are directed to people living in the latter days. Mormon 7 contains counsel specifically for latter-day descendants of Lehi, and Mormon 8–9 contains counsel for all people in the latter days.

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

1. Mormon exhorts the latter-day descendants of Lehi to repent, believe in Christ, and be baptized.

Read and discuss Mormon 7, which contains Mormon's words to the latter-day descendants of Lehi. You may want to explain that latter-day descendants of Lehi are found among the people of North, Central, and South America and the Pacific Islands.

- Have a class member read Mormon 7:2 aloud. Point out that in this final message, these were Mormon's first words to the latter-day descendants of Lehi. Why is it important for the descendants of Lehi to know that they are "of the house of Israel"? What blessings has the Lord promised to righteous members of the house of Israel? (See Abraham 2:8–11.)
- What instructions did Mormon give the latter-day descendants of Lehi? (See Mormon 7:3–10 and the list below. Some items in the list include questions to encourage discussion.)
 - a. Repent, be baptized, and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost (Mormon 7:3, 5, 8, 10).
 - b. Lay down weapons of war unless God commands differently (Mormon 7:4).
 - c. Come to the knowledge of their ancestors (Mormon 7:5). Why is it important for the latter-day descendants of Lehi to gain a knowledge of their ancestors? (See Mormon 7:9 and the title page of the Book of Mormon.) How can we all benefit from a knowledge of God's works among our ancestors?
 - d. Believe in Jesus Christ and His Atonement (Mormon 7:5–7, 10).
 - e. Study the gospel in the Bible and the Book of Mormon (Mormon 7:8–9). How does the Book of Mormon help people believe the Bible? (See Mormon 7:9; see also 1 Nephi 13:38–40; 2 Nephi 3:11–12.)
- In this dispensation the Lord has said that "the Lamanites shall blossom as the rose" (D&C 49:24). How is this prophecy being fulfilled today?

2. Moroni prophesies that the Book of Mormon will come forth in a day of great wickedness.

Read and discuss selected verses from Mormon 8. Explain that this chapter contains Moroni's first writings after the death of his father, Mormon.

- Have a class member read Mormon 8:1–5 aloud. What emotions do you sense from Moroni as you read these words? What can we learn from Moroni's diligence despite being so alone?
- Moroni prophesied of Joseph Smith, saying, "Blessed be he that shall bring this thing [the Book of Mormon] to light" (Mormon 8:16; see also verses 14–15). What role did Moroni play in Joseph Smith's bringing the Book of Mormon "out of darkness unto light"? (See Mormon 8:14; Joseph Smith—History 1:30–35, 46, 59.) What can we do so the Book of Mormon will continue to be "brought out of darkness unto light"?

President Ezra Taft Benson said: "I commend you faithful Saints who are striving to flood the earth and your lives with the Book of Mormon. Not only must we move forward in a monumental manner more copies of the Book of Mormon, but we must move boldly forward into our own lives and throughout the earth more of its marvelous messages" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1989, 3; or *Ensign*, May 1989, 4).

- Have a class member read Mormon 8:21–22 aloud. How can Moroni’s words in Mormon 8:22 strengthen us as we labor in the Lord’s cause?
- What did Moroni prophesy about conditions in the world when the Book of Mormon would come forth? (Have class members take turns reading verses from Mormon 8:26–33. As they read, ask them to discuss ways in which the conditions described in these verses are evident today.) Why was Moroni able to prophesy so clearly concerning the last days? (See Mormon 8:34–35.)
- Moroni said that he would speak to those of us in the last days “as if [we] were present” (Mormon 8:35). Then he said, “I know that ye do walk in the pride of your hearts” (Mormon 8:36). What did Moroni say about pride in the last days? (See Mormon 8:36–41.)
- How does pride affect people’s attitudes toward the needy? (See Mormon 8:37, 39.)
- Have a class member read Mormon 8:38 aloud. Why might some people be “ashamed to take upon [themselves] the name of Christ”? Why might it help us to remember that “endless happiness” has more value than “the praise of the world”?
- What should be our response to Moroni’s prophecies about pride?

President Ezra Taft Benson said:

“The antidote for pride is humility—meekness, submissiveness (see Alma 7:23). It is the broken heart and contrite spirit (see 3 Nephi 9:20; 12:19; D&C 20:37; 59:8; Psalm 34:18; Isaiah 57:15; 66:2). . . .

“God will have a humble people. Either we can choose to be humble or we can be compelled to be humble. . . .

“Let us choose to be humble” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1989, 6; or *Ensign*, May 1989, 6).

3. Moroni exhorts people in the last days to believe in Christ.

Read and discuss selected verses from Mormon 9.

- Mormon 9 begins with Moroni’s words to people in the latter days who do not believe in Christ (Mormon 9:1). Why would such people be “more miserable to dwell with . . . God [than] to dwell with the damned souls in hell”? (See Mormon 9:3–5.) What does Mormon 9:6 teach about what we must do so we can dwell in God’s presence? (See also D&C 121:45.)
- Invite four class members to read the following scripture passages: 2 Nephi 28:2–6; Mormon 9:7; Joseph Smith—History 1:17–19, 21–22; and Articles of Faith 1:7 (see “Preparation,” item 3). How do these four passages relate to one another? What did Moroni say to people who do not believe in the gifts of the Spirit? (See Mormon 9:8–10.)
- To those who believe that God no longer performs miracles, Moroni said, “I will show unto you a God of miracles” (Mormon 9:11). What did he teach to show that the Lord is a God of miracles? (See Mormon 9:11–17, which is outlined on the next page. Point out that these doctrines summarize the plan of redemption.)

- a. The creation of the heavens, the earth, and mankind (Mormon 9:11–12, 17).
 - b. The Fall (Mormon 9:12).
 - c. Redemption through Jesus Christ (Mormon 9:12–13).
 - d. The resurrection of all people (Mormon 9:13).
 - e. The return of all people to the Lord’s presence to be judged (Mormon 9:13–14).
- Moroni referred to the “many mighty miracles” performed by Jesus and His Apostles (Mormon 9:18). What are some miracles performed by Jesus and His Apostles that have inspired you?
 - What causes miracles to cease for some people? (See Mormon 9:20.) What signs will continue to follow those who believe in Christ? (See Mormon 9:21–25.)
 - If someone were to tell you that the Lord is not a God of miracles, how would you respond? What experiences could you appropriately share to bear witness that the Lord is a God of miracles?
 - Moroni exhorted us to “doubt not, but be believing” (Mormon 9:27). In this dispensation, the Prophet Joseph Smith declared, “Where doubt is, there faith has no power” (*Lectures on Faith* [1985], 46). What can we do to overcome our doubts?

Joseph Smith taught: “Those who know their weakness and liability to sin would be in constant doubt of salvation if it were not for the idea which they have of the excellency of God, that he is slow to anger and long-suffering, and of a forgiving disposition, and does forgive iniquity, transgression, and sin. An idea of these facts does away doubt, and makes faith exceedingly strong” (*Lectures on Faith*, 42).

Conclusion

If you have not already done so, ask a class member to read Mormon 9:27. Point out that although Moroni warned of the judgments of God, he also testified of the Lord as a “God of miracles,” whose Atonement brings to pass “the redemption of man” (Mormon 9:11–12).

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

Lesson
45

“Never Has Man Believed in Me As Thou Hast”

Ether 1–6

Purpose To help class members understand from the example of the brother of Jared how faith can enable us to enter the presence of the Lord eternally.

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. Ether 1. The Lord grants the requests of the brother of Jared and promises to lead the Jaredites to a promised land.
 - b. Ether 2. The Jaredites begin their journey to the promised land.
 - c. Ether 3. The brother of Jared sees Jesus Christ.
 - d. Ether 4. Moroni seals up the writings of the brother of Jared until the Gentiles repent and exercise faith.
 - e. Ether 6:1–12. The Jaredites travel to the promised land, and when they arrive they praise the Lord for His tender mercies over them.
2. Additional reading: Genesis 11:1–9; Mosiah 8:7–11.
3. If the picture *The Brother of Jared Sees the Finger of the Lord* is available, prepare to use it during the lesson (62478; Gospel Art Picture Kit 318).

**Suggestions for
Lesson Development**

Attention Activity As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. Share the following account with class members:

“While residing in Kirtland Elder Reynolds Cahoon had a son born to him. One day when President Joseph Smith was passing his door, he called the Prophet in and asked him to bless and name the baby. Joseph did so and gave the boy the name of Mahonri Moriancumer. When he had finished the blessing he laid the child on the bed, and turning to Elder Cahoon he said, ‘The name I have given your son is the name of the brother of Jared; the Lord has just shown [or revealed] it to me.’ Elder William F. Cahoon . . . heard the Prophet make this statement to his father; and this was the first time the name of the brother of Jared was known in the Church in this dispensation” (George Reynolds, “The Jaredites,” *Juvenile Instructor*, 1 May 1892, 282).

Explain that this lesson discusses the brother of Jared, Mahonri Moriancumer, of whom the Lord said, “Never has man believed in me as thou hast” (Ether 3:15). Because of his faith, the Jaredites were blessed to have their language preserved after the tower of Babel, and they were guided safely to the promised land. His example can increase our understanding of the importance and power of faith.

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

1. The Lord grants the requests of the brother of Jared.

Discuss Ether 1. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud. Explain that the prophet Ether wrote the record of the Jaredites, who left Babylon when the Lord confounded the language of the people attempting to build the tower of Babel (Ether 1:33–43; see also Genesis 11:1–9). Ether wrote this record on 24 gold plates, which were later found by the people of Limhi (Mosiah 8:7–11). The book of Ether contains Moroni's abridgment of Ether's record.

- When the people were scattered and their language was confounded, Jared asked his brother to go to the Lord. What kind of person was the brother of Jared? (See Ether 1:34.)
- In response to requests from Jared, the brother of Jared “did cry unto the Lord” (Ether 1:34–39). What is the difference between “crying unto the Lord” and merely saying prayers? What can we do to make our prayers more effective? (See Alma 34:17–28.)
- Each time the brother of Jared prayed, the Lord “had compassion” on him and his people (Ether 1:35, 37, 40). How have you felt the Lord's compassion in response to your prayers?
- What preparations did the Lord instruct the people to make? (See Ether 1:41–42.) What was the reason the Lord promised to guide the Jaredites to a promised land? (See Ether 1:43. Note the Lord's words: “This long time ye have cried unto me.”) What can we learn from this example about the power of prayer?

2. The Jaredites begin their journey to the promised land.

Read and discuss selected verses from Ether 2.

- The Lord promised to lead the Jaredites to “the land of promise, which was choice above all other lands” (Ether 2:7). For whom had the Lord preserved that choice land? (See Ether 2:7.) What warning did the Lord give the brother of Jared regarding the promised land? (See Ether 2:8.)
- What did Moroni say about the decrees of God pertaining to the land of promise? (See Ether 2:9–12. Point out that the warning and promise were for all people who would inhabit the Americas, not just the Jaredites.)
- When they arrived at the seashore, the Jaredites pitched their tents and stayed there for four years (Ether 2:13). At the end of the four years, the Lord spoke with the brother of Jared. Why did the Lord chasten him? (See Ether 2:14.) Why might we sometimes neglect to call upon the Lord?
- The brother of Jared repented and began building barges to cross the sea (Ether 2:15–17). What problems did the brother of Jared encounter after the barges were built? (See Ether 2:19.) What did the Lord instruct the brother of Jared to do to have air to breathe in the barges? (See Ether 2:20.)

- What was the Lord’s response when the brother of Jared asked how to light the barges? (See Ether 2:23–25.) What can we learn from the Lord’s response? (See the quotation below.) Why is it important to do all we can in addition to asking the Lord for help?

Elder Russell M. Nelson said that he has often heard President Gordon B. Hinckley say, “I don’t know how to get anything done except getting on my knees and pleading for help and then getting on my feet and going to work” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1997, 18; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 16).

- How do you think the challenge to light the barges helped the brother of Jared grow? How can challenges in our lives help us?

3. The brother of Jared sees Jesus Christ.

Read and discuss selected verses from Ether 3.

- How did the brother of Jared propose to solve the problem of lighting the barges? (See Ether 3:1–5.) How did this show his humility and faith? (You may want to have class members identify words or phrases spoken by the brother of Jared that show his humility and faith.)
- When the brother of Jared had finished speaking, the Lord touched the stones one by one with His finger (Ether 3:6). Why was the brother of Jared so frightened when he saw the finger of the Lord? (See Ether 3:6–8. If you are using the picture of the brother of Jared seeing the finger of the Lord, display it now.) What did the Lord say about the faith of the brother of Jared? (See Ether 3:9.)
- What question did the Lord ask before showing Himself to the brother of Jared? (See Ether 3:11.) How did the brother of Jared’s response demonstrate the depth of his faith? (See Ether 3:12. He accepted the Lord’s words even before he had heard them.) What can we do to follow his example?
- How did the Lord describe Himself to the brother of Jared? (See Ether 3:13–14. You may want to have a class member read these verses aloud.) What was necessary for the brother of Jared to be in the Lord’s presence? What is necessary for us to be in the Lord’s presence eternally?
- What did the Lord show the brother of Jared? (See Ether 3:15–18, 25–26.) What did the Lord instruct the brother of Jared to do after he had seen these things? (See Ether 3:21–24, 27–28; 4:1.)

4. Moroni seals up the writings of the brother of Jared.

Read and discuss selected verses from Ether 4.

- How did Moroni describe the vision of the brother of Jared? (See Ether 4:4.) What did the Lord command Moroni to do with the brother of Jared’s record and the interpreters? (See Ether 4:3, 5.) When will we be able to receive these records? (See Ether 4:6–7. We will be able to receive them when we have faith as great as the brother of Jared’s and become sanctified.)
- What did the Lord teach about those who deny His words at the last day? (See Ether 4:8, 10, 12.) What blessings will come to those who believe the Lord’s words? (See Ether 4:11.) In what ways does the Holy Ghost help you know that the Lord’s words are true?

- The Lord exhorted the Gentiles and the house of Israel to come unto Him and receive great blessings and knowledge (Ether 4:13–14). What did He say we must do to come unto Him? (See Ether 4:15, 18.) What blessings did He promise to those who do these things? (See Ether 4:15–19.)

5. The Jaredites travel to the promised land.

Read and discuss selected verses from Ether 6:1–12. Explain that these verses continue the record of the Jaredites as they journeyed to the promised land. Discuss how the Jaredites' journey to the promised land can be likened to our journey through life.

- The Lord caused the stones in the barges “to shine in darkness, to give light unto men, women, and children” (Ether 6:3). What “lights” has the Lord provided for us as we journey through life?
- What did the Jaredites do after they had prepared all they could for their journey? (See Ether 6:4. They entrusted themselves to the Lord.) How can we show this same kind of trust in the Lord?
- As the winds blew and the Jaredites were driven forth, what did the Jaredites do throughout the day and night? (See Ether 6:8–9.) What are some ways we can give praise to the Lord?
- What did the Jaredites do when they had arrived in the promised land? (See Ether 6:12.) In what ways might this be similar to our return to our Father in Heaven?

Conclusion

Read the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland:

“The brother of Jared may not have had great belief in himself, but his belief in God was unprecedented. In that there is hope for us all. His faith was without doubt or limit. . . . Once and for all it was declared that ordinary people with ordinary challenges could rend the veil of unbelief and enter the realms of eternity” (*Christ and the New Covenant* [1997], 29).

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

Additional Teaching Idea

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use this idea as part of the lesson.

Teachings from Ether 5

- To whom is Ether 5 addressed? (Joseph Smith.) Who were the three witnesses Moroni spoke of in Ether 5:3? (Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris. See The Testimony of Three Witnesses in the introductory material of the Book of Mormon.) How has the testimony of the Three Witnesses helped strengthen your testimony of the Book of Mormon?

Lesson
46

“By Faith All Things Are Fulfilled”

Ether 7–15

Purpose To help class members understand the importance of exercising faith, being humble, and heeding the counsel of the prophets.

Preparation Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:

- Ether 12:1–22. Moroni explains the importance of faith and gives examples of the power of faith.
- Ether 12:23–41. The Lord teaches Moroni that He gives us weakness that we may be humble. Moroni commends us to “seek this Jesus, of whom the prophets and apostles have written.”
- Ether 13:1–12. Moroni records Ether’s prophecies concerning the promised land.
- Ether 13:13–15:34. Moroni records Ether’s account of the destruction of the Jaredite civilization.

**Suggestions for
Lesson Development**

Attention Activity As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. Have class members read Mosiah 8:8–9, 12, 19; 28:17–19.

- What record is referred to here? (The record of the Jaredites, which was abridged by Moroni in the book of Ether.) What effect did hearing this record have on the people of Mosiah? Why do you think it is important for us to read this account?

Explain that this lesson discusses the account of the Jaredites from their arrival in the promised land to their complete destruction many generations later. Although the account of their destruction is tragic, we, like the people of Mosiah, can rejoice in the knowledge the record gives us.

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

1. Moroni explains the importance of faith.

Explain that after arriving in the promised land, the Jaredites began to “multiply . . . and wax strong in the land” (Ether 6:18). When Jared and his brother died, a king was appointed to lead the people (Ether 6:21–30). Ether 7–11 records the succession of righteous and wicked kings, the rise of secret combinations among the people, and the teachings of prophets who were called to preach repentance to the Jaredites (see the first and second additional teaching ideas for more

discussion of Ether 7–11). Ether 12 begins the account of the teachings of Ether, who was one of those prophets.

Read and discuss selected verses from Ether 12:1–22.

- Ether exhorted the people to believe in God, saying that “by faith all things are fulfilled” (Ether 12:3). How did Ether describe those who believe in God? (See Ether 12:4.) How can faith and hope be an anchor for us? What are some examples of how faith leads to good works that glorify God?
- Ether prophesied “great and marvelous things” to the people, but they did not believe him. Why? (See Ether 12:5.)

Ask class members to think of times when they or other people have been blessed for following prophetic counsel even when they could not “see” or understand the reasons for the counsel. Invite them to share their examples as appropriate.

- Moroni recorded that the people would not believe the prophecies of Ether because they could not see them. Moroni then defined faith and gave examples of it. How did he define faith? (See Ether 12:6; see also Hebrews 11:1; Alma 32:21.) What do you think it means that we “receive no witness until after the trial of [our] faith”? (Ether 12:6; see also Ether 12:29–31; D&C 58:2–4). In what ways have trials strengthened and confirmed your faith?
- Moroni listed several events that occurred as a result of faith. What events did he list? (See Ether 12:7–22. List class members’ responses on the chalkboard. Also, suggest that class members mark the word *faith* each time it appears in these verses.) What other examples from the scriptures have shown you the power of faith?
- The Prophet Joseph Smith taught, “We receive by faith all temporal blessings that we do receive, [and] we in like manner receive by faith all spiritual blessings that we do receive” (*Lectures on Faith* [1985], 3). What are some blessings you have received because of your faith? (You may want to invite class members to think about this question rather than answer it aloud.)

2. The Lord teaches Moroni that He gives us weakness that we may be humble.

Read and discuss selected verses from Ether 12:23–41.

- What was Moroni’s concern about how the Gentiles would receive his record? (See Ether 12:23–25.) What was the Lord’s response? (See Ether 12:26.) Why is it important to read Moroni’s words—and all scriptures—with meekness?

Have a class member read Ether 12:27 aloud. Direct class members’ attention to the Lord’s promise to those who humble themselves and have faith in Him (“Then will I make weak things become strong unto them”). Ask class members to think of examples of this promise being fulfilled in the scriptures, their lives, or the lives of others. Invite them to share some of these examples.

- Moroni wrote of the importance of faith, hope, and charity (Ether 12:28–34). How do these qualities bring us unto Christ?
- Moroni exhorted us to “seek this Jesus of whom the prophets and apostles have written” (Ether 12:41). In what ways can we “seek Jesus” today? What

does the Lord promise those who do this? (See Ether 12:41.) Why do we need the grace of God and His Son?

3. Moroni records Ether's prophecies concerning the promised land.

Read and discuss Ether 13:1–12.

- What did Ether prophesy about the New Jerusalem and the Old Jerusalem? (Have class members read Ether 13:2–12 to find answers to this question; see also the list below.)
 - a. The Old Jerusalem (“from whence Lehi [came]”), will be “built up again, a holy city unto the Lord” (Ether 13:5). This will be done by the descendants of Judah before the Second Coming.
 - b. Before the Second Coming, “a new Jerusalem should be built up upon this land [the Americas]” (Ether 13:6). The New Jerusalem will be a holy city built by a remnant of the house of Joseph (Ether 13:8).
 - c. The City of Enoch will come down out of heaven and become part of the New Jerusalem (Ether 13:3, 10; see also Revelation 21:2, 10). This will occur after the Second Coming.
- How did Moroni describe those who would be worthy to live in these holy cities? (See Ether 13:10–11.) What does it mean to be “washed in the blood of the Lamb”? (To be cleansed from sin through the Atonement of Jesus Christ.)

4. War rages throughout the land. The Jaredite civilization is destroyed.

Read and discuss selected verses from Ether 13:13–15:34. Explain that the people cast Ether out, and he made the remainder of his record while hiding in the cavity of a rock (Ether 13:13–14). The people soon became engulfed in wars and secret combinations.

- During the second year that Ether dwelled in the cavity of a rock, the word of the Lord came to him. What did the Lord instruct him to do? (See Ether 13:20–21.) How did Coriantumr respond to Ether's prophecies? (See Ether 13:22.)

Explain that Ether 13:23–15:28 describes continual bloodshed as different groups sought to obtain power. Millions of Jaredites were killed in the battles. Although Coriantumr lost many battles and was wounded several times, he did not die. Near the end of the record, Coriantumr and Shiz gathered all the people together for a final battle. After several days of fighting, only Coriantumr and Shiz remained alive.

- How did the battle finally end? (See Ether 15:29–32.) How was this a fulfillment of Ether's prophecy? (See Ether 13:20–21.)
- What can we learn from the Jaredite record about the importance of repenting before we become deeply involved in sin? (See Ether 15:1–5, 18–19; see also Helaman 13:32–33, 38.) How does sinning limit our agency?
- What are some similarities between the history of the Nephites and the history of the Jaredites? What can we learn from the accounts of these civilizations?

Conclusion

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

Additional Teaching Ideas

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

1. The importance of following the prophets

Point out that the history of the Jaredites gives many examples of the following pattern:

- a. The people become wicked.
- b. Prophets call the people to repentance.
- c. The people accept the prophets and are blessed, or they reject the prophets and begin to suffer the consequences of their wickedness.
- d. In response to the consequences, the people repent and follow the prophets, or they continue in wickedness to their destruction.

You may want to read and discuss examples of this pattern in Ether 7:23–27; 9:23–35; 11:1–8, 11–14, 19–23.

2. Moroni warns against secret combinations

After the death of Jared and his brother, the people were ruled by a succession of kings. With the passing of each generation, contention for the throne became more intense. As this contention grew, Jared's daughter devised a plan to make her father the king (Ether 8:8; remind class members that the man named Jared in this account was a descendant of the Jared referred to in Ether 1–6).

- What plan did Jared's daughter create to make her father the king? (See Ether 8:9–12.) How did this plan introduce secret combinations in the land? (See Ether 8:13–18.)
- What did Moroni teach about the danger of secret combinations? (See Ether 8:21–22.) Why did he include these things in his record? (See Ether 8:23, 26.) How can we recognize secret combinations and protect ourselves from them? (See Ether 8:23–25.)

3. "Because thou hast seen thy weakness thou shalt be made strong" (Ether 12:37)

- As Hyrum Smith prepared to go to Carthage Jail, where he and the Prophet Joseph Smith were murdered, he read Ether 12:36–38 and folded down the page (D&C 135:4–5). What comfort do these verses offer? What passages of scripture have strengthened or comforted you?

Lesson
47

“To Keep Them in the Right Way”

Moroni 1–6

Purpose To increase class members’ understanding of gospel ordinances and of the need to strengthen one another.

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. Moroni 1. Having survived the destruction of the Nephites, Moroni continues his writings. He must remain in hiding because he “will not deny the Christ.”
 - b. Moroni 2–5. Moroni teaches about essential gospel ordinances.
 - c. Moroni 6. Moroni explains the requirements for Church membership and the need for record keeping and fellowshipping.
2. Additional reading: “Some Thoughts on Temples, Retention of Converts, and Missionary Service” (Gordon B. Hinckley, *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 49–50; see also Conference Report, Oct. 1997, 68–73); “Care for New Converts” (Carl B. Pratt, *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 11–12; see also Conference Report, Oct. 1997, 11–13).

**Suggestions for
Lesson Development**

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

Ask class members to think of the last time they attended a sacrament meeting at a ward or branch other than their own.

- What elements of sacrament meeting are the same wherever you go in the Church? (Answers may include praying, singing hymns, blessing and partaking of the sacrament, bestowing the gift of the Holy Ghost on new converts, and concluding testimonies or discourses in the name of Jesus Christ.) Why do you think it is important that we be unified in these matters?

Explain that this lesson discusses Moroni’s teachings about some of the ordinances of the gospel—bestowing the gift of the Holy Ghost, ordaining priests and teachers, administering the sacrament, and baptizing—that are part of the restored Church today. His teachings can help us see the continuation today of the same ordinances that existed in the Church that the Savior established anciently. They also help us fulfill our responsibility as Church members to strengthen one another to “keep [us] in the right way” (Moroni 6:4; see also 2 Nephi 25:28–29).

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

1. Having survived the destruction of the Nephites, Moroni continues his writings.

Read and discuss Moroni 1. Explain that Moroni had believed that his abridgment of Ether's record would be his last writings. However, because he had not yet died, he continued writing.

- Ask a class member to read Moroni 1:1–4 aloud. What were Moroni's circumstances when he wrote this chapter? (See Moroni 1:1. He was alone and hiding from the Lamanites.) Why would the Lamanites have killed him? (See Moroni 1:2–3.) What does this show us about Moroni's faith? How can we develop such a firm testimony of Jesus Christ?
- Why did Moroni continue to write? (See Moroni 1:4. Point out that although the Lamanites of his day would have killed him, Moroni continued to be concerned for their descendants.)

2. Moroni teaches about essential gospel ordinances.

Read and discuss selected verses from Moroni 2–5. Explain that the Book of Mormon teaches us about the importance of the ordinances of the gospel. However, until the book of Moroni, relatively little is recorded about how ordinances were performed. Discuss how Moroni increases our understanding of how ordinances were performed in the ancient Church.

Invite a class member to read aloud Moroni 2, which describes the words the Savior spoke to His Nephite disciples as He laid His hands upon them. Write the heading *Bestowing the Gift of the Holy Ghost* on the chalkboard.

- How did the Savior instruct the disciples to bestow the gift of the Holy Ghost? (See Moroni 2:2. Under the heading on the chalkboard, write *By the laying on of hands in the name of Jesus Christ*.)

Invite a class member to read aloud Moroni 3, which describes how the disciples ordained priests and teachers. Write the heading *Ordaining Priests and Teachers* on the chalkboard.

- What were priests and teachers ordained to do? (See Moroni 3:3. Under the second heading, write *To preach repentance and remission of sins*.) How are these responsibilities similar to the duties of priesthood holders today? (See D&C 20:46–59.) How can we help Aaronic Priesthood bearers understand and fulfill their assigned duties?

Invite two class members to read aloud Moroni 4 and 5, which describe the manner of administering the sacrament. Write the heading *Administering the Sacrament* on the chalkboard.

- What covenants do we make through the sacrament? (See Moroni 4:3; 5:2. Under the third heading, write *To remember, follow, and obey the Savior*.) What are we promised in return? How do you feel when you have partaken of the sacrament reverently and worthily?
- Why are chapters 2–5 important for our day? (Answers may include that they help us see the consistency of gospel ordinances through different periods of time.) How does it strengthen you to see the same ordinances present in different dispensations of the Lord's Church?

3. Moroni explains the requirements for Church membership and the need for record keeping and fellowship.

Read and discuss Moroni 6.

- What did Moroni teach about the requirements for baptism? (See Moroni 6:1–3.)

Ask class members to think of examples of people who have continued to fulfill these requirements after being baptized. Invite them to share these examples as appropriate.

- Moroni taught that after people were baptized and had received the gift of the Holy Ghost, “they were numbered among the people of the church of Christ; and their names were taken” (Moroni 6:4). Why were their names recorded? (See Moroni 6:4.) Who has the responsibility to see that both long-time and new members are “remembered and nourished by the good word of God”? (Emphasize that each of us has this opportunity and responsibility. Then share the quotations below.)

President Gordon B. Hinckley taught: “Any convert whose faith grows cold is a tragedy. Any member who falls into inactivity is a matter for serious concern. The Lord left the ninety and nine to find the lost sheep. His concern for the dropout was so serious that He made it the theme of one of His great lessons. We must constantly keep Church officers and the membership aware of the tremendous obligation to fellowship in a very real and warm and wonderful way those who come into the Church as converts, and to reach out with love to those who for one reason or another step into the shadows of inactivity” (in *Church News*, 8 Apr. 1989, 6).

President Hinckley also said: “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)” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1997, 66; or *Ensign*, May 1997, 47).

- What can we do to follow President Hinckley’s counsel? How have you been blessed by others who have remembered and nourished you?
- Moroni recorded that the Church “did meet together oft” (Moroni 6:5). Why? (See Moroni 6:5–6.) How are we strengthened when we fast and pray together? How do Church meetings give us an opportunity to speak to each other “concerning the welfare of [our] souls”? Why is it important that we meet together to partake of the sacrament?
- What did Moroni teach about how Church meetings were conducted? (See Moroni 6:9.) What can each of us do to invite the Spirit into our meetings?

Conclusion

Explain that Moroni taught of the importance of strengthening one another as members of the Church. Encourage class members to look for ways they can “remember and nourish” other members of the ward or branch.

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

**Additional
Teaching Idea**

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use this idea as part of the lesson.

Helping others feel welcome in our wards and branches

Elder Carl B. Pratt told of the feelings his family experienced as they visited different wards in the Church. Share the following excerpt with class members:

“Some wards our children loved to visit because they quickly found friends among the youth, and we all received a warm and hearty welcome. But there were other wards to which our children returned with less enthusiasm, and there was a noticeable absence of the warm and hearty welcome.

“We then began to observe that in some wards we visited . . . , if we had been investigators or new members, we would not have felt very welcome. . . .

“These experiences . . . made us conscious of the need we *all* have to improve what we call our fellowshiping skills. . . .

“Brothers and sisters, we have the richest blessings that God can give to His children. We have the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ. We ought to be the most open, friendly, happy, kind, considerate, thoughtful, loving people in the whole world. . . .

“Will nonmembers, new converts, and visitors to our chapels recognize us as His disciples by the warmth of our greeting, by the ease of our smiles, by the kindness and genuine concern that shine in our eyes?” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1997, 12; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 11–12).

- How do you think visitors or new converts would feel in our ward or branch? (Ask class members to ponder this question rather than answer it aloud.) How can we improve the way we treat visitors and new converts?

Lesson
48

“Come unto Christ”

Moroni 7–8; 10

Purpose

To teach class members how to judge between good and evil and how to receive a testimony of the gospel and the Book of Mormon.

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. Moroni 7:1–19. Mormon explains how to judge between good and evil (note that these words were recorded by Mormon’s son Moroni).
 - b. Moroni 7:20–48. Mormon explains that faith in Christ is the power by which miracles are wrought. He explains the importance of faith, hope, and charity.
 - c. Moroni 8. In a letter to Moroni, Mormon outlines the conditions of salvation and explains that little children are saved through the Atonement of Christ.
 - d. Moroni 10. Moroni explains that the Holy Ghost bears witness of all truth to those who ask in faith. He describes spiritual gifts and exhorts all to come unto Christ.
2. Additional reading: Bible Dictionary, “Light of Christ,” 725.

**Suggestions for
Lesson Development**

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

Tell the following story:

One cold day in February 1910, Vincenzo di Francesca, a Protestant minister, came across a weather-beaten copy of a religious book with no title page. Curious, he wrapped the book in newspaper and took it with him. At home he cleaned and read the book. “I read and reread, twice and twice again, and I found it fit to say that the book was a fifth gospel of the Redeemer,” he said.

The book he had found was the Book of Mormon. When he had read it, he followed the admonition in Moroni 10:4. “At the end of the day, I locked the door of my room, knelt with the book in my hands, and read chapter ten of the book of Moroni. I prayed to God, the Eternal Father, in the name of his son, Jesus Christ, to tell me if the book were of God, if it were good and true, and if I should mix its words with the words of the four gospels in my preaching.

“I felt my body become cold as the wind from the sea. Then my heart began to palpitate, and a feeling of gladness, as of finding something precious and extraordinary, bore consolation to my soul and left me with a joy that human language cannot find words to describe. I had received the assurance that God had answered my prayer and that the book was of greatest benefit to me and to all who would listen to its words.”

The testimony Vincenzo di Francesca received at this time helped him through many difficult experiences. He was stripped of his position as a minister because he taught from the Book of Mormon. It was 1930 before he learned the name of the book and the name of the Church that published it. Because of war and other political problems, another 21 years passed before he was able to be baptized. Throughout these difficulties, he maintained a strong testimony of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon. (See Vincenzo di Francesca, “I Will Not Burn the Book!” *Ensign*, Jan. 1988, 18–21.)

Point out that this lesson discusses the final chapters of the Book of Mormon. Included in these writings are Moroni’s instructions about how each of us can gain a personal testimony of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon.

Scripture Discussion
and Application

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

1. Mormon explains how to judge between good and evil.

Discuss Moroni 7:1–19. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud. Point out that Moroni 7 contains the words of Mormon, as recorded by his son Moroni.

- Mormon referred to the members of the Church as “peaceable followers of Christ” (Moroni 7:3). On what basis did Mormon make this judgment about the Church members? (See Moroni 7:4–5.) How do we become “peaceable followers of Christ”?
- What did Mormon teach about the importance of our motives for doing good works? (See Moroni 7:6–9.) What does it mean to give a gift or pray “with real intent”? How can we purify our motives for doing good?
- What did Mormon teach about how we can discern good from evil? (See Moroni 7:12–19.)

Write on the chalkboard *Does _____ invite me to love and serve God? Is _____ inspired of God?* Encourage class members to use these questions when they are evaluating whether a thing or action is good or evil. (You may want to point out that it can be easier to judge whether or not something leads us toward God than it is to judge whether or not something leads us toward the devil. Satan’s deceitful practices often encourage us to think that something is “not so bad”—that it is not really evil, even if it is not good. Emphasize that anything that does not lead us toward God only leads us away from Him.)

- Mormon cautioned the people to “take heed . . . that ye do not judge that which is evil to be of God, or that which is good . . . to be of the devil” (Moroni 7:14; see also 2 Nephi 15:20). What are some ways in which you see this happening today? (You may want to list class members’ responses on the chalkboard under the headings *Evil presented as good* and *Good presented as evil*.)

- What influence have we been given to help us judge good from evil? (See Moroni 7:16, 18–19.)

Explain that the “Spirit of Christ” or “light of Christ” is “an uplifting, ennobling, persevering influence that comes upon mankind because of Jesus Christ” (Bible Dictionary, “Light of Christ,” 725). It is available to all people and can prepare a person to find truth and receive the Holy Ghost. In its role of helping us discern between right and wrong, the light of Christ is often called our conscience.

- In what ways has the light of Christ helped you discern good from evil? How can we become more receptive to the guidance of the light of Christ?

2. Mormon explains the importance of faith, hope, and charity.

Read and discuss selected verses from Moroni 7:20–48.

- Mormon asked, “How is it possible that ye can lay hold upon every good thing?” (Moroni 7:20). How did he answer this question? (See Moroni 7:21–26. “All things which are good cometh of Christ,” and we can “lay hold” on them by exercising faith in Him.)

Ask class members to think about blessings that have come to them or to others because of faith. Invite them to share these examples as appropriate.

- What is the relationship between faith and miracles? (See Moroni 7:28–30, 35–38.) Why is it necessary for faith to precede miracles? (See Moroni 7:37; see also Ether 12:12, 18 and the quotation below.) Why don’t miracles alone provide a firm foundation for faith?

President Brigham Young said, “Miracles, or these extraordinary manifestations of the power of God, are not for the unbeliever; they are to console the Saints, and to strengthen and confirm the faith of those who love, fear, and serve God” (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, sel. John A. Widtsoe [1941], 341).

- What is hope? What relationship exists between faith and hope? (See Moroni 7:40–42.)

Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught: “As used in the revelations, *hope* is the desire of faithful people to gain eternal salvation in the kingdom of God hereafter. . . . Faith and hope are inseparable. Hope enables [us] to have faith in the first instance and then because of faith that hope increases until salvation is gained” (*Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. [1966], 365–66).

- What quality must precede faith and hope? (See Moroni 7:43.) Why must a person be “meek, and lowly of heart” to have true faith and hope?
- Mormon taught that in addition to faith and hope, we must have charity. What is charity? (See Moroni 7:46–47.) What are the characteristics of charity? (See Moroni 7:45. You may want to list class members’ responses on the chalkboard.) How have experiences in your life confirmed that “charity never faileth”?
- How can we increase our faith and hope? How can we become filled with the pure love of Christ? Why must we strive to possess faith, hope, and charity? (See Moroni 10:20–21.)

3. Mormon teaches that little children are saved through Christ's Atonement.

Read and discuss selected verses from Moroni 8. Point out that this chapter contains a letter from Mormon to his son Moroni.

- Why do little children not need baptism? (See Moroni 8:8–9, 11, 19–20. Note that Mormon's teachings about little children also apply to "all they that are without the law" [Moroni 8:22], which refers to those who are mentally incapable of understanding the commandments and ordinances of the gospel.) Why is the baptism of little children "mockery before God"? (See Moroni 8:20, 22–23.)
- Little children are saved because they are innocent and incapable of sinning. How can those of us who have sinned gain salvation through the Atonement of Christ? (See Moroni 8:10, 24–26.)

4. The Holy Ghost testifies of all truth. Spiritual gifts follow those who come unto Christ.

Read and discuss selected verses from Moroni 10.

- As the final chapter in the Book of Mormon, Moroni 10 contains Moroni's closing words. To whom is this chapter addressed? (See Moroni 10:1.) Moroni closes with "a few words by way of exhortation" (Moroni 10:2). What does the word *exhort* mean? (To advise or urge strongly.) Ask class members to quickly read through the chapter and identify the things Moroni exhorts his readers to do. (Answers are listed below. You may want to have class members read aloud each verse that contains an exhortation.)
 - a. "Remember how merciful the Lord hath been unto the children of men" (verse 3).
 - b. "Ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true" (verse 4).
 - c. "Deny not the power of God" (verse 7).
 - d. "Deny not the gifts of God" (verse 8).
 - e. "Remember that every good gift cometh of Christ" (verse 18).
 - f. "Remember that [Christ] is the same yesterday, today, and forever" (verse 19).
 - g. "Remember these things [that Moroni has written]" (verse 27).
 - h. "Come unto Christ" (verse 30).
- Invite class members to think about whether they have gained a testimony that the Book of Mormon is the word of God. What is the role of the Holy Ghost in our gaining testimonies of spiritual things? (See Moroni 10:4–5.) Why can't we gain our testimonies through our intellect alone? (See 1 Corinthians 2:11; Alma 26:21–22; Moroni 10:6–7.)
- Moroni exhorted us to "deny not the power of God" (Moroni 10:7). In what ways might we sometimes deny God's power? (In addition to asking for class members' responses, you may want to read the statement below.)

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland taught:

"The Savior said, 'Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. . . . Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid' (John 14:27).

“I submit to you, that may be one of the Savior’s commandments that is, even in the hearts of otherwise faithful Latter-day Saints, almost universally disobeyed; and yet I wonder whether our resistance to this invitation could be any more grievous to the Lord’s merciful heart. I can tell you this as a parent: as concerned as I would be if somewhere in their lives one of my children were seriously troubled or unhappy or disobedient, nevertheless I would be infinitely more devastated if I felt that at such a time that child could not trust me to help or thought his or her interest was unimportant to me or unsafe in my care. In that same spirit, I am convinced that none of us can appreciate how deeply it wounds the loving heart of the Savior of the world when he finds that his people do not feel confident in his care or secure in his hands or trust in his commandments” (“Come unto Me,” *Ensign*, Apr. 1998, 19).

- What did Moroni teach about spiritual gifts? (See Moroni 10:8–19.) Why do we each receive different gifts from God? (See D&C 46:11–12.)
- What have you learned and felt as you have pondered the messages of the Book of Mormon? (Invite class members to ponder this question silently if they do not want to share their thoughts with the class.)
- How does Moroni’s exhortation to “come unto Christ” reflect the entire message of the Book of Mormon? (Moroni 10:30, 32). In what specific ways has this year’s study of the Book of Mormon helped you come unto Christ?

Conclusion

As directed by the Spirit, testify of the truths discussed during the lesson and invite class members to do the same.

Additional Teaching Idea

You may want to share the following statements as you encourage class members to continue their study of the Book of Mormon:

President Gordon B. Hinckley said: “I would like to urge every man and woman . . . and every boy and girl who is old enough to read to again read the Book of Mormon during this coming year. . . . There is nothing we could do of greater importance than to have fortified in our individual lives an unshakable conviction that Jesus is the Christ, the Living Son of the Living God. . . . That is the purpose of the coming forth of this remarkable and wonderful book” (in *Church News*, 4 May 1996, 2).

President Joseph Fielding Smith said: “No member of this Church can stand approved in the presence of God who has not seriously and carefully read the Book of Mormon” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1961, 18).

President Ezra Taft Benson said: “The Book of Mormon is studied in our Sunday School and seminary classes every fourth year. This four-year pattern, however, must *not* be followed by Church members in their personal and family study. We need to read daily from the pages of the book that will get a man ‘nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than by any other book’ (*History of the Church*, 4:461)” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1988, 3; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1988, 4).

President Benson also said: “Every Latter-day Saint should make the study of this book a lifetime pursuit” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1975, 97; or *Ensign*, May 1975, 65).

THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

