



Presidents of the Church

TEACHER MANUAL

Religion 345

Presidents of the Church

Teacher Manual

Religion 345

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CES Curriculum, 50 E. North Temple Street, Floor 8, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-2722
E-mail: cesmanuals@ldschurch.org

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Introduction

OVERVIEW

The *Presidents of the Church Teacher Manual* consists of 15 chapters. Each chapter covers one Church President and is divided into two parts: “Part 1: The Early Years” and “Part 2: The Later Years.” The time period covered in the life of the prophet being studied in each part varies from prophet to prophet. An attempt was made to balance the material in each part to cover one class period.

ORGANIZATION OF CHAPTERS IN THIS MANUAL

Historical Background. Each part of a chapter—“Part 1: The Early Years” and “Part 2: The Later Years”—begins with an introduction focusing on the prophet being studied and related events or facts about the Church at that time.

Events, Highlights, and Teachings. The “Events, Highlights, and Teachings” section contains suggested teaching ideas related to the subtitles under which they occur. Each teaching suggestion is designated by an icon (💡). In addition to suggestions for student participation, additional stories or information of interest about the prophet are provided in this section of the teacher manual. Teachers should help students study the lives of the prophets and identify principles that guided their lives. Students are encouraged to adopt and apply those same principles in their own lives as they seek to become more like the Savior.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

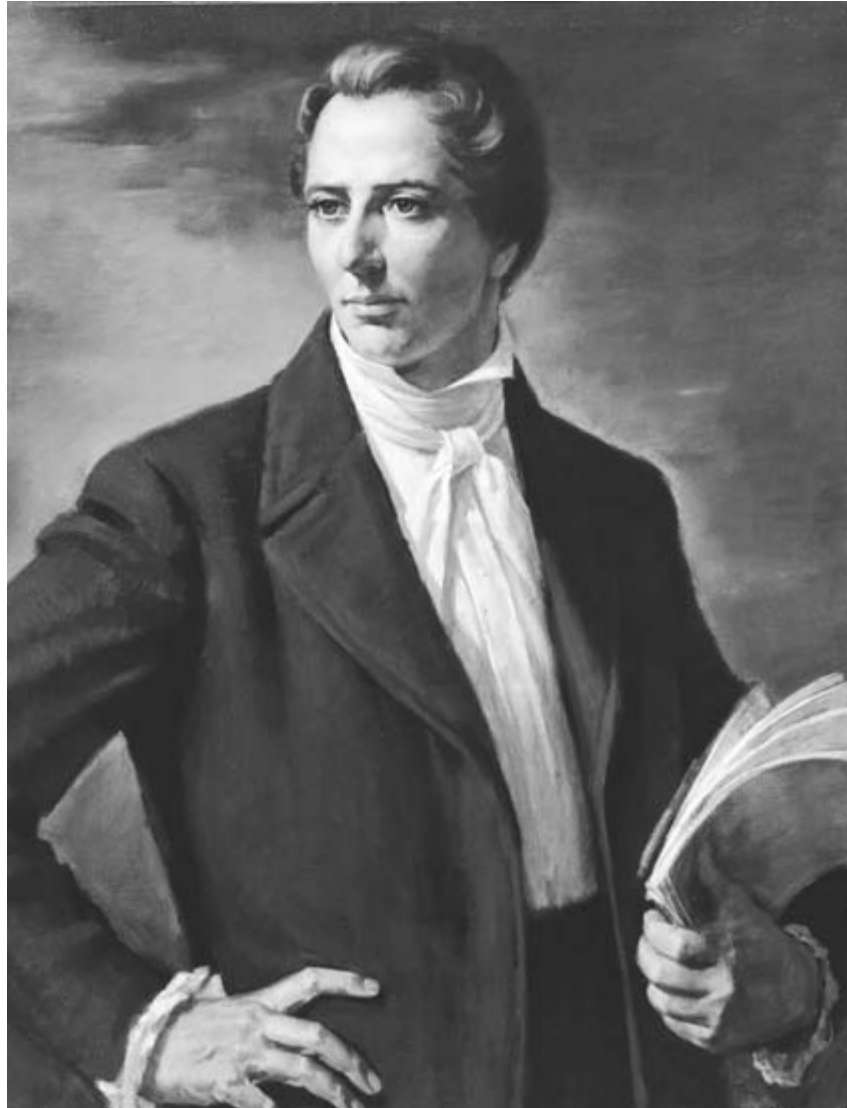
Presidents of the Church Time Line. A time line showing the lives of the Church Presidents from Joseph Smith through Gordon B. Hinckley is printed in the back of the student manual. The time line also shows some of the major Church, United States, and world events. It may be helpful to refer to this chart as each new chapter is introduced.

Presidents of the Church DVD. *Presidents of the Church, Supporting DVD Media* (religion 345, 2003; item 54047) is available separately from Church Distribution. This is a three-disc set of DVDs containing a documentary, a testimony, and a photo gallery for each Church President from Joseph Smith through Gordon B. Hinckley.

CHAPTER 1

Joseph Smith

FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE CHURCH



Joseph Smith by Alvin Giltner. © 1989 [R]


PART 1: THE EARLY YEARS

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Joseph Smith was born December 23, 1805, in Sharon township, Windsor County, Vermont. At that time, much of the eastern United States was unsettled wilderness. Hardworking families could clear the land and make a living. After residing in several communities in Vermont and New Hampshire, the Smith family moved to Palmyra, New York, in 1816. Later, in 1818, they purchased a farm in the nearby Farmington township (later called the Manchester township), and cleared about 100 acres. The Hill Cumorah, where the plates lay buried, was three miles from the Smith farm.


EVENTS, HIGHLIGHTS, AND TEACHINGS

The Presidents of the Church are prophets of God.

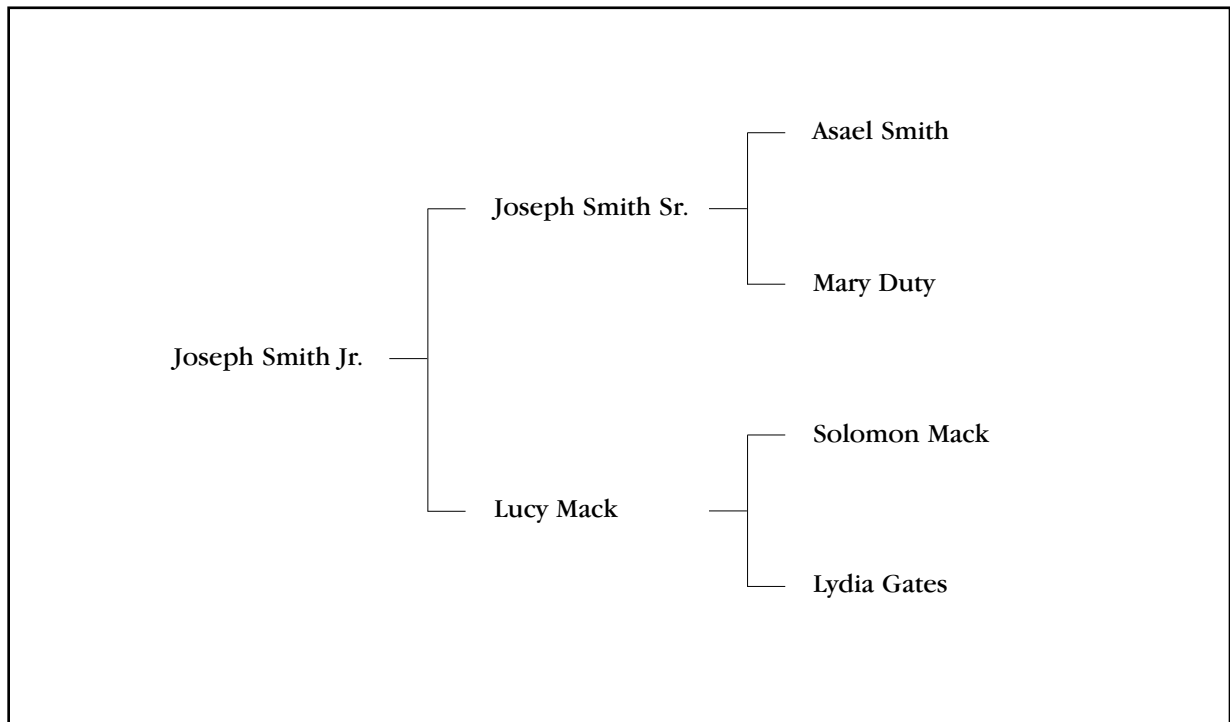
 Play five or six testimonies of the more recent Presidents of the Church found on the *Presidents of the Church, Supporting DVD Media* (religion 345, 2003; item no. 54047). Do not tell students who is speaking. (*Note:* The testimonies of Wilford Woodruff and Joseph F. Smith through Gordon B. Hinckley are their actual voices. The testimonies of Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, John Taylor, and Lorenzo Snow use voice-over talent.) Ask students if they recognize any of the voices of these prophets. You may want to have them listen to all of the excerpts and write down their answers, and then give them the correct answers. After listening to all of the excerpts, have students read Doctrine and Covenants 1:4–5, 14, 38. Ask the following questions:

- What do each of these verses teach about prophets?
- What are the roles of prophets in the Church?
- Why is it a worthy endeavor to study the lives of the Presidents of the Church?

Joseph Smith was born into a strong, religious family.

 At least one day before class, select two students and give each one a copy of pages 15–19 of *Church History in the Fulness of Times* (religion 341–43, 2nd ed., 2000). Ask one student to summarize for the class the religious background of Joseph Smith's paternal grandparents and the other student to summarize the religious background of his maternal grandparents.

On the board, draw Joseph Smith's ancestry chart as shown below:



Discuss with the class briefly the religious background of Joseph Smith's parents and grandparents: Refer students to the third paragraph in the left column on page 3 of the student manual, which tells about the religious beliefs of Joseph Smith Sr. and Lucy Mack Smith. Have the previously assigned students report on the religious background of Joseph Smith's grandparents. Help students understand that Joseph Smith's ancestors provided him with a religious heritage that helped prepare him for the Restoration of the gospel. Share the following statement of Asael Smith before his grandson Joseph Smith was born:

"It has been borne in upon my soul that one of my descendants will promulgate a work to revolutionize the world of religious faith" (quoted in George Q. Cannon, *Life of Joseph Smith, the Prophet* [1986], 26).

The Prophet Joseph Smith wrote:

"My grandfather, Asael Smith, long ago predicted that there would be a prophet raised up in his family, and my grandmother was fully satisfied that it was fulfilled in me. My grandfather Asael died in East Stockholm, St. Lawrence county, New York, after having received the Book of Mormon, and read it nearly through; and he declared that I was the very Prophet that he had long known would come in his family" (in *History of the Church*, 2:443).

Share your testimony of the Lord's preparation for the Restoration of the gospel through the Prophet Joseph Smith long before his birth. Joseph Smith was born into a family where he could develop character traits and learn truths that would prepare him to do the Lord's work.

Ask: What can parents do to encourage their children to live righteously?

Share the following testimony of President Brigham Young:

"The Lord had his eye upon him, and upon his father, and upon his father's father, and upon their progenitors clear back to Abraham, and from Abraham to the flood, from the flood to Enoch, and from Enoch to Adam. He has watched that family and that blood as it has circulated from its fountain to the birth of that man. He was foreordained in eternity to preside over this last dispensation" (in *Journal of Discourses*, 7:289–90).

Joseph's experiences and character traits prepared him to serve the Lord.

💡 Ask students: What are some of the character traits the Prophet Joseph Smith displayed?

Explain that young Joseph Smith had experiences in his youth that influenced him in later years. Using examples from the student manual (see pp. 3–4) and from the following three examples, share experiences from Joseph Smith's life. Invite students to suggest how each experience may have prepared Joseph Smith for the work the Lord foreordained him to do.

1. *Joseph Smith showed persistence during hardship.*

In 1816, Joseph Smith Sr. went to Palmyra, New York, with a Mr. Howard, to prepare for the family's subsequent move there. In the meantime, the family packed their belongings and prepared to leave as soon as they received a letter from Joseph's father requesting that they join him. The family was to travel with another Mr. Howard, who was a cousin of the man who had gone to Palmyra with Joseph's father.

Lucy Mack Smith, Joseph's mother, soon discovered that "the man who drove the team in which we rode was an unprincipled, unfeeling wretch by the manner in which he handled my goods and money, as well as his treatment of my children, especially Joseph." Joseph was only 10 years old at the time and not yet fully recovered from his leg operation (see pp. 3–4 of the student manual). Lucy recalled, "This child was compelled by Mr. Howard to travel for miles at a time on foot, though he was still somewhat lame" (*History of Joseph Smith by His Mother*, ed. Scot Facer Proctor and Maurine Jensen Proctor [1996], 84).

Many years later, Joseph wrote of his experience: "Howard drove me from the waggon & and made me travel in my weak state through the snow 40 miles per day for several days, during which time I suffered the most excruciating weariness & pain . . . & when my brothers remonstrated with Mr Howard for

his treatment to me, he would knock them down with the butt of his whip” (in *The Papers of Joseph Smith*, ed. Dean C. Jessee, 2 vols. [1989–92], 1:268).

Ask students: What benefits could have come to Joseph from enduring his early hardships?

2. *Joseph Smith had an inclination to ponder.*

Lucy Mack Smith, Joseph’s mother, wrote that young Joseph “was less inclined to the study of books than any child we had, but much more given to reflection and deep study” (*History of Joseph Smith by His Mother*, 111).

Ask students:

- How might Joseph’s ability to ponder and think deeply have contributed to his work in life?
- How does pondering relate to revelation? (see 1 Nephi 11:1; D&C 138:1).

3. *Joseph Smith worked hard.*

“The enemies of Joseph Smith have made out over and over that he was shiftless, lazy, indolent, that he never did a day’s work in his life. But a document exists that contains reported recollections about Joseph Smith as recorded by Martha Cox. One of these comes from a woman, identified as Mrs. Palmer, who knew him in his early life when she was a child. As a girl—years younger than him, apparently—she watched him with others of the boys working on her father’s farm. Far from his being indolent, the truth is that, according to this account, her father hired Joseph because he was such a good worker” (Truman G. Madsen, *Joseph Smith the Prophet* [1989], 9).

Mrs. Palmer remembered that her father thought Joseph was “the best help he had ever found.” Her father arranged the hoeing of his field when Joseph was available because when Joseph worked with the other boys of the neighborhood, “the work went steadily forward, and [her father] got the full worth of the wages he paid” (“Stories from Notebook of Martha Cox,” Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; spelling and punctuation standardized).

Ask students:

- What benefits can come from learning to work hard early in life?
- Why do you think the enemies of Joseph Smith sought to portray him as lazy and dishonest?

Joseph Smith’s First Vision is the pivotal event of the Restoration.

- 💡 Show a door hinge and ask students to describe its function (it holds the door solidly onto the door frame and allows the door to swing freely at the pivot point). Have students suggest an event in Church history that could be referred to as a hinge for the Restoration. Discuss their suggestions.

Share the following statement from President Gordon B. Hinckley:

“Every claim we make concerning divine authority, every truth that we offer concerning the validity of this work, [finds its] roots in the First Vision of the boy prophet. This was the great curtain-raiser on the dispensation of the fulness of times, when God promised that He would restore all the power, the gifts, the blessings, of all previous dispensations in one great summing up. . . . That [event] becomes the hinge pin on which this whole cause turns. If the First Vision was true, if it actually happened, then the Book of Mormon is true. Then we have the priesthood. Then we have the Church organization and all of the other keys and blessings of authority which we say we have. Now, it is just that simple. Everything . . . turns on the reality of that first vision” (in “Messages of Inspiration from President Hinckley,” *Church News*, Feb. 1, 1997, 2).

Ask: What reasons did President Hinckley give for considering the First Vision as a hinge pin of the Restoration? (Invite a student to list the students’ answers on the board; see also James E. Faust, in Conference Report, Apr. 1984, 92–93; or *Ensign*, May 1984, 68.)

Invite students to share their feelings about the First Vision and why a knowledge of its truth is important to their testimony.

Read Joseph Smith—History 1:15–16. Ask: Why do you think Satan made such a strong attempt to stop young Joseph Smith from praying?

Joseph Smith’s suffering and trials strengthened him.

💡 Invite students to list examples of tribulations and suffering from the life of the Prophet Joseph Smith. You may want to refer them beforehand to the following sections in the student manual: “Joseph Smith Was Persecuted and Ridiculed for His Witness That God Had Spoken to Him” (p. 6), “The First 116 Pages Were Lost” (pp. 9–10), “The Loss Was a Learning Experience” (p. 10), “He Was Tried in Richmond and Imprisoned in Liberty Jail” (pp. 13–14).

Ask: Why do you think the Prophet Joseph Smith faced so many tribulations? Then share the following statements illustrating Joseph Smith’s perspective on affliction:

“I am like a huge, rough stone rolling down from a high mountain; and the only polishing I get is when some corner gets rubbed off by coming in contact with something else, striking with accelerated force against religious bigotry, priestcraft, lawyer-craft, doctor-craft, lying editors, suborned judges and jurors, and the authority of perjured executives, backed by mobs, blasphemers, licentious and corrupt men and women—all hell knocking off a corner here and a corner there. Thus I will become a smooth and polished shaft in the quiver of the Almighty” (*History of the Church*, 5:401).

“All your losses will be made up to you in the resurrection, provided you continue faithful. By the vision of the Almighty I have seen it” (*History of the Church*, 5:362).


President John Taylor related:

“I heard the Prophet Joseph say, in speaking to the Twelve on one occasion: ‘You will have all kinds of trials to pass through. And it is quite as necessary for you to be tried as it was for Abraham and other men of God, and (said he) God will feel after you, and He will take hold of you and wrench your very heart strings, and if you cannot stand it you will not be fit for an inheritance in the Celestial Kingdom of God’ ” (in *Journal of Discourses*, 24:197).

Ask the following questions:

- Why are the Lord’s servants not always shielded from persecution and affliction?
- What can you learn from the Prophet Joseph Smith’s example that might help you face your own problems?

Joseph Smith enjoyed participating in wholesome recreation.

 The Prophet Joseph Smith enjoyed physical activities. Those who knew him recalled him enjoying recreation with children and adults. He used these moments as a diversion from his more serious activities. Refer students to “Joseph Smith Loved Physical Contests” in the student manual (p. 16). You may also want to share some of the following accounts:

“We were encamped in Adam Ondi Ahman and mostly around camp fires without tents. One night the snow fell 4 or 5 inches on us. . . . The Prophet seeing our forlorn condition called on us to form into two parties in battle array. Lyman Wight at the head of one line, and he (Joseph the Prophet) heading the other line and have a sham battle and the weapons to be used were snow balls, and we set to with a will full of glee and fun. . . . Thus, the Prophet was cheerful—often wrestling with Sidney Rigdon and he had his pants torn badly but had a good laugh over it” (Edward Stevenson, in “Autobiography: the Life and History of Elder Edward Stevenson,” Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 32; spelling and punctuation standardized).

“He was brimming over with the noblest and purest of human nature, which often gave vent in innocent amusements—in playing ball, in wrestling with his brothers and scuffling with them, and enjoying himself; he was not like a man with a stake run down his back, and with his face cast in a brazen mold that he could not smile, that he had no joy in his heart. O, he was full of joy; he was full of gladness; he was full of love, and of every other noble attribute that makes men great and good, and at the same time simple and innocent, so that he could descend to the lowest condition; and he had power, by the grace of God, to comprehend the purposes of the Almighty too. That was the character of the Prophet Joseph Smith. And while he could play with children and amuse himself at simple, innocent games among men, he also communed with the Father and the Son and spoke with angels” (Joseph F. Smith, discourse given at memorial services in honor of Joseph Smith’s birthday, Dec. 23, 1894, published in *Salt Lake Herald Church and Farm Supplement*, Jan. 12, 1895, 211; spelling and punctuation standardized).

William Allred, a contemporary of Joseph Smith, remembered the Prophet's explanation for his games and sports:

“I have played ball with him many times in Nauvoo. He was preaching once, and he said it tried some of the pious folks to see him play ball with the boys. He then related a story of a certain prophet who was sitting under the shade of a tree amusing himself in some way, when a hunter came along with his bow and arrow, and reproved him. The prophet asked him if he kept his bow strung up all the time. The hunter answered that he did not. The prophet asked why, and he said it would lose its elasticity if he did. The prophet said it was just so with his mind, he did not want it strung up all the time” (William M. Allred, in “Recollections of the Prophet Joseph Smith,” *Juvenile Instructor*, Aug. 1, 1892, 472).

Ask the following questions:

- Why is it meaningful to know that the Prophet enjoyed wholesome recreation?
- In what ways can appropriate recreation influence us in our daily lives? (see “Joseph Smith Loved Physical Contests” in the student manual, p. 16).

The Prophet Joseph Smith has become known “for good and evil among all nations.”

- 💡 Read with students Joseph Smith—History 1:33. Discuss why this prophecy is so remarkable by asking: Considering Joseph Smith’s education and social status, why is this such an amazing prophecy? (Emphasize that his name would be known among *all* nations and *all* people.)

Share the following statement from President Gordon B. Hinckley regarding this prophecy:

“How could a farm boy, largely without formal education, have dared to say such a thing? And yet it has all come to pass and will continue to increase as this restored gospel is taught across the world” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1998, 4; or *Ensign*, May 1998, 6).

Tell students that while serving a mission in Tonga, Elder John H. Groberg of the Presidency of the Seventy decided to test that prophecy about the name of Joseph Smith. Then share the following summary:

Elder Groberg and his companion sailed to the island of Tafahi, located about eight miles from their home island of Niuatoputapu. About 80 people lived on Tafahi. Like the people on Niuatoputapu, the people on Tafahi had no running water or electricity, but they were even more isolated from the outside world since they had no telegraph or scheduled boats.

When Elder Groberg visited, the island had only 18 homes, and the missionaries visited each one. He wrote: “At the last home, a strange thought occurred to me, ‘Why don’t you test the prophecy that the name of Joseph Smith should be known for good and evil throughout the world?’ I don’t know why the thought came, but it did.”

The missionaries asked the family if they had ever heard of the president of the United States. “Who’s he?” and “Where’s the United States?” was their response. Elder Groberg reported: “I tried to explain where it was, but they couldn’t understand. They asked how big an island it was. I replied that it was a very big island, thousands of miles away with millions of people living on it. I told them that many people there had never even seen the ocean and that many people didn’t know one another. They couldn’t comprehend that.”

He then asked if they had heard of Russia and France and their leaders; he asked about movie stars, sports figures, and world political leaders. They knew nothing of these places or people, nor of world events such as the Depression and the Korean War.

Elder Groberg recalled: “There was not a member of the Church living on this island, although there were two other churches there. I took a deep breath and said, ‘Have you ever heard of Joseph Smith?’ ”

“Immediately their faces lit up. Everyone looked at me, and the father said, ‘Don’t talk to us about that false prophet! Not in our home! We know all about him. Our minister has told us!’ I could hardly believe what I was hearing. The scripture . . . sounded in my mind that Joseph’s name should be had for good and evil among all nations. . . . To me this was a direct fulfillment of prophecy.

“I am convinced that you could hardly get a place more remote, more out of touch with modern civilization, than the little island of Tafahi. The people there knew nothing of the great leaders of the day—political, economic, or otherwise—but they knew the name *Joseph Smith*. In this case they knew it for ill, at least to begin with. I spent the next few days explaining more of the mission of the Prophet Joseph Smith, and before we left, a few of them knew his name for good” (*In the Eye of the Storm* [1993], 104–6).

Ask students:

- What experiences have you had when speaking about the Prophet Joseph Smith to people of other faiths?
- What evidence do you find that this prophecy is still being fulfilled?


PART 2: THE LATER YEARS

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Joseph Smith was a prophet and witness of the Lord Jesus Christ. Through him the Lord restored the knowledge, authority, keys, and ordinances by which people receive the blessings of exaltation. Ancient prophets gave him knowledge and priesthood authority, and with this knowledge and authority he taught the Saints the purpose of temples and how to build them. He understood that those holy edifices were so important that the work had to be accomplished, even at great sacrifice. Although the Prophet Joseph did not live to see the completion of the Nauvoo Temple, the Lord revealed the ordinances to be performed in the temple through him so others could continue temple work after his death.

EVENTS, HIGHLIGHTS, AND TEACHINGS

Ancient prophets taught about the Prophet Joseph Smith.

 Tell students that it is best to go to an original source to learn truth. Explain that as one person relates details and facts he or she has heard or learned to another person, the details often change from the original source. Throughout the Great Apostasy, many gospel truths were modified or lost. The true Church had to be restored with proper authority from the Lord (see 2 Thessalonians 2:1–3). This restoration began with the appearance of the Father and the Son to Joseph Smith in 1820.

Remind students that although Joseph Smith had very little schooling during his early years, he learned and taught eternal truths. Ask students to read “Heavenly Tutors Were Sent to Joseph” in the student manual (p. 8). Then ask:

- From where could a young boy in the early 1800s learn accurate information about the church that Jesus Christ organized while He was on earth?
- Why did Joseph Smith also need to learn from heavenly messengers?
- How do the authenticity of a church and the validity of its ordinances depend on authority from God?

Tell students that much of what Joseph Smith needed to know to bring forth the Restoration was personally taught by past prophets and apostles. They taught him the truth of the gospel and gave him the keys and authority to perform ordinances. Ask students: Who were some past prophets or other heavenly messengers who visited Joseph Smith?

You may want to tell students that according to available records, Moroni visited Joseph Smith at least 22 times.

Share the following statement of President John Taylor:

“Joseph Smith . . . was set apart by the Almighty . . . to introduce the principles of life among the people, of which the Gospel is the grand power and influence, and through which salvation can extend to all peoples, all nations, all kindreds, all tongues and all worlds. It is the principle that brings life and immortality to light, and places us in communication with God. . . . The principles which [Joseph Smith] had, placed him in communication with the Lord, and not only with the Lord, but with the ancient apostles and prophets; such men, for instance, as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Noah, Adam, Seth, Enoch, and Jesus and the Father, and the apostles that lived on this continent as well as those who lived on the Asiatic continent. He seemed to be as familiar with these people as we are with one another. Why? Because he had to introduce a dispensation which was called the dispensation of the fulness of times, and it was known as such by the ancient servants of God. . . . It is a dispensation in which all other dispensations are merged or concentrated. It embraces and embodies all the other dispensations that have existed upon the earth wherein God communicated himself to the human family” (in *Journal of Discourses*, 21:94).

Review with students information in the following chart of some of the heavenly beings who appeared to the Prophet Joseph Smith. You may want to make an overhead or handout of it. (See also D&C 128:21.)

SOME APPEARANCES OF HEAVENLY MESSENGERS TO THE PROPHET JOSEPH SMITH		
PERSONAGES	PURPOSE OF APPEARANCE	SELECTED REFERENCES
God the Father and Jesus Christ	Open the last dispensation	Joseph Smith—History 1:17
Jesus Christ	Accept the Kirtland Temple	D&C 110:2–10
Moroni	Instruct and bestow the plates and Urim and Thummim	Joseph Smith—History 1:30–49, 59
John the Baptist	Confer the Aaronic Priesthood and its keys	D&C 13; <i>History of the Church</i> , 1:39–40
Peter, James, and John	Confer the Melchizedek Priesthood and its keys	D&C 27; 128:20; <i>History of the Church</i> , 1:40–42
Moses	Confer the keys to gather Israel and the ten tribes	D&C 110:11
Elias	Commit the dispensation of the gospel of Abraham	D&C 110:12
Elijah	Confer sealing power	D&C 110:13–16
Adam (Michael)	Instruct	D&C 128:21; <i>History of the Church</i> , 2:380; 3:388
Noah (Gabriel)	Instruct	D&C 128:21
Raphael	Instruct	D&C 128:21
“Divers angels”	Declare their respective dispensations	D&C 128:21
Lehi	Instruct	Wilford Woodruff, in <i>Journal of Discourses</i> , 16:266
Nephi	Instruct	Woodruff, in <i>Journal of Discourses</i> , 16:266; John Taylor, in <i>Journal of Discourses</i> , 17:374; 21:161
Mormon	Instruct	Taylor, in <i>Journal of Discourses</i> , 17:374
(Adapted from Brian L. Smith, “I Have a Question,” <i>Ensign</i> , Oct. 1994, 63.)		

Joseph Smith's ministry has eternal consequences.

- 💡 Explain that a critical part of the Prophet Joseph Smith's ministry involved temples and temple ordinances. He led the Saints in building temples in Kirtland and Nauvoo. Three additional temples were planned in Missouri (Independence, Far West, and Adam-ondi-Ahman), but persecution and violence prevented their construction. Joseph Smith taught about ordinance work for the dead. During the final two years of his life, he introduced the endowment to nearly ninety men and women and gave instructions and keys to the Twelve Apostles concerning temple ordinances.

Invite students to read Malachi 4:5–6. Discuss how temple work turns the hearts of fathers and children to each other and how the sealing power increases love and unity in families.

The Lord blessed the Saints in their efforts to build temples.

- 💡 Explain that the first temples in the latter days were built under the direction of the Prophet Joseph Smith. Review with students “The Saints Were Commanded to Build a Temple” in the student manual (pp. 11–12), and then share the following discussion the Prophet's mother, Lucy Mack Smith, recorded in the summer of 1833 about building a temple in Kirtland:

“In this council Joseph requested each of the brethren to rise and give his views, and when they were through, he would give his opinion concerning the matter. They all spoke. Some thought that it would be better to build a frame house. Others said that a frame house was too costly, and the majority concluded upon putting up a log house and made their calculations about what they could do towards building it. Joseph rose and reminded them that they were not making a house for themselves or any other man, but a house for God. ‘And shall we, brethren, build a house for our God of logs? No, I have a better plan than that. I have the plan of the house of the Lord, given by himself. You will see by this the difference between our calculations and his idea of things.’

“He then gave them the full plan of the house of the Lord at Kirtland, with which the brethren were highly delighted, particularly Hyrum, who was twice as much animated as if it were designed for himself, and declared that he would strike the first blow towards building the house.

“Before the meeting closed, they resolved upon laying the cornerstone one week from the succeeding Wednesday. ‘Now, brethren,’ said Joseph, ‘let us go select a place for the building.’ They all went out, and when they came to a certain field of wheat, which my sons had sown the fall before, they chose a spot in the northwest corner. Hyrum ran to the house and caught the scythe and was about returning to the place without giving any explanation, but I stopped him and asked him where he was going with the scythe. He said, ‘We are preparing to build a house for the Lord, and I am determined to be the first at the work.’

“In a few minutes, the fence was removed, the young wheat cut, and the ground in order for the foundation of the wall, and Hyrum commenced digging away the earth where the stones were to be laid. This was Saturday night. Early Monday morning, the brethren were out with their teams,

laboring with great ambition at digging a trench for the wall, quarrying stone and hauling it to the place where they were to be used” (*The History of Joseph Smith by His Mother, Revised and Enhanced*, ed. Scot Facer Proctor and Maurine Jensen Proctor [1996], 321–22).

Ask students:

- Why do you think the brethren were so anxious to begin work on the temple?
- In what ways did the financial situation of the Saints affect the work on the temple?
- Why would it matter what materials were used to build the temple?

Point out that with only limited funds to build the temple, many Saints found other ways to help. You may want to refer to the following descriptions and discuss the sacrifices required of the Prophet and the Saints to build the temple in Kirtland:

“When I got to Kirtland the brethren were engaged in building the house of the Lord. . . . The church was in a state of poverty and distress, . . . at the same time our enemies were raging and threatening destruction upon us, and we had to guard ourselves night after night, and for weeks were not permitted to take off our clothes, and were obliged to lay with our fire locks in our arms” (Heber C. Kimball, “Extract from the Journal of Elder Heber C. Kimball,” *Times and Seasons*, Jan. 15, 1845, 771).

“Our women were engaged in spinning and knitting in order to clothe those who were laboring at the building, and the Lord only knows the scenes of poverty, tribulation, and distress which we passed through in order to accomplish this thing. My wife toiled all summer in lending her aid towards its accomplishment. She had a hundred pounds of wool, which, with the assistance of a girl, she spun in order to furnish clothing for those engaged in the building of the Temple, and although she had the privilege of keeping half the quantity of wool for herself, as a recompense for her labor, she did not reserve even so much as would make her a pair of stockings; but gave it for those who were laboring at the house of the Lord. She spun and wove and got the cloth dressed, and cut and made up into garments, and gave them to those men who labored on the Temple; almost all the sisters in Kirtland labored in knitting, sewing, spinning, &c., for the purpose of forwarding the work of the Lord, while we went up to Missouri to endeavor to reinstate our brethren on their lands, from which they had been driven. . . . After we returned from our journey to the west [on Zion’s Camp], the whole church united in this undertaking, and every man lent a helping hand. Those who had no teams went to work in the stone quarry and prepared the stones for drawing to the house. President Joseph Smith jr. being our foreman in the quarry. The Presidency, High Priests, and Elders all alike assisting.—Those who had teams assisted in drawing the stone to the house. These all laboring one day in the week, brought as many stones to the house as supplied the masons through the whole week. We continued

in this manner until the walls of the house were reared” (Heber C. Kimball, “Extracts from H. C. Kimball’s Journal,” *Times and Seasons*, Apr. 15, 1845, 867–68).

“Artemus Millet and Lorenzo Young . . . [supervised] the plastering of the temple exterior. This work was accomplished between November 2, 1835, and January 8, 1836. The stucco used on the outside walls was composed of crushed limestone mixed with clay and bluish river sand. Dishes and glassware were pulverized and mixed with the stucco so that the bluish-tinted walls glistened in the light of the sun” (Milton V. Backman Jr., *The Heavens Resound: A History of the Latter-day Saints in Ohio, 1830–1838* [1983], 157).

Ask students:

- In what ways can the sacrifice of time and money strengthen members of the Church?
- What are some ways we can help in temple work? (Answers may include attending temple preparation classes, attending the temple whenever possible, and participating in family history work.)

Explain that while the devil opposes temples, the heavens rejoice as they are built and used. Review with students “Miraculous Manifestations Accompanied the Building and Dedication of the Kirtland Temple” in the student manual (pp. 12–13), and discuss the special manifestations that occurred during the temple completion and dedication.

Ask students to read Acts 2:1–4. Ask: In what ways was the spiritual outpouring on the day of Pentecost similar to the manifestations that occurred at the time of the Kirtland Temple dedication?

Even when imprisoned, the Prophet Joseph Smith displayed courage and compassion.

💡 Read with students Elder Parley P. Pratt’s experience from “He Was Tried in Richmond and Imprisoned in Liberty Jail” in the student manual (pp. 13–14). Then ask the following questions:

- What do you think gave the Prophet courage to respond to the vile stories and foul language?
- How can his example help you when you face social circumstances that offend the Spirit?

Refer to the last paragraphs of “He Was Tried in Richmond and Imprisoned in Liberty Jail” in the student manual (p. 14), which describes the Prophet Joseph Smith’s response while in Liberty Jail to reports of persecution and suffering of the Saints. Ask students: What do the Prophet’s pleas of concern for the Saints tell us about his character and leadership?

Have students read through Doctrine and Covenants 122, and ask: What part of the Lord’s answer to the Prophet Joseph Smith is most significant to you?

Joseph Smith forgave those who betrayed him.

💡 Ask students: Why is betrayal such a painful experience?

Explain that Joseph Smith suffered many trials because some men who betrayed him were once his friends and fellow Church leaders. Regardless of how severely these betrayers had acted toward him, the Prophet welcomed them back into the Church if they repented. Share the following example:

Although he had been a leader of the Church in Missouri, William W. Phelps became embittered toward the Prophet Joseph Smith. In 1838 his testimony during a trial helped send the Prophet and other Church leaders to Liberty Jail. But two years later he repented and wrote a letter to the Prophet, pleading for forgiveness:

“I am as the prodigal son, though I never doubt or disbelieve the fulness of the Gospel. . . .

“I have seen the folly of my way, and I tremble at the gulf I have passed. . . . Says I, ‘I will repent and live, and ask my old brethren to forgive me, and though they chasten me to death, yet I will die with them, for their God is my God. The least place with them is enough for me, yea, it is bigger and better than all Babylon.’ . . .

“I know my situation, you know it, and God knows it, and I want to be saved if my friends will help me. . . . I have done wrong and I am sorry. The beam is in my own eye. I have not walked along with my friends according to my holy anointing. I ask forgiveness in the name of Jesus Christ of all the Saints, for I will do right, God helping me. I want your fellowship; if you cannot grant that, grant me your peace and friendship, for we are brethren, and our communion used to be sweet, and whenever the Lord brings us together again, I will make all the satisfaction on every point that Saints or God can require” (*History of the Church*, 4:141–42).

In his response to Brother Phelps’s letter, the Prophet wrote:

“It is true, that we have suffered much in consequence of your behavior—the cup of gall, already full enough for mortals to drink, was indeed filled to overflowing when you turned against us. . . .

“However, the cup has been drunk, the will of our Father has been done, and we are yet alive, for which we thank the Lord. And having been delivered from the hands of wicked men by the mercy of our God, we say it is your privilege to be delivered from the powers of the adversary, be brought into the liberty of God’s dear children, and again take your stand among the Saints of the Most High, and by diligence, humility, and love unfeigned, commend yourself to our God, and your God, and to the Church of Jesus Christ.

“Believing your confession to be real, and your repentance genuine, I shall be happy once again to give you the right hand of fellowship, and rejoice over the returning prodigal. . . .

“ ‘Come on, dear brother, since the war is past, For friends at first, are friends again at last’ ” (*History of the Church*, 4:163–64).

Ask students: What can you learn about Joseph Smith from his response to William Phelps's letter?

Nauvoo was a place of gathering and organization for the Church.

💡 Write the following list on the board and ask students to suggest what these events have in common. (They all took place in Nauvoo or when the main body of the Church was in Nauvoo.)

- The Relief Society was organized.
- Ordinance work for the dead was revealed, announced, and begun.
- The Articles of Faith were written.
- A militia was organized.
- A university was created.
- The first wards were created.
- Hundreds of British converts immigrated.

Summarize “The Saints Find Refuge at Nauvoo” in the student manual (p. 14) and discuss why Nauvoo could be considered to have been a refuge for the Prophet and members of the Church. Share the following observations:

“The first significant event of the Nauvoo period was the decision early in 1839 to congregate as a Church in Nauvoo, then known as Commerce, in Hancock County, Illinois. It was not entirely the desolate swampland sometimes remembered in some personal histories. But to the Saints it was a place of refuge and a land of opportunity. Lying low along the Mississippi, soggy in places from the high water table and unhealthy during the mosquito season, it stretched inland over rich farmlands” (Glen M. Leonard and T. Edgar Lyon, “The Nauvoo Years,” *Ensign*, Sept. 1979, 11).

The city grew quickly as new converts immigrated to the area. “Commerce was soon being promoted as the central gathering place. By summer it was unofficially renamed Nauvoo, a word that the Prophet said was derived from the Hebrew and suggested a beautiful place of rest. The following spring federal officials renamed the Commerce post office Nauvoo, and in December 1840 state legislators granted the city a charter” (James B. Allen and Glen M. Leonard, *The Story of the Latter-day Saints*, 2nd ed., rev. and enl. [1992], 156).

“Nauvoo had grown to 2,450 residents when the census of 1840 was taken, making it similar in size to Quincy and Springfield and half the size of Chicago. Nauvoo increased by more than 30 percent during the next two years, then mushroomed. In 1845, near its peak, the city boasted 11,036 inhabitants, while Chicago that same year was not far ahead with 12,088. House building to accommodate Nauvoo's new families (and construction of public buildings and the temple) kept the city alive with industry” (Leonard and Lyon, *Ensign*, Sept. 1979, 12).

The Saints gathered to Nauvoo to receive the blessings of the temple.

💡 Tell students that on January 19, 1841, the Prophet Joseph Smith received a commandment to build a temple at Nauvoo, Illinois. Read with them Doctrine and Covenants 124:25–28, 31, 40–42. Then share the following teaching from the Prophet Joseph Smith:

“Why gather the people in this place? For the same purpose that Jesus wanted to gather the Jews—to receive the ordinances, the blessings, and the glories that God has in store for His Saints” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 312).

Ask students to raise their hands if they have participated in baptisms for the dead. Ask which temple they visited to do this work. Explain that ordinance work for the dead was not part of the restored Church until the Nauvoo era.

Share the following information on how and when the ordinance of baptism for the dead was first taught to the members of the Church:

- The first recorded teaching on the important work of baptism for the dead came during the Prophet’s sermon on August 15, 1840, at the funeral of Seymour Brunson, an early convert who joined the Church in Ohio in January 1831.
- In a revelation on January 19, 1841, the Lord told the Saints He would accept baptisms outside the temple only until they had enough time to build a temple and a baptismal font (see D&C 124:31–32).
- Baptisms for the dead continued to be performed outside the temple until October 3, 1841, when the Prophet declared in a conference of the Church, “There shall be no more baptisms for the dead, until the ordinance can be attended to in the Lord’s House” (*History of the Church*, 4:426).
- Later, the Prophet gave further instructions regarding this ordinance (see D&C 127–28).

Tell students that on May 4, 1842, the Prophet Joseph Smith invited several leading brethren of the Church to the room above his store and administered to them the first temple endowments. He recorded that he spent the day with these brethren “instructing them in the principles and order of the Priesthood, attending to washings, anointings, endowments and the communication of keys pertaining to the Aaronic Priesthood, and so on to the highest order of the Melchisedek Priesthood.” He added that this knowledge would be communicated to the rest of the Saints “so soon as they are prepared to receive, and a proper place is prepared to communicate them” (*History of the Church*, 5:2).

Ask:

- What doctrines did Joseph Smith reveal during this foundational period in the history of the Church?
- How do the revelations on temple work bless you and your family?

Invite students who have attended a temple dedication to think about how it was different from most other Church meetings. (Encourage them to think more about the spirit of the experience than the specific events that occurred.) Ask them:

- What personal preparation should be made for individuals to feel the Spirit during temple dedications?
- In what ways do temples assist in taking the gospel to every nation where possible?

Joseph Smith has influenced many people for good.

💡 Have students consider the most influential person in their lives. Ask them to think about the following questions:

- Why has this person influenced you so much?
- How might your life have been different if you had not known this person?

Have students consider what they know about the Prophet Joseph Smith and apply the previous two questions to him. Invite students to share their responses.

Many people honor Joseph Smith's prophetic calling.

💡 Read with students Doctrine and Covenants 135:3. Invite them to list and discuss examples of how this statement of Elder John Taylor, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, is true.

Give students time to read silently “He Was a Prophet, Seer, Revelator, Restorer, Witness, Martyr” and “He Is the Great Prophet of This Dispensation” in the student manual (pp. 17–19). Then share the following statements:

Josiah Quincy, who later became the mayor of Boston, visited Nauvoo in May 1844. Years later he recalled his visit with the Prophet: “It is by no means improbable that some future text-book, for the use of generations yet unborn, will contain a question something like this: What historical American of the nineteenth century has exerted the most powerful influence upon the destinies of his countrymen? And it is by no means impossible that the answer to that interrogatory may be thus written: Joseph Smith, the Mormon prophet” (*Figures of the Past from the Leaves of Old Journals* [1883], 376).

Elder Gordon B. Hinckley, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, shared the following experience:

“When I was a boy, twelve years of age, my father took me to a meeting of the priesthood of the stake in which we lived. I sat on the back row while he, as president of the stake, sat on the stand. At the opening of that meeting, the first of its kind I had ever attended, three or four hundred men stood. They were men from varied backgrounds and many vocations, but each had in his heart the same conviction, out of which together they sang these great words:

*Praise to the man who communed with Jehovah!
Jesus anointed that Prophet and Seer.
Blessed to open the last dispensation,
Kings shall extol him, and nations revere.
(Hymns, no. 147.)*

“Something happened within me as I heard those men of faith sing. There came into my boyish heart a knowledge, placed there by the Holy Spirit, that Joseph Smith was indeed a prophet of the Almighty. In the many years that have since passed, years in which I have read much of his words and works, that knowledge has grown stronger and ever more certain. Mine has been the privilege of bearing witness across this nation from sea to shining sea, and on continents north and south, east and west, that he was and is a prophet of God, a mighty servant and testifier of the Lord Jesus Christ” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1977, 97; or *Ensign*, May 1977, 66).

President Hinckley later said: “We sing that great hymn, ‘We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet.’ Whenever I hear it, I don’t think of myself. I think of the Prophet Joseph Smith, of the boy who went into the woods and prayed for light and understanding, unto whom God the Father and the risen Son appeared and spoke. This great and remarkable man was the instrument of God in bringing to us this marvelous Book of Mormon and the revelation found in the Doctrine and Covenants. Joseph Smith laid the foundation of this Church. If what he said was true, then it is all true, and I want to give my testimony that what he said is true” (in “Messages of Inspiration from President Hinckley,” *Church News*, Feb. 7, 1998, 2).

Sing “Praise to the Man” (*Hymns*, no. 27). Invite students to share how their lives have been blessed because of the Prophet Joseph Smith. Share with them your testimony of the Prophet.

CHAPTER 2

Brigham Young

SECOND PRESIDENT OF THE CHURCH



PART 1: THE EARLY YEARS

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Four years before the birth of Joseph Smith, a son, Brigham, was born to John and Abigail Howe Young, their ninth child. This son, born June 1, 1801, was a welcome addition to their family in Whitingham, Vermont. John Young, a veteran of the American Revolutionary War, would not have imagined that one day a statue of this son would be placed in Statuary Hall of the capitol building in Washington, D.C. Yet less than fifty years after his birth, Brigham Young became the political and spiritual leader of tens of thousands of people—governor of the Utah Territory and prophet of the Lord. However, to his parents, brothers, and sisters in 1801, Brigham was simply the new baby.

EVENTS, HIGHLIGHTS, AND TEACHINGS

Brigham Young’s parents and ancestors gave him a strong religious foundation.

💡 Ask students to discuss what good qualities they have learned from their parents or grandparents. Share the following tribute by President Brigham Young:

“My ancestors were some of the most strict religionists that lived upon the earth. You no doubt can say the same about yours. Of my mother—she that bore me—I can say, no better woman ever lived in the world than she was. . . .

“My mother, while she lived, taught her children all the time to honour the name of the Father and the Son, and to reverence the holy Book. She said, Read it, observe its precepts, and apply them to your lives as far as you can: do every thing that is good; do nothing that is evil; and if you see any persons in distress, administer to their wants: never suffer anger to arise in your bosoms; for, if you do, you may be overcome by evil” (in *Journal of Discourses*, 6:290).

Hard work and other challenges increased Brigham Young’s abilities.

💡 Ask if any students know details about Brigham Young’s life before he joined the Church, for example, what his occupation was. Have students search for these details in “Brigham Young Knew the Rigors of Life and Hard Work” and “He Excelled as a Craftsman” in the student manual (pp. 22–23). Ask:

- In what ways did hard work prepare Brigham Young for Church leadership?
- How can hard work in any endeavor help you prepare for the responsibilities you will have as a parent and Church member?

Brigham Young studied the scriptures and Church teachings carefully before joining the Church.

💡 Explain that Brigham Young was introduced to the Church shortly after it was organized. In 1828 he moved to Mendon, New York, a short distance from Fayette Township where the Church was later organized. In 1830 Samuel Smith, the brother of the Prophet Joseph Smith, sold a copy of the Book of Mormon to Phineas Young, Brigham Young’s brother. Phineas Young was impressed with the book and gave it to

his father. His father shared the book with Brigham's sister Fanny, who gave it to Brigham. Brigham Young studied the Book of Mormon and Church teachings for nearly two years before his baptism.

Review and discuss "He Searched for Spiritual Fulfillment" in the student manual (pp. 24–25). Have students look for answers to the following questions as they review that section:

- What were Brigham Young's spiritual desires?
- What frustrations did he have in seeking the truth?
- How can his example help you as you seek to strengthen your testimony?

Read "He Investigated the Claims of 'Mormonism' with Caution" in the student manual (p. 25) and ask why Brigham Young so cautiously investigated the restored gospel.

He loved, supported, and defended the Prophet Joseph.

💡 Ask students if they have ever heard someone defend a person's reputation against a group of critical people. Then ask why it takes courage to defend the reputation of others, especially when the people being defended are not present and may never know. Explain to students that in all circumstances, Brigham Young remained loyal to the Prophet Joseph Smith.

Review "He Was a Dedicated Disciple of the Lord and of the Lord's Prophet" in the student manual (pp. 26–27) and have students find examples of Brigham Young's loyalty to Joseph Smith. Read the following statement of Brigham Young about the Prophet:

"I feel like shouting, hallelujah, all the time, when I think that I ever knew Joseph Smith, the Prophet whom the Lord raised up and ordained, and to whom he gave keys and power to build up the kingdom of God on earth and sustain it. These keys are committed to this people, and we have power to continue the work that Joseph commenced, until everything is prepared for the coming of the Son of Man" (*Deseret News*, Oct. 31, 1855, 268).

Discuss the following example of Brigham Young's faithfulness to Joseph Smith. Brigham Young wrote:

"On a certain occasion several of the Twelve, the witnesses to the Book of Mormon, and others of the Authorities of the Church, held a council in the upper room of the [Kirtland] Temple. The question before them was to ascertain how the Prophet Joseph could be deposed, and David Whitmer appointed President of the Church. Father John Smith, brother Heber C. Kimball and others were present, who were opposed to such measures. I rose up, and in a plain and forcible manner told them that Joseph was a Prophet, and I knew it, and that they might rail and slander him as much as they pleased, they could not destroy the appointment of the Prophet of God, they could only destroy their own authority, cut the thread that bound them to the Prophet and to God and sink themselves to hell. Many were highly enraged at my decided opposition to their measures, and Jacob Bump (an old pugilist) was so exasperated that he could not be still.

Some of the brethren near him put their hands on him, and requested him to be quiet; but he writhed and twisted his arms and body saying, ‘How can I keep my hands off that man?’ I told him if he thought it would give him any relief he might lay them on. This meeting was broken up without the apostates being able to unite on any decided measures of opposition. This was a crisis when earth and hell seemed leagued to overthrow the Prophet and Church of God. The knees of many of the strongest men in the Church faltered.

“During this seige of darkness I stood close by Joseph, and, with all the wisdom and power God bestowed upon me, put forth my utmost energies to sustain the servant of God and unite the Quorums of the Church” (*Manuscript History of Brigham Young*, comp. Elden J. Watson, 2 vols. [1968–71], 1:15–17).

Ask: What obligations do members of the Church take upon themselves when they raise their hands during general, stake, and ward conferences to sustain the prophet? Share the following statement from Orson F. Whitney, who would later be a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. He described how Brigham Young loved and defended the Prophet during the Kirtland apostasy of 1837:


“It was well for Joseph [Smith] and for Mormonism in general that he decided to keep by him at that time the lion heart and intrepid soul of Brigham Young. Firm as a rock in his fealty to his chief, he combined sound judgment, keen perception, with courage unfaltering and sublime. Like lightnings were his intuitions, his decisions between right and wrong; like thunder his denunciations of what his soul conceived was error. A man for emergencies, far-sighted and inspirational; a master spirit and natural leader of men. . . .

“In that dark hour,—the darkest perhaps that Mormonism had seen,—when its very foundations seemed crumbling, when men supposed to be its pillars were weakening and falling away, joining hands secretly or openly with its enemies, the man Brigham never faltered, never failed in his allegiance to his leader, never ceased defending him against his accusers, and as boldly denouncing them betimes for falsehood, selfishness and treachery. His life was imperilled by his boldness. He heeded not, but steadily held on his way, an example of valor and fidelity, a faithful friend” (*History of Utah*, 4 vols. [1892–1904], 1:137).

Ask students:

- What enabled Brigham Young to resist opposition within the Church and support the Prophet Joseph Smith?
- What similar circumstances might young Latter-day Saints find themselves in today?

Brigham Young led the Church after the martyrdom of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

 Ask students: Who would be responsible for directing the affairs of the Church if the current Church President were to pass away? Explain that when the President of the Church dies, the First Presidency is dissolved and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, with the senior Apostle directing, governs the Church until a new

Church President is called and sustained. Early in this dispensation, the process was not well known to Church members.

Tell students that after the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, then President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, returned to Nauvoo on August 6, 1844, from his mission to the eastern United States. Two days later he presided over a meeting in Nauvoo to choose a successor to Joseph Smith. Sidney Rigdon, who had been a counselor to the Prophet Joseph Smith, tried to persuade the Church members to accept him (Sidney) as guardian of the Church, arguing that no one was capable of taking the Prophet Joseph's place. Before most of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles arrived in Nauvoo, Rigdon had journeyed from branch to branch, urging his case. His argument, however, was contrary to the instructions of the Prophet Joseph Smith, given prior to his death. Joseph Smith taught that leadership of the Church was to be under the direction of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

Share what President Wilford Woodruff later wrote concerning the final meeting the Prophet Joseph Smith had with the Apostles:

“The Prophet Joseph, I am now satisfied, had a thorough presentiment that that was the last meeting we would hold together here in the flesh. We had had our endowments; we had had all the blessings sealed upon our heads that were ever given to the apostles or prophets on the face of the earth. On that occasion the Prophet Joseph rose up and said to us: ‘Brethren, I have desired to live to see this temple built. I shall never live to see it, but you will. I have sealed upon your heads all the keys of the kingdom of God. I have sealed upon you every key, power, principle that the God of heaven has revealed to me. Now, no matter where I may go or what I may do, the kingdom rests upon you’ ” (“The Keys of the Kingdom,” *Millennial Star*, Sept. 2, 1889, 546).

Read and discuss “The Mantle of the Prophet Rested on Him” in the student manual (p. 30), and have students describe how the Lord indicated that Brigham Young was to be the next prophet. Ask them:

- What is the order of succession for a new Church President today?
- How may Church members obtain this testimony for themselves?

Share with students the following statement of Brigham Young concerning the Prophet Joseph Smith:

“Joseph Smith lived and died a prophet, and sealed his testimony with his blood. He lived a good man, and died a good man, and he was as good a man as ever lived. I never pretended to be Joseph Smith. I am not the man who brought forth the Book of Mormon, but I do testify to the truth of it. I am an apostle, to bear the testimony to the Gentiles of this last dispensation, and also to the Jews. . . . My feelings are the same as they were when I was baptized, to do the will of my God” (quoted in Preston Nibley, *Brigham Young, the Man and His Work* [1936], 147–48).

Ask: What qualities did Brigham Young exhibit in this statement and throughout his life?

Strong spirituality grounded Brigham Young's practical approach to life.

- 💡 Tell students that Brigham Young had great faith and trust in God. He recognized danger, but was not unduly concerned when the clear path of duty lay before him. Ask them how the following experience illustrates Brigham Young's faith in God:

"A few months after the martyrdom of Joseph the Prophet, in the autumn and winter of 1844 we did much hard labor on the Nauvoo temple, during which time it was difficult to get bread and other provisions for the workmen to eat. I counseled the committee who had charge of the temple funds to deal out all the flour they had, and God would give them more; and they did so; and it was but a short time before Brother Toronto came and brought me twenty-five hundred dollars in gold. The bishop and the committee met, and I met with them; and they said, that the law was to lay the gold at the apostles' feet. Yes, I said and I will lay it at the bishop's feet; so I opened the mouth of the bag and took hold at the bottom end, and gave it a jerk towards the bishop, and strewed the gold across the room and said now go and buy flour for the workmen on the temple and do not distrust the Lord any more; for we will have what we need" (Brigham Young, in B. H. Roberts, *Comprehensive History of the Church*, 2:472).

Explain that President Brigham Young and his colleagues wanted to stay in Illinois until the Nauvoo Temple was completed and adequate preparations were made for departure. The Church leaders assured the members, some of whom were surprised at the announcement, that the exodus was a well-planned transplanting necessary to give the Church the room it needed to grow. The October 1845 general conference was largely devoted to preparing for an orderly and unified withdrawal. The evacuation from western Illinois was originally planned for April 1846, but threats prompted an early, hasty exit. One threat was a warning by Governor Thomas Ford and others that federal troops planned to intercept the Mormons and destroy them.

Discuss the following letter the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles sent to Church members in 1847 as the Saints prepared to travel west:

"Come immediately and prepare to go West—bringing with you all kinds of choice seeds, of grain, vegetables, fruits, shrubbery, trees, and vines, every thing that will please the eye, gladden the heart, or cheer the soul of man, that grows upon the face of the whole earth; also, the best stock of beast—bird and fowl of every kind; also, the best tools of every description, and machinery for spinning, or weaving, and dressing cotton, wool, flax, and silk, &c., &c., or models and descriptions of the same, by which they can construct them; and the same in relation to all kinds of farming utensils and husbandry, such as corn shellers, grain threshers and cleaners, smut machines, mills, and every implement and article within their knowledge that shall tend to promote the comfort, health, happiness,

or prosperity of any people. So far as it can be consistently done, bring models and drafts, and let the machinery be built where it is used, which will save great expense in transportation, particularly in heavy machinery, and tools and implements generally” (“General Epistle from the Council of the Twelve Apostles, to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Abroad, Dispersed Throughout the Earth,” *Journal History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, Dec. 23, 1847, Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints).

Explain to students that Brigham Young was recognized for his remarkable ability to lead in temporal as well as spiritual matters. Discuss the following questions after reading with students “He Showed a Blend of the Practical and the Spiritual” in the student manual (pp. 35–36).

- If the Prophet Joseph Smith is credited for laying the foundation of the Church, how would you describe President Brigham Young’s work?
- In what ways was Brigham Young involved with temporal matters in the newly settled territory?
- How did he use his talents to build communities?

Review in the student manual “His Courage, Faith, and Sense of Humor Were Examples for the Saints” (p. 31) and “His Humor and Love Were Appreciated” (p. 38). Ask students:

- What do these accounts show about Brigham Young’s sense of humor?
- How might Brigham Young’s sense of humor have helped him lead the Saints?
- How can the appropriate use of humor help as we fulfill our many responsibilities?

Brigham Young believed that the Constitution of the United States was inspired of God.

💡 Tell students that as the Saints prepared in Iowa for the long trek west, a war began between Mexico and the United States. The president of the United States invited Church members to enlist and help fight in the war. At the request of Brigham Young, around 500 men volunteered to serve in what came to be known as the Mormon Battalion. (*Note: “Part Two: The Later Years” contains more information about the Mormon Battalion.*) Although the Saints knew that representatives of the government had done little to stop the persecutions against them, they understood that the principles upon which the United States were formed were inspired of God.

Ask students:


- What were some of the key factors Brigham Young would have to consider before sending so many men to the Battalion? (For example, they were all preparing to move west and would need many able-bodied men to help.)
- Why would it have been difficult for Church members to support the U.S. government at that time?

Share the following statement of Brigham Young about the Constitution of the United States:

“The general Constitution of our country is good, and a wholesome government could be framed upon it, for it was dictated by the invisible operations of the Almighty. . . .

“Will the Constitution be destroyed? No; It will be held inviolate by this people; and, as Joseph Smith said, ‘the time will come when the destiny of the nation will hang upon a single thread; at that critical juncture, this people will step forth and save it from the threatened destruction.’ It will be so” (Journal History, July 4, 1854, Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints).

Brigham Young taught the importance of education and wholesome recreation.

 Invite students to discuss how their lives would be different if they had less education. Brigham Young strongly encouraged learning even though he had little formal education himself. He enjoyed the arts and encouraged people to develop their talents whenever possible.

Review and discuss the section “He Supported Education and the Cultural Arts” in the student manual (pp. 37–38). Share the following statements by Brigham Young:

“The education of youth is an important text for the brethren to preach from. A very high value should be placed upon it by the Saints. We have the privilege of enjoying the spirit of revelation and the knowledge which comes from above, and in addition to this, every branch of education known in the world should be taught among and acquired by us. All the arts and sciences, and every branch of mechanism known and understood by man should be understood by this people” (in *Journal of Discourses*, 13:263).

“Go to work and start some schools, go to school and study; have the girls go, and teach them chemistry, so that they can take any of these rocks and analyze them. The sciences can be learned without much difficulty. I want to have schools and entertain the minds of the people and draw them out to learn the arts and sciences. Send the old children to school, and the young ones also; there is nothing I would like better than to learn chemistry, botany, geology, and mineralogy, so that I could tell what I walk on, the properties of the air I breathe, what I drink, etc.” (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, sel. John A. Widtsoe [1954], 253).

Ask students:

- Why do you think Brigham Young had such a love for learning?
- In what ways can education influence a person’s future?
- In what ways can an education benefit you and the Church?

Tell students that although Brigham Young believed strongly in mental exertion, he also recognized the importance of physical activity and relaxation. Read and discuss the following statement of President Young:

“The mind of a man who is wholly devoted to the Church and kingdom of God on the earth is powerfully exercised. . . . The minds of such men are exercised from morning until morning again, and they labour more unhealthily than a person does at mowing or chopping wood, and their minds become weary. What do they need? A little relaxation. . . .

“My mind becomes tired, and perhaps some of yours do. If so, go and exercise your bodies. . . .

“If you want to dance, run a foot-race, pitch quoits [a game similar to ring toss], or play at ball, do it, and exercise your bodies, and let your minds rest.

“The blessings of food, sleep, and social enjoyment are ordained of God for his glory and our benefit, and it is for us to learn to use them and not abuse them, that his kingdom may advance on the earth, and we advance in it” (in *Journal of Discourses*, 6:147–49).

Ask: How would you apply President Young’s statement to the lifestyle of today’s Latter-day Saint?

PART 2: THE LATER YEARS


HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

When Brigham Young became President of the Church on December 5, 1847, he presided over nearly 35,000 members, with one stake and five missions in the Church. When the Saints were driven west, they were forced to leave Nauvoo and their newly dedicated temple. Over the next 30 years, as Brigham Young presided over the Church, more than 80,000 Latter-day Saints crossed the plains and settled in the West.

President Brigham Young presided over the Church longer than anyone else in this dispensation. As a colonizer he had few peers. Within ten years after the Saints settled in the Great Basin, they had colonized nearly 800,000 square miles of territory. The settlements stretched for over 1,000 miles from Canada to Mexico and 800 miles from California to Wyoming. In 1877, the year of Brigham Young's death, the Church had over 115,000 members, with 20 stakes, 8 missions, and a dedicated temple in St. George, Utah. Other Utah temples in Logan, Manti, and Salt Lake City were under construction (see *2003 Church Almanac* [2003], 473, 631).

EVENTS, HIGHLIGHTS, AND TEACHINGS

Brigham Young learned by experience to lead the Saints.

 Read with the students “He Helped Lead the Saints out of Missouri and into Illinois” and “He Prepared for Leadership” in the student manual (pp. 29–30). Have them look for qualities that made Brigham Young a great leader. List several responses on the board.

Discuss the challenges President Brigham Young faced in the decades following the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith. Ask students to list on the board as many of his challenges as they can. These challenges included:


- Preserving unity and order in the Church in the months and years following the Martyrdom.
- Preparing the Saints to move west—building wagons, gathering supplies, studying maps, and so on.
- Protecting the Saints until they were ready to move west.
- Completing the temple in Nauvoo and administering ordinances there.
- Evacuating Nauvoo.
- Settling the Saints in Winter Quarters.
- Recruiting men, at the request of the United States government, to fight in the war with Mexico (the Mormon Battalion).
- Organizing the Camps of Israel for the move west (see D&C 136), leading the first company to the Salt Lake Valley, and developing a system to help thousands of Saints immigrate to the West.
- Establishing over 350 settlements throughout the West.

- Sending missionaries to many nations to preach the gospel.
- Handling the political problems of establishing the Utah Territory.
- Constructing the Endowment House in Salt Lake City and a temple in St. George and beginning the construction of three other temples.
- Cultivating relationships with Native American Indians and teaching them the gospel.

Ask students to recall early experiences that may have helped Brigham Young develop the skills and abilities to meet these challenges. As necessary, remind students that these experiences included:

- Living faithfully through apostasies in Kirtland, Far West, and Nauvoo.
- Serving as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles for nine years, six years as the senior Apostle; receiving and using the keys of the priesthood.
- Developing a strong work ethic in his youth and learning woodworking and business skills.
- Serving in Zion's Camp and the Nauvoo Legion.
- Receiving his endowment from the Prophet Joseph Smith.
- Assisting Joseph Smith in his flight from Kirtland in early 1838 and helping the Saints settle in Far West, Missouri.
- Helping thousands of Saints evacuate from Missouri to Illinois during the winter of 1839 and early spring of 1840 while the Prophet was in Liberty Jail.
- Assisting in settling the Saints throughout northern Missouri.
- Serving for ten years on missions in the eastern United States, Canada, and Great Britain.
- Counseling with Joseph Smith about moving west.
- Participating in constructing temples in Kirtland and Nauvoo.

The Mormon Battalion was a blessing to the Saints.

 If it is available, have students turn to map 6, "The Westward Movement of the Church," in their triple combination and locate the Mormon Battalion route. Have students locate the land between the Indian Territory next to Missouri and the land to the west labeled "Mexico." Identify this area as land claimed by both Texas and Mexico. Explain that after the United States annexed Texas in 1845, disputes about this area and other related issues resulted in a war between the United States and Mexico.

Read and discuss with students "The Mormon Battalion Was Organized" in the student manual (pp. 31–32), and have them look for reasons why President Brigham Young would ask so many men to leave their families at a time when they were preparing for the long journey west. Then ask students:

- After mobs had persecuted and driven the Saints from their homes, why might this decision to form the Mormon Battalion be difficult for members of the Church?
- In what ways did the Mormon Battalion benefit the Latter-day Saints?

Brigham Young warned the Saints about seeking quick wealth.

- 💡 Read an advertisement for a “get-rich-quick” idea, and ask students why we are cautioned against such allurements. Or display some currency and ask how the desire for riches may motivate a person to act foolishly. Tell students that one major problem facing President Brigham Young was the desire of many Saints to seek gold in California. He felt that the lust for gold would destroy faithful Saints.

Read the following statements by President Young:

“We are not anxious to obtain gold; if we can obtain it by raising potatoes and wheat, all right. ‘Can’t you make yourselves rich by speculating?’ We do not wish to. ‘Can’t you make yourselves rich by going to the gold mines?’ We are right in the midst of them. ‘Why don’t you dig the gold from the earth?’ Because it demoralizes any community or nation on the earth to give them gold and silver to their hearts’ content; it will ruin any nation. But give them iron and coal, good hard work, plenty to eat, good schools and good doctrine, and it will make them a healthy, wealthy and happy people” (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, 298).

“The worst fear that I have about this people is that they will get rich in this country, forget God and His people, wax fat, and kick themselves out of the Church and go to hell. This people will stand mobbing, robbing, poverty, and all manner of persecution, and be true. But my greater fear for them is that they cannot stand wealth; and yet they have to be tried with riches, for they will become the richest people on this earth” (reported in James S. Brown, *Life of a Pioneer* [1900], 122–23).

Ask students:

- In what ways could the character of the Saints be affected by going to search for gold in California rather than working at home in the newly formed settlements?
- Why would Church members find it more difficult to be wealthy than to endure “mobbing, robbing, poverty, and all manner of persecution”?

Between 1856 and 1860 many Saints came to the Great Basin by handcart.

- 💡 Invite a student to describe and explain the use of a pioneer handcart. Ask students why some pioneers began using handcarts.

President Brigham Young sought a way to reduce the costs of bringing poor Church members across the plains to Utah. He decided that the Saints could put their necessary provisions in a handcart and walk to the valley. With handcarts, pioneers did not need to feed and herd oxen and hitch them to expensive wagons. Pioneers could walk faster than the oxen, so handcart companies were able to travel faster than wagon trains. In 1856, the first three handcart companies to arrive in the Salt Lake Valley traveled quickly and well; they were greeted by brass bands and cheering crowds. Unfortunately, the next two companies, headed by James G. Willie and Edward Martin, left late and were caught in early winter storms.

Explain that in this emergency President Brigham Young displayed his deep belief that religion must be practical. He understood that the Lord often answers our prayers for help through other people. When President Young learned of the plight

of the Martin and Willie handcart companies, he gave the following charge to the Saints who had gathered for general conference:

“The text will be—to get them here. . . .

“I shall call upon the Bishops this day, I shall not wait until to-morrow, nor until next day, for sixty good mule teams and twelve or fifteen wagons. . . .

“I will tell you all that your faith, religion, and profession of religion, will never save one soul of you in the celestial kingdom of our God, unless you carry out just such principles as I am now teaching you. Go and bring in those people now on the Plains” (in *Journal of Discourses*, 4:113).

Tell students that after receiving help from rescuers, the Willie Company completed their journey on November 9, 1856, after suffering great loss of life (67 deaths). The Martin Company came later, on November 30, having suffered an even greater loss of life (135–50 deaths). Both groups had been rescued by caring Latter-day Saints with more than 100 wagon loads of food and clothing. Ask students:

- What do you learn from President Brigham Young’s belief that religion should be practical?
- How can you show the spirit of the handcart rescue in your own life?

Misunderstanding and persecution followed the Saints west.

💡 Ask students which they believe posed the greatest challenges the pioneers faced after moving to the West—nature or other people. Discuss the reasons or explanations for their responses.

Explain that persecution, conflict, and rumors of disloyalty to the United States government plagued the Saints through much of the 1800s. For example, in 1857 the Latter-day Saints were surprised to learn that an army was on its way to Utah to quell a “Mormon rebellion.” After receiving false reports from unhappy territorial officials, the federal government appointed a new governor to replace Brigham Young and sent him to Utah, escorted by an army of 2,500 soldiers. Having suffered persecutions in Missouri and Illinois, Church members and leaders did not know what to expect from this army. In fact, there were those in the army who did not see their role as merely escorting a new governor; they fully expected a war to put an end to Mormonism.

President Brigham Young and other Church leaders responded to the threat by preparing settlers in the Utah Territory to defend their homes and communities. They sent raiding parties to slow the army by harassing it and by burning its supply trains. These raiders were given strict instructions not to shed blood. The military action and the resistance by the Saints became known as the “Utah War.”

The tactics of the Saints successfully slowed the army and forced it to spend a miserable winter in western Wyoming under the command of Colonel Albert Sidney Johnston. During the winter, negotiations took place with the help of Thomas Kane, a friend of the Church. The new governor, Alfred Cumming, came into Salt Lake City without the army to consult with Brigham Young.

In the spring of 1858, Church leaders evacuated the northern Utah Saints from their homes and moved them south. A few men were assigned to stay behind and burn the empty homes to the ground, if necessary, rather than allow the federal soldiers to occupy them. The construction site of the Salt Lake Temple was leveled and covered with dirt so it would resemble a plowed field. As a result of the peace negotiations, the army passed through Salt Lake City and established Camp Floyd, about 40 miles southwest of Salt Lake City. The Saints returned to their homes in the summer of 1858. The army remained at Camp Floyd until it was withdrawn in 1861.

Invite students to suggest ways that President Brigham Young's leadership, characteristics, and personality were reflected in his response to the arrival of Colonel Johnston's army.

Explain that after war began between the northern and southern United States, President Young took the opportunity on October 18, 1861, to remind officials of the United States government that the Saints were still loyal. The Overland Telegraph had just been finished and Brigham Young was given the opportunity to send the first message from the West to the East over the new telegraph line. The message he sent read in part, "Utah has not seceded, but is firm for the Constitution and laws of our once happy country" (in Edward Henry Anderson, *Life of Brigham Young* [1893], 140–41).

Brigham Young served as Church President for over 30 years.

- 💡 Ask students to discuss ways the Saints would be affected by the death of a Church President who had served for 30 years. For many of the young people and new converts, President Brigham Young was the only prophet they had known. Many recognized in him outstanding qualities that endeared him to them. His counsel to the Saints during his presidency addressed many aspects of life. Share the following statements of President Young and discuss with students why these teachings are relevant to us today.

Becoming great in the eyes of God:

"If you wish to be great in the kingdom of God, you must be good. . . . No man or woman, in this kingdom that the Lord Almighty has again established upon the earth, can become great without being good—without being true to their integrity, faithful in their trust, full of charity and good works. If they do not order their lives to do all the good they can, they will be stripped of their anticipation of greatness. . . . Again you must make sacrifice (if such you may call it) of every feeling you possess on earth for the sake of the kingdom of God on earth. . . . Remember, that no earthly object may stand between you and your calling and duty" (Journal History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, July 24, 1854, 8, Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints).

The role of divine revelation:

“This church has been led by revelation, and unless we forsake the Lord entirely, so that the priesthood is taken from us, it will be led by revelation all the time. The question arises with some who has the right to revelation? . . . Every member has the right of receiving revelations for themselves. . . . It is the very life of the church of the living God, in all ages of the world” (in “October Conference Minutes,” *Times and Seasons*, Oct. 15, 1844, 682–83).

The keys of the resurrection:

“It is supposed by this people that we have all the ordinances in our possession for life and salvation. . . . This is not the case. We are in possession of all the ordinances that can be administered in the flesh; but there are other ordinances and administrations that must be administered beyond this world. . . . I will mention one. We have not, neither can we receive here, the ordinance and the keys of the resurrection. . . . There are many more. We hold the authority to dispose of, alter and change the elements; but we have not received authority to organize native element, to even make a spear of grass grow. . . .

“. . . Another item: We have not the power in the flesh to create and bring forth or produce a spirit. . . .

“We cannot receive, while in the flesh, the keys to form and fashion kingdoms and to organize matter, for they are beyond our capacity and calling, beyond this world” (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, 397–98).

As you conclude this lesson, you may want to use the following description of President Brigham Young given by Benjamin F. Johnson:

“His great influence as a leader seemed to be in his quick discernment, his ready decisions and his right judgement, in placing men and things in their proper positions, and to their best possible use; while his intuitive magnetism, his kindly sympathy and affection, his noble bearing as a brother, friend, and a man . . . inspired confidence, respect and love in all who really knew him. . . .

“I know him to have been a pioneer, a promoter, and a true friend to education, and although he was not himself cultured in scholarship or refined by classic education, yet he, by nature, was highly cultured or refined, both in habit, demeanor and conversation, and no one could associate with him and not be impressed by his refining influence. And so far as the influence of music and the drama tend to civilize and elevate, or define society, credit should be due to Brigham Young as a pioneer chief in their promotion and establishment in the heart of the ‘Great American Deseret.’ . . .

“But we should not forget that Brigham Young was the leader of a people, driven before the cannon and bayonet of a heartless and cruel mob, who fled across the Mississippi in winter, leaving their homes without opportunity to provide food or clothing, and plundered of all they could not carry, and to go they knew not where; and to save the lives of all these many thousands now developed on Brigham Young, even to look after the possibilities of transportation, to learn the way, to open the road, to see that all had food, and then protect them from the tomahawk, scalping knife and bullet; and when in the Valleys, to measure out land, to formulate laws, and to counsel the people how to save a pittance from swarms of crickets and locusts that ravaged their fields” (Benjamin F. Johnson letter to George S. Gibbs, Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 16).

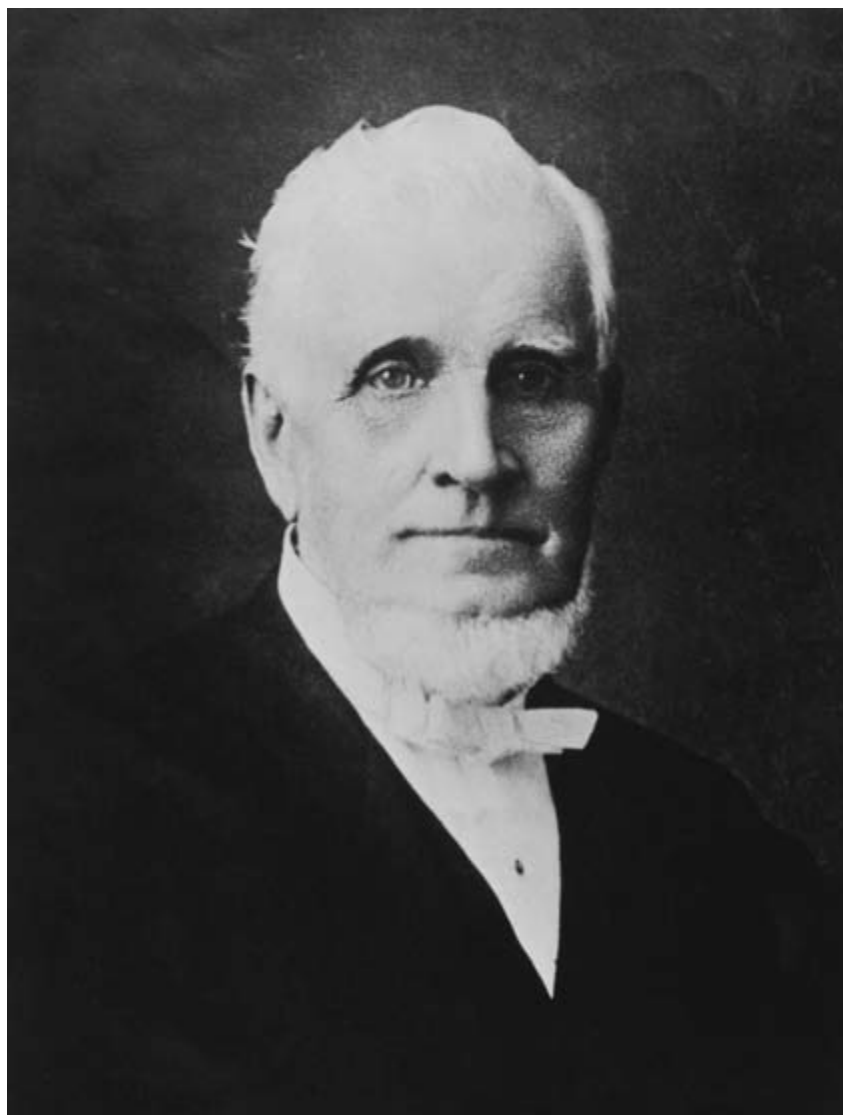
Ask students:

- What are some impressive characteristics you see in President Brigham Young?
- What teachings of President Young have influenced you?
- How will you apply those teachings in your life?

CHAPTER 3

John Taylor

THIRD PRESIDENT OF THE CHURCH



PART 1: THE EARLY YEARS

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

John Taylor was born on November 1, 1808, in Milnthorpe, Westmoreland, England, to James and Agnes Taylor. He was the second of 10 children. When John Taylor was born, Joseph Smith was almost three years old, Brigham Young was seven years old, and Wilford Woodruff was almost two years old. John Taylor was almost 12 years old when the First Vision occurred, and he was a young man of 21 when the Book of Mormon was published.

EVENTS, HIGHLIGHTS, AND TEACHINGS

John Taylor was foreordained to lead the Church.

- 💡 Ask students if they know where President John Taylor was born. Explain that John Taylor was born to James and Agnes Taylor on November 1, 1808, in Milnthorpe, Westmoreland, England. He was raised in a family of 10 children, having seven brothers and two sisters. He was the only prophet of this dispensation born outside the United States.

Invite students to turn to Jeremiah 1:5, and ask a student to read it. Ask:

- What do we learn in this scripture about Heavenly Father’s knowledge of His children before their birth?
- How might God’s foreknowledge apply to a man like John Taylor and to other leaders of the Church?

Share the following statement of the Prophet Joseph Smith:

“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).

As a young man, John Taylor learned to work hard, and he developed a deep reverence for God.

- 💡 Ask students to identify a habit, attitude, or goal they had early in their life that has continued to influence them.

Explain that when John Taylor was 11, his father relocated the family to a small farm in Hale, Westmoreland, England. John attended school there and farmed for three years. At the age of 14 he was apprenticed to a cooper in Liverpool and began to learn to make barrels and casks. When that business failed about a year later, he moved to Penrith, Cumberland, where he learned to be a wood turner. Over the next five years he became a master of wood turning.

Explain that John Taylor’s hard work and early experiences served him well throughout his life. In addition to working hard and developing physical skills, he grew spiritually and prepared himself to receive the restored gospel. Read the following, and invite students to look for qualities in John Taylor that prepared him for the gospel:

“In childhood and youth he . . . had a deep reverence for God; with him it was an intuition, and he dreaded nothing so much as offending Him.

“When about sixteen he heard the Methodist doctrines taught, and as he perceived more spiritual light and force in their teachings than in . . . the Church of England, he became a Methodist. He was strictly sincere in his religious faith, and very zealous to learn what he then considered to be the truth. Believing that ‘every good and perfect gift proceedeth from the Lord,’ he prayed frequently in private. Most of his leisure hours were spent in reading the Bible, works on theology and in prayer. For the latter purpose he usually resorted to secluded places in the woods and fields. The missionary spirit about this time began to develop in him. He induced a number of boys about his own age to join with him in secret prayer, but they generally soon forsook him” (B. H. Roberts, *Life of John Taylor* [1963], 26–27).

John Taylor moved to Canada and embraced the restored gospel.

💡 Ask students to share how they or their family was introduced to the gospel. Explain that John Taylor was 16 years old when he left the Church of England and joined the Methodist Church. In 1830 the family of James and Agnes Taylor moved to Toronto, Canada, while John Taylor remained in Great Britain to settle family affairs. He rejoined the family in 1832. Upon his arrival in Canada, John Taylor met and married Leonora Cannon and continued activity with the Methodists. They and a number of people in Toronto studied the New Testament to identify more fully the characteristics of the ancient Church. In time, they concluded that all churches fell short of the true Church, but they recognized that they did not have authority to restore the true Church.

In the spring of 1836, Elder Parley P. Pratt, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, went to Toronto to preach the gospel. When Elder Pratt first visited John Taylor, he found him polite but uninterested. Throughout the city, ministers and city officials rejected Elder Pratt’s requests for a place to preach. After some time, with no apparent hope of success, he decided to leave Toronto and stopped at the Taylor home to say farewell. At that time, John Taylor’s neighbor felt impressed to offer to feed and house Elder Pratt and allow him to hold meetings. Elder Pratt accepted the offer and soon began to preach to John Taylor and the friends with whom he had been studying the Bible.

The group was delighted with Elder Pratt’s teachings regarding faith, repentance, baptism, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and many other concepts with which they were familiar. However, when he spoke of Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon, many in the group refused to investigate further.

Share the following statement of John Taylor to the group:

“We are here, ostensibly in search of truth. Hitherto we have fully investigated other creeds and doctrines and proven them false. Why should we fear to investigate Mormonism? This gentleman, Mr. Pratt, has brought to us many doctrines that correspond with our own views. We have endured a great deal and made many sacrifices for our religious convictions. We have prayed to God to send us a messenger, if He has a true Church on earth. Mr. Pratt has come to us under circumstances that are peculiar; and there is one thing that

commends him to our consideration; he has come amongst us without purse or scrip, as the ancient apostles traveled; and none of us are able to refute his doctrine by scripture or logic. I desire to investigate his doctrines and claims to authority, and shall be very glad if some of my friends will unite with me in this investigation. But if no one will unite with me, be assured I shall make the investigation alone. If I find his religion true, I shall accept it, no matter what the consequences may be; and if false, then I shall expose it" (in Roberts, *Life of John Taylor*, 37–38).


Explain that after this bold declaration, John Taylor began to study the gospel even more intensely. Then share the following information:

"After this, John Taylor began the investigation of Mormonism in earnest. He wrote down eight sermons which Apostle Pratt preached, and compared them with the scripture. He also investigated the evidences of the divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants. 'I made a regular business of it for three weeks,' he says, 'and followed Brother Parley from place to place.' The result of his thorough investigation was conviction; and on the 9th of May, 1836, himself and wife were baptized. 'I have never doubted any principle of Mormonism since,' was the comment he made in relating, when well advanced in life, how he came to accept the gospel" (Roberts, *Life of John Taylor*, 38).

Ask students:

- How did a study of the Bible prepare John Taylor for Elder Pratt's message?
- How can scripture study help prepare you to receive greater truth?
- How can you follow John Taylor's example in seeking after and defending the truth?


John Taylor's conversion blessed the lives of his friends and acquaintances.

-  Ask students to relate experiences they have had or know of in which a new investigator or convert to the Church helped share the message of the restored gospel with friends.

Explain that before his baptism, John Taylor accompanied Elder Parley P. Pratt on his first visit to the countryside around Toronto, Canada. Elder Pratt recalled, "We called at a Mr. Joseph Fielding's, an acquaintance and friend of Mr. Taylor's" (*Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt* [1985], 128). Joseph Fielding and his sisters, Mary and Mercy, soon joined the Church. Mary Fielding later became the wife of Hyrum Smith; the mother of Joseph F. Smith, the sixth President of the Church; and the grandmother of Joseph Fielding Smith, the tenth President of the Church.

Ask: How can sharing the gospel with even one person have a great effect?

John Taylor defended the Prophet Joseph Smith.

-  Ask students to imagine what they would do if they discovered that the missionaries who taught them were some time later struggling with their own testimonies. Ask what they would say to these former missionaries.

Share with students that in March 1837 John Taylor visited Kirtland, Ohio, to meet the Prophet Joseph Smith. At that time an economic panic had caused many businesses and financial institutions to fail. The people in Kirtland did not escape this economic disaster, and many Church members blamed the Prophet for their financial losses. A spirit of criticism and apostasy prevailed in Kirtland. Review and discuss with students “He Was an Advocate for the Prophet Joseph Smith” in the student manual (pp. 42–43).

Ask students: How did John Taylor help Elder Parley P. Pratt overcome his struggle? Have students review Doctrine and Covenants 1:38 as they discuss the following questions:

- What are the dangers of speaking evil of the Lord’s prophet?
- Why should we especially strive to follow the prophet during times of adversity?

John Taylor’s motto was “The kingdom of God or nothing!”

💡 Ask students if any of them have a personal or family motto. Have them share their mottos with the class.

Ask: How can a motto help us focus on our lifelong goals?

Write on the board *The kingdom of God or nothing!* and explain that this was John Taylor’s motto. Ask: What does this motto tell you about John Taylor?

Ask them to ponder for a few moments and create a worthwhile motto. It may include part of one of their favorite scriptures. Invite students to share their mottos.

John Taylor showed great courage in preaching the gospel.

💡 Ask students if they have ever been in a position where they felt uncomfortable or threatened in sharing the gospel. Inform them that John Taylor was in such a position while preparing to preach the gospel near Columbus, Ohio, in 1837. When Church members learned that local citizens intended to tar and feather him after a meeting, John Taylor was advised to cancel the meeting; however, he was even more determined to preach. Share the following concerning his experience:

John Taylor began by speaking briefly about the American traditions of liberty and about the privilege of having the “right to think, to speak, to write; the right to say who shall govern . . . , and the right to worship God” earned by “noble sires, who, rather than bow to the behests of a tyrant, pledged their lives, fortunes and sacred honors to burst those fetters, enjoy freedom themselves, bequeath it to their posterity, or die in the attempt.” Then he declared:

“ ‘I have been informed that you purpose to tar and feather me, for my religious opinions. Is this the boon you have inherited from your fathers? Is this the blessing they purchased with their dearest hearts’ blood—this your liberty? If so, you now have a victim, and we will have an offering to the goddess of liberty.’ Here he tore open his vest and said: ‘Gentlemen come on with your tar and feathers, your victim is ready; and ye shades of the venerable patriots, gaze upon the deeds of your degenerate sons! Come on, gentlemen! Come on, I say, I am ready!’

“No one moved, no one spoke. He stood there drawn to his full height, calm but defiant—the master of the situation.

“After a pause of some moments he continued his remarks and preached with great boldness and power for some three hours.

“At the conclusion of his discourse, he was waited upon by some of the leading citizens of the place who expressed their pleasure at what they had heard, and disclaimed, in behalf of the people, any intention of tarring and feathering him; but the brethren still insisted that such was the intention of the crowd, and that the tar and feathers had been provided; but they had been awed into silence by the boldness of Elder Taylor” (Roberts, *Life of John Taylor*, 54–55).

Ask: Why do you think the crowd decided not to tar and feather John Taylor?

Invite students to share experiences that they or friends or family members have had where they stood boldly for their beliefs.

John Taylor was ordained an Apostle and called to serve a mission to England.

💡 John Taylor was ordained an Apostle in December 1838, and in the late summer of 1839 he left his home to serve a mission to Great Britain with other members of the Quorum of the Twelve. While there, Elder Taylor taught in Ireland, Scotland, Liverpool (England), and surrounding areas. In the Isle of Man he had the privilege of teaching in the town where his wife (Leonora Cannon) was born.

Wherever he taught, John Taylor helped people understand that the restored Church was a fulfillment of prophecy. Ask a student to read John Taylor’s statement in “He Gave a Mission Report to the British Saints” in the student manual (p. 46). Emphasize his gratitude for the gospel and the privilege of teaching it. Invite class members to express similar feelings they may have had at the conclusion of their missions.

John Taylor witnessed the martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum Smith.

💡 Invite students to read and ponder Doctrine and Covenants 135:1–3. Ask them why they think it is important to have an eyewitness account of the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum. Invite a student to read the following account by John Taylor:

“I was sitting at one of the front windows of the jail, when I saw a number of men, with painted faces, coming around the corner of the jail, and aiming towards the stairs. The other brethren had seen the same, for, as I went to the door, I found Brother Hyrum Smith and Dr. Richards already leaning against it. . . . While in this position, the mob, who had come upstairs and tried to open the door, probably thought it was locked and fired a ball through the keyhole. At this Dr. Richards and Brother Hyrum leaped back from the door, with their faces towards it. Almost instantly another ball passed through the panel of the door, and struck Brother Hyrum on the left side of the nose, entering his face and head. At the same instant, another ball from outside entered his back. . . . Immediately, when the ball struck him, he fell flat on his back, crying as he fell, ‘I am a dead man!’ He never moved afterwards.

“I shall never forget the deep feeling of sympathy and regard manifested in the countenance of Brother Joseph as he drew nigh to Hyrum, and, leaning over him, exclaimed, ‘Oh! my poor, dear brother Hyrum!’ He, however, instantly arose, and with a firm, quick step, and a determined expression of countenance, approached the door, and pulling the six-shooter left by Brother Wheelock from his pocket, opened the door slightly, and snapped the pistol six successive times. . . . I had in my hands a large, strong hickory stick, brought there by Brother Markham and left by him, which I had [seized] as soon as I saw the mob approach; and while Brother Joseph was firing the pistol, I stood close behind him. As soon as he had discharged it he stepped back, and I immediately took his place next to the door, while he occupied the one I had done while he was shooting. Brother Richards, at this time, had a knotty walking-stick in his hands belonging to me, and stood next to Brother Joseph a little farther from the door, in an oblique direction, apparently to avoid the rake of the fire from the door. The firing of Brother Joseph made our assailants pause for a moment. Very soon after, however, they pushed the door some distance open, and protruded and discharged their guns into the room, when I parried them off with my stick, giving another direction to the balls.

“It certainly was a terrible scene. Streams of fire as thick as my arm passed by me as these men fired, and, unarmed as we were, it looked like certain death. I remember feeling as though my time had come, but I do not know when, in any critical position, I was more calm, unruffled, energetic, and acted with more promptness and decision. It certainly was far from pleasant to be so near the muzzles of those firearms as they belched forth their liquid flames and deadly balls. While I was engaged in parrying the guns, Brother Joseph said, ‘That’s right, Brother Taylor, parry them off as well as you can.’ These were the last words I ever heard him speak on earth. . . .

“After parrying the guns for some time, which now protruded farther and farther into the room, and seeing no hope of escape or protection there, as we were now unarmed, it occurred to me that we might have some friends outside, and that there might be some chance of escape in that direction, but here there seemed to be none. . . . I made a spring for the window which was right in front of the jail door, where the mob was standing, and also exposed to the fire of the Carthage Greys, who were stationed some ten or twelve rods off [about 180 feet]. The weather was hot; we all of us had our coats off, and the window was raised to admit air. As I reached the window, and was on the point of leaping out, I was struck by a ball from the door about midway of my thigh, which struck the bone and flattened out almost to the size of a quarter of a dollar, and then passed on through the fleshy part to within about half an inch of the outside. . . . I fell upon the window sill, and cried out, ‘I am shot!’ Not possessing any power to move, I felt myself falling outside of the window, but immediately I fell inside, from some, at that time, unknown cause. . . . As soon as I felt the power of motion I crawled under the bed, which was in a corner of the room, not far from the window where I received my wound. While on my way and under the bed, I was wounded in three other places; one ball entered a little below the left knee, and never was extracted; another

entered the forepart of my left arm, a little above the wrist, and, passing down by the joint, lodged in the fleshy part of my hand, about midway, a little above the upper joint of my little finger. Another struck me on the fleshy part of my left hip and tore away the flesh as large as my hand, dashing the mangled fragments of flesh and blood against the wall. . . .

“It would seem that immediately after my attempt to leap out of the window, Joseph also did the same thing. . . . The first thing that I noticed was a cry that he had leaped out of the window. A cessation of firing followed, the mob rushed downstairs, and Dr. Richards went to the window. . . .

“Soon afterwards Dr. Richards came to me, informed me that the mob had precipitately fled, and at the same time confirmed the worst fears that Joseph was assuredly dead. I felt a dull, lonely, sickening sensation at the news. When I reflected that our noble chieftain, the Prophet of the living God, had fallen, and that I had seen his brother in the cold embrace of death, it seemed as though there was a void or vacuum in the great field of human existence to me, and a dark gloomy chasm in the kingdom, and that we were left alone. Oh, how lonely was that feeling! How cold, barren, and desolate! . . . We were left alone without his aid, and as our future guide for things spiritual or temporal, and for all things pertaining to this world, or the next, he had spoken for the last time on earth”
(The Gospel Kingdom, sel. G. Homer Durham [1943], 359–62).

Ask students:

- What was the “unknown cause” that prevented John Taylor from falling out the window? (A bullet struck John Taylor’s watch and propelled him back into the room.)
- How can members of the Church today appropriately recognize and remember the events of June 27, 1844?
- What are your feelings as you hear John Taylor’s account of the martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum Smith?
- What reasons can you see for John Taylor’s life being miraculously spared at this time? (He was foreordained to be a prophet. He provided a second witness of the martyrdom.)

PART 2: THE LATER YEARS

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In 1877, President Brigham Young died after presiding over the Church for 33 years. During that period many people had been born into the Church and many others had joined the Church. These people knew only President Young as the leader of the Church. His leadership had strengthened members through many trials. When Brigham Young's earthly work was completed, John Taylor took his place in leading the Church.

For the first three years after the death of Brigham Young, John Taylor led the Church as President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. In 1880, when he became President of the Church, membership was over 133,000, with 23 stakes, 10 missions, and 1 temple, in St. George, Utah (see *2003 Church Almanac* [2003], 473, 631).

In 1884, President Taylor dedicated the Logan Temple. He went into hiding in 1885 to avoid antipolygamy persecution. The United States government passed the Edmunds-Tucker Act in 1887, which intensified the persecution of the Church because of the practice of plural marriage. This legislation enabled the government to confiscate Church property in an effort to punish and control Church members. In 1887, the year of President Taylor's death, the Church had grown to over 173,000 members, with 31 stakes, 12 missions, and 2 temples (see *2003 Church Almanac*, 473, 631).

EVENTS, HIGHLIGHTS, AND TEACHINGS

John Taylor expressed his testimony through music.

- 💡 Inform students that John Taylor wrote the words to two hymns in our current hymnbook: "Go, Ye Messengers of Glory" (*Hymns*, no. 262) and "Go, Ye Messengers of Heaven" (*Hymns*, no. 327). Select one of these hymns to begin the class devotional. Ask students to pick a favorite line from the hymn and be prepared to share why they liked it.

John Taylor believed the Lord would help the Saints through their trials.

- 💡 Explain that throughout John Taylor's ministry the Saints experienced many trials from within and without. Many Church members were driven from Illinois to Iowa. They eventually made their way west to the Salt Lake Valley. Share the following statement of President Taylor expressing his attitude about trials:

"So far as I am concerned, I say, let everything come as God has ordained it. I do not desire trials. I do not desire affliction. I would pray to God to 'lead me not in temptation, and deliver me from evil; for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory.' But if the earthquake bellows, the lightnings flash, the thunders roll, and the powers of darkness are let loose, and the spirit of evil is permitted to rage, and an evil influence is brought to bear on the Saints, and my life with theirs is put to the test, let it come, for we are the Saints of the most High God, and all is well, all is peace, all is right, and will be, both in time and in eternity.

“But I do not want trials. I do not want to put a straw in anybody’s way; and, if I know my own feelings, I do not want to hurt any man under the heavens, nor injure the hair of any person’s head. I would like to do every man good. These are the feelings, the spirit which the gospel has implanted in my bosom, and that the Spirit of God implants in the bosoms of my brethren. And if men will pursue an improper course, the evil of course, must be on their own heads.

“I used to think, if I were the Lord, I would not suffer people to be tried as they are. But I have changed my mind on that subject. Now I think I would, if I were the Lord, because it purges out the meanness and corruption that stick around the Saints, like flies around molasses” (*The Gospel Kingdom*, sel. G. Homer Durham [1943], 332–33).

Ask students:

- What strengths can come from overcoming trials?
- How can people turn trials and afflictions into positive experiences or blessings?

John Taylor traveled to the Salt Lake Valley in 1847.

💡 Have students look at the picture of John Taylor’s home in Nauvoo, Illinois, on page 45 of the student manual. Ask how they think John Taylor and others could have found the strength to leave such beautiful homes.

Have students look at the map on page 33 of the student manual. Explain that John Taylor was not a member of the original pioneer company but was selected by President Brigham Young to organize the Saints at Winter Quarters to follow the vanguard company later that year. By the end of June 1847, a party of 1,533 persons with 600 wagons began the westward march under the direction of Elders Parley P. Pratt and John Taylor. As they traveled west, they met members of the vanguard company who had reached the valley and were returning to Winter Quarters. Share the following incident with students, which shows Elder Taylor’s resilience and good nature under pressure:

“The morning that Elder Taylor’s division met the returning pioneers, there was a flurry of snow. The heavens were darkened, the bright sunshine which they had enjoyed without a cloud to obscure it for weeks together, was now shut out from view, and snow fell two or three inches deep. Snow! and in September, too! Was that the kind of climate they were going to? The hearts of some sank within them, and the prospect looked gloomy enough. But that which produced fears in the breasts of the timid, only provoked laughter from Elder Taylor. He bade them be of good cheer, and laughingly proposed to insure the lives of the whole company at five dollars per head” (B. H. Roberts, *Life of John Taylor* [1963], 190).

Explain that this group arrived in the Salt Lake Valley on October 5, 1847. Elder Taylor immediately set to work building a home for his family. He completed the home by December 1847. Less than two years later he was called to serve a mission to France and Germany.

Ask: What can we learn from John Taylor's life about the priority of serving missions?

He used his talents to defend the faith.

💡 Ask students to describe some of their talents. Then ask: In what ways can you use your talents to serve the Lord and spread the gospel message?

Explain that John Taylor was abundantly blessed with the talent to write. Shortly after coming home from a mission in France and Germany, Elder Taylor was elected to the Utah Territorial Legislature. In the summer of 1854, he was appointed to go to New York and preside over the Eastern States Mission.

Review "He Went on a Printer's Mission to New York City" in the student manual (pp. 50–51). In New York City he published a newspaper from February 1855 until September 1857 called *The Mormon*, which defended the Saints. Elder Taylor's work helped correct false perceptions in the East about the Saints. He returned to Utah in August 1857 because a federal army was marching toward Salt Lake City.

Read with students President Brigham Young's compliment of Elder Taylor's newspaper in the last paragraph of "He Went on a Printer's Mission to New York City" in the student manual (pp. 50–51).

Ask: How does what is published about the Church affect missionary efforts around the world?

If the Church has been mentioned in your local newspaper recently, ask students if they noticed the article, and allow them to express their reaction to it.

Tell the students that you want to share quickly with them the titles of a number of John Taylor's writings. This list will help them appreciate all he contributed when the Church needed a strong voice to counter many negative articles in newspapers.

He edited three newspapers that were published in Nauvoo, Illinois—the *Times and Seasons* for three years, the *Nauvoo Neighbor* for two and a half years, and the *Wasp* for six months. He also edited *The Mormon*, a newspaper published in New York, for two and a half years; and he contributed liberally to the newspapers *Etoile De Deseret* (Star of Deseret) in Paris, France, and *Zions Panier* (Zion's Banner) in Hamburg, Germany.

He personally authored many works, including the following:

- *The Government of God*, Liverpool, 1852.
- *The Mediation and Atonement of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*, Salt Lake City, 1892.
- *Items on Priesthood*, Salt Lake City, 1899.
- *On Marriage, an Official Declaration by John Taylor, President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, Salt Lake City.
- *Three Nights' Public Discussion Between the Reverends C. W. Cleeve, James Robertson, and Philip Carter, and John Taylor of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, at Boulogne-Sur-Mer, France*, Liverpool, 1850.
- "Reply to Colfax," a lengthy debate between John Taylor and the vice president of the United States, Schyler Colfax, on the subject of plural marriage.

In addition, he wrote numerous poems, mostly on gospel themes, delivered literally hundreds of polished sermons, and presided over the Church.

Ask students: In what ways can you use your talents and other abilities to do the Lord's work?

In 1875, Brigham Young reordered the Twelve.

- 💡 Explain that in June of 1875 President Brigham Young announced that seniority in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles would be determined by time of membership in the quorum, not by age. Brigham Young felt that Orson Hyde, who had been removed from the quorum on May 4, 1839, should have his seniority based upon his reinstatement, on June 27, 1839, not upon his original ordination in 1835. Similarly, Orson Pratt's seniority was based on his reinstatement after being excommunicated on August 20, 1842, and rebaptized on January 20, 1843. Wilford Woodruff, who was a year older than John Taylor, was placed in the second position because he had been ordained an Apostle after John Taylor. These changes moved John Taylor from the fourth in seniority to the first.

A great spiritual awakening characterized President Taylor's administration.

- 💡 Inform students that with the death of President Brigham Young on August 29, 1877, John Taylor, the senior Apostle, became the presiding officer of the Church. He led the Church as the President of the Quorum of the Twelve for three years and then became President of the Church on October 10, 1880. Share the following description of this period of Church history:

"Great energy characterized President Taylor's administration of affairs in the Church, both in Zion and abroad. He pushed forward with increased zeal the work on the temples, of which three were in course of erection, at the time of his taking control of affairs. He required bishops to hold weekly priesthood meetings in their wards [and] presidents of stakes to hold general priesthood meetings monthly in their respective stakes; and [he] appointed quarterly conferences in all the stakes of Zion. . . .

"He personally attended as many of these quarterly conferences as he could, without neglecting the executive branch of his calling, which necessarily occupied much of his time, and kept him at or within easy reach of Salt Lake City. But where he could not go himself, he sent members of his quorum, so that the Saints received much teaching and instruction from the Apostles, more perhaps than at any previous time in the history of the Church. The result was a great spiritual awakening among the Saints" (Roberts, *Life of John Taylor*, 329).

Ask:

- What provisions has the Church made to accommodate individual spiritual growth?
- How do Church leaders encourage individual spiritual growth today?

The Jubilee Conference marked the 50th year of the Church.


- 💡 Ask students to imagine that they owe a large amount of money to someone but are unable to pay it. Then ask:
- How would you feel if that person forgave your debt?
 - How might getting a fresh start without debt affect you personally?

Explain that April 1880 marked the 50th year since the Church was organized. President John Taylor called for a “Jubilee Celebration.” In connection with the Jubilee, he felt that the Church should follow the custom of ancient Israel and release from debt the poor who owed money to the Perpetual Emigration Fund (see Leviticus 25:8–16, 23–55). He proposed that the worthy and honest poor who were unable to pay be forgiven the amount they owed, or one-half the total the amount owed to the Church by its members at that time—\$802,000 forgiven of a total \$1,604,000 debt. He urged that all the Saints throughout the Church also forgive the debts of those unable to pay and promised them that if they would forgive the debts owed to them by others, the Lord would do the same for them. He also suggested that Church members gather 1,000 head of cows, 5,000 head of sheep, and bushels of wheat to distribute to the poor (see Roberts, *Life of John Taylor*, 333–35).

Have a student read to the class President Taylor’s advice in the last paragraph of “A Year of Jubilee Was Celebrated” in the student manual (p. 53). Ask:

- How do people grow from forgiving the debts of others?
- What spiritual debts might people have?

President John Taylor withdrew from public life in his final years.

 Tell students that on March 22, 1882, the President of the United States signed into law the Edmunds Bill, which authorized fines and imprisonment for those practicing plural marriage. It also placed the registration of all voters in Utah under a federal board of control known as the Utah Commission, whose duty it was to ascertain if a voter practiced polygamy. If he did, he was not permitted to vote. Share the following statement of President John Taylor in the April 1882 general conference:

“As American citizens, we shall contend for all our liberties, rights and immunities, guaranteed to us by the Constitution; and no matter what action may be taken by mobocratic influence, by excited and unreasonable men, or by inimical legislation, we shall contend inch by inch for our freedom and rights, as well as the freedom and rights of all American citizens and of all mankind” (in Roberts, *Life of John Taylor*, 361–62).

Ask: Why did the Saints believe so strongly in the Constitution of the United States when they were being persecuted for their beliefs? (see D&C 101:80).

Explain that in 1885 the First Presidency withdrew from public view because of persecution for the practice of plural marriage. They continued to lead the Church from various locations in Utah. Remarkably, Church leaders were able to accomplish much in spite of the persecution they faced. Share the following description of the burden this persecution put on President Taylor, a burden other Latter-day Saints also shared:

“From that date [February 1885], upwards of two years and a half ago, when he left his home in Salt Lake City, he had not the opportunity of crossing its threshold again. To home and its joys, its delightful associations and its happy reunions he has been a stranger. He has lived as an exile—a wanderer in the land, to the development and good government of which he has contributed so much! While living in this condition, one of his wives was stricken with

disease, and though his heart was torn with anguish at the thought of her condition, and with anxiety to see her and minister to her in her deep distress, her residence was closely watched by spies, and when she was in a dying condition, was even searched with the hope of entrapping him! Thus she was deprived of the privilege of looking upon his beloved face, and he had not even the sad consolation of witnessing or taking any part in her funeral ceremonies" (in Roberts, *Life of John Taylor*, 412–13).

John Taylor was an example of resolution and integrity.

💡 As you conclude your lesson about President John Taylor, review with students "He Died in Exile" in the student manual (p. 55). Ask:

- What are some examples in President Taylor's life where he met "every issue . . . boldly"?
- President Taylor's counselors called him a "living martyr for the truth." In what ways does that phrase describe President Taylor's life of service?

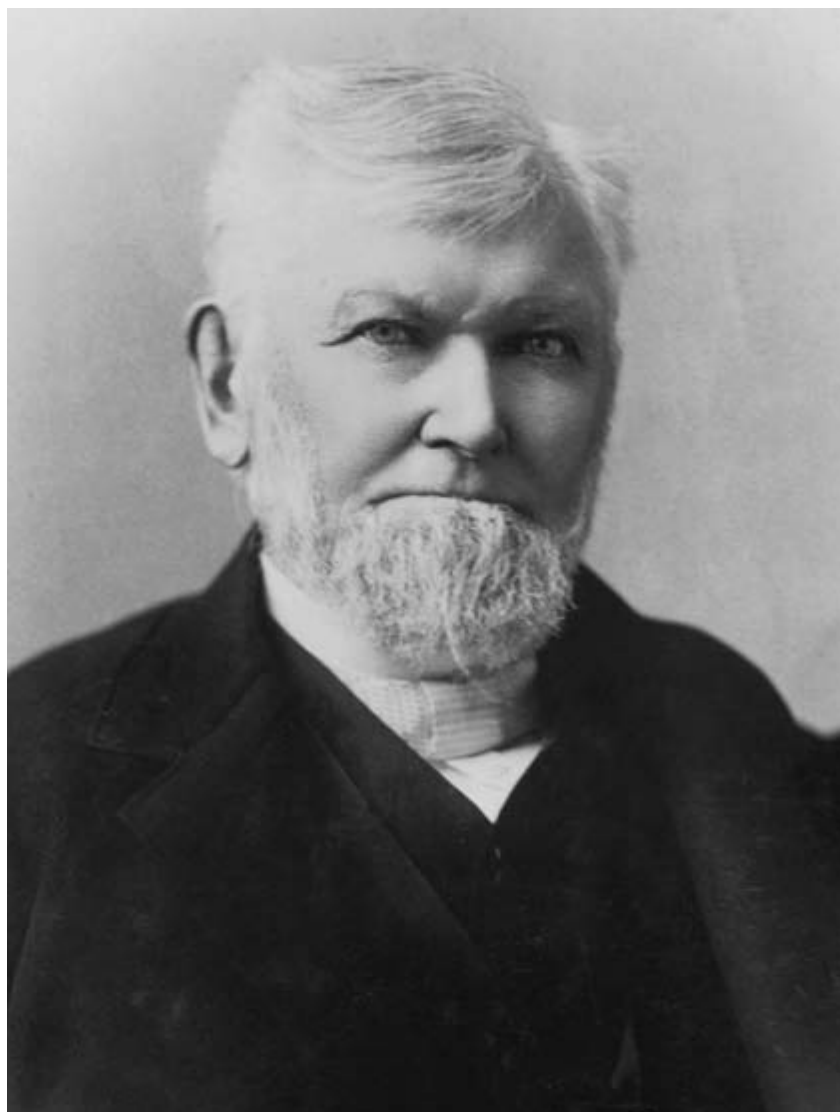
At the funeral of President Taylor, Elder Lorenzo Snow, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, who had served with him in the presiding councils of the Church, said of John Taylor:

"The Latter-day Saints feel that they have lost a friend; that we have lost a mighty counselor; that we have lost one of the greatest men that have stood upon the earth since the days of the Son of God—a man whose virtue, whose integrity, whose resolution to pursue the path of righteousness is known, and well known" (in Roberts, *Life of John Taylor*, 443).

CHAPTER 4

Wilford Woodruff

FOURTH PRESIDENT OF THE CHURCH



PART 1: THE EARLY YEARS

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Wilford Woodruff was born on March 1, 1807, in Farmington, Connecticut. During the first decades of his life, world events included the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo in 1815 and the emergence of independent nations in Latin America with the help of men like Simón Bolívar and José de San Martín. During this time the Industrial Revolution continued to foster great changes across the earth. Great events took place all over the world; however, Wilford Woodruff played a role in a far grander event—the Restoration and establishment of the Church. His skills as a historian, diarist, and journalist documented the Restoration, and his writings have blessed Latter-day Saints throughout the world.

EVENTS, HIGHLIGHTS, AND TEACHINGS

Questions about Wilford Woodruff's early years.

💡 Ask students to identify which of the following statements are true and which are false:

1. The first five Presidents of the Church were born between 1801 and 1814. (True.)
2. The Prophet Joseph Smith was younger than Wilford Woodruff. (False: Joseph Smith was born in 1805; Wilford Woodruff was born in 1807.)
3. George Washington, the first president of the United States, was still alive when Wilford Woodruff was born. (False: George Washington died in 1797.)
4. U.S. president Abraham Lincoln and English naturalist Charles Darwin were contemporary with Wilford Woodruff. (True: Lincoln lived from 1809–65 and Darwin lived from 1809–82.)
5. Thomas Jefferson was president of the United States when Wilford Woodruff was born. (True.)
6. The state of Utah supported U.S. president Abraham Lincoln during the Civil War in the 1860s. (False: Utah did not achieve statehood until 1896.)

Wilford Woodruff's parents and ancestors established a heritage of hard work.

💡 Explain to the students that Wilford Woodruff's parents were Aphek and Beulah Thompson Woodruff. His mother died when Wilford was only 15 months old. Aphek, then the father of three sons, married Azubah Hart, who later gave birth to six children. Wilford Woodruff's ancestors were known as hard workers. Read the following statement of Wilford Woodruff to the class:

“My great grandfather, Josiah Woodruff, lived nearly one hundred years, and possessed an iron constitution, and performed a great amount of manual labor nearly up to the time of his death. . . .

“My grandfather, Eldad Woodruff, was the third son of Josiah. He was born in Farmington, Hartford co., Connecticut, in 1751; he also possessed a strong constitution. It was said that he performed the most labor for several years of any man in Hartford county, and from over exertion in hewing timber, he

was attacked with rheumatism in his right hip, which caused severe lameness for several years before his death. . . .

“My father [Aphék Woodruff] was a strong constitutioned man, and has done a great amount of labor. At eighteen years of age he commenced attending a flouring and saw mill, and continued about 50 years; most of this time he labored eighteen hours a day” (“History of Wilford Woodruff,” *Millennial Star*, Mar. 18, 1865, 167–68).

Tell students that Aphék and Azubah Woodruff worked hard to provide the basic necessities of life for their children. They taught their children to be hard working, independent, and self-reliant, traits that Wilford Woodruff learned well. Share the following statement of Wilford Woodruff:

“In April 1827, I took the flouring mill of my aunt, Helen Wheeler, which I attended three years. In May 1830, I took charge of the flouring mill of Mr. Collins, the ax manufacturer, in South Canton, Conn. At the end of one year it was demolished to make way for other machinery. In March 1831, I took charge of the flouring mill owned by Mr. Richard B. Cowles of New Hartford, Conn. In the spring of 1832, in company with my oldest brother, Azmon, I went to Richland, Oswego co., New York, and purchased a farm and saw mill, and settled in business” (“History of Wilford Woodruff,” *Millennial Star*, Mar. 18, 1865, 168).

He had many dangerous experiences during his childhood and youth.

💡 Have the students review “His Early Years Were Marred by Many Accidents” in the student manual (pp. 58–60), and ask them to name some of Wilford Woodruff’s mishaps and life-threatening experiences. Ask a student to read aloud the last paragraph of the section. Based on the information in this paragraph, discuss with students the answers to the following questions:

- How did Wilford Woodruff’s experiences with these accidents influence his understanding of God?
- What qualities did Wilford Woodruff develop because of these experiences?

He studied the Bible carefully.

💡 In his youth, Wilford Woodruff studied the Bible and learned of the organization of the early Church. Share the following statement of Wilford Woodruff about his searching the scriptures during his youth:

“In . . . Sabbath school I read the New Testament. I learned verse after verse and chapter after chapter. What did the Testament teach me? It taught me the Gospel of life and salvation; it taught me a Gospel of power before the heavens and on the earth. It taught me that the organization of the Church consisted of Prophets, Apostles, Pastors and Teachers, with helps and governments. What for? ‘For the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the ministry: for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ’ [Ephesians 4:12–13]. These are the things which


I learned, and they made an impression upon me. I believed in them; yet I had never heard them taught by any clergyman or divine upon the earth. In my early manhood I attended the meetings of almost every denomination there was. . . .

“There is where I stood in my youth. I did not believe that these gifts and graces were done away, only through the unbelief of the children of men” (*Deseret Weekly*, Apr. 6, 1889, 450).

Ask students:

- How did Wilford Woodruff prepare himself to recognize and find the truth?
- What can we do to better prepare our hearts and minds to receive gospel knowledge?

He embraced the gospel.

-  Ask class members to think of the first time they remember hearing a gospel sermon or the first time they remember a gospel sermon making sense to them and felt the truthfulness of the message. Explain that Wilford Woodruff heard the gospel preached for the first time by a Church member on December 29, 1833. Share what he later wrote about the experience:

“For the first time in my life, I saw an Elder in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. That was Zera Pulsipher. He told me that he was inspired of the Lord. He was threshing grain in his barn when the voice of the Lord came to him and told him to arise and go to the north, the Lord had business for him there. He called upon Brother [Elijah] Cheney, his neighbor and a member of the Church. They traveled sixty miles on foot . . . in deep snow, and the first place they felt impressed to call upon was the house of my brother and myself. They went into the house and talked with my brother’s wife, and they told her who they were and what their business was. They told her that they were moved upon to go to the north, and they never felt impressed to stop anywhere until they came to that house. When they told her their principles, she said her husband and her brother-in-law both were men who believed those principles, and they had prayed for them for years. They appointed a meeting in the schoolhouse upon our farm.

“I came home in the evening, and my sister-in-law told me of this meeting. I had been drawing logs from the shores of Lake Ontario (I was in the lumber business), and I turned out my horses, did not stop to eat anything, and went to the meeting. I found the house and the dooryard filled with people. I listened for the first time in my life to a Gospel sermon as taught by the Elders of this Church. It was what I had sought for from my boyhood up. I invited the men home with me. I borrowed the Book of Mormon, and sat up all that night and read. In the morning I told Brother Pulsipher I wanted to be baptized. I had a testimony for myself that those principles were true. Myself and my brother . . . went forth and were baptized—the two first in that county” (in *Deseret Evening News*, Mar. 1, 1897, 1; paragraphing altered).

Tell students that Elder Pulsipher baptized and confirmed Wilford Woodruff only two days after that first meeting, in a creek on December 31, 1833. Ask: Why do you think Wilford Woodruff was able to recognize and accept the gospel so quickly?

Note: Instead of reading the preceding paragraphs, you may want to show the dramatization of Wilford Woodruff's conversion found in presentation 2, "The Great Apostasy," of *Doctrine and Covenants and Church History Video Presentations 1–12* (item 53786) or *Doctrine and Covenants and Church History DVD Presentations 1–22* (item 54012). It can also be found as presentation 1, "A Search for the Truth," on the Church videocassette *Teachings from the Doctrine and Covenants and Church History* (item 53933).

He shared his joy in finding the restored gospel with his friend Robert Mason.

- 💡 Have students read the first two paragraphs of "Robert Mason Told Him of a Vision He Had" in the student manual (p. 61). Summarize the rest of that section. Explain that after Wilford Woodruff was baptized, he wrote a letter to Robert Mason. Wilford Woodruff explained:

"I . . . told him I had found the Church of Christ that he had told me about. I told him about its organization and the coming forth of the Book of Mormon; that the Church had prophets, apostles, and all the gifts and blessings in it, and that the true fruit of the kingdom and Church of Christ were manifest among the Saints as the Lord had shown him in his vision. He received my letter, and read it over many times, and handled it as he had handled the fruit in the vision; but he was very aged, and soon died. He did not live to see any Elder to administer the ordinances of the Gospel unto him.

"The first opportunity I had, after the doctrine of baptism for the dead was revealed, I went forth and was baptized for him" ("Leaves from My Journal," *Millennial Star*, May 23, 1881, 335).

Ask students:

- In what specific ways has your life been influenced or changed by missionary work?
- What impressed you about Robert Mason's account?
- How does his experience help us understand the importance of temple work?

He felt a great desire to preach the gospel.

- 💡 Share what Wilford Woodruff wrote about the great desire he felt to share his testimony with others when he first heard the gospel:

"I could not feel it my duty to leave [their] house without bearing witness to the truth before the people" (Journal of Wilford Woodruff, Dec. 31, 1834, Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; spelling and punctuation standardized).

Explain that soon after his baptism, Wilford Woodruff traveled to Missouri with Zion's Camp. In the months after Zion's Camp, his desire to preach the gospel

continued to grow, until he prayed to the Lord for the privilege to be a missionary. Read the following statement of Wilford Woodruff about his prayer to serve a mission:


“I had a great desire to preach the Gospel, which I did not name to my brethren; but one Sunday evening I retired into the woods alone, and called upon the Lord in earnest prayer, to open my way to go and preach the Gospel to the inhabitants of the earth. The Spirit of the Lord bore witness that my prayer was heard, and should be answered. I arose from my knees happy, and walked some forty rods, and met Elias Higbee, a High Priest, with whom I had staid a number of months. As I approached him, he said, ‘Brother Wilford, the Spirit of the Lord tells me that you should be ordained, and go on a mission.’ I replied, ‘I am ready’ ” (“History of Wilford Woodruff,” *Millennial Star*, Mar. 25, 1865, 183).

Tell students that on November 5, 1834, Wilford Woodruff was ordained a priest at a meeting of the high council in Missouri, and he was called to go on a mission to the southern United States. Ask:

- Why do you think Wilford Woodruff was so eager to do missionary work?
- What can prospective missionaries do to qualify to answer “I am ready,” as did Wilford Woodruff?

Review “He Was a Missionary and Experienced the Ministering of Angels” in the student manual (p. 63). Point out to students that the gift and power of the Holy Ghost is available to all members of the Church. Ask: How does the Holy Ghost guide and strengthen people in their missionary efforts?

He wanted to be an heir to the celestial kingdom.

-  Tell students that Wilford Woodruff committed himself to building up Zion. Read the following entry from his journal, and ask students to identify the various commitments he made:

“Believing it to be the duty of the latter day Saints to consecrate and dedicate all their properties with themselves unto God in order to become lawful heirs to the Celestial Kingdom of God, . . . I consecrated [myself and my properties] before the Bishop of the Church of the Latter-day Saints in Clay County, Dec. 31st, 1834. The following is a copy of the Consecration:

“ ‘Clay Co., Missouri, Dec. 31st, 1834. Be it known that I, Wilford Woodruff, do freely covenant with my God that I freely consecrate and dedicate myself together with all my properties and effects unto the Lord for the purpose of assisting in building up his kingdom, even Zion on the earth, that I may keep his law and lay all things before the bishop of his Church that I may be a lawful heir to the Kingdom of God, even the Celestial Kingdom’ ” (Journal of Wilford Woodruff, Mar. 17, 1857).

Ask: In what ways can you consecrate yourself and your possessions to building up the kingdom of God?

Ask the students why it is more important to please God than people. Then read the following statement of Wilford Woodruff and have students listen for his explanation:

“It is better to suffer stripes [beatings or blows] for the testimony of Christ, than to suffer and fall by our sins and transgressions, and then have to suffer afterwards. I would rather seal my testimony with my blood, and lay my body to rest in the grave, and have my spirit go to the other side of the veil, to enjoy a long eternity of light, truth, blessings, and knowledge which the Lord will bestow upon every man who keeps his law, than to spend a few short years of earthly pleasure, and be deprived of those blessings, and the society of my friends and brethren behind the veil” (*The Discourses of Wilford Woodruff*, sel. G. Homer Durham [1946], 278–79).

Ask: How can an eternal perspective influence the decisions you make?

He raised his wife Phoebe from the dead.

- 💡 Explain that Wilford Woodruff’s wife Phoebe had become critically ill as he was leading a group of Saints from Maine to Illinois. Share the experience he recorded in blessing her during her illness:

“December 3rd [1838] found my wife very low. I spent the day in taking care of her, and the following day I returned to [the nearby town of] Eaton to get some things for her. She seemed to be gradually sinking, and in the evening her spirit apparently left her body, and she was dead.

“The sisters gathered around her body, weeping, while I stood looking at her in sorrow. The spirit and power of God began to rest upon me until, for the first time during her sickness, faith filled my soul, although she lay before me as one dead.

“I had some oil that was consecrated . . . in Kirtland. I took it and consecrated it again before the Lord for anointing the sick. I then bowed down before the Lord and prayed for the life of my companion, and I anointed her. . . . I laid my hands upon her, and in the name of Jesus Christ I rebuked the power of death and the destroyer, and commanded the same to depart from her, and the spirit of life to enter her body.

“Her spirit returned to her body, and from that hour she was made whole; and we all felt to praise the name of God, and to trust in him and keep his commandments.

“While this operation was going on with me (as my wife related afterwards) her spirit left her body, and she saw her body lying upon the bed, and the sisters weeping. She looked at them and at me, and upon her babe, and, while gazing upon this scene, two personages came into the room. . . .

One of these messengers informed her that she could have her choice: she might go to rest in the spirit world, or, on one condition she could have the privilege of returning to her tabernacle and continuing her labors upon the earth. The condition was, if she felt that she could stand by her husband,

and with him pass through all the cares, trials, tribulations and afflictions of life which he would be called to pass through for the Gospel's sake unto the end. When she looked at the situation of her husband and child she said: 'Yes, I will do it!'

"At the moment that decision was made the power of faith rested upon me, and when I administered unto her, her spirit entered her tabernacle. . . .

"On the morning of the 6th of Dec., the Spirit said to me: 'Arise, and continue thy journey!' and through the mercy of God my wife was enabled to arise and dress herself and walk to the wagon, and we went on our way rejoicing" ("Leaves from My Journal," *Millennial Star*, Oct. 3, 1881, 639).

Wilford Woodruff carefully recorded his experiences in his journal.

- 💡 Display in front of the class a stack of books with a cumulative page count of several thousand pages. Ask the students how long it would take them to write this many journal pages. Explain to students that Wilford Woodruff regularly kept a journal of the events he witnessed in the Church. Some of his writings provide the only known record available of the sermons of the Prophet Joseph Smith and President Brigham Young. In a meeting in 1857, Elder Wilford Woodruff, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, spoke of his motivation to keep journals:

"I have had this . . . subject upon my mind ever since I have been a member of the Church. I have been inspired and moved upon to keep a journal and write the affairs of this Church as far as I can. I did not understand why my feelings were exercised so much in the early age of this Church, but I understand it now. I seldom ever heard Brother Joseph or the Twelve preach or teach any principle but what I felt as uneasy as a fish out of water until I had written it. Then I felt right. I could write a sermon of Joseph's a week after it was delivered almost word for word and after it was written it was taken from me or from my mind. This was a gift from God unto me and I have kept a journal of almost every day of my life for the last 24 years. I could tell each day what I had done, what company I was in and what was transpiring around me and any teachings or councils from the presidency of the Church, except where I knew that reporters had written their discourses, and I have urged this same course upon the Twelve and all the quorums of the church to keep a record of their meetings and the dealings of God with them and for all men who bear the priesthood to keep a record of their lives, especially of all their official acts in the Church and kingdom of God" (Journal of Wilford Woodruff, Mar. 17, 1857).

Also share what he wrote on another occasion:

"I wish to say to my young friends that it will be a great blessing to them, and their children after them, if they will keep a daily journal of what takes place with them and around them. . . .

“What shall I write?” you ask. Write about anything that is worth preserving, or the best you have; and if you begin this while you are young, it will be quite easy for you when you become men and women. How pleasing it would be to you, and to your children, thirty, fifty, or eighty years hence, to sit down and read what took place around you in your childhood and youth! Would you not like to read what took place with our fathers, and mothers, and grand parents, while they were young and during their lives? But the object is not so much to get you to keep a journal while you are young, as it is to get you to continue it after you become men and women, even through your whole lives. This is especially needed in the generation in which you live, for you live in as important a generation as the children of men ever saw, and it is far more important that you should begin early to keep a journal and follow the practice while you live, than that other generations should do so.

“You are the children of Zion, and your parents have been called of God to build up the Church of Christ and the Kingdom of God upon the earth in the last days, and soon your parents will be dead, and you will have to take their places. You will be fathers and mothers, and those little boys . . . will become prophets, apostles and elders, and will live to travel and preach the gospel, and will live to receive the word of the Lord. Then it will be very necessary that you should keep a journal and write an account of the dealings of the Lord with you” (“Keep a Journal,” *Juvenile Instructor*, Jan. 1, 1867, 5).

Review with students “He Chronicled Events” and “He Testified about Journal Writing and Warned Future Historians” in the student manual (pp. 65–66). Then ask:

- Why did Wilford Woodruff feel that his life had been preserved? (see the last paragraph of “He Chronicled Events”).
- What events might you record in your journal relating to the history of the Church as you have witnessed it?
- What are the personal benefits of keeping a journal?

PART 2: THE LATER YEARS

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Wilford Woodruff was often known as “Wilford the Faithful.” In his lifetime he preached the gospel in the United States and Great Britain. He baptized many people into the Church, and he recorded thousands of journal pages of information, reflecting over 60 years of Church history. He presided over the Church during some of the most significant events of its history, including the suspension of plural marriage, the dedication of the Salt Lake Temple, and statehood for Utah. Wilford Woodruff was a missionary, miller, printer, farmer, pioneer, colonizer, statesman, husband, father, Apostle, and prophet of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Wilford Woodruff served as an Apostle for over 50 years before he became the President of the Church. In 1889, the year he became President, the Church had about 183,000 members, with 32 stakes, 12 missions, and 3 temples. He served as President for over nine years. In 1898, the year of Wilford Woodruff’s death, the Church had grown to 267,251 members, with 40 stakes, 20 missions, and 4 temples (see *2003 Church Almanac* [2003], 473, 631).

EVENTS, HIGHLIGHTS, AND TEACHINGS

He was ordained an Apostle.

- 💡 Explain to students that while laboring on the Fox Islands (located off the coast of Maine) in August 1838, Wilford Woodruff learned by letter from Thomas B. Marsh that he had been selected by revelation to fill one of the vacancies in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. He was urged to come to Missouri to be ordained. Before he could arrive, however, the Saints were ordered from the state of Missouri by Governor Lilburn W. Boggs. Wilford Woodruff spent the winter of 1838 in Illinois, and in the spring he gathered with the Saints at Quincy, Illinois. From there he journeyed with Brigham Young to Far West, Missouri. On April 26, 1839, while standing on the temple site in Far West, Brigham Young ordained Wilford Woodruff an Apostle. Afterward, as directed by revelation, they departed on their missions to Great Britain (see D&C 118:5–6).

He was a dedicated missionary.

- 💡 Ask students if they know anyone who has served more than one mission. Tell them that Wilford Woodruff served in the mission field during portions of 13 of his first 16 years as a Church member. He served in the southern United States (1834–36), the eastern United States and the Fox Islands (1837–38), Great Britain (1839–41), a second time in the eastern United States (1844), Great Britain (as the European mission president; 1844–46), and again in the eastern United States (1848–50).

Explain that in the early days of the Church a large percentage of the early converts came from England. Wilford Woodruff and those taught by him influenced thousands to join the Church and come unto Christ. He and other missionaries were so successful that by 1851 twice as many members of the Church lived in Great Britain (approximately 30,000) as in the United States (about 15,000). Share the following statement of President Heber J. Grant about President Woodruff:

“I can bear witness that Wilford Woodruff was in very deed a servant of the living God and a true Prophet of God. Wilford Woodruff, a humble man, converted and baptized hundreds of people in a few months in Herefordshire, England. In eight months, as I now remember it, he baptized between fifteen hundred and two thousand souls. I believe that no other man who ever walked the face of the earth was a greater converter of souls to the Gospel of Jesus Christ” (in Conference Report, June 1919, 8).

Review and discuss “He Served a Mission to England” in the student manual (p. 65).

Ask: What factors, in addition to baptisms, contribute to a successful mission?

Have a student read the following commentary while students identify other ways Wilford Woodruff was a successful missionary:

Wilford Woodruff recorded in his journal this conclusion to the year 1840:

“The first day of 1840 found me in company with Elders J. Taylor and T. Thurley on board of the packet ship Oxford on the Atlantic . . . and the last day in company with Elder Kimball in . . . London, the great metropolis of Britain and the world. This has been an important year to myself, to all the Saints, and to the world at large in many respects. Never have I spent a year with more interest than 1840. Never have I been called to make greater sacrifices or enjoyed greater blessings. I have been called to make a sacrifice of the society of my wife and children, not once beholding their faces, one of which is taken from time. (Sarah Emma is gone to be seen no more in this life.)

“The whole year has been spent in a foreign nation combating error with everlasting truth, meeting with many contradictions of sinners who oppose themselves against the truth, being stoned, mobbed, and opposed. Yet the Lord hath blessed me with a great harvest of souls as seals of my ministry. Many hundreds have received the word with joy and gladness and are now rejoicing in the new and everlasting covenant which Saints live in a lively hope of meeting in the celestial glory of our God. I feel very thankful to my Heavenly Father, for his great goodness and loving kindness towards me and my brethren during the past year and may the Lord still be with us during the following year” (Journal of Wilford Woodruff, Dec. 31, 1840, Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; spelling and punctuation standardized).

Among the “fruits of [his] labours” listed for the year, Elder Woodruff included these details: During the year he traveled 4,469 miles; held 230 meetings; attended 14 conferences; baptized 336 persons and assisted in baptizing 86 others; confirmed 420 persons and assisted in confirming 50 others; ordained 18 elders, 97 priests, 34 teachers, 1 deacon; blessed 120 children; administered to 120 people who were sick; helped gather £1,000 to print the *Millennial Star*, 3,000 copies of the hymn book, and 5,000 copies of the Book of Mormon and to assist 200 members of the Church to emigrate to Nauvoo and Iowa; wrote 200 letters; received 112 letters; and faced 4 mobs (see Journal of Wilford Woodruff, Dec. 31, 1840).

Ask students:

- What does this description tell us about Wilford Woodruff's efforts as a missionary?
- What qualities of Wilford Woodruff's character helped him in doing the Lord's work?

Joseph and Hyrum Smith were martyred while Wilford Woodruff was on a mission.

- 💡 Ask students to think about the difficulty of hearing of the death of a loved one while living away from home. Explain that the Prophet Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum were martyred June 27, 1844, while most of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles were serving missions.

A few weeks later, Elder Woodruff recorded the following in his journal:

"I have never shed a tear since I heard of the death of the prophets until this morning but my whole soul has felt nerved up like steel.

"Elder B. Young arrived in Boston this morning. I walked with him to 57 Temple Street and called upon Sister Vose. Br. Young took the bed and I the big chair, and I here veiled my face and for the first time gave vent to my grief and mourning for the Prophet and Patriarch of the Church, Joseph and Hyrum Smith, who were murdered by a gentile mob. After being bathed by a flood of tears I felt composed" (Journal of Wilford Woodruff, July 17, 1844).

Joseph Smith gave the keys of the kingdom to the Twelve.

- 💡 Explain that in their last meeting with the Prophet Joseph Smith before the Apostles left on their mission, he gave them instructions about carrying on the work after his death. Have a student read to the class the following statement of Wilford Woodruff:

"The Prophet Joseph, I am now satisfied, had a thorough presentiment that that was the last meeting we would hold together here in the flesh. We had had our endowments; we had had all the blessings sealed upon our heads that were ever given to the apostles or prophets on the face of the earth. On that occasion the Prophet Joseph rose up and said to us: 'Brethren, I have desired to live to see this temple built. I shall never live to see it, but you will. I have sealed upon your heads all the keys of the kingdom of God. I have sealed upon you every key, power, principle that the God of heaven has revealed to me. Now, no matter where I may go or what I may do, the kingdom rests upon you.'

"Now, don't you wonder why we, as apostles, could not have understood that the prophet of God was going to be taken away from us? But we did not understand it. The apostles in the days of Jesus Christ could not understand what the Savior meant when He told them 'I am going away; if I do not go away the Comforter will not come.' Neither did we understand what Joseph meant. 'But,' he said, after having done this, 'ye apostles of the Lamb of God,

my brethren, upon your shoulders this kingdom rests; now you have got to round up your shoulders and bear off the kingdom.' And he also made this very strange remark, 'If you do not do it you will be damned.'

"I am the last man living who heard that declaration. He told the truth, too; for would not any of the men who have held the keys of the kingdom of God or an apostleship in this Church have been under condemnation, and would not the wrath of God have rested upon them if they had deserted these principles or denied and turned from them and undertaken to serve themselves instead of the work of the Lord which was committed to their hands?" (*Discourses of Wilford Woodruff*, 71–72).

Ask: When a worthy priesthood holder dies, does he still hold the priesthood in the spirit world? Then read and discuss the following statement of Wilford Woodruff:

"The same priesthood exists on the other side of the veil. Every man who is faithful is in his quorum there. When a man dies and his body is laid in the tomb, he does not lose his position. The Prophet Joseph Smith held the keys of this dispensation on this side of the veil, and he will hold them throughout the countless ages of eternity. He went into the spirit world to unlock the prison doors and to preach the gospel to the millions of spirits who are in darkness, and every apostle, every seventy, every elder, etc., who has died in the faith, as soon as he passes to the other side of the veil, enters into the work of the ministry, and there is a thousand times more to preach there than there is here" (*Discourses of Wilford Woodruff*, 77).

Ask students: What keys does Joseph Smith hold through eternity? (Keys of this dispensation.)

Wilford Woodruff understood the importance of temples and temple ordinances.

💡 Ask students what their most important material possessions are. Then ask: Why do Latter-day Saints place greater value on spiritual blessings than material possessions?

Explain that the Saints worked hard to finish the Nauvoo Temple so they could receive the endowment. Once the temple was completed, President Brigham Young and other leaders worked long hours administering the ordinances to worthy Saints before they left their beautiful temple. They built it with great sacrifice, but they knew that they would have to leave it soon.

Ask students what they think it might mean to the pioneer Saints that temple ordinances are once again available in a temple in Nauvoo. Share what Elder Wilford Woodruff, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, said following the dedication of the first Nauvoo Temple:

"At the edge of the evening I repaired to the temple, and dressed in our priestly robes in company with Elder Orson Hyde and about 20 others of the Elders of Israel, we dedicated the Temple of the Lord built by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, unto His Most Holy name. We had an interesting time. Notwithstanding the many false prophecies of Sidney Rigdon and others that

the roof should not go on nor the House be finished and the threats of the mob that we should not dedicate it, yet we have done both. . . . At the close of the dedication we raised our voices in the united Shout of Hosanna to God and the Lamb, which entered the Heavens to the joy and consolation of our hearts. We prayed for the Camp of Israel, for good weather, that we might not be disturbed by any mob until the dedication was over. I returned home thankful for the privilege of assisting in the dedication of the Temple of the Lord” (Journal of Wilford Woodruff, Apr. 30, 1844).


The Church members found a new home in the Salt Lake Valley.

- 💡 Remind the students that the Latter-day Saints had been bitterly persecuted and driven from their homes. In 1847 they traveled to a valley that many explorers felt was uninhabitable. Yet they were determined to find a place where they could live in peace, away from mobs and corrupt leaders who sought to exterminate them. They established a new home in the Great Salt Lake Basin. Although some explorers thought the area was too arid, the pioneers saw it as a refuge from persecution. Read what Elder Woodruff recorded about his first view of the valley on July 24, 1847:

“This is an important day in the history of my life and the history of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. On this important day after traveling from our encampment 6 miles through the deep ravine valley, ending with the canyon through the last creek, we came in full view of the great valley or basin, the Salt Lake, and land of promise held in reserve by the hand of God for a resting place for the Saints upon which a portion of the Zion of God will be built. We gazed with wonder and admiration upon the vast rich, fertile valley which lay for about 25 miles in length and 16 miles in width clothed with the heaviest garb of green vegetation in the midst of which lay a large lake of Salt water . . . in which could be seen large islands and mountains towering towards the clouds, also the glorious valley abounding with the best fresh water springs, rivulets, creeks, and brooks and rivers of various sizes, all of which gave animation to the sporting trout and other fish while the waters were wending their way into the Great Salt Lake. Our hearts were surely made glad after a hard journey from Winter Quarters of 1,200 miles through flats of Platte Rivers, steeps of the Black Hills, and the Rocky Mountains, and burning sands of the eternal sage regions and willow swales and rocky canyons and stubs and stones, to gaze upon a valley of such vast extent entirely surrounded with a perfect chain of everlasting hills and mountains covered with eternal snow, with there innumerable peaks like pyramids towering towards Heaven presenting at one view the grandest and most sublime scenery probably that could be obtained on the globe. Thoughts of pleasing meditations ran in rapid succession through our minds while we contemplated that [in] not many years that the House of God would stand upon the top of the mountains while the valleys would be converted into orchard, vineyard, gardens, and fields by the inhabitants of Zion and the standard be unfurled for the nations to gather thereto” (Journal of Wilford Woodruff, July 24, 1847).

Invite the class to sing the third verse of “Come, Come, Ye Saints” (*Hymns*, no. 30). Then ask: Why do you think the Saints were willing to struggle on such a long and difficult journey and settle in a valley that others thought dry and uninhabitable?

Wilford Woodruff enjoyed fishing.

 Tell students that one of Wilford Woodruff’s favorite pastimes was fishing. In the river that powered his father’s sawmill, the trout streams of England, and the rivers of the Rocky Mountains, Wilford Woodruff found great enjoyment in fishing. He learned to fish with artificial flies in England and was later recognized as one of the best fly fishermen of the early pioneers.


Ask: What is the value of recreation for coping with the demands of a busy schedule?

Explain that in 1892, 85-year-old President Woodruff wrote a letter to the *Forest and Stream* magazine from a relaxing camping trip in Utah’s Uintah Mountains. In his letter he reminisced on his interest in fishing:

“I was born . . . on the banks of a trout brook which had turned the wheels of a flour mill and a saw mill owned by my grandfather and father, for many years. As soon as I was old enough to carry a fish-rod I commenced catching trout, which I have continued to do, from time to time, for nearly 80 years.

“Several years of my life were spent in Ashland, Oswego Co, New York, on the east border of Lake Ontario. While there I assisted one morning in catching 500 salmon, very few of which were under 20 lbs., while a few weighed 40 lbs. My first experience in fishing with fly for trout and salmon was in England and Scotland in 1845” (“Utah Fish and Game Notes,” *Forest and Stream*, Sept. 22, 1892, 249).

Wilford Woodruff succeeded John Taylor as President of the Church.

 Tell students that on July 26, 1887, Elder Wilford Woodruff was in Sanpete County, Utah, when he learned of the death of President John Taylor in Kaysville, Utah. Read the following journal entry of Wilford Woodruff where he shared his feelings about President Taylor’s death. Ask students to listen for examples of the humility he felt when he realized he would lead the Church.

“President John Taylor died today at 5 minutes to 8 o’clock, which lays the responsibility of the care of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints upon my shoulders as President of the Church or President of the Twelve Apostles, which is the presiding authority of the Church in the absence of the First Presidency. This places me in a very peculiar situation, a position I have never looked for during my life. But in the providence of God it is laid upon me, and I pray God my Heavenly Father to give me grace equal to my day. It is a high and responsible position for any man to occupy and a position that needs great wisdom. I never expected to outlive President Taylor . . . but it has come to pass. . . . I can only say marvelous are thy ways O Lord God Almighty, for thou has certainly chosen the weak thing of this world to perform thy work on the earth. May thy servant Wilford be prepared for whatever awaits him on earth and have power to perform whatever is required at his hands by the God of Heaven. I ask this blessing of my Heavenly Father in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God” (Journal of Wilford Woodruff, July 26, 1887).

He issued the Manifesto by revelation.

- 💡 One of the most challenging periods of Church history was when Church members faced tremendous persecution for the practice of plural marriage. The Lord revealed to President Wilford Woodruff what would happen to the Saints if they continued the practice. The Lord instructed President Woodruff to tell the Saints “to refrain from contracting any marriage forbidden by the law of the land” (Official Declaration 1).

Study with students “The Manifesto Was Received by Revelation” and “God Is at the Helm” in the student manual (pp. 69–70). Divide the class in half and ask each group to read and summarize one of these sections and share what they learned.

Share what President Wilford Woodruff said about his commitment to follow the Lord:

“I want to say to all Israel that the step which I have taken in issuing this manifesto has not been done without earnest prayer before the Lord. I am about to go into the spirit world, like other men of my age. I expect to meet the face of my Heavenly Father—the Father of my spirit; I expect to meet the face of Joseph Smith, of Brigham Young, of John Taylor, and of the Apostles, and for me to have taken a stand in anything which is not pleasing in the sight of God, or before the heavens, I would rather have gone out and been shot. My life is no better than other men’s. I am not ignorant of the feelings that have been engendered through the course I have pursued. But I have done my duty, and the nation of which we form a part must be responsible for that which has been done in relation to this principle” (*Deseret Weekly*, Oct. 18, 1890, 552).

Ask: Why is it important to be more concerned about pleasing God than pleasing people?

President Wilford Woodruff received revelation to guide the Church.

- 💡 Explain that President Wilford Woodruff taught Church members that continuing revelation was necessary to the progress of the Church. Share with students some or all of the following statement of President Woodruff:

“I wish to say to the Latter-day Saints that we live in a very important generation. We are blessed with power and authority, holding the Holy Priesthood by the commandment of God, to stand upon the earth and redeem both the living and the dead. . . . The Lord would not permit me to occupy this position one day of my life, unless I was susceptible to the Holy Spirit and to the revelations of God. It is too late in the day for this Church to stand without revelation. Not only the President of the Church

should possess this gift and give it unto the people, but his counselors and the Apostles and all men that bear the Holy Priesthood, if they magnify their calling, should possess that gift for themselves and to assist them in their duties, although they may not be called to give revelations to lead and direct the Church. . . .

“I want to say, as the President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, that we should now go on and progress. We have not got through revelation. We have not got through the work of God. . . . We have had prophets and apostles. President Young, who followed President Joseph Smith, led us here. He organized these Temples and carried out the purposes of his calling and office. He laid the foundation of this great Temple on this block, as well as others in the mountains of Israel. What for? That we might carry out these principles of redemption for the dead. He accomplished all that God required at his hands. But he did not receive all the revelations that belong to this work; neither did President Taylor, nor has Wilford Woodruff. There will be no end to this work until it is perfected” (*Millennial Star*, May 21, 1894, 324–25).

Explain that President Wilford Woodruff received a revelation clarifying how temple work should be done. In the early days of the Church some people were *adopted* by sealing in the temple to faithful leaders who were not of their lineage. This practice of sealing outside one’s family was common until April 8, 1894, when President Woodruff made the following statement:

“I have not felt satisfied, neither did President Taylor, neither has any man since the Prophet Joseph who has attended to the ordinance of adoption in the temples of our God. We have felt that there was more to be revealed upon this subject than we had received. Revelations were given to us in the St. George Temple, which President Young presented to the Church of God. Changes were made there, and we still have more changes to make, in order to satisfy our Heavenly Father, satisfy our dead and ourselves. I will tell you what some of them are. I have prayed over this matter, and my brethren have. We have felt, as President Taylor said, that we have got to have more revelation concerning sealing under the law of adoption. Well, what are these changes? One of them is the principle of adoption. In the commencement of adopting men and women in the Temple at Nauvoo, a great many persons were adopted to different men who were not of the lineage of their fathers. . . .

“Now, what are the feelings of Israel? They have felt that they wanted to be adopted to somebody. . . . When I went before the Lord to know who I should be adopted to (we were then being adopted to prophets and apostles), the Spirit of God said to me, ‘Have you not a father, who begot you?’ ‘Yes, I have.’ ‘Then why not honor him? Why not be adopted [sealed] to him?’ ‘Yes,’ says I, ‘that is right.’ I was [sealed] to my father, and should have had my father sealed to his father, and so on back; and the duty that I want every man who presides over a temple to see performed from this day henceforth and forever, unless the Lord Almighty commands otherwise, is, let every man be [sealed]


to his father. When a man receives the endowments, [seal] him to his father; not to Wilford Woodruff, nor to any other man outside the lineage of his fathers. That is the will of God to this people. . . .

“In my prayers the Lord revealed to me, that it was my duty to say to all Israel to carry this principle out, and in fulfillment of that revelation I lay it before this people. I say to all men who are laboring in these temples, carry out this principle, and then we will make one step in advance of what we have had before. Myself and counselors conversed upon this and were agreed upon it, and afterwards we laid it before all the Apostles who were here . . . , and the Lord revealed to every one of these men—and they would bear testimony to it if they were to speak—that that was the word of the Lord to them. I never met with anything in my life in this Church that there was more unity upon than there was upon that principle. They all feel right about it, and that it is our duty. . . . The Spirit of God will be with us in this matter. We want the Latter-day Saints from this time to trace their genealogies as far as they can, and to be sealed to their fathers and mothers. Have children sealed to their parents, and run this chain through as far as you can get it” (*Millennial Star*, 337–39).

Have a student read Articles of Faith 1:9. Then ask:

- How does President Woodruff’s teaching about adoption reflect the ninth article of faith?
- Why do you feel the doctrine of continuous revelation is essential?

The dedication of the Salt Lake Temple inspired the Saints to research their ancestors.

 Invite the class to turn to Doctrine and Covenants 110:13–15, and ask a student to read the verses. Ask: In what ways have the hearts of the children been turned to their fathers?

Explain that the dedication of the Salt Lake Temple in 1893 and President Wilford Woodruff’s revelation on temple sealings inspired the organization of the Genealogical Society of Utah. This organization made available to members records which would enable them to seek out their ancestors.

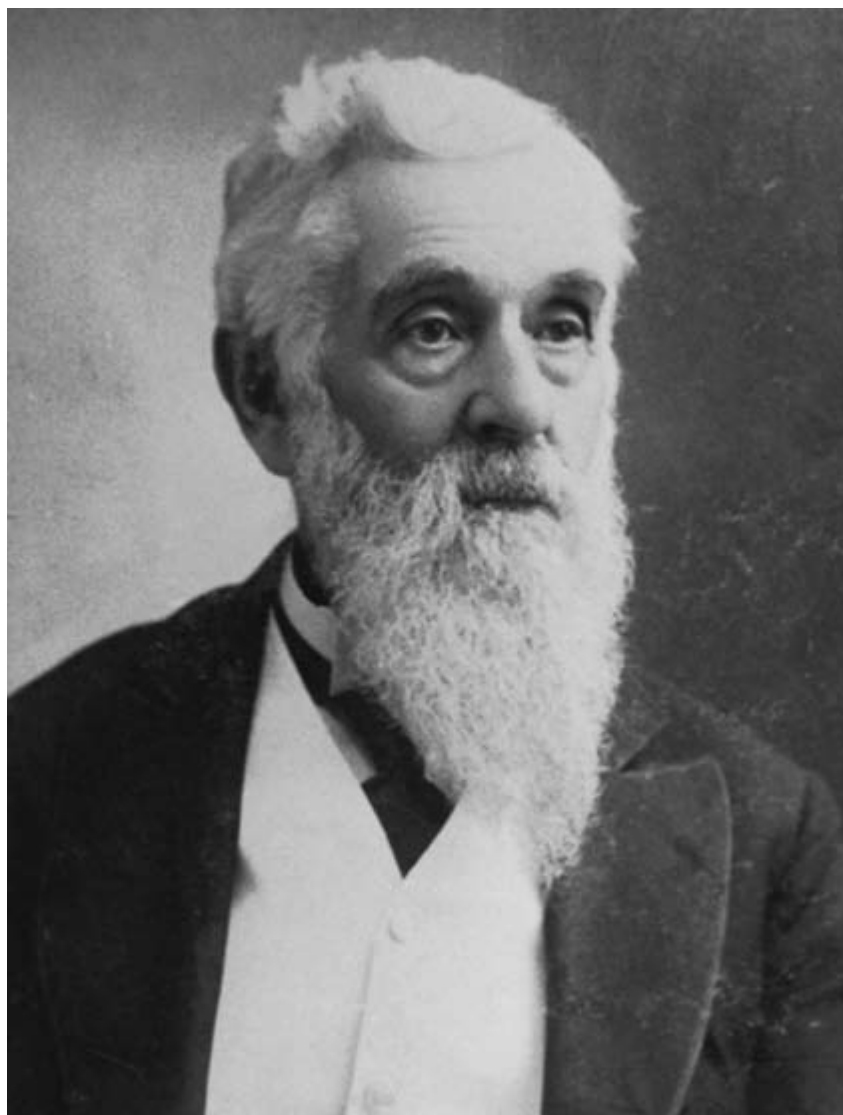
Ask: How can you do temple work for your ancestors at this time in your life?

Invite a student to briefly share his or her feelings about family history work. Encourage students to begin some aspect of family history work during the coming week—gathering the names of ancestors, beginning a personal history, interviewing parents or grandparents about their lives, and so on.

CHAPTER 5

Lorenzo Snow

FIFTH PRESIDENT OF THE CHURCH



PART 1: THE EARLY YEARS

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

When Lorenzo Snow was born in Ohio on April 3, 1814, much of the world was at war. The United States of America was fighting against Britain. France was in the middle of the Napoleonic Wars in Europe. Wars for independence continued in Latin America.

Lorenzo Snow was six years old in 1820 when the Prophet Joseph Smith received the First Vision in the Sacred Grove. Sixteen years later, Lorenzo was baptized in Kirtland, Ohio, at age 22.

EVENTS, HIGHLIGHTS, AND TEACHINGS

Lorenzo Snow's parents encouraged responsibility and broad-mindedness.

💡 Summarize for the class the introductory paragraph and “His Early Life Included Lessons in Responsibility” in the student manual (p. 77). Emphasize that Lorenzo Snow learned to oversee the family farm in his father’s absence. Ask: How might his work on the farm have helped Lorenzo Snow prepare for later duties in life?

Compare Lorenzo Snow’s home life as described in “He Was Taught to Be Sympathetic, Broad-Minded, and Tolerant” in the student manual (p. 77) with the following counsel from President Gordon B. Hinckley. Ask students to cite ways the Snow family practiced the same principles emphasized by President Hinckley.

“Each of us is an individual. Each of us is different. There must be respect for those differences” (*Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley* [1997], 661).

“We must work harder to build mutual respect, an attitude of forbearance, with tolerance one for another regardless of the doctrines and philosophies which we may espouse. Concerning these you and I may disagree. But we can do so with respect and civility” (*Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley*, 665).

Ask a student to read Articles of Faith 1:11. Then ask:

- How can we respect others even when we disagree with them?
- Why is respect for others an important part of Latter-day Saint practice?

Lorenzo Snow learned about the gospel from the examples and teachings of Church members.

💡 Explain to students that missionaries from the Church in nearby Kirtland, Ohio, contacted and taught the Snow family. As a result, Lorenzo Snow’s mother and his sister Lenora were baptized in 1831. His sister Eliza was baptized in 1835. Lorenzo, on the other hand, showed little interest in the doctrines for several years. Deciding to attend school in Oberlin, Ohio, he departed on the 50-mile journey. En route he met David W. Patten, one of this dispensation’s first Apostles.

Have a student read the following account, which describes the effect this meeting had on Lorenzo Snow, as recorded by his sister Eliza R. Snow:

“On his way to Oberlin, my brother accidentally fell in company with David W. Patten, an incident to which he frequently refers as one of those seemingly trivial occurrences in human life which leave an indelible trace. This gentleman was an early champion of the fulness of the Gospel. . . . In conversation with him, my brother was much impressed with the depth and beauty of the philosophical reasoning with which this inspired Elder seemed perfectly familiar. . . . From that time a new field, with a new train of reflections, was open to my brother’s mind, the impress of which has never been erased” (*Biography and Family Record of Lorenzo Snow* [1884], 4).

Ask students to share an experience of meeting someone who at first may have not seemed significant, but who later proved to be very important in their life. Read the following statement from Elder Neal A. Maxwell, who was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, regarding our association with others:

“So often, among so many other praiseworthy blessings, life features the intertwinings of our lives which we can scarcely number. Yet why should we be surprised? Do we not sometimes use phrases such as ‘instant friends’ and ‘kindred spirits’? After all, those within our individual circles of influence definitely constitute our particular portion of humanity—those whom God expects us in particular to love and to serve. Within our intersecting circles, whatever their size and extent, lie many unused opportunities for service, ‘enough and to spare’ (D&C 104:17). These intersectings mercifully provide multiple opportunities, and they can bring ‘unnumbered blessings.’ . . .
“What do these intertwinings signify? To be sure, God is in the details of each of our lives especially to the extent we allow” (*One More Strain of Praise* [1999], 97, 103).

Ask: What can you do to love and serve the people in your “particular portion of humanity”?

Divide the class into three groups and ask each group to prepare a short oral report from one of the following sections in the student manual: “His Mother and Two Sisters Were Converted” (pp. 77–78), “He Was Open and Receptive to the Church” (p. 78), and “He Observed the Members Carefully Before He Accepted Baptism” (p. 78). Prior to these oral reports, you might want to invite any students who were not raised in Latter-day Saint homes to share briefly how they learned of the gospel. If there are no students with this background, tell about someone you know who was introduced to the Church. Then invite a representative from each of the groups to report on Lorenzo Snow’s conversion. Ask students:

- Why might the example of Church members be as important as the truthfulness of the gospel in the conversion process?
- How can Church members best encourage family members to listen to the gospel message?

Ask the students to reflect on the example they have given through their words and actions to those who are not members of the Church. If they feel a change is needed, encourage them to set goals and make changes in their lives.

Lorenzo Snow received a strong testimony through the Holy Ghost.

💡 Review with students the first two paragraphs of “He Studied, Was Baptized, and Received a Witness of the Truth of the Restoration” in the student manual (pp. 78–79). Have them summarize the reasons behind Lorenzo Snow’s decision to be baptized. Then ask: What did Lorenzo Snow hope to receive by being baptized?

Have a student read aloud 3 Nephi 11:32–35 and 3 Nephi 12:1–2. Ask: What does baptism “with fire and with the Holy Ghost” mean?

Have a student read aloud the remaining paragraphs of Lorenzo Snow’s account of his conversion in “He Studied, Was Baptized, and Received a Witness of the Truth of the Restoration” in the student manual (p. 79). Then ask students:

- How did Lorenzo Snow gain “a perfect knowledge” of the gospel principles he had accepted by being baptized?
- Why does a witness from the Holy Ghost require effort from the individual who seeks it?

Lorenzo Snow had a strong desire to be a missionary.

💡 Invite returned missionaries or students preparing to leave on missions to share what motivated them to accept or desire a call to serve. Read “He Wanted to Serve God” from the student manual (pp. 79–80), and have students listen for what motivated Lorenzo Snow to serve a mission.

Ask: Why did Lorenzo Snow seek the privilege of serving as a missionary? Then review “Highlights in the Life of Lorenzo Snow” in the student manual (p. 76) and note his missionary service.

Have students read Doctrine and Covenants 4. Then ask:

- What qualifies us to serve as missionaries?
- How can we prepare ourselves to serve the Lord better?
- How can serving a mission affect the rest of your life?

The Lord protected Lorenzo Snow during his missionary labors.

💡 Share the following letter that Lorenzo Snow wrote to his aunt, describing the passage from New York to Liverpool, England:

“I was forty-two days crossing the ocean, and during this time we encountered three terrible storms—storms which those accustomed to the ocean pronounced very dangerous. Unacquainted as I was with the turbulent waves, I was unable to judge comparatively, but, in a number of instances, to say the least of it, the scene was fearfully terrific. I did not feel surprised that men, women and children who had not learned to trust in God, wrung their hands in an agony of fear, and wept. My trust was in Him who created the seas and defined their bounds. I was on His errand. . . .

“Now, after the storm subsided and the bosom of the great deep settled into calm repose . . . again the ship moves through the parting waves with stately pride, while joy and gratitude fill every heart” (in Snow, *Biography and Family Record*, 49–50).

Tell students that shortly after arriving in Great Britain, Elder Snow was appointed to preside over the Church in London. The growth of the Church at this time was

significant. But as success is often accompanied by resistance from the adversary, Elder Snow soon encountered opposition from an unseen evil power. Share the following story recorded by his sister Eliza:

“After retiring to bed at night, he was aroused from sleep by the most discordant noises. It seemed as though every piece of furniture in the room was put in motion, going . . . back and forth against each other in such terrible fury that sleep and rest were utter impossibilities.

“He endured the unceremonious visitation for several nights, each night thinking it was the last, that they would leave as unbidden as they came, until the fact forced itself upon his mind that so long as he would tamely submit to their aggressions, so long they would continue to repeat them. Something must be done. He must claim the right of master over his own premises.

“Accordingly, after a day of fasting and before kneeling to pray, as was his custom before retiring for the night, he read aloud a chapter in the Bible, and then, in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, and by the authority of the Holy Priesthood, rebuked those spirits, and commanded them to leave the house—went to bed and had no more disturbance. But those spirits were not discouraged with one defeat. It was not long before several members of the Church became disaffected and came out in open rebellion, insomuch that it was painfully necessary to expel quite a number” (Snow, *Biography and Family Record*, 54).

Explain that although opposition continued to present itself in proselyting efforts, the Church continued to grow and progress. Six months after Elder Snow was appointed to lead the Church in London, membership had increased from fewer than 100 members to 220 members. Ask students:

- What might have been the result of Elder Snow’s encounter with the adversary if he had feared or lacked faith?
- What experiences have you encountered with opposition or even persecution for your beliefs?
- Why do we experience trials even when we live righteously?

Ask students how they would answer the following question from a group of 12-year-old deacons: “With all the danger in the world, why should we even plan to go on missions?” Then refer to Doctrine and Covenants 35:13–14 and 84:88 and share the following statement of Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“Our missionaries have not participated in this great work without serious challenges, tribulations, and difficulties. Parents of missionaries have always known the risk of losing a loved one serving in the mission field due to accident or illness. Now, we must add to the risk of missionary service the possibility of acts of terrorism. . . .

“However . . . parents and prospective missionaries have no reason to be fearful and to feel that serving a mission is unusually dangerous or risky. . . . Missionaries . . . have a much lower risk of death than others of comparable age” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1989, 42–43; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1989, 33–34).

You may also consider sharing some or all of the following experiences related by Lorenzo Snow concerning how he was protected while serving the Lord:

“When at the house of Brother Smith, in Stark County, Ohio, I dreamed one night that arrangements were in progress to mob me. The following evening after I had the dream, as I sat conversing with friends who had called on me, a loud rap at the door preceded the entrance of two well dressed young men, who politely invited me to accompany them to a school house about one mile distant, and address an audience already assembled. After a little hesitation on my part, they began to urgently request my acceptance of their invitation, when the dream of the preceding night instantaneously flashed across my mind, and I told them that I could not comply with their wishes. They still persisted to urge and insist on my accompanying them. When they were convinced that I was immovable in my determination of non-compliance, they not only manifested disappointment, but were exceedingly angry.

“The next day I learned that they told the truth so far as a congregated audience waiting my appearance at the school house was concerned, but the object was entirely different from that reported by the young men—it corresponded precisely with my dream” (in Snow, *Biography and Family Record*, 17).

“During my stay in Wales [in the autumn of 1851], I attended a number of very interesting meetings. On the evening of the fourth of November, I addressed a very large assembly, convened in a hall in Tredegar, in Monmouthshire. . . .

“At the close of the meeting, President [William] Phillips and myself were conducted to a hotel, where, after supper, we were shown to lodgings in an upper room. As we passed into the bedchamber, while closing the door, I noticed that, owing to some defect in the lock, it could not be fastened. We soon retired to rest, then about 11 o’clock; thinking ourselves safe from harm, we slept soundly, until probably about 2 o’clock a.m., I was suddenly awakened by a savage looking fellow standing close to my bedside, ordering me and my companion to leave our bed forthwith or suffer the consequences; at the same time using the most blasphemous language, and uttering the most hideous oaths imaginable, while fiendishly striking his huge fists in close proximity to my face. Two of his comrades, stout, fierce looking fellows, were standing by, evidently prepared for an encounter. Brother Phillips was soundly sleeping, and it was with some difficulty that I awakened him sufficiently to comprehend our situation. Of course, we could do but little towards defending ourselves against a trio of ruffians, desperately bent on mischief; and as we afterwards learned, had been hired to mob us, and that the landlord was secretly conniving with the actors in the hellish raid.

“In the contest, the light which one of them held, was by some means, suddenly extinguished, which caused an alarm, resulting in their retreat forthwith from the room; upon which I suggested to Elder Phillips that we immediately do our best to secure ourselves by barricading the door, for I felt assured the insurgents would make another attack. We placed a chair at the door, with the top directly under the knob of the door lock, and there I assumed the responsibility of holding it, while Brother Phillips performed the duty of pressing his large and stately person against the door.

“No sooner had these protective arrangements been completed, than the mobocrats, with considerable reinforcements, came rushing forward to renew the attack. They persistently endeavored to force the door open, but failing, they placed themselves against it, [Samson] like, but, owing to the position of things inside, without avail; then, with a volley of oaths, they commenced pounding and kicking the door, and continued until the noise and uproar was so great that the landlord did not dare any longer to ignore the situation, and coming to our relief, he quelled the disturbance by requesting the ruffians to retire.

“Some years after the date of this occurrence, I was informed that the hotel in which the foregoing disgraceful scenes were enacted was being used as a common stable for the accommodation of horses; and that the landlord had been signally reduced to beggary, and was a vagabond upon the earth” (in Snow, *Biography and Family Record*, 189–91).

“I left Geneva on the 9th inst. [on the mail coach] and commenced winding my way over a rough, hilly and mountainous country. . . . As we approached the towering Alps, there came a heavy snow storm, which made our journey very gloomy, dreary and altogether disagreeable. About six o’clock in the evening of the following day, we commenced the ascent of Mount Cenis, and reached its cloudy summit, six thousand seven hundred feet in height, at one o’clock the next morning.

“Though but one passenger beside myself saw proper to venture over the mountain, it was found that ten horses were barely sufficient to carry us forward through the drifting snow, which had fallen to nearly the depth of four feet since the last post had passed, a circumstance that rendered it very dangerous making our way up the narrow road and short turnings. One stumble or the least unlucky toss of our vehicle would, at very many points of our path, have plunged us a thousand feet down rocky precipices. . . .

“We descended the mountain with much more ease to our horses, and more comfort to ourselves; and I felt thankful that my passage over these rocky steeps was completed, and hoped it might never be my lot to cross them a third time at night in the winter season; but regarding these matters, we need seek to exercise no anxiety, inasmuch as over them we hold no control” (in Snow, *Biography and Family Record*, 207–8).

Ask one or two students to share an experience when the Lord protected them (or people they know) while they were on a mission.

Lorenzo Snow strengthened the Saints as they prepared to travel westward.

💡 If available, have students refer to map 5, “The Missouri, Illinois, and Iowa Area of the USA,” in their triple combination and locate Mount Pisgah, Iowa. Explain that as the Saints traveled from Nauvoo, Illinois, to Winter Quarters they often stopped at way stations along the trail to rest and further prepare for their journey. One way station was Mount Pisgah, where Lorenzo Snow lived from the summer of 1846 until the spring of 1848. Beginning in the spring of 1847, he presided over the Saints there.

Explain that many of the Saints in Mount Pisgah were in difficult circumstances. Read Lorenzo Snow’s commentary about the condition of the Saints at this time:

“By this time the Saints in Pisgah were in a very destitute condition, not only for food and clothing, but also for teams and wagons to proceed on their journey. Several families were entirely out of provision, and dependent on the charity of their neighbors, who, in most cases, were illy prepared to exercise that virtue. But, above all this, a sweeping sickness had visited the settlement, when there were not sufficient well ones to nurse the sick; and death followed in the wake, and fathers, mothers, children, brothers, sisters and dearest friends fell victims to the destroyer, and were buried with little ceremony, and some destitute of proper burial clothes. Thus were sorrow and mourning added to destitution” (in Snow, *Biography and Family Record*, 90).

Lorenzo Snow approached these circumstances with energy and foresight. His sister Eliza R. Snow recorded:

“He moved to arouse and combine the energies of the people—organized the brethren in companies, making selections of suitable men, some to proceed to the Gentile settlements to obtain work for provisions and clothing, others to put in crops at home and look after the families of those who were called away—to repair wagons, making new ones out of old, and to manufacture chairs, barrels, tubs, churns, baskets and such other articles as could be disposed of to advantage in the neighboring settlements. . . .

“He sent . . . two intelligent and judicious brethren, to the State of Ohio and other parts of the country, to solicit aid, to invite rich Gentiles to contribute to the wants of the Saints and assist them in their journey westward. They succeeded in gathering funds amounting to about six hundred dollars. The arrangements entered into resulted in supplying the people with abundance of food and clothing, besides facilitating the exodus of those who wished to proceed on the journey as early as practicable” (*Biography and Family Record*, 90–91).

Lorenzo Snow also encouraged the Saints and organized other activities and religious services for them. He recorded in his journal:

“During the long winter months, I sought to keep up the spirits and courage of the Saints in Pisgah, not only by inaugurating meetings for religious worship and exercises, in different parts of the settlement, but also by making provisions for, and encouraging proper amusements of various kinds. These entertainments corresponded with our circumstances, and, of course, were of a very unpretentious and primitive character; their novel simplicity and unlikeness to anything before witnessed, added greatly to the enjoyment. They were truly exhibitions of ingenuity” (in Snow, *Biography and Family Record*, 91).

Following instructions from President Brigham Young, Lorenzo Snow organized a company of pioneers and left Mount Pisgah in the spring of 1848 to journey to the Salt Lake Valley. He arrived in the valley with his family in the fall of 1848.

Ask students:

- How did Lorenzo Snow make the best of a difficult situation?
- What can we do to help and strengthen others when we find ourselves in difficult situations?

PART 2: THE LATER YEARS

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND


Lorenzo Snow was ordained an Apostle on February 12, 1849, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles on April 7, 1889, and President of the Church on September 13, 1898.

When Lorenzo Snow became President, the Church was deeply in debt. For many years the Church had fought a legal battle over plural marriage, helping Church members who could not afford legal fees and attempting to fight laws designed to undermine the Church. The Church also spent much money to complete the Salt Lake Temple. During the period when the United States government confiscated Church property as a result of the Edmunds-Tucker Act, the income from tithing significantly decreased. Many Saints were unwilling to pay tithing, knowing the government could confiscate Church property. To make matters worse, the United States entered a severe financial depression during the early 1890s, making the payment of tithes a real test of faith on the part of Church members. By 1898 the Church owed over \$1.25 million (see Richard O. Cowan, *The Church in the Twentieth Century* [1985], 15; and Leonard J. Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom* [1958], 400–401).

Lorenzo Snow was 84 years old when he became President of the Church and was well prepared spiritually and temporally for leadership. He possessed a keen mind and was a great champion of education. President Snow had a special mission to establish the Lord’s people on a solid temporal and spiritual foundation by the determined application of the law of sacrifice. When he became President, the Church had about 270,000 members, with 40 stakes, 20 missions, and 4 temples. In 1901, the year of his death, the Church had grown to about 293,000 members, with 50 stakes and 21 missions (see *2003 Church Almanac* [2003], 473, 631).

EVENTS, HIGHLIGHTS, AND TEACHINGS

He was called as an Apostle and served a mission to Italy.

 Tell students that on February 12, 1849, Lorenzo Snow was asked to attend a meeting of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. He had no idea why he had been asked to attend. When he arrived, he was surprised to learn that he had been called as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve. He was then ordained an Apostle.

Invite students to look in the Bible Dictionary and find the meaning of the word *Apostle*. Explain that Apostles in the Church have the mission to teach and testify of the Savior and His gospel to the world.

Divide the class into three groups and have each group read one of the following sections in the student manual: “A Call Came to Serve in Italy” (pp. 81–82), “He Faced Opposition in Italy” (p. 82), and “His Life Was Preserved in Hawaii” (p. 83). Ask each group to give a brief summary of Elder Snow’s mission experience.

You may want to share with students the following miracle, which helped vitalize the missionary work in Italy. Explain that Lorenzo Snow was frustrated that the

missionary work in Italy proceeded slowly, but then he found an opportunity to show the power of God. He reported in a letter to President Brigham Young:

“It seemed very singular, and it was no small tax on my patience, to be weeks and even months in the midst of an interesting people without being actively and publicly engaged in communicating the great principles which I had been sent to promulgate. But, as I felt it was the mind of the Spirit that we should proceed at first with slow and cautious steps, I submitted to the will of heaven.

“September 6th.—This morning, my attention was directed to Joseph Grey, a boy of three years of age—the youngest child of our host. Many friends had been to see the child, as to all human appearances his end was near. I went to see him in the afternoon; death was preying upon his body—his former healthy frame was now reduced to a skeleton, and it was only by close observation we could discern that he was alive. As I reflected upon the peculiarity of our situation, my mind was fully awakened to a sense of our position. For some hours before I retired to rest, I called upon the Lord to assist us at this time. My feelings on this occasion will not easily be erased from my memory.

“September 7th.—This morning I proposed to Elder Stenhouse we should fast and retire to the mountains and pray. As we departed, we called and saw the child—his eyeballs turned upwards—his eyelids fell and closed—his face and ears were thin, and wore the pale marble hue, indicative of approaching dissolution. The cold perspiration of death covered his body as the principle of life was nearly exhausted. Madam Grey and other females were sobbing, while Monsieur Grey hung his head and whispered to us, *‘Il meurt! il meurt!’* (He dies! he dies!)

“After a little rest upon the mountain, aside from any likelihood of interruption, we called upon the Lord in solemn, earnest prayer, to spare the life of the child. As I reflected on the course we wished to pursue, the claims that we should soon advance to the world, I regarded this circumstance as one of vast importance. I know not of any sacrifice which I can possibly make, that I am not willing to offer, that the Lord might grant our requests.

“We returned about three o’clock in the afternoon, and having consecrated some oil, I anointed my hand and laid it upon the head of the child, while we silently offered up the desires of our hearts for his restoration. A few hours afterward we called, and his father, with a smile of thankfulness, said, *‘Mieux beaucoup! beaucoup!’* (Better, much, much!)

“September 8th. The child had been so well during the past night the parents had been enabled to take their rest, which they had not done for some time before; and to-day they could leave him and attend to the business of the house. As I called to see him, Madam Grey expressed her joy in his restoration. I, in turn, remarked, *‘Il Dio di cielo ha fatto questa per voi.’* (The God of heaven has done this for you.)” (in Eliza R. Snow, *Biography and Family Record of Lorenzo Snow* [1884], 128–29).

Ask students:

- Why did Elder Snow feel so strongly about healing the young boy that there was no sacrifice he was “not willing to offer”?

- Why do you suppose Elder Snow regarded fasting and prayer as such an important part of healing this boy?
- How can events that seem like trials turn into opportunities to do the work of the Lord?

Lorenzo Snow endured opposition with a good attitude.

- 💡 Have a student read aloud 2 Nephi 2:11. Then ask another student to summarize its message in his or her own words. Share with students the following account and review with them the section “He Was a Dedicated Apostle and Defender of the Faith” in the student manual (p. 84).

“Friday, November 20th, 1885, was a memorable but sad day for the family of Lorenzo Snow, for on that date the venerable Apostle of the Lord was placed under arrest by the United States Marshals [for practicing plural marriage]. The warrant cited him to appear in Ogden at once for a preliminary hearing. “His little children who had not seen him for months ran clinging to him, wept bitterly and would not be comforted” (Thomas C. Romney, *The Life of Lorenzo Snow* [1955], 379).

Explain that Elder Snow, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, was tried, convicted, and sentenced to a term in prison, which began March 12, 1886. Although he was 71 years old when he began his sentence, he endured his situation well and maintained a good attitude. Share the following account of Elder Snow’s experience:

The governor of the Utah Territory visited Lorenzo Snow in prison and promised him amnesty if he would “renounce the principle of plural marriage.” Lorenzo Snow replied, “I thank you, Governor, but having adopted sacred and holy principles for which we have already sacrificed property, home and life on several occasions in their defense, we do not propose, at this late hour, to abandon them because of threatened danger” (in Romney, *Life of Lorenzo Snow*, 380).

Elder Snow wrote to the First Presidency from prison:

“I am very thankful to the Giver of all Good, for the bodily health and buoyancy of spirit which He so confers on me that I feel perfectly resigned with calm submission to the inevitable and am enabled, fully, to acknowledge the hand of God, and His overruling Providence in whatever has or may occur. . . . If I can serve the Holy Cause, which is dearer to me than life, and promote the glory of God by passing through the ordeal of incarceration in a penitentiary, I am perfectly willing” (in Romney, *Life of Lorenzo Snow*, 382).

Tell students that while in prison, Lorenzo Snow helped with a school there, and he taught two grammar classes a week. He was released from prison on February 8, 1887.

President Lorenzo Snow shared a sacred experience with his granddaughter.

💡 Ask students if a close relative has ever shared a personal, sacred experience with them. Without having them relate the sacred experience, invite them to tell how it affected their feelings toward this relative. If no student responds, perhaps you have had such an experience and could share your feelings. Then read with students “The Savior Appeared to Him in the Salt Lake Temple” in the student manual (p. 85).

Write the word *witness* on the board and discuss its meaning. Then ask:

- How might the testimony of a reliable witness affect your feelings toward a reported event?
- Why do you think this sacred experience has been shared with the Church and not just kept within the Snow family?

Ask the students to review the instructions of the Savior to President Snow. Discuss how these instructions set a precedent that is still observed today—upon the death of a Church President, the First Presidency is reorganized without a long delay.

The Lord revealed to President Lorenzo Snow the solution to the Church's debt.

💡 Review with students the second paragraph of the historical background at the beginning of part 2 of this chapter (p. 78). Ask them to explain why being in debt is such a heavy burden. Read the following praise of President Heber J. Grant for President Lorenzo Snow and his work to resolve the problem of Church debt:

“I know that Lorenzo Snow was a Prophet of God. . . . It is stated that men do not amount to much after they pass fifty, and that when they are sixty you ought to get some kind of a drug and put them to sleep, and that when they are seventy they are simply useless. But Lorenzo Snow came to the presidency of the Church when he was eighty-five years of age, and what he accomplished during the next three years of his life is simply marvelous to contemplate. He lifted the Church from the financial slough of despond, so to speak, from almost financial bankruptcy. . . . This man who had not been engaged in financial affairs, who had been devoting his life for years to laboring in the Temple, took hold of the finances of the Church of Christ, under the inspiration of the living God, and in those three years changed everything, financially, from darkness to light” (in Conference Report, June 1919, 9–10).

Ask students to read “He Received Revelation That Helped Solve the Church’s Financial Crisis” in the student manual (pp. 86–87) and to describe how the Lord directed President Snow. Ask:

- What principles about debt did the Saints learn that would apply to your personal life?
- Why is tithing more a principle of faith than a principle about money?
- How are the tithing donations used in the Church?

Ask two or three student volunteers to recount how they gained a testimony of tithing. Share the following statements of President Lorenzo Snow:

“The time has now come for every Latter-day Saint, who calculates to be prepared for the future and to hold his feet strong upon a proper foundation, to do the will of the Lord and to pay his tithing in full. That is the word of the Lord to you. . . . The Lord has blessed us and has had mercy upon us in the past; but there are times coming when the Lord requires us to stand up and do that which He has commanded and not leave it any longer. . . . There is no man or woman that now hears what I am saying who will feel satisfied if he or she fails to pay a full tithing” (*The Teachings of Lorenzo Snow*, sel. Clyde J. Williams [1984], 155).

“A part of a tithing is no tithing at all, no more than immersing only half a person’s body is baptism. . . .

“ . . . It is now time for us to wake up, turn our attention to the Lord, and do our duty” (*Teachings of Lorenzo Snow*, 155–56).

If students have specific questions about their own tithing faithfulness, explain that they can find answers through prayer and scripture study and through their bishop or branch president.

“As man now is, God once was: As God now is, man may be.”

- 💡 A few days prior to class, invite a student to read “He Received a Revelation about Man’s Divine Potential” in the student manual (pp. 88–89) and prepare a brief lesson to teach this account and doctrine to the class. After the student presentation, explain that Lorenzo Snow discussed his experience and insight with Brigham Young, after which Brigham Young replied:

“Brother Snow, that is a new doctrine; if true, it has been revealed to you for your own private information, and will be taught in due time by the Prophet to the Church; till then I advise you to lay it upon the shelf and say no more about it” (in Orson F. Whitney, “Lives of Our Leaders—The Apostles—Lorenzo Snow,” *Juvenile Instructor*, Jan. 1, 1900, 4).

Write Lorenzo Snow’s couplet on the board. Ask a student to read the section “They Shall Organize Worlds and Rule Over Them” in the student manual (p. 90), and have the class discuss how it relates to President Snow’s couplet. Ask:

- How does this doctrine help you understand the purpose of your life?
- Why do you think this doctrine is sometimes difficult for people to accept?

We must become perfect like God is perfect.

- 💡 Explain that to achieve our divine potential we must become perfect like God is perfect. Read with students “We Should Strive for Daily Improvement” in the student manual (p. 90–91). Discuss with them the commandment to be perfect, even as the Father is perfect (see Matthew 5:48; 3 Nephi 12:48). Ask:
 - In what ways may we perfect ourselves in some areas of our lives, if not in all?
 - Why might some people think such a goal is impossible in this life?

Read with students “Do Not Be Discouraged While Seeking Improvement” in the student manual (p. 91). Have them find what President Snow taught that we should do each day while seeking to improve.

Ask students to read Ether 12:27. Emphasize that the process of overcoming personal weakness can have its challenges. President Lorenzo Snow taught that when we work to overcome personal weakness we should not become discouraged if we experience difficulties along the way. Emphasize the importance of exercising faith in the Lord and coming unto Him as we seek to overcome weaknesses.

Ask: Why do people sometimes continue to encounter troubles, even when they try to do what is right? Share the following statements from President Snow:

“I suppose I am talking to some who have had worry and trouble and heart burnings and persecution, and have at times been caused to think that they never expected to endure quite so much. But for everything you have suffered, for everything that has occurred to you which you thought an evil at that time, you will receive fourfold, and that suffering will have had a tendency to make you better and stronger and to feel that you have been blessed. When you look back over your experiences you will then see that you have advanced far ahead and have gone up several rounds of the ladder toward exaltation and glory” (*Teachings of Lorenzo Snow*, 117).

“We are here that we may be educated in a school of suffering and of fiery trials, which school was necessary for Jesus, our Elder Brother, who, the scriptures tell us, ‘was made perfect through suffering.’ It is necessary that we suffer in all things, that we may be qualified and worthy to rule, and govern all things, even as our Father in Heaven and His eldest son, Jesus” (*Teachings of Lorenzo Snow*, 119).

Ask students: In what ways might trials and hardships turn to our advantage?

Lorenzo Snow helped build the kingdom of God.

- 💡 Have students review the section “He Was a Builder of the Kingdom” in the student manual (pp. 91–92). Have them discuss possible ways the Church has been strengthened because of Lorenzo Snow’s work and teachings. Ask: Which of President Snow’s teachings have strengthened your desire to more fully live gospel principles?

CHAPTER 6

Joseph F. Smith

SIXTH PRESIDENT OF THE CHURCH



PART 1: THE EARLY YEARS

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

As a child, Joseph F. Smith personally experienced many significant events of early Church history. He was born in Missouri on November 13, 1838, during some of the greatest persecutions there. When he was a child, he knew the Prophet Joseph Smith (his uncle) and other Church leaders. When he was five years old his father, Hyrum Smith, was martyred at Carthage Jail. While he was still young, mobs drove Church members from Nauvoo, and he helped his mother cross the plains to the Salt Lake Valley when he was just nine years old. After arriving in the valley, he helped his mother establish a home where they lived until she died in 1852. Joseph F. Smith was only 13 years old. When he was 15 years old, he left on his first mission.

EVENTS, HIGHLIGHTS, AND TEACHINGS

Joseph F. Smith learned from his mother to depend on the Lord.

💡 Have students review “He Was Born during Turbulent Times” and “He Was Mature beyond His Years” in the student manual (pp. 95–96). Ask them if they have ever heard anyone say that the world is so dangerous and terrible they would rather not bring children into it. Ask: How would you respond to this expression of fear or concern?

Read with students “His Mother’s Faith Was Demonstrated” in the student manual (pp. 96–97) and discuss how Mary Fielding Smith’s example influenced her son. Years later, Joseph F. Smith made the following statement about his mother’s prayer to find their cattle:

“It was one of the first practical and positive demonstrations of the efficacy of prayer I had ever witnessed. It made an indelible impression upon my mind, and has been a source of comfort, assurance and guidance to me throughout all of my life” (in Joseph Fielding Smith, *The Life of Joseph F. Smith* [1938], 133–34).

Ask: What do you think he meant by “the efficacy of prayer”? Then have a student read to the class the following statement of President Joseph F. Smith, then a counselor in the First Presidency:

“There is nothing so imperishable as the influence of the mother; that is when she is good and has the spirit of the Gospel in her heart, and she has brought up her children in the way they should go. . . .

“ . . . I can remember all the trials incident to our endeavors to move out with the Camp of Israel, coming to these valleys of the mountains without teams sufficient to draw our wagons; and being without the means to get those teams necessary, she yoked up her cows and calves, and tied two wagons together, and we started to come to Utah in this crude and helpless condition, and my mother said—‘The Lord will open the way;’ but how He would open the way no one knew. I was a little boy then, and I drove team and did my

share of the work. I remember coming upon her in her secret prayer to God to enable her to accomplish her work and her mission. Do you not think that these things make an impression upon the mind? Do you think I can forget the example of my mother? No; her faith and example will ever be bright in my memory. . . . Every breath I breathe, every feeling of my soul rises to God in thankfulness to Him that my mother was a Saint, that she was a woman of God, pure and faithful, and that she would suffer death rather than betray the trust committed to her. . . . That is the spirit which imbued her and her children. Would not her children be unworthy of such a mother did they not hearken to and follow her example? Therefore I say God bless the mothers in Israel” (in “Influence and Sphere of Woman,” *Deseret Weekly*, Jan. 9, 1892, 71).

Ask students:

- What do you think the statement that “there is nothing so imperishable as the influence of the mother” means?
- In what ways have your parents’ teachings guided and protected you?

From his mother, he learned to keep God’s commandments even in difficult times.

- 💡 Explain that life was difficult in the Salt Lake Valley in 1848. Even though the pioneers were grateful to arrive at their destination, their work was not over. Share the following description by Elder Joseph Fielding Smith, a son of Joseph F. Smith and, then, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“His mother was forced to set about at once to provide a home and shelter for her growing family and the dependents who looked to her for help. Through her faith and resourcefulness she managed to exist through the winter. She located in Mill Creek, south of Salt Lake City, where she, with the help of her boys, expected to engage in farming. She caused a small cabin to be built in which to do the cooking, but she and most of the family slept in the wagons during the winter of 1848. How they survived through the winter they hardly knew; they were thinly clad and without needed shelter suffered intensely from the cold. Her sad experiences of the past had trained her to be resourceful and with the watchcare of the Lord over them they managed to endure their lot until the springtime came. By careful planning and much hard work, in the course of two years, she had made a comfortable home and she had secured some valuable property” (*Life of Joseph F. Smith*, 157–58).

In spite of the circumstances of her family, Mary Fielding Smith felt strongly about paying tithes and offerings. Joseph F. Smith remembered one occasion when his mother expressed her commitment to paying tithing:

“One spring when we opened our potato pits [my mother] had her boys get a load of the best potatoes, and she took them to the tithing office; potatoes were scarce that season. I was a little boy at the time, and drove the team. When we drove up to the steps of the tithing office ready to unload the

potatoes, one of the clerks came out and said to my mother: ‘Widow Smith, it’s a shame that you should have to pay tithing.’ . . . [The tithing clerk] chided my mother for paying her tithing, called her anything but wise and prudent; and said there were others able to work that were supported from the tithing office. My mother turned upon him and said: ‘. . . Would you deny me a blessing? If I did not pay my tithing I should expect the Lord to withhold His blessings from me; I pay my tithing, not only because it is a law of God but because I expect a blessing by doing it. By keeping this and other laws, I expect to prosper and to be able to provide for my family.’ . . . [My mother] prospered because she obeyed the laws of God. She had abundance to sustain her family. We never lacked so much as many others did; for while we found nettle greens most acceptable when we first came to the valley, and while we enjoyed thistle roots, segoes and all that kind of thing, we were no worse off than thousands of others, and not so bad off as many, for we were never without corn-meal and milk and butter, to my knowledge. Then that widow had her name recorded in the book of the law of the Lord. That widow was entitled to the privileges of the House of God. No ordinance of the Gospel could be denied her, for she was obedient to the laws of God, and she would not fail in her duty or become discouraged when observing one in an official position failing to keep the commandments of God” (in Smith, *Life of Joseph F. Smith*, 158–59).

Ask students:

- What strength do Church members receive from willingly paying tithes and offerings?
- How have you been blessed because of paying your tithes and offerings?

Joseph F. Smith was sustained and strengthened by the Spirit of the Lord.

💡 Ask students if they would have been ready for a mission if they had been called at age 15. Discuss some of the concerns they might have had at being called at such a young age. Review with students “He Overcame Many Trials during His Missions” in the student manual (p. 97–98). Ask: How did Joseph F. Smith overcome the obstacles he faced on his mission in Hawaii?

Explain that Joseph F. Smith had a great spiritual experience while serving as a missionary in Hawaii. Review “A Dream Encouraged Him on His Mission” in the student manual (p. 98–99). Write on the board the following: *journey, mansion, bath, clothing, door, Joseph Smith, the hand*. Discuss with students what each of these words might mean relative to the dream. Ask:

- In what ways do you think this experience strengthened young Joseph F. Smith?
- How do we learn to exercise confidence in the Lord?

Have a student read “His Desire Was to Bear a Strong Testimony” in the student manual (p. 99). Discuss how one might go about obtaining a testimony of such depth. Ask: How might his testimony have helped sustain him during his mission in Hawaii?


Review the incidents from President Smith’s life in “Under No Conditions Would He Deny His Testimony” in the student manual (p. 99–100). Share the following statement of President Joseph F. Smith:

“When I as a boy first started out in the ministry, I would frequently go out and ask the Lord to show me some marvelous thing, in order that I might receive a testimony. But the Lord withheld marvels from me, and showed me the truth, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, until he made me to know the truth from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet, and until doubt and fear had been absolutely purged from me. He did not have to send an angel from the heavens to do this, nor did he have to speak with the trump of an archangel. By the whisperings of the still small voice of the Spirit of the living God, he gave to me the testimony I possess. And by this principle and power he will give to all the children of men a knowledge of the truth that will stay with them, and it will make them to know the truth, as God knows it, and to do the will of the Father as Christ does it. And no amount of marvelous manifestations will ever accomplish this. It is obedience, humility, and submission to the requirements of heaven and to the order established in the kingdom of God upon the earth, that will establish men in the truth”
(*Gospel Doctrine*, 5th ed. [1939], 7).

Ask:

- How can individuals gain a strong testimony of the gospel?
- What influences sometimes cause the Spirit to leave us?

He served a second mission to Hawaii.

 Explain that on his second mission to Hawaii, Joseph F. Smith traveled with Elders Lorenzo Snow and Ezra T. Benson. Their purpose in going was to investigate the activities of an apostate Church leader named Walter M. Gibson. He had taken complete control over the Church in Hawaii, both financially and ecclesiastically. He sold positions in the priesthood to Church members and he organized his own twelve Apostles and called high priests, seventies, and bishops. Women were given positions as priestesses, and he required Church members to turn all their possessions over to him (see B. H. Roberts, *Comprehensive History of the Church*, 5:98–99). Ask students: What would happen if apostasy went unchecked by Church leaders?

Tell them that after excommunicating Walter Gibson from the Church, Elders Lorenzo Snow and Ezra T. Benson left 25-year-old Joseph F. Smith, along with William W. Cluff and Alma L. Smith, to bring Hawaiian Church members back into harmony with the truth. Share the following assessment of Elder Smith's efforts:

“Elder Joseph F. Smith had rendered great service in settling the affairs of this mission. In his former mission to the islands (1854–1858) he had acquired a perfect knowledge of the language and spoke it with the fluency of a native. Being a man of unusual determination and strong against injustice he confronted Captain Gibson with great power, and exposed to the natives his fraudulent and unwarranted course. He also acted as interpreter for the apostles, and thus rendered more effective their labors in correcting Gibson's irregularities and their ministry among the natives” (Roberts, *Comprehensive History of the Church*, 5:100).

Joseph F. Smith was called to be an Apostle.

- 💡 Tell students that when Joseph F. Smith and the other missionaries arrived in Hawaii, a drowning accident almost claimed the life of Elder Lorenzo Snow. Share with students the following description of the event:

“An incident usually mentioned in connection with this apostolic mission to Hawaii is the drowning of Elder Lorenzo Snow in Lahaina Harbor, and his restoration to life by the ministrations of the brethren. The accident occurred by the capsizing of a boat when trying to land while a heavy surf was running in the harbor. The captain of the vessel, Elders Benson, Snow, Cluff and A. L. Smith were all in the boat when it capsized. Elder Joseph F. Smith had refused to accompany the other brethren in the effort to land, being convinced that it was a most dangerous undertaking. Natives from the shore, who witnessed the disaster, rescued the unfortunate men, but it was 20 minutes before Lorenzo Snow gave any signs of life after being taken from the water” (Roberts, *Comprehensive History of the Church*, 5:100–101).

Tell students that “President [Lorenzo] Snow declared that after this incident the Lord revealed to him that this young man, Joseph F. Smith . . . would some day be the Prophet of God on the earth” (Smith, *Life of Joseph F. Smith*, 216).

Ask a student to read “He Was Called to Be an Apostle” in the student manual (p. 100). Ask: What skills did Joseph F. Smith gain during his Hawaiian missions that helped him in his new calling as an Apostle? Read and discuss the following statement by President Joseph F. Smith:

“I know that my Redeemer lives. We have all the testimony and all the evidence of this great and glorious truth that the world has, that is, all that the so-called Christian world possesses; and in addition to all that they have, we have the testimony of the inhabitants of this western continent, to whom the Savior appeared and delivered his gospel, the same as he delivered it to the Jews. In addition to all this new testimony, and the testimony of the holy scriptures from the Jews, we have the testimony of the modern prophet, Joseph Smith, who saw the Father and the Son, and who has borne record of them to the world, whose testimony was sealed with his blood and is in force upon the world today. We have the testimony of others, who witnessed the presence of the Son of God in the Kirtland temple, when he appeared to them there, and the testimony of Joseph, and of Sidney Rigdon, who declared that they were the last witnesses of Jesus Christ. Therefore I say again, I know that my Redeemer lives; for in the mouths of these witnesses this truth has been established in my mind.

“Besides these testimonies, I have received the witness of the Spirit of God in my own heart, which exceeds all other evidences, for it bears record to me, to my very soul, of the existence of my Redeemer, Jesus Christ. I know that he lives, and that in the last day he shall stand upon the earth, that he shall come to the people who shall be prepared for him, as a bride is prepared for the Bridegroom when he shall come” (*Gospel Doctrine*, 506–7).

Conclude by sharing your testimony of the Savior.

PART 2: THE LATER YEARS

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

During the years of President Joseph F. Smith's administration, the Church built the Church Administration Building in Salt Lake City and began to build temples in Hawaii and Alberta, Canada. Important Church historical sites in the eastern half of the United States were purchased under the leadership of President Smith, and bureaus of information, the forerunners of today's visitors' centers, also had their beginnings at this time.

In response to several theories that were currently debated, two doctrinal clarifications were made. These included statements on the origin of man and on the Father and the Son. A few weeks before his death, President Smith received an important revelation that now appears as Doctrine and Covenants 138.

When he became President, the Church had about 293,000 members, with 50 stakes, 21 missions, and 4 temples. In 1918, the year of his death, the Church had almost 497,000 members, with 75 stakes, 22 missions, and 4 temples (see *2003 Church Almanac* [2003], 473, 631).

EVENTS, HIGHLIGHTS, AND TEACHINGS

The First Presidency urged Church members to hold family home evening.

💡 Have students review the 1915 First Presidency announcement of family home evening in "Family Home Evening Was Introduced" in the student manual (p. 101–2), which starts with the third paragraph. Ask:

- What were the purposes or objectives of family home evening as explained in the announcement?
- What were some of the recommended activities for family home evening?
- What promises were given to parents who follow the counsel to hold family home evenings?

President Joseph F. Smith taught the importance of marriage and family relationships.


💡 Have students read Doctrine and Covenants 131:1–4. Then read the following statement to the class and discuss President Joseph F. Smith's explanation about marriage:

"The lawful union of man and woman [is] the means through which they may realize their highest and holiest aspirations. To the Latter-day Saints, marriage is not designed by our heavenly Father to be merely an earthly union, but one that shall survive the vicissitudes of time, and endure for eternity, bestowing honor and joy in this world, glory and eternal lives in the worlds to come" ("An Address: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to the World," in Conference Report, Apr. 1907, 7; this address is printed after the April 1907 general conference addresses).

Ask students to describe the qualities of a great family. Review “He Loved His Family with a Pure and Holy Love” in the student manual (p. 103). Ask:

- How does the example of love and unity in the Smith home support his teachings on the family?
- What can parents do to establish unity and love in their families?
- What can children do?

President Smith grieved over the deaths of ten of his children.

 [Note: You may have members of your class who have lost a child or sibling. Be sensitive to their feelings as you discuss this topic. If you are aware of class members who have lost a child or sibling, you may want to speak with them before class to find out how actively they want to participate in the discussion.]

Have students reflect upon a situation where someone has lost a child. Review with students “He Knew the Grief and Heartache of Losing a Child” in the student manual (pp. 103–4). Share the following statement of President Joseph F. Smith on the salvation of little children, and ask students to ponder how it may comfort parents who have lost a child:

“If we have received the testimony of the spirit of truth in our souls, we know that all is well with our little children who pass away, that we could not . . . better their condition. . . .

“But, with little children who are taken away in infancy and innocence before they have reached the years of accountability, and are not capable of committing sin, the gospel reveals to us the fact that they are redeemed, and Satan has no power over them. Neither has death any power over them” (*Gospel Doctrine*, 5th ed. [1939], 452).

Ask: Why do faithful parents mourn even though they have a testimony that the salvation of their deceased children is secure? (see D&C 42:45). Then share the following teachings of President Joseph F. Smith:

“In the resurrection of the dead the child that was buried in its infancy will come up in the form of the child that it was when it was laid down; then it will begin to develop. From the day of the resurrection, the body will develop until it reaches the full measure of the stature of its spirit” (*Gospel Doctrine*, 24).

“When the mother is deprived of the pleasure and joy of rearing her babe to manhood or to womanhood in this life, through the hand of death, that privilege will be renewed to her hereafter, and she will enjoy it to a fuller fruition than it would be possible for her to do here. When she does it there, it will be with the certain knowledge that the results will be without failure; whereas here, the results are unknown until after we have passed the test” (*Gospel Doctrine*, 454).

The Church need not fear unjust accusations.

- 💡 Review with students “As President of the Church, He Came Under Personal Attack” in the student manual (p. 106). Share the following statement of President Joseph F. Smith:

“Frequently, and from nearly all parts of the world, we hear of periodical outbursts of indignation against the Latter-day Saints. These are generally groundless and made by writers and speakers who are uninformed, and who get their inspiration from sensational books and literature published abroad by evil-designing persons who make money out of the credulous by their sensational stories. . . . Thus many things are charged against us which have no foundation in fact, and in which there is no grain of truth. Though amusing where the truth is known, these falsehoods have the effect, of course, of prejudicing the ignorant, scandalizing the Church, and making it very unpleasant for its missionaries and membership.

“But scandal and falsehood never can have permanent injurious effect upon those unto whom they are unjustly directed. The Latter-day Saints need have no fear nor anxiety whatever regarding these things, so long as they are directed against them unjustly. Scandals die of themselves when discovered, as they are sure to be” (“Three Threatening Dangers,” *Improvement Era*, Mar. 1914, 476).

Review with students “He Was Courageous and Undaunted in Defending Truth” in the student manual (p. 104). Ask: In what ways did President Smith defend the kingdom of God?

The Bureau of Information gave accurate information about the Church.

- 💡 Ask if any students have ever heard false stories about the Church and its members. Then ask: How can these stories prevent people from hearing or accepting the gospel message?

Inform students that during the early 1900s many people had heard false stories about the Church and had formed negative opinions. Such stories were told to visitors to Salt Lake City by many hackmen, the drivers of hired carriages, as they transported visitors around the city, as explained in the following statement:

“At the turn of the century, even those who came to Salt Lake City were not guaranteed to hear the truth about the Latter-day Saints. Hotel operators would send employees with carriages to meet incoming trains and vie for guests. These hack drivers made quite a business of filling visitors with wild tales about the Mormons. Both community and Church leaders were concerned about the negative image this practice was creating. Discussions among members of the Young Men’s Mutual Improvement Association general board and the First Council of the Seventy resulted in the specific recommendation that a ‘bureau of information’ be established on Temple Square to provide correct information to those visiting the city. In 1902 the First Presidency approved this project and assigned the Seventy to take charge of it. The first building was an octagonal structure measuring twenty feet across and costing six hundred dollars. About two dozen

volunteers staffed the bureau; during its first year of operation they distributed Articles of Faith cards and other literature to 150,000 visitors. Popularity of the guided tours of Temple Square continued to grow, and in 1906 free organ recitals were added. . . . As the number of visitors continued to increase, ever more commodious facilities were provided. In later years of the twentieth century, annual visitors to the square would number in the millions” (Richard O. Cowan, *The Church in the Twentieth Century* [1985], 37–38).

The Church grew rapidly during President Joseph F. Smith’s administration.

💡 From 1901 until 1918, the years of Joseph F. Smith’s presidency, the Church grew from 292,931 to 496,962 members (see *2003 Church Almanac* [2003], 473, 631). Share with students the following information:

“As [President Joseph F. Smith] continued to encourage the Saints to remain and build up the Church in their homelands, Latter-day Saint missions and branches expanded abroad. This expansion was reflected in Joseph F. Smith’s becoming the first Church President to visit Europe while serving in that office.

“During a period of about two months in 1906, he visited the missions in the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland, France, and England. President Smith’s personal visit did much to promote the growth of Church strength in these lands. During his first visit to Europe, President Joseph F. Smith made an important prophetic statement. At a conference in Bern, Switzerland in 1906, he stretched out his hands and declared: ‘The time will come when this land [Europe] will be dotted with temples, where you can go and redeem your dead.’ He also explained that ‘temples would be built in diverse countries of the world’ ” (Cowan, *Church in the Twentieth Century*, 65).

Ask students: How do temples strengthen the worldwide Church?

The Church faces at least three major dangers.

💡 Ask students what they consider to be the greatest dangers facing the Church today, and list responses on the board. Explain that President Joseph F. Smith identified three specific dangers to the Church. Read with students “He Identified Three Dangers That the Church Faces” in the student manual (pp. 107–8). Write these dangers on the board:

1. Flattery of prominent people in the world
2. False educational ideas
3. Sexual impurity

Ask:

- Why are these three things more dangerous to the Church than criticisms and false accusations?
- How may they be avoided?

The First Presidency issued statements to clarify certain doctrines.

- 💡 Explain that during the ministry of President Joseph F. Smith, many Latter-day Saints were uncertain about some key doctrinal issues. One concerned the origin of man, including the fatherhood of God and the role of Adam as the first parent of the human family. The second dealt with the character and role of God the Father and Jesus Christ. In response, the First Presidency issued two statements. The first, issued in 1909, was called “The Origin of Man.” The second, issued in 1916, was entitled “The Father and the Son: A Doctrinal Exposition by The First Presidency and The Twelve.” Discuss with students the details of the following excerpts:

“The Origin of Man”

“It is held by some that Adam was not the first man upon this earth, and that the original human being was a development from lower orders of the animal creation. These, however, are the theories of men. The word of the Lord declares that Adam was ‘the first man of all men’ (Moses 1:34), and we are therefore in duty bound to regard him as the primal parent of our race. It was shown to the brother of Jared that all men were created in the *beginning* after the image of God [Ether 3:15]; and whether we take this to mean the spirit or the body, or both, it commits us to the same conclusion: Man began life as a human being, in the likeness of our heavenly Father.

“True it is that the body of man enters upon its career as a tiny germ or embryo, which becomes an infant, quickened at a certain stage by the spirit whose tabernacle it is, and the child, after being born, develops into a man. There is nothing in this, however, to indicate that the original man, the first of our race, began life as anything less than a man, or less than the human germ or embryo that becomes a man.

“Man, by searching, cannot find out God. Never, unaided, will he discover the truth about the beginning of human life. The Lord must reveal Himself, or remain unrevealed; and the same is true of the facts relating to the origin of Adam’s race—God alone can reveal them. Some of these facts, however, are already known, and what has been made known it is our duty to receive and retain.

“The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, basing its belief on divine revelation, ancient and modern, proclaims man to be the direct and lineal offspring of Deity. God Himself is an exalted man, perfected, enthroned, and supreme. . . .

“Man is the child of God, formed in the divine image and endowed with divine attributes, and even as the infant son of an earthly father and mother is capable in due time of becoming a man, so the undeveloped offspring of celestial parentage is capable, by experience through ages and aeons, of evolving into a God” (“Editor’s Table,” *Improvement Era*, Nov. 1909, 80–81).

Ask: Why does it make a difference to know that God is our Father and that we did not descend from lower forms of life?

“The Father and the Son: A Doctrinal Exposition by The First Presidency and The Twelve”

“The term ‘Father’ as applied to Deity occurs in sacred writ with plainly different meanings. Each of the four significations specified in the following treatment should be carefully segregated.

“1. ‘FATHER’ AS LITERAL PARENT

“Scriptures embodying the ordinary signification—literally that of Parent—are too numerous and specific to require citation. . . . God the Eternal Father, whom we designate by the exalted name-title ‘Elohim,’ is the literal Parent of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and of the spirits of the human race. Elohim is the Father in every sense in which Jesus Christ is so designated, and distinctively He is the Father of spirits. . . .

“2. ‘FATHER’ AS CREATOR

“A second scriptural meaning of ‘Father’ is that of Creator, e.g. in passages referring to any one of the Godhead as ‘The Father of the heavens and of the earth and all things that in them are’ (Ether 4:7; see also Alma 11:38, 39 and Mosiah 15:4).

“God is not the Father of the earth as one of the worlds in space, nor of the heavenly bodies in whole or in part, nor of the inanimate objects and the plants and the animals upon the earth, in the literal sense in which He is the Father of the spirits of mankind. Therefore, scriptures that refer to God in any way as the Father of the heavens and the earth are to be understood as signifying that God is the Maker, the Organizer, the Creator of the heavens and the earth.

“With this meaning, as the context shows in every case, Jehovah, who is Jesus Christ the Son of Elohim, is called ‘the Father,’ and even ‘the very eternal Father of heaven and of earth’ (see passages before cited, and also Mosiah 16:15). With analogous meaning Jesus Christ is called ‘The Everlasting Father’ (Isaiah 9:6; compare 2 Nephi 19:6). The descriptive titles ‘Everlasting’ and ‘Eternal’ in the foregoing texts are synonymous.

“That Jesus Christ, whom we also know as Jehovah, was the executive of the Father, Elohim, in the work of creation is set forth in the book ‘Jesus the Christ’ Chapter 4. Jesus Christ, being the Creator, is consistently called the Father of heaven and earth in the sense explained above; and since His creations are of eternal quality He is very properly called the Eternal Father of heaven and earth.

“3. JESUS CHRIST THE ‘FATHER’ OF THOSE WHO ABIDE IN HIS GOSPEL

“A third sense in which Jesus Christ is regarded as the ‘Father’ has reference to the relationship between Him and those who accept His Gospel and thereby become heirs of eternal life. . . .

“Men may become children of Jesus Christ by being born anew—born of God, as the inspired word states. . . .

“If it be proper to speak of those who accept and abide in the Gospel as Christ’s sons and daughters—and upon this matter the scriptures are explicit

and cannot be gainsaid nor denied—it is consistently proper to speak of Jesus Christ as the Father of the righteous, they having become His children and He having been made their Father through the second birth—the baptismal regeneration.

“4. JESUS CHRIST THE ‘FATHER’ BY DIVINE INVESTITURE OF AUTHORITY

“[Another] reason for applying the title ‘Father’ to Jesus Christ is found in the fact that in all His dealings with the human family Jesus the Son has represented and yet represents Elohim His Father in power and authority. . . . Thus the Father placed His name upon the Son; and Jesus Christ spoke and ministered in and through the Father’s name; and so far as power, authority and Godship are concerned His words and acts were and are those of the Father” (“Editor’s Table,” *Improvement Era*, Aug. 1916, 934–36, 938–40).

Ask students:

- Why do Church members need to know that the Father and the Son are separate and distinct beings?
- How does this understanding affect how we worship the Father and the Son?

President Joseph F. Smith taught about life after death.

- 💡 Remind students that several of President Joseph F. Smith’s children died before he did. Share President Smith’s response to the sudden death of his son Hyrum M. Smith, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“My soul is rent asunder. My heart is broken, and flutters for life! O my sweet son, my joy, my hope! O I love him still. I will love him for evermore. And so it is and ever will be with all my sons and daughters, but he is my first born son. . . . From the depths of my soul I thank God for him! But I needed him more than I can express. . . . O I needed him! We all needed him. He was most useful to the Church. He was indeed a prince among men. Never in his life did he displease me or give me cause to doubt him. I loved him through and through. He has thrilled my soul by his power of speech, as no other man ever did. Perhaps this was because he was my son, and he was filled with the fire of the Holy Ghost. And now, what can I do! O what can I do! My soul is rent, my heart is broken! O God, help me!” (in Joseph Fielding Smith, *Life of Joseph Smith* [1938], 474).

Several months later, President Joseph F. Smith declared in general conference that he had received revelations over the past months regarding the spirit world. One of these was received the day before the conference began and is now recorded in Doctrine and Covenants 138.

Read with students Doctrine and Covenants 138:1–5, 11–20. Ask: What did Jesus Christ do when He went to the spirit world following His death?

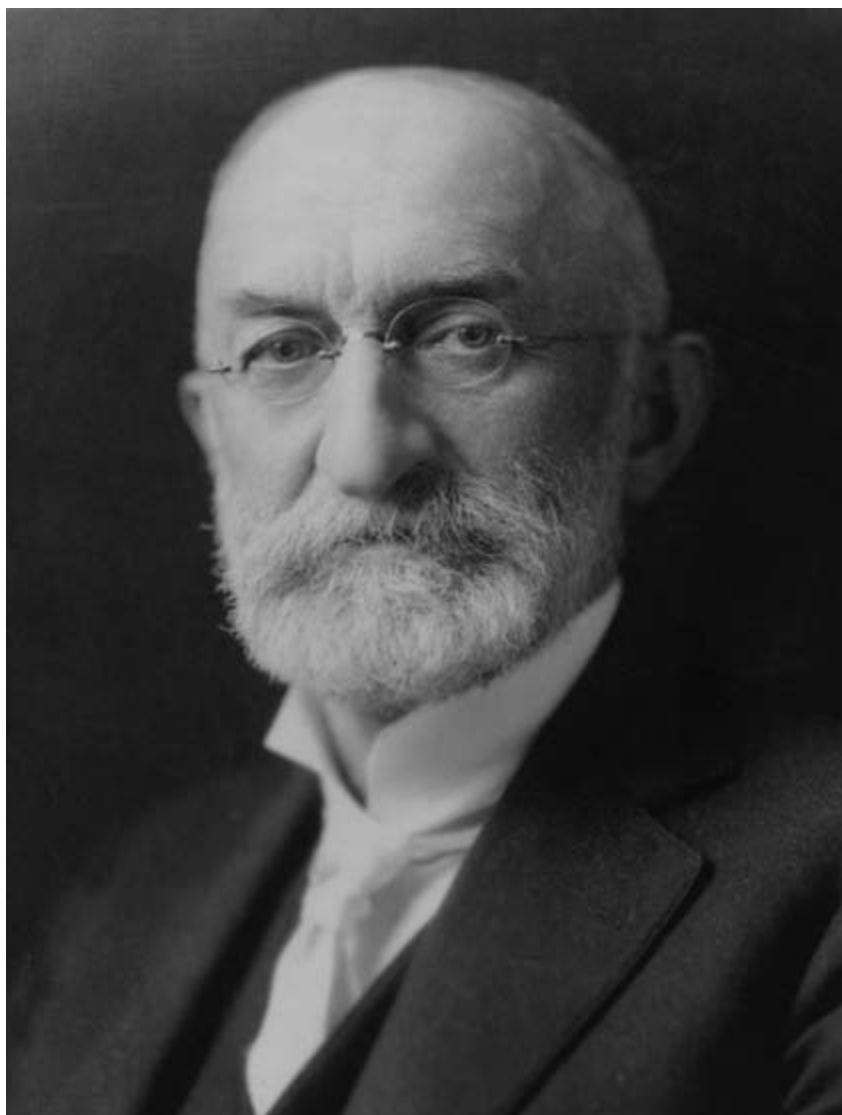
Read Doctrine and Covenants 138:29–30, 57. Ask:

- How can this revelation comfort those whose righteous friends and family members have died?
- What can we do on earth to help with the work that occurs in the spirit world?

CHAPTER 7

Heber J. Grant

SEVENTH PRESIDENT OF THE CHURCH



PART 1: THE EARLY YEARS

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Heber J. Grant was born November 22, 1856. That year many pioneers traveled in handcart companies across the plains to the Great Salt Lake Valley. Two weeks before Heber J. Grant's birth, the Willie handcart company arrived in the valley. Of the original 500 pioneers in the handcart company, 67 died en route to the valley, and many survivors arrived with frozen limbs and in a starved condition. When Heber was nine days old, his father, Jedediah M. Grant (then a member of the First Presidency), died of pneumonia. On the same day, the Martin handcart company arrived in the Salt Lake Valley. Of that group of pioneers, 135 to 150 pioneers had died out of the original 576.

As a boy, Heber J. Grant knew many prominent Church members. His friends included a son and a grandson of President Brigham Young, and he regularly attended family prayers in the home of the prophet. In addition, he had long conversations with President Young; Elder Erastus Snow, an Apostle; and Elder Snow's cousin Eliza R. Snow, who had known and associated with many early Church leaders.

EVENTS, HIGHLIGHTS, AND TEACHINGS

He learned from “the transforming power of [his] mother’s love.”

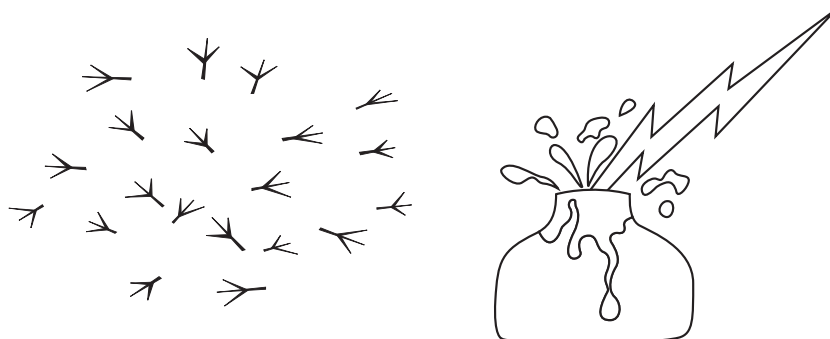
- 💡 Review with students some of the “Highlights in the Life of Heber J. Grant” in the student manual (p. 111). Have them note when Heber J. Grant's father passed away, and discuss the difficulties he may have had while growing up in a single-parent home. Ask a student to read “His Determination Was Encouraged by a Wise Mother” in the student manual (pp. 113–14).

Tell students that even though Heber J. Grant grew up without a father, in his later years he testified of the faithfulness of both his mother and his father. Share with students President Grant's feelings from “He Was Deeply Affected by the Sacrifices of His Family” in the student manual (p. 114). Ask:

- What valuable lessons have you learned from your parents?
- What would you like your posterity to say about you?

With determination and persistence, he went from inadequacy to expertise.

- 💡 Ask the students to write the following sentence on a piece of paper in their best handwriting: *We should be faithful to God.* Then discuss why good penmanship is challenging. Draw the following illustrations on the board and ask students to interpret what they see:



Review with students the two comments about Heber J. Grant's early penmanship in "His Penmanship Improved from 'Hen Tracks' to the Best in Utah" in the student manual (p. 116). Ask: What blessings came in his life as a result of his hard work to improve his penmanship? (He became so good that he made more income from his penmanship than from his regular salary and later taught penmanship.)

Share with students a statement that Heber J. Grant often quoted, which is sometimes attributed to Ralph Waldo Emerson:

"That which we persist in doing becomes easier for us to do; not that the nature of the thing itself is changed, but that our power to do is increased" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1901, 63).


Review with students Heber J. Grant's efforts to learn to sing in "He Was Determined to Learn to Sing" in the student manual (pp. 116–17). Ask:

- How did his effort to learn to sing compare with his effort to improve his penmanship?
- How did the results compare? (He did not succeed as well with singing as he did with penmanship, but he tried as hard.)
- Why should we give our best effort to a worthy objective even if we may not become the best at it?
- What do the principles of determination and practice have to do with becoming like Christ?

Ask one or two students to throw a tennis ball or other soft ball and hit a predetermined spot in the room. If necessary, let them try three or four times to see if they can get closer to the mark. Relate the story of young Heber J. Grant's lack of ability to throw a baseball (see "He Worked Toward Excellence as an Athlete" in the student manual, p. 113). Ask a student to read the last two paragraphs. Ask:

- How might Heber J. Grant's determination in sports have carried over to his spiritual goals?
- What specific goals can we set in gospel matters?

He had the right motivation for reading the scriptures.

 Ask students what motivates them to read the scriptures. Have a student read "He Was Challenged to Read the Book of Mormon" in the student manual (pp. 114–15). Then ask:

- What motivated young Heber to read the Book of Mormon at first? What motivated him to continue?
- How did the testimonies of his mother and teacher influence his motivation?
- What did he say about his interest level and its effect upon his reading goal?
- How can we develop greater motivation for studying the scriptures?

Share the following testimonies Heber J. Grant gave later in life:

“There is no character of which we have any record in the Book of Mormon that I admire more than Nephi [son of Lehi]. The life of that man has been one of the guiding stars of my life. His faith, his determination, his spirit to do the will of God has inspired me with a desire to follow in his noble footsteps” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1900, 23).

“The Book of Mormon is in absolute harmony from start to finish with other sacred scriptures. There is not a doctrine taught in it that does not harmonize with the teachings of Jesus Christ. . . . There is not a thing in it but what is for the benefit and uplift of mankind. It is in every way a true witness for God, and it sustains the Bible and is in harmony with the Bible” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1929, 128–29).

Read together Ezekiel 37:15–17 and 2 Nephi 3:12 and discuss how these scriptures support President Grant’s testimony.

As a leader, he set a good example.

- 💡 Have students turn to “Highlights in the Life of Heber J. Grant” in the student manual (p. 111) and determine how old Heber J. Grant was when he was called as president of the Tooele Utah Stake (at the age of 23). Tell them that when he was called as stake president, Heber J. Grant told members of the stake that he would not ask them to be more faithful than he would be (see “He Added Faith in God to His Determination and Overcame His Weaknesses” in the student manual, pp. 118–19).

Ask: How did President Grant feel after his first talk as a stake president when he overheard someone say that it was a pity that the General Authorities “had to send a boy to preside over us” and that they “could not have sent one with the sense enough to talk at least ten minutes”? (see student manual, p. 118).

Review with students the story of Heber J. Grant’s response when President Joseph F. Smith asked if he knew the gospel was true in “He Added Faith in God to His Determination and Overcame His Weaknesses” in the student manual (p. 118). Ask:

- Why was President John Taylor unconcerned about Heber J. Grant’s statement that he did not know absolutely the gospel was true?
- How can a person have a testimony without knowing he or she has one?

His public speaking ability increased when he desired to speak for the benefit of the people.

- 💡 Write on the board: *First speech as stake president, 7.5 minutes; second speech, 45 minutes; third speech, 5 minutes.* Review with students the last three paragraphs of “He Added Faith in God to His Determination and Overcame His Weaknesses” in the student manual (pp. 118–19). Ask:

- Since President Grant desired the third speech to be as long as the second, why did he fall short?
- What resolve did he make?
- How can we become “single to the glory of God”? (see D&C 88:67–68).
- In what ways do our daily decisions influence the direction of our lives?

He followed the Brethren.

- 💡 Write on the board the following phrase: “*When the prophet speaks, . . . the debate is over*” (Elaine Cannon, “If We Want to Go Up, We Have to Get On,” *Ensign*, Nov.

1978, 108). Ask students what this phrase means to them. Invite a student to read “He Was Willing to Sacrifice” in the student manual (p. 119). Ask:

- What resolve expressed by Heber J. Grant reflects his attitude about following the Brethren? (He always wanted to do what the General Authorities of the Church wanted him to do, regardless of his own likes or dislikes.)
- Why should Church members work to develop that same desire?

He humbly accepted the calling to be an Apostle.

💡 Ask why a person needs humility to serve well in a calling. Share the following thought by President Heber J. Grant:

“I have felt my own lack of ability. In fact when I was called as one of the apostles I arose to my feet to say it was beyond anything I was worthy of, and as I was rising the thought came to me, ‘You know as you know that you live that John Taylor is a prophet of God, and to decline this office when he had received a revelation is equivalent to repudiating the prophet.’ I said, ‘I will accept the office and do my best.’ I remember that it was with difficulty that I took my seat without fainting” (*Gospel Standards*, comp. G. Homer Durham [1941], 194).

Ask: What other characteristics help Church members serve well in callings?

He had great joy in missionary service.

💡 From “Highlights in the Life of Heber J. Grant” in the student manual (p. 111), review with students the years Heber J. Grant served as a missionary and where he served. Note that he served five years in full-time missionary service when he opened and presided over the first mission in Japan and then presided over the British and European missions. You might also want to review his comments in “He Presided over Missions in Japan and England” in the student manual (p. 121). Share the following statements by President Heber J. Grant:

“There is no other labor in all the world that brings to a human heart, judging from my own personal experience, more joy, peace and serenity than proclaiming the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1926, 4).

“In no part of the work of God here upon the earth at the present time is there such a band of happy, contented, peaceful people as those who are engaged in missionary service. Service is the real key to joy. When one is giving service for the advancement of humanity, when one is working without money and without price, with no hope of earthly reward, there comes a real, genuine joy into the human heart” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1934, 9).

Ask some returned missionaries to respond to these statements, based on their own experiences. Then ask:

- Why is missionary work sometimes difficult?
- Why is missionary work rewarding?

PART 2: THE LATER YEARS

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Heber J. Grant served as President of the Church from November 23, 1918, to May 14, 1945. He served for more than 26 years (age 62–88), longer than any prior Church President except Brigham Young. He led the Church from the end of World War I, through the Great Depression, to the end of World War II. These years were challenging for the United States and the Church.


When the Armistice ended World War I, people looked forward to times of peace and plenty. This dream, however, would not become a reality. Although for 11 years conditions looked bright in America, where the largest percentage of Church members resided, a financial crisis began in 1929 that affected the entire world. Many people found themselves without jobs or income. This Great Depression was followed by a second world war during the late 1930s and through the first half of the 1940s. World War II was fought on a much larger scale than World War I.

During his presidency, Heber J. Grant dedicated temples in Hawaii; Alberta, Canada; and Arizona. In 1924 a radio station in Salt Lake City, owned by the Church, began broadcasting general conference. In 1926 the first institute of religion was started in Moscow, Idaho.

When Heber J. Grant became President, the Church had about 496,000 members, with 75 stakes, 22 missions, and 4 temples. In 1945, the year of his death, it had almost 980,000 members, with 153 stakes, 38 missions, and 8 temples (see *2003 Church Almanac* [2003], 473, 632).

EVENTS, HIGHLIGHTS, AND TEACHINGS

He had great faith in times of trial.

 Share the following story to illustrate President Heber J. Grant's faith in and dependence upon the Lord in times of trial:

“My wife Lucy was very sick for nearly three years prior to her death. At one time I was in the hospital with her for six months. When she was dying, I called my children into the bedroom and told them their mamma was dying. My daughter Lutie said she did not want her mamma to die, and insisted that I lay hands upon her and heal her, saying that she had often seen her mother, when sick in the hospital, in San Francisco, suffering intensely, go to sleep immediately and have a peaceful night's rest, when I had blessed her. I explained to my children that we all had to die, some time, and that I felt that their mamma's time had come. The children went out of the room, and I knelt down by the bed of my dying wife, and told the Lord that I acknowledged his hand in life or in death, in joy or in sorrow, in prosperity or adversity; that I did not complain because my wife was dying, but that I lacked the strength to see my wife die and have her death affect the faith of my children in the ordinances of the gospel. I therefore pleaded with him to give to my daughter Lutie a testimony that it was his will that her mother should die. Within a few short hours, my wife breathed her last. Then I called the children into the

bed-room and announced that their mamma was dead. My little boy, Heber, commenced weeping bitterly, and Lutie put her arms around him and kissed him, and told him not to cry, that the voice of the Lord had said to her, 'In the death of your mamma the will of the Lord will be done.' Lutie knew nothing of my prayers, and this manifestation to her was a direct answer to my supplication to the Lord, and for it I have never ceased to be grateful" ("When Great Sorrows Are Our Portion," *Improvement Era*, June 1912, 726–27).

His example influenced others outside of the Church.

💡 Tell students that before Heber J. Grant became President of the Church, he had made many friends who were so impressed with his integrity that they took it for granted that the Church with which he was associated was good (see "He Had a Reputation for Honesty" in the student manual, p. 120). President Grant taught, "We carry upon our shoulders the reputation, so to speak, of the Church, every one of us" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1944, 10). Ask:

- Why do people judge the Church by the example of its members?
- Does the importance of setting a good example increase with leadership responsibility? Why?

"[The Lord] knows whom He wants to lead His Church."

💡 Ask students:

- Who leads this Church?
- How is the President of the Church chosen?

Share the following experience shared by President Heber J. Grant:

"The last words uttered by President Joseph F. Smith were to the effect, when he shook hands with me—he died that night—"The Lord bless you, my boy, the Lord bless you; you have got a great responsibility. Always remember this is the Lord's work and not man's. The Lord is greater than any man. He knows whom he wants to lead His Church, and never makes any mistake. The Lord bless you' " (in Conference Report, Apr. 1941, 4).

List on the board the following counsel President Smith gave to President Grant:

- "This is the Lord's work and not man's."
- "The Lord is greater than any man."
- The Lord "never makes any mistake."

Discuss with students how events from the life of Heber J. Grant show these statements to be true. Ask for a volunteer to give a brief, impromptu talk on the statement "This is the Lord's work and not man's."

President Grant was at ease with the rich and the poor.

💡 Ask students why a person should learn to be genuine around all people. Tell students that President Heber J. Grant's ability to draw people close to him was a direct result of his genuine love for them. Those who knew him best knew also of his desire to help all members of the Church, especially needy widows. Read the

following to students, inviting them to share afterward their impressions of President Grant:

“He is truly the greatest ambassador of friendship and good will to the professional and business man that the Church has ever had. No one can begin to estimate the amount of good he has done for the Church in the matter of allaying prejudice in the minds of influential people. . . .

“In the home of the humblest he is as welcome and happy as in the mansion of the wealthy. Bread and milk and the simplest fare when offered to him in the homes of the Saints (although they usually give him the best that the land affords) are more gratefully received and more highly appreciated than are the richest delicacies and the choicest foods that the famous chefs of great hostleries can prepare. The privilege to partake of the hospitality of true Latter-day Saints, to relate to them the goodness of the Lord to him, and to join with them in prayer in the family circle never becomes tedious or monotonous to President Grant” (Joseph Anderson, “The President As Seen by His Secretary,” *Improvement Era*, Nov. 1941, 691–92).

He counseled against debt.

💡 Have a student read what Heber J. Grant’s daughter Lucy said about him in “He Knew the Agony of Debt” in the student manual (p. 122). Ask:

- To what did she compare debt?
- How does this comparison help explain why President Grant constantly encouraged the members of the Church to avoid debt?
- What do Church leaders counsel today regarding debt?

Share the following insights into President Heber J. Grant’s feelings about money and debt:

“Right here let me warn the Latter-day Saints . . . to buy the ordinary necessities of life when they have the money to buy them, and not to mortgage their future” (*Gospel Standards*, 111).

“He had no special interest in the accumulation of money except for the good he could do with it” (Joseph Anderson, *Prophets I Have Known* [1973], 30).

Based on these statements, discuss President Grant’s approach to money management with students.

He taught the principle of tithing.

💡 Review with students “Payment of Tithes and Offerings Helps Overcome Selfishness” and “Tithing Is the Lord’s Law of Financial Success” in the student manual (pp. 125–26). Ask:

- In what way can tithing be considered a debt we owe the Lord? (see Malachi 3:8–9).
- Why should we pay our tithing before paying other financial obligations?

Have a student read aloud Malachi 3:10–12, and discuss with students the blessings promised those who faithfully pay tithing. Ask: What blessings, besides temporal blessings, come as a result of paying tithing?

Conclude with the following statement from President Heber J. Grant:

“I am a firm believer that the Lord opens up the windows of heaven when we do our duty financially and pours out upon us blessings of a spiritual nature, which are of far greater value than temporal things. But I believe he also gives us blessings of a temporal nature” (*Gospel Standards*, 66).

He exemplified good business practices.

💡 Share the following experience related by Heber J. Grant:

“When [I was] a youth, attending school, a man was pointed out to me who kept books in Wells, Fargo and Co’s. Bank, in Salt Lake City, and it was said that he received a salary of one hundred and fifty dollars a month. Well do I remember figuring that he was earning six dollars a day, Sundays omitted, which seemed to me an enormous amount. . . . I dreamed of being a book-keeper, and of working for Wells, Fargo & Co., and immediately joined the book-keeping class in the Deseret University, in the hope some day of earning what I thought at that time to be an immense salary. . . .

“The result was that some years later, I secured a position as book-keeper and policy clerk in an insurance office. Although at fifteen, I wrote a very nice hand, and it was all that was needed to satisfactorily fill the position which I then held, yet I was not fully satisfied but continued to dream and ‘scribble,’ when not otherwise occupied. I worked in the front part of A. W. White & Co’s. bank, and, when not busy, volunteered to assist with the bank work, and to do anything and everything I could to employ my time, never thinking whether I was to be paid for it or not, but having only a desire to work and learn. Mr. Morf, the book-keeper in the bank, wrote well, and took pains to assist me in my efforts to become proficient as a penman. I learned to write so well that I often earned more before and after office hours by writing cards, invitations, etc., and making maps, than the amount of my regular salary. Some years later, a diploma at the Territorial Fair was awarded me for the finest penmanship in Utah. When I engaged in business for myself, there was a vacancy at the university in the position of teacher of penmanship and book-keeping, and to make good the promise to myself, made when a youth of twelve or thirteen, that I would some day teach these branches, I applied for the situation. My application was accepted, and my obligation to myself was thus discharged” (“The Nobility of Labor,” *Improvement Era*, Dec. 1899, 82–84).

Ask students:

- In the process of realizing his dream to earn a good salary, what other rewards did Heber J. Grant receive?
- What are some rewards you have received as a result of education and hard work?

He counseled on financial matters.

 Share the following:

“As President of the Church, Heber J. Grant counseled the Saints on matters of financial security, drawing on his own experiences and following the example of his predecessor, President Joseph F. Smith. President Grant focused on two basic principles: the peace that comes when we avoid debt and the temporal and spiritual blessings we receive when we pay tithes and offerings. In April 1932 he taught these principles at a general Relief Society conference. At that time the United States had sunk into the despair of the Great Depression, a widespread crisis of low economic activity and high unemployment. President Grant reproved the Saints for not heeding the counsel they had received from President Smith:

“ ‘If the people known as Latter-day Saints had listened to the advice given from this stand by my predecessor, under the inspiration of the Lord, calling and urging upon the Latter-day Saints not to run in debt, this great depression would have hurt the Latter-day Saints very, very little. . . . To my mind, the main reason for the depression in the United States as a whole, is the bondage of debt and the spirit of speculation among the people.’

“Continuing with his address, President Grant emphasized the need to avoid debt. He also urged his listeners to pay tithes and offerings, even in times of financial difficulty . . . :

“ ‘. . . If there is any man living who is entitled to say, “Keep out of debt,” his name is Heber J. Grant. Thank the Lord that I was able to pay [all my debt], and pay it all without asking a dollar discount from anyone. I do not believe I ever would have paid it if I had not been absolutely honest with the Lord. When I made any money, the first debt I paid was to the Lord, and I believe beyond a shadow of a doubt, that if the Latter-day Saints as a people, had taken the advice of the Prophet of the Lord, and had been efficient tithe payers they would not be in the condition they are in today. If they were honest and conscientious in the payment of [fast offerings] we could take care of every person in distressed circumstances in this Church’ [in *Relief Society Magazine*, May 1932, 299, 302]” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Heber J. Grant* [2002], 119, 121).

President Grant also taught:

“The great criterion of success in the world is that men can make money. But I want to say to you Latter-day Saints that to do this is not true success. As a man grows and increases in the things of this world, if he is not careful, he will lose the Spirit of the Lord, and he will set his heart upon the things of this world. And if he loses the Spirit of the Lord, and fails to be honest with God in the payment of his tithes as strictly and honestly as he would account to a partner if he were engaged in business, that man will lessen his strength, will lessen his power, will lessen the testimony of the Spirit of God within his soul. There is no question of it in my mind.

“We must be honest with the Lord. The great trouble is that there are many people who, as they grow and increase in the things of this world, set their hearts upon them and lose the Spirit of the Lord. Therefore, that which is counted by the world as success is failure; because if a man starts out for a prize and he fails to secure it after laboring nearly a lifetime for that prize, certainly his life has been a failure. I know many individuals who, when they made small sums of money, were absolutely honest with the Lord, and paid one-tenth of it. But when they made large sums of money they paid all the way from one percent, instead of ten, up to two or three percent. What is the matter? Why, the appetite for money grows upon a man, increases and strengthens unless he is careful, just as much as the appetite for whiskey. It gets possession of him, and he loves the money instead of loving it only for the good that he can do with it. He does not estimate properly the value of things” (*Gospel Standards*, 181; paragraphing altered).

Ask students:

- Why can focusing on worldly success lead us to lose the Spirit of the Lord?
- What can we do to keep financial success in proper perspective?

He offered a definition and formula for success.

💡 Ask students what they think the prophet’s advice would be concerning how to become successful. Ask how he might define success. After discussing their responses, review President Heber J. Grant’s definition of success in “His Definition of Success Was Simple and Practical” in the student manual (p. 123).

Ask a student to read aloud Matthew 22:36–40 and another to read Mosiah 2:17, and discuss the similarities between these scriptures and President Grant’s definition of success.

Ask a student to read aloud “One of the Secrets of Success Is Service” in the student manual (p. 123). Ask: In what ways does service to others bring happiness?

Ask if any students would like to share stories about the service they have done for others or that they have known others to do. Be prepared to share some stories of your own.

He had a testimony of the divine calling of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

💡 Ask students to share what they think are some of the most important events in the history of the world. Then ask what they think are some of the most important events in the history of the Church. Share the following insights by President Heber J. Grant:

“The most glorious thing that has ever happened in the history of the world since the Savior Himself lived on earth, is that God Himself saw fit to visit the earth with His beloved, only begotten Son, our Redeemer and Savior, and to appear to the boy Joseph” (*Gospel Standards*, 174–75).

“I rejoice that the Church of Jesus Christ is founded upon the first great vision that was enjoyed by the boy Joseph Smith over one hundred

years ago. He declared that he saw two heavenly beings, whose glory and grandeur were beyond the power of man to describe and that one of them addressed him and pointed to the other and said: ‘This is my beloved Son, hear him.’ There cannot be any doubt in the heart of a Latter-day Saint regarding Jesus Christ being the Son of the Living God, because God himself introduced him to Joseph Smith. It is a fundamental truth of the Church of Jesus Christ in our day that Joseph Smith was and is and ever will be a prophet of the living God; and with Joseph Smith recognized as a prophet of God, and the testimony in our hearts of that fact, there will never be any schism, so to speak, in the Church of Christ” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1924, 6–7).

Ask students: Why does each member need to know that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God?

He taught the blessings of living the Word of Wisdom.

💡 Ask students how the Word of Wisdom has blessed their lives. Ask a student to read aloud “He Taught about Welfare and the Word of Wisdom” in the student manual (pp. 124–25). Write on the board the blessings listed by President Heber J. Grant that result from keeping the Word of Wisdom, which include:

- “Increased vigor of body”
- “Increased vigor of mind”
- Spiritual growth
- “A more direct line of communication with God”

Read together Doctrine and Covenants 89:18–21 and compare the similarities between this scripture and the list on the board.

He laid the foundation of the Church welfare program.

💡 Ask students what they think is the purpose of the Church welfare program. Read with them “The Welfare Plan Was Established upon Revealed Principles” in the student manual (p. 124) and discuss the purpose of welfare as President Heber J. Grant described it. Ask:

- How is idleness a curse?
- How does “the dole” harm individuals and families?
- What are the benefits of “independence, industry, thrift and self respect”?
- In what ways is work a blessing?

Write the following statement on the board: “*The aim of the Church is to help the people to help themselves*” (Heber J. Grant, in Conference Report, Oct. 1936, 3).

Ask students:

- What is the benefit of helping people to help themselves?
- How does this welfare principle apply to social, emotional, and physical health?
- How can parents use this principle in raising their children?

He encouraged Church members to keep the commandments.

- 💡 Share with students what President Heber J. Grant said was his one-sentence theme, which he often reiterated:

“I say to all Latter-day Saints: Keep the commandments of God. That is my keynote speech, just those few words: Keep the commandments of God” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1920, 10).

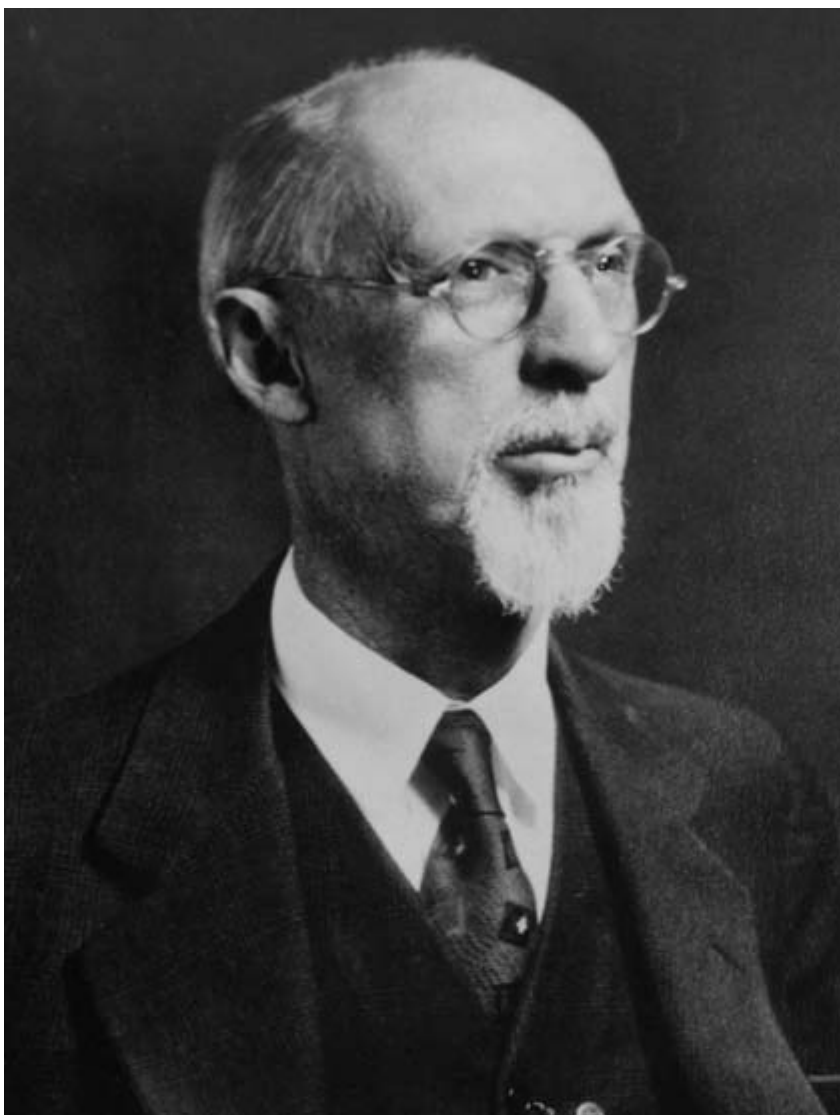
Ask: What blessings come to the obedient? Share what President Grant taught in a later conference address:

“I promise you, as a servant of the living God, that every man and woman who obeys the commandments of God shall prosper in righteousness, that every promise made of God shall be fulfilled upon their heads, and that they will grow and increase in wisdom, light, knowledge, intelligence, and above all, in the testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1944, 13).

CHAPTER 8

George Albert Smith

EIGHTH PRESIDENT OF THE CHURCH



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PART 1: THE EARLY YEARS

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Two years before George Albert Smith was born on April 4, 1870, the last pioneer wagon train entered the valley, replaced in 1869 by the transcontinental railroad. In the year of his birth, Church membership was just over 90,000. Brigham Young was the President of the Church at the time, and he died when George Albert Smith was seven years old. The Salt Lake Temple was under construction during all the years of his childhood and youth. In 1876 Alexander Graham Bell patented the telephone, and Thomas Edison invented the phonograph in 1877 and developed the incandescent light bulb in 1879.

EVENTS, HIGHLIGHTS, AND TEACHINGS

George Albert Smith descended from faithful Church leaders.

- 💡 Explain that George Albert Smith’s family was prominent in pioneer Utah. He was named after his grandfather who was serving as a counselor in the First Presidency when George Albert Smith was born in 1870. His father, John Henry Smith, was ordained an Apostle when George Albert Smith was 10 years old, and he later also became a counselor in the First Presidency. His great-grandfather John Smith, uncle to the Prophet Joseph Smith, served during his lifetime as an assistant counselor in the First Presidency and as Patriarch to the Church.

Share or have a student read the following statement by Elder George Albert Smith, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“One of the beautiful things to me in the gospel of Jesus Christ is that it brings us all to a common level. It is not necessary for a man to be a president of a stake, or a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, in order to attain a high place in the celestial kingdom. The humblest member of the Church, if he keeps the commandments of God, will obtain an exaltation just as much as any other man. In as far as we observe to keep the laws of the Church, we have equal opportunities for exaltation” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1933, 25).

Ask students: In what ways does this statement encourage us in our quest for exaltation?

Young George Albert Smith knew President Brigham Young.

- 💡 Ask students: In what ways have Church leaders influenced your lives?

Summarize the information found in paragraphs two through four of “He Had Personal Experiences with Great Leaders” in the student manual (p. 130). Then ask: What might his experience with President Brigham Young have taught George Albert Smith?

He learned in his youth to keep the commandments.

- 💡 Ask a student to read aloud “ ‘Stay on the Lord’s Side of the Line’ ” in the student manual (p. 142). Explain that George Albert Smith learned from these words of his

grandfather and from the examples of family members to keep himself clean and pure. Ask:

- In what ways do some people justify crossing over the line between the Lord's territory and the devil's territory?
- What can we do to keep from crossing that line?

Ask students why some people feel commandments are oppressive. Read together Doctrine and Covenants 59:3–4 and discuss why God has given His children commandments and how commandments can be considered blessings. Share the following statement by Elder George Albert Smith, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“As a child I presume I may have felt that the Lord had so arranged affairs . . . in this life that I must obey certain laws or swift retribution would follow. But as I grew older I have learned the lesson from another viewpoint, and now to me the laws of the Lord . . . are but the sweet music of the voice of our Father in heaven in His mercy to us. They are but the advice and counsel of a loving parent. . . . And so I say it is not hard for me to believe that it is best for me to keep the commandments of God” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1911, 43–44).

Ask students:

- How are commandments an indication of our Father's love?
- How can you come to receive commandments as “sweet music of the voice of our Father in heaven”?
- In what ways does an attitude like this toward God and His commandments bring peace and joy in this life?

Young George Albert Smith had faith to be healed.

💡 Read with students Doctrine and Covenants 46:19, and discuss what it means to have faith to be healed. Ask a student to read “He Had Faith to Be Healed” in the student manual (p. 131). Ask:

- How did George Albert Smith show his faith to be healed?
- Why do you suppose he was certain it was the Lord who had healed him?
- How can we cultivate this gift of the Spirit in our lives?

Invite students to share an experience in which they or someone else demonstrated faith to be healed.

Karl G. Maeser had a profound effect upon the young George Albert Smith.

💡 Explain to students that as a boy George Albert Smith went to the Brigham Young Academy in Provo, Utah, where he met Karl G. Maeser, the principal of the academy. Share the following, which George Albert Smith wrote in a letter to a president of Brigham Young University:

“I love the memory of Brother Maeser. I think I have spoken of him more than any other man perhaps among those who have contributed to my education” (in Glen R. Stubbs, “A Biography of George Albert Smith” [Ph.D. diss., Brigham Young University, 1974], 20).

Ask students: What counsel do you remember from teachers you have had? Then share this reminiscence of George Albert Smith:


“I went to school at the Brigham Young Academy. It was fortunate that part of my instruction came under Dr. Karl G. Maeser, that outstanding educator who was the first builder of our great Church schools. I cannot remember much of what was said during the year that I was there, but there is one thing that I will probably never forget. Dr. Maeser one day stood up and said: ‘Not only will you be held accountable for the things that you do, but you will be held responsible for the very thoughts that you think.’

“Being a boy, not in the habit of controlling my thoughts very much, it was quite a puzzle to me what I was to do, and it worried me. In fact, it stuck to me just like a burr. About a week or ten days after that it suddenly came to me what he meant. I could see the philosophy of it then. All at once there came to me this interpretation of what he had said: Why, of course you will be held accountable for your thoughts because when your life is completed in mortality, it will be the sum of your thoughts. That one suggestion has been a great blessing to me all my life, and it has enabled me upon many occasions to avoid thinking improperly, because I realize that I will be, when my life’s labor is complete, the product of my thoughts” (“President Smith’s Leadership Address,” *Church News*, Feb. 16, 1946, 1).

Ask students:


- In what ways are people’s lives the “sum of [their] thoughts”?
- What can you do to control your thoughts better?

Zebedee Coltrin foretold George Albert Smith’s call as an Apostle in a patriarchal blessing.

 Ask students to share how their patriarchal blessings have influenced their lives. Tell students that George Albert Smith received a patriarchal blessing at age 13 from Zebedee Coltrin. Ask a student to read aloud the second introductory paragraph for the George Albert Smith chapter in the student manual (p. 130). Ask:

- How might this blessing have influenced George Albert Smith throughout his life?
- How can a patriarchal blessing help us prepare our lives for what the Lord would have us do?

George Albert Smith interrupted his courtship to serve a special mission.

 Tell students that George Albert Smith first met Lucy Emily Woodruff, the granddaughter of President Wilford Woodruff, when they were very young. The two young people developed a strong friendship over the years, but another suitor attracted Lucy’s attention as they approached adulthood. When he was 21 years old, George Albert was called on a special mission to help strengthen youth in the Mutual Improvement Association in southern Utah. While there, he heard that Lucy was planning to marry the other suitor. He wrote her a letter in which he concluded:

“Be prayerful and humble, do not mistake the duty you owe to others. Your first duty is to yourself. I feel that you will be happy and my prayer is that you will” (in Merlo J. Pusey, *Builders of the Kingdom* [1981], 212).

Ask students what effect this kind and heartfelt letter might have had upon Lucy. Ask a student to read the last paragraph of “He Married Lucy Woodruff” in the student manual (p. 133). Then ask: What lessons can you learn from this experience of Lucy Woodruff and George Albert Smith?

The newly married George Albert Smith went on a proselyting mission.

- 💡 Explain that George Albert Smith married Lucy Emily Woodruff on May 25, 1892. Soon after their marriage, on June 23, 1892, George Albert Smith left on a mission to the southern United States. Within a few months, Lucy was called to join her husband in the mission, and she arrived in the fall of that year.

Explain that although Lucy Smith worked in the mission office with her husband, he often went on proselyting trips with other companions, including J. Golden Kimball, who presided over the mission. Share the details of one or both of the following events:

On one occasion, George Albert Smith was traveling and holding meetings with J. Golden Kimball and four other missionaries. One of the local members of the Church invited the group of missionaries to spend the night at his home, which was built of logs and quite small. George Albert Smith recalled:

“About midnight we were awakened with a terrible shouting and yelling from the outside. Foul language greeted our ears as we sat up in bed to acquaint ourselves with the circumstances. It was a bright moonlit night and we could see many people on the outside. President Kimball jumped up and started to dress. The men pounded on the door and used filthy language ordering the Mormons to come out, that they were going to shoot them. President Kimball asked me if I wasn’t going to get up and dress and I told him no, I was going to stay in bed, that I was sure the Lord would take care of us. In just a few seconds the room was filled with shots. Apparently the mob had divided itself into four groups and were shooting into the corners of the house. Splinters were flying over our heads in every direction. There were a few moments of quiet, then another volley of shots was fired and more splinters flew. I felt absolutely no terror. I was very calm as I lay there, experiencing one of the most horrible events of my life, but I was sure that as long as I was preaching the word of God and following his teachings that the Lord would protect me, and he did.

“Apparently the mob became discouraged and left. The next morning when we opened the door, there was a huge bundle of heavy hickory sticks such as the mob used to beat the missionaries in the South” (*The Teachings of George Albert Smith*, comp. Robert McIntosh and Susan McIntosh [1996], 194).

On another occasion George Albert Smith was traveling late one dark night with his companion, Elder Stout. Elder Smith recalled:

“Elder Stout and I were traveling along a high precipice. Our little walk was narrow; on one side was the wall of the mountain, on the other side, the deep, deep river. We had no light and there were no stars and no moon to guide us. We had been traveling all day and we knew that we would have hospitality extended to us if we could reach the McKelvin home, which was on the other side of a high valley.


“We had to cross this little mountain in order to reach the home of Mr. McKelvin. Our mode of travel of necessity was very halting. We walked almost with a shuffle, feeling each foot of ground as we advanced, with one hand extended toward the wall of the mountain. Elder Stout was ahead of me and as I walked along I felt the hard surface of the trail under my feet. In doing so I left the wall of the mountain, which had acted as a guide and a steadying force. After I had taken a few steps away from the mountain wall itself, I felt impressed to stop immediately, that something was wrong. I called to Elder Stout and he answered me. The direction from which his voice came indicated I was on the wrong trail, so I backed up until I reached the wall of the mountain and again proceeded forward. He was just a few steps in front of me, and as I reached him we came to a fence piling. In the dark we carefully explored it with our hands and feet to see whether it would be safe for us to climb over. We decided that it would be secure and made the effort. While I was on the top of this big pile of logs, my little suitcase popped open and the contents were scattered around. In the dark I felt around for them and was quite convinced that I had recovered practically everything.

“We arrived safely at our destination about eleven o’clock at night. I soon discovered I had lost my comb and brush, and the next morning we returned to the scene of my accident. I recovered my property, and while there my curiosity was stimulated and aroused to see what had happened the night before when I had lost my way in the dark. As missionaries we wore hob-nails in the bottom of our shoes to make them last longer, so that I could easily follow our tracks in the soft dirt. I retraced my steps to the point where my tracks left the mountainside and discovered that in the darkness I had wandered to the edge of a deep precipice. Just one more step and I would have fallen over into the river and been drowned. I felt very ill when I realized how close I had come to death. I also was very grateful to my Heavenly Father for protecting me. I have always felt that if we are doing the Lord’s work and ask him for his help and protection, he will guide and take care of us” (*Teachings of George Albert Smith*, 194–95).

Ask students:

- How would you characterize George Albert Smith’s confidence in his calling and in the Lord?
- What did he learn about following the prompting of the Spirit?

George and Lucy Smith were blessed with two daughters and a son.

 Discuss with students how couples might feel who have difficulty bearing children. Tell students that George Albert and Lucy Smith desired to have children. When years passed without children, Lucy became discouraged. Have a student read the following to the class:

“Still childless after more than four years of marriage, George and Lucy began to yearn for a family. One day President Woodruff visited them and asked Lucy if she had any children. ‘No, grandfather,’ she replied, bursting into tears, ‘much as we would like to have some we haven’t any.’ ‘Sit down,’ the president said. Laying his hands on her head he blessed her that she should bear children. Within a year, on November 19, 1895, a daughter was born to them” (Pusey, *Builders*, 220).

A second daughter was born in November 1899, and Lucy bore a son in September 1905. These children brought George Albert and Lucy Smith much joy. Their children were a great blessing to them.

PART 2: THE LATER YEARS


HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

George Albert Smith served as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles for 42 years (from age 33 to age 75) and as President of the Church for 6 years (from 1945 to 1951). His time as an Apostle and Church President spanned two world wars and a long economic depression. These years also saw the first airplane flight at Kitty Hawk (1903) and the first rocket-powered supersonic flight (1947), which typified the remarkable technological progress of humanity. After George Albert Smith's calling to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, the Church became debt-free and then, through the years, became a model of fiscal responsibility.

In 1945, the year George Albert Smith became President, the Church had almost 980,000 members, with 153 stakes, 38 missions, and 8 temples. In 1951, the year of his death, the Church had almost 1.2 million members, with 191 stakes, 42 missions, and 8 temples (see *2003 Church Almanac* [2003], 473, 632).

EVENTS, HIGHLIGHTS, AND TEACHINGS

George Albert Smith was ordained an Apostle.

 Ask students what they remember about the promise made to George Albert Smith in his patriarchal blessing. Tell them that the blessing pronounced by Zebedee Coltrin on January 16, 1884, was realized when George Albert Smith was called as an Apostle. Explain that in the early days of the Church, calls were often given at a conference without a previous interview. Tell them that on Tuesday, October 6, 1903, George Albert Smith had not been able to attend general conference because of work responsibilities. He recorded in his journal:

“At 3:30 p.m. I left for home to take my children to the fair. Was met at my door by Sister Nellie C. Taylor who congratulated me with much earnestness. I was confused at first but she soon told me that I had been voted in that afternoon as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. I thought she was mistaken and told her so. She felt confused and returned to the Tabernacle to ascertain if she was wrong. Later I was met by her and others who corroborated the matter. I was completely dumbfounded and could hardly believe it possible at this time, although I felt that I might someday succeed my Father as my Patriarchal blessing under the hands of Zebedee Coltrin indicated that I might become an Apostle.

“I didn't feel capable or worthy but if it pleases the Lord I will try to do my full duty” (*The Teachings of George Albert Smith*, comps. Robert McIntosh and Susan McIntosh [1996], xxi).

Ask students:

- Despite his feelings of inadequacy, in what ways was George Albert Smith prepared for this important calling?
- What can you do to increase your confidence in your ability to accept and fulfill Church callings?

Elder George Albert Smith prepared a list of lifelong goals.

💡 Have students read “He Had a Personal Creed” in the student manual (p. 133), and list on the board at least six principles George Albert Smith was determined to live by (your list might include the principles below). Have students note how the following principles might enable a person to be a better disciple of Christ:

- “Be a friend to the friendless.”
- “Find joy in ministering to the needs of the poor.”
- “Visit the sick and afflicted and inspire in them a desire for faith to be healed.”
- “Teach the truth to the understanding and blessing of all mankind.”
- “Seek out the erring one and try to win him back to a righteous and happy life.”
- “Love [people] into doing the thing that is right.”
- “Help [people] solve their problems.”
- “Avoid the publicity of high positions and discourage the flattery of thoughtless friends.”
- “Not knowingly wound the feeling of any, not even one who may have wronged me.”
- “Overcome . . . selfishness and jealousy and rejoice in the successes of all the children of my Heavenly Father.”
- “Not be an enemy to any living soul.”
- Fulfill the duty and privilege of disseminating the truth of the gospel plan.

Encourage students to choose some guiding principles and to strive to follow them throughout their lives.

George Albert Smith struggled with serious health problems throughout his life.

💡 Read the following to the students:

“George Albert Smith was not blessed with a strong physical body and this fact brought much distress to him and his family. His health problems were many and varied. . . . Physical problems notwithstanding, he had a zest for work and loved work, often going beyond what one would consider prudent and wise for good health. Both his friends and his doctor cautioned him to slow down, but he would not” (Glen R. Stubbs, “A Biography of George Albert Smith” [Ph.D. diss., Brigham Young University, 1974], 99).

Explain to students that George Albert Smith became very ill for an extended period of time, beginning in 1909 and lasting for about four years. It was a time of great frustration for Elder Smith because he desired to do the work of the Lord but could not. Invite a student to read the last paragraph of “He Was Steadfast and Faithful during Times of Trial” in the student manual (pp. 131–32). Ask: Why is it important to always seek the will of God?

Tell students that during one season of serious illness and while recovering in St. George, Utah, George Albert Smith had a profound spiritual experience. Have a student read “What Have You Done with My Name” in the student manual (p. 134). Ask:

- Have any of you been named after an ancestor? What responsibilities do you feel having that name has given you?
- How did this dream strengthen Elder Smith?
- How can we benefit from regularly evaluating what we have done with the Savior's name?

Share the following testimony by President George Albert Smith:

"I have been in the valley of the shadow of death in recent years, so near the other side that I am sure that [except] for the special blessing of our Heavenly Father I could not have remained here. But never for one moment did that testimony that my Heavenly Father has blessed me with become dimmed. The nearer I went to the other side, the greater was my assurance that the gospel is true. Now that my life has been spared I rejoice to testify that I know the gospel is true, and with all my soul I thank my Heavenly Father that he has revealed it to me" (*Teachings of George Albert Smith*, 190).

Love characterized the ministry of George Albert Smith.

- 💡 Have two students read "Love Seeks Any Opportunity to Serve" and "Love Finds Time for Others" in the student manual (pp. 138–39). Then have another student share the following story shared by President Thomas S. Monson, a counselor in the First Presidency. As students listen, ask them to consider the strengths of George Albert Smith's ministry.

"Junius Burt of Salt Lake City, a longtime worker in the Streets Department, related a touching and inspirational experience. He declared that on a cold winter morning, the street cleaning-crew of which he was a member was removing large chunks of ice from the street gutters. The regular crew was assisted by temporary laborers who desperately needed the work. One such wore only a lightweight sweater and was suffering from the cold. A slender man with a well-groomed beard stopped by the crew and asked the worker, 'You need more than that sweater on a morning like this. Where is your coat?' The man replied that he had no coat to wear. The visitor then removed his own overcoat, handed it to the man and said, 'This coat is yours. It is heavy wool and will keep you warm. I just work across the street.' The street was South Temple. The good Samaritan who walked into the Church Administration Building to his daily work and without his coat was President George Albert Smith of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. His selfless act of generosity revealed his tender heart. Surely he was his brother's keeper" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1990, 62; or *Ensign*, May 1990, 47).

Ask students:

- How do you feel when you are the recipient of someone's kindness?
- How can we develop love for others and a desire to serve them?

He worked to keep the important events of Church history remembered.

- 💡 Ask students if there are any monuments or statues near their homes. Discuss why people or nations build monuments and what purposes the monuments serve. Have students identify some of the monuments and historical sites the Church has preserved. Share what Elder George Albert Smith, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, wrote in a letter in 1937 explaining some reasons for building monuments:

“It has been customary to build monuments to individuals that their memories might be retained. Great events have also been more permanently established in the minds of people by building monuments. In this part of the world there are many points of interest that are being forgotten and the people have felt that it was desirable to mark them in a substantial way so that those who follow will have their attention called to important events” (in Stubbs, “Biography of George Albert Smith,” 254).

Tell students that under the direction of President Heber J. Grant, Elder George Albert Smith worked to ensure that the history of the Latter-day Saints would not be forgotten. His effort to preserve various sites led to markers and monuments of remembrance all across the United States. The Hill Cumorah pageant, which began in 1937, is enjoyed by thousands each year. It is the result of a 1928 purchase that had taken almost 27 years to complete. Another monument that he had a personal interest in was the This Is the Place Monument, a prominent landmark in the Salt Lake Valley.

George Albert Smith became the eighth President of the Church.

- 💡 Tell students that at the October 1945 general conference, soon after the end of World War II, George Albert Smith presided for the first time as President of the Church. Invite a student to read “He Was Called to Be President of the Church” in the student manual (p. 136). Ask:
- In what ways had George Albert Smith been prepared to become President of the Church at this time?
 - From what you have learned about President Smith, what do you think was the most important aspect of his preparation?

President George Albert Smith helped heal the wounded nations.

- 💡 Ask students to imagine what it might be like to interact with Church members who were once part of an enemy nation. Explain that after World War II, Church members had an opportunity to experience that very situation. Review and share in your own words “He Sent an Emissary of Peace” and “He Met with the President of the United States” in the student manual (pp. 137–38). Then ask:
- Whom did President Smith send as an emissary to help the Saints in war-torn Europe? (Elder Ezra Taft Benson.)
 - How does the gospel help heal the wounds of war?

Read with students “The Lord Will Fight Our Battles” in the student manual (p. 142). Ask: How does the Lord protect and strengthen His people?

Discuss with students the number of wars and conflicts in the world today. With the students, review the following sections in the student manual: “There Can Be

Peace in a War-Torn World” (p. 135), “Avoiding Calamity Must Be Done in the Lord’s Way” (p. 141), and “Only with the Spirit Can Men Design a Successful Peace” (p. 141).

President Smith had a mighty vision for missionary work.

💡 Tell students that George Albert Smith was a great missionary for the Church. He was especially effective in breaking down prejudices against the Church. His administration as President, though less than six years, came at an important time in the history of the Church.

Assign students to read aloud “We Will Go to Every Part of the World,” “The Gospel Will Be Taught with Improved Technology,” and “Millions Will Accept the Truth” in the student manual (p. 135). Then ask:

- In what ways are these statements prophetic?
- How does the Lord use technology to spread the gospel throughout the world?

Share the following statement by President George Albert Smith:

“It is a wonderful day and age in which we live. It will not be long until the servants of the Lord will go again to the nations of the earth in great numbers. . . .

“We must preach the gospel to the South American countries which we have scarcely touched. We must preach the gospel to every African section that we haven’t been in yet. We must preach the gospel to Asia. And I might go on and say in all parts of the world where we have not yet been permitted to go. I look upon Russia as one of the most fruitful fields for the teaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ. And if I am not mistaken, it will not be long before the people who are there will desire to know something about this work which has reformed the lives of so many people. We have some few from that land, who belong to the Church, fine, capable individuals who may be called to go, when the time comes, back to the homeland of their parents, and deliver the message that is so necessary to all mankind. Our most important obligation, my brethren, is to divide with our Father’s children all those fundamental truths, all his rules and regulations which prepare us for eternal life, known as the gospel of Jesus Christ. Until we have done that to the full limit of our power, we will not receive all the blessings which we might otherwise have. So let us set our own homes in order, prepare our boys and our girls, and ourselves, so that if we are called to go to the various parts of the earth, we will be prepared to go. This will be our great mission” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1945, 119).

Ask students: How is this charge to Church members being fulfilled today?

He strove to prepare the Saints for the coming of the Lord.


💡 Divide students into four groups and assign each to read and become familiar with one of the following sections in the student manual:

- “He Warned of the Latter-Day Judgments” (p. 140).
- “The World Is Spiritually Sick” (p. 140).
- “Many Have Fallen Away from a True Belief in God” (p. 140).

- “It Is Not a Hopeless Situation” (p. 141).

Have each group discuss how those teachings of President George Albert Smith help prepare people for the Lord’s coming and how the messages are relevant today. Have them also determine how they can follow counsel and heed warnings given in these statements. After a short group discussion, have a student from each group summarize their discussion for the class.

He bore a powerful testimony.

 Ask students to think of some powerful testimonies they have heard. Review some of the examples of testimony from “I Know That My Redeemer Liveth” from the student manual (pp. 142–43). Then ask:

- What makes a testimony powerful to those who hear it?
- How can you develop a strong testimony and have the courage to share it often?

Relate to students an occasion when you have heard a powerful testimony and how those testimonies have influenced your life. Share your testimony with your students.

CHAPTER 9

David O. McKay

NINTH PRESIDENT OF THE CHURCH



PART 1: THE EARLY YEARS

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In 1873, four years before President Brigham Young died, a son was born to David and Jennette Evans McKay. The new baby, named David Oman, was born in Huntsville, Utah, and was the first son and third child in the family. At the time of David O. McKay's birth, Utah was more than 20 years from becoming a state. Only four years earlier the transcontinental railroad had been completed, and Utah was beginning to experience the end of its relative isolation.

Seven years after the birth of this new baby, tragedy struck the McKay household when both of David's older sisters died. Rheumatic fever took one of the girls, and pneumonia took the other; both died in the short span of one week. The two girls were buried side by side in the same grave.

David O. McKay graduated with a degree from the University of Utah, where he also played football. President McKay was the first Church President who was married in the Salt Lake Temple.

EVENTS, HIGHLIGHTS, AND TEACHINGS

David O. McKay learned about revelation early.

- 💡 Ask students about the earliest time in their lives when they can remember saying a prayer on their own. Ask them to consider the circumstances of that prayer.

Tell students that when David O. McKay was not yet eight years old, his father was called on a two-year Church mission to Scotland. At the time of his father's departure, his mother was expecting a baby very soon. His father asked David to "take care of Mama," which he earnestly tried to do. At times he was afraid for himself and his family. One night he had an experience confirming that the Lord watched over him. Ask students to read "He Learned about Revelation When He Was Young" from the student manual (pp. 146–47). Then ask: In what way did this experience help David O. McKay believe in the revelations to the Prophet Joseph Smith?

He offered a tribute to his mother.

- 💡 Tell students that President David O. McKay often spoke fondly of his parents, who greatly influenced his life. The following tribute he gave to his mother reveals much about his feelings concerning motherhood. Share the tribute and ask students to look for ideals that they would like to have when they are parents.

"I cannot think of a womanly virtue that my mother did not possess. Undoubtedly, many a youth, in affectionate appreciation of his mother's love and unselfish devotion can pay his mother the same tribute; but I say this in the maturity of manhood when calm judgment should weigh facts dispassionately. To her children, and all others who knew her well, she was beautiful and dignified. Though high-spirited she was even-tempered and self-possessed. Her dark brown eyes immediately expressed any rising emotion which, however, she always held under perfect control.

“In the management of her household she was frugal yet surprisingly generous, as was father also, in providing for the welfare and education of her children. To make home the most pleasant place in the world for her husband and children was her constant aim, which she achieved naturally and supremely. Though unselfishly devoted to her family, she tactfully taught each one to reciprocate in little acts of service. . . .

“Mother left us when she was still young, only fifty-four. During the intervening . . . years I have often wished that I had told her in my young manhood that my love for her and the realization of her love and of her confidence gave me power more than once during fiery youth to keep my name untarnished. . . .

“Among my most precious soul treasures, is the memory of mother’s prayers by the bedside, of her affectionate touch as she tucked the bedclothes around my brother and me and gave each a loving, goodnight kiss. We were too young and roguish, then, fully to appreciate such devotion, but not too young to know that mother loved us.

“It was this realization of mother’s love, with a loyalty to the precepts of an exemplary father, which, more than once during youth, turned my steps from the precipice of temptation.

“If I were asked to name the world’s greatest need, I should say unhesitatingly *wise mothers*; and the second, *exemplary fathers*” (in Llewelyn R. McKay, *Home Memories of President David O. McKay* [1956], 3–4).

Ask students: What was one of the regrets expressed by David O. McKay following the death of his mother?

He learned from his father.

💡 Explain that David O. McKay learned to work from his father. His father did not tell his boys what to do on the farm but would ask them, “Boys, what is your plan for today?” This approach taught them to make decisions and helped them feel that the farm belonged to them as much as it did to their father (see McKay, *Home Memories*, 7). This training helped them when their father was called on a mission to Scotland in 1881 and the care of the farm was left to the family. David was only seven years old when his father was called. Because he was responsible to care for the farm, David O. McKay matured quickly.

For more details about these early years of his life, you may wish to review and discuss with students “He Had Important Responsibilities at an Early Age” in the student manual (p. 146). Ask students:

- What challenges might young David have faced during those years of his father’s absence?
- What challenges did you face early in your life that have benefited you?

“Act Well Thy Part” became his motto.

💡 Remind students of the discussion of President John Taylor’s motto in an earlier lesson. Ask if anyone remembers that motto. Ask if any students have adopted a personal or family motto since the class discussed President Taylor’s motto.

Explain that President Taylor and his motto impressed David O. McKay while he was a young boy. Share the following statement by President David O. McKay:

“Just above the pulpit in the meetinghouse where as a boy I attended Sunday services, there hung for many years a large photograph of the late President John Taylor, and under it, in what I thought were gold letters, this phrase: ‘The Kingdom of God or Nothing.’

“The sentiment impressed me as a mere child years before I understood its real significance. I seemed to realize at that early date that there is no other church or organization that approaches the perfection or possesses the divinity that characterizes the church of Jesus Christ. As a child I felt this intuitively; in youth, I became thoroughly convinced of it; and today I treasure it as a firm conviction of my soul” (*Cherished Experiences from the Writings of President David O. McKay*, comp. Clare Middlemiss, rev. ed. [1976], 15).

Ask: How does a strong commitment to a motto like “The Kingdom of God or Nothing” affect decisions about keeping the commandments? getting married? going on a mission? attending church? listening to different kinds of music? getting an education?

Review with students “Act Well Thy Part” in the student manual (pp. 147–48), and have them look for a motto David O. McKay referred to most of his life. Ask:

- Why might seeing this inscription have been a turning point for Elder McKay?
- Have you had similar turning points in your life? What motivated them?

He served a mission to Scotland.

💡 Tell students that David O. McKay was called to serve in Great Britain and spent most of his mission in Scotland, the same country in which his father served when David was a young boy. Share and discuss the following mission experience he later spoke of:

“Following a series of meetings at the conference held in Glasgow, Scotland, was a most remarkable priesthood meeting. I remember, as if it were yesterday, the intensity of the inspiration of that occasion. Everybody felt the rich outpouring of the Spirit of the Lord. All present were truly of one heart and one mind. Never before had I experienced such an emotion. It was a manifestation for which as a doubting youth I had secretly prayed most earnestly on hillside and in meadow. It was an assurance to me that sincere prayer is answered sometime, somewhere. . . .

“Such was the setting in which James L. McMurrin gave what has since proved to be a prophecy. I had learned by intimate association with him that James McMurrin was pure gold. His faith in the gospel was implicit. No truer man, no man more loyal to what he thought was right ever lived. So when he turned to me and gave what I thought then was more of a caution than a promise, his words made an indelible impression upon me. Paraphrasing the words of the Savior to Peter, Brother McMurrin said: ‘Let me say to you, Brother David, Satan

hath desired you that he may sift you as wheat, but God is mindful of you.’ [See Luke 22:31.] Then he added, ‘If you will keep the faith, you will yet sit in the leading councils of the Church.’


“At that moment there flashed in my mind temptations that had beset my path, and I realized even better than President McMurrin, or any other man how truly he had spoken when he said, ‘Satan hath desired thee.’ With the resolve then and there to keep the faith, there was born a desire to be of service to my fellowmen; and with it came a realization, a glimpse at least, of what I owed to the elder who first carried the message of the restored gospel to my grandfather and grandmother, who had accepted the message years before in the north of Scotland and in South Wales.

“I ask God to continue to bless you. . . . Do not let temptation lead you astray” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1968, 86).

Ask students:

- What do you think the phrase “Satan desires to ‘sift you as wheat’ ” means? (see Luke 22:31).
- What realization strengthened Elder McKay’s resolve to resist temptation?
- What can we do to resist temptation?

Teaching is a noble profession.

 Ask students why they seek an education. Discuss with them the opportunities they will have to teach others. Explain that David O. McKay first attended school in Huntsville, Utah, and then, after eighth grade, he studied at the Weber Stake Academy in Ogden, Utah, for two years, after which he returned to teach at the Huntsville school. He next enrolled at the University of Utah and graduated in 1897 as valedictorian. Following his mission, he began teaching at the Weber Stake Academy in 1899, and he became principal of the Academy in 1902.

Share with the class some or all of the following teachings of President David O. McKay regarding education, and discuss what they suggest about teaching and learning:

“I have said to teachers on more than one occasion: If you will give your classes a thought, even *one* new thought during your recitation period, you will find that they will go away satisfied. But it is your obligation to be prepared to give that new thought” (*Gospel Ideals: Selections from the Discourses of David O. McKay* [1953], 439).

“The lives of men become signposts to us, pointing the way along roads that lead either to lives of usefulness and happiness or to lives of selfishness and misery. It is important then that we seek, both in life and in books, the companionship of the best and noblest men and women” (*Gospel Ideals*, 439–40).

“The Church stands for education. The very purpose of its organization is to promulgate truth among men. Members of the Church are admonished to acquire learning by study, and also by faith and prayer, and to seek after everything that is virtuous, lovely, of good report, or praiseworthy. . . .

“Indeed, one of the fundamental teachings of the Church is that salvation itself depends upon knowledge; for, says the revelation, ‘It is impossible for a man to be saved in ignorance,’ (D&C 131:6)” (*Gospel Ideals*, 440).

“Gaining knowledge is one thing and applying it, quite another. Wisdom is the right application of knowledge; and true education—the education for which the Church stands—is the application of knowledge to the development of a noble and Godlike character.

“A man may possess a profound knowledge of history and of mathematics; he may be authority in psychology, biology, or astronomy; he may know all the discovered truths pertaining to geology and natural science; but if he has not with this knowledge that nobility of soul which prompts him to deal justly with his fellow men, to practise virtue and holiness in personal life, he is not a truly educated man.

“Character is the aim of true education; and science, history, and literature are but means used to accomplish the desired end. Character is not the result of chance work but of continuous right thinking and right acting.

“True education seeks, then, to make men and women not only good mathematicians, proficient linguists, profound scientists, or brilliant literary lights, but also honest men, combined with virtue, temperance, and brotherly love—men and women who prize truth, justice, wisdom, benevolence, and self-control as the choicest acquisitions of a successful life” (*Gospel Ideals*, 440).

Ask students:

- In your opinion, how was David O. McKay’s philosophy of education different or similar to that found in educational institutions today?
- What do you believe is the purpose of education?
- How can you fulfill the responsibility to become educated and stay close to the Lord at the same time?

Read and discuss Doctrine and Covenants 88:77–81.

PART 2: THE LATER YEARS

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

David O. McKay was called as an Apostle in 1906 at the age of 32, and he served over 63 years. In 1951 he became President of the Church at a time when conditions were favorable for two things to occur: the establishment of the Church as a major force in a larger area of the world and the consolidation of many Church programs designed to help Church members learn and live the gospel. Temples were dedicated in Switzerland (1955), New Zealand (1958), and England (1958). Many members of the Church outside of the United States were beginning to have access to temples.

In addition to earning the admiration and devotion of Church members, President David O. McKay was recognized by many organizations for his uplifting influence. During his lifetime he received several honorary degrees from colleges and universities, as well as many awards and honorary memberships from civic and professional organizations, including the Blue Key National Honor Fraternity (a service organization), the Boy Scouts of America, and the Sons of Utah Pioneers.

In 1951, the year David O. McKay became President, Church membership was almost 1.2 million, with 191 stakes, 42 missions, and 8 temples. In 1970, the year he died, Church membership was around 2.9 million, with 537 stakes, 92 missions, and 13 temples (see *2003 Church Almanac* [2003], 473, 632).

EVENTS, HIGHLIGHTS, AND TEACHINGS

He was called to be an Apostle.

- 💡 Ask students if they have ever felt unqualified for or overwhelmed by a calling they have received. Explain that Elder David O. McKay was sustained as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles at the same time as Church leaders George F. Richards and Orson F. Whitney. At the time of these calls to serve in the Quorum of the Twelve, Elder Richards had served as a counselor in a stake presidency and as a patriarch and Elder Whitney had served for almost 28 years as a bishop. David O. McKay was only 32 years old and was serving as an assistant to the stake Sunday School superintendent. He was ordained an Apostle on April 9, 1906, by President Joseph F. Smith.

Ask students: What can we do when we feel unqualified for or overwhelmed by a position to which we have been called?

Elder McKay was assigned to visit Church members around the world.

- 💡 Inquire of the students about who traveled the greatest distance from their home to reach their mission assignment. (This will give the class an opportunity to find out where some of their classmates have served missions.) Tell them that in December 1920, Elder David O. McKay and Hugh J. Cannon (then president of the Salt Lake Liberty Stake) left on a year-long assignment from the First Presidency to tour the missions of the world. They traveled over 60,000 miles by land and sea. Have students read “He Went on a World Tour during 1920–21” in the student manual (p. 149).

Ask: What insights about the worldwide Church might Elder McKay have gained that he could not get from hearing reports or reading correspondence from people in international areas? Explain that sometimes when the servants of the Lord are

saved from harm, the importance of this protection is shown in a dramatic fashion. Share the following story with the students:

“It happened in 1921, while President McKay and Elder Hugh Cannon were making a tour of the missions of the world. After a day of inspiring conference meetings in Hilo, Hawaii, a night trip to the Kilauea volcano was arranged for the visiting brethren and some of the missionaries. About nine o’clock that evening, two carloads, about ten of us, took off for the then very active volcano.

“We stood on the rim of that fiery pit, . . . our backs chilled by the cold winds sweeping down from snowcapped Mauna Loa, and our faces almost blistered by the heat of the molten lava. Tiring of the cold, one of the elders discovered a volcanic balcony about four feet down inside the crater where observers could watch the display without being chilled by the wind. It seemed perfectly sound, and the railing on the open side of it formed a fine protection from the intense heat, making it an excellent place to view the spectacular display.

“After first testing its safety, Brother McKay and three of the elders climbed down into the hanging balcony. As they stood there warm and comfortable, they teased the others of us more timid ones who had hesitated to take advantage of the protection they had found. For quite some time we all watched the ever-changing sight as we alternately chilled and roasted.


“After being down there in their protected spot for some time, suddenly Brother McKay said to those with him, ‘Brethren, I feel impressed that we should get out of here.’

“With that he assisted the elders to climb out, and then they in turn helped him up to the wind-swept rim. It seems incredible, but almost immediately the whole balcony crumbled and fell with a roar into the molten lava a hundred feet or so below” (Virginia Budd, in *Cherished Experiences from the Writings of President David O. McKay*, comp. Clare Middlemiss, rev. ed. [1976], 52–53).

Ask students:

- What impresses you about Elder McKay’s response to spiritual impressions in those circumstances?
- How can we learn to be more sensitive to spiritual promptings?

The McKays were recognized for their courtesy in the home.

-  Ask students if they are aware of any popular phrases or expressions that are attributed to President David O. McKay. Responses may include “No other success can compensate for failure in the home.” This phrase became a popular theme among members of the Church and conveys our deep feelings about the role of the home in society. Another expression often attributed to David O. McKay is “Every member a missionary.”

Inform students that in the April 1964 general conference President McKay taught:

“No other success can compensate for failure in the home. . . . The poorest shack of a home in which love prevails over a united family is of greater value to God and future humanity than the richest bank on earth. In such a home God can work miracles and will work miracles. . . . Pure hearts in a pure home are always in whispering distance of heaven” (quoted from J. E. McCulloch, *Home: The Savior of Civilization* [1924], 42; in Conference Report, Apr. 1935, 116).

Ask students:

- What kinds of success do some people try to substitute for success in the home?
- What do you think the statement “Pure hearts in a pure home are always in whispering distance of heaven” means?

Ask students if they can imagine a father on his deathbed saying as his last words, “I wish I would have spent more time at the office.” Discuss what kind of regrets a parent might be more likely to express at that time.

Explain to students that the good relationship between David O. McKay and his wife, Emma Ray, was well known. They showed great love for each other. Share the following description of the McKay home with students:

“David and Ray reared their children in an atmosphere of love, harmony, and security, where father and mother were respected, not because they demanded their place as leaders, but because the children naturally made them their ideals and respected their judgment. . . .

“There were no company [visitor] manners in the McKay home. Father and mother were as courteous to each other and to their children when only the members of the family were present, as when the most respected guests were in the home. The same courtesy and respect for each other’s rights were required of the children in their association and play together” (Jeanette McKay Morrell, *Highlights in the Life of President David O. McKay* [1966], 42, 47).

Ask students:

- What does the statement mean “there were no company manners”?
- What message is sent to children when there are two sets of manners?

Read and discuss with students “He Gave Ten Conditions That Can Contribute to a Happy Home” in the student manual (pp. 155–56). You may want to make an overhead transparency and reveal the conditions one at a time as you discuss them. Ask: Which of these conditions seem especially challenging in today’s culture? Why?

David O. McKay became President of the Church.

- 💡 Tell students that on April 9, 1951, following the death of President George Albert Smith, David O. McKay became the senior Apostle. He was chosen by the Lord to lead the Church. He called Stephen L. Richards and J. Reuben Clark Jr. as his counselors. Joseph Fielding Smith, as the next senior Apostle and President of the

Quorum of the Twelve, ordained and set apart David O. McKay as President of the Church on April 12, 1951.

Write on the board “Without [God’s] divine guidance and constant inspiration, we _____. With his guidance, with his inspiration, we _____.” Invite students to review the first half of “He Became President of the Church” in the student manual (p. 151) and fill in the blanks. Ask:

- In what ways can Church members support the First Presidency with “confidence, faith, and prayer” (D&C 107:22)?
- How else can Church members support their leaders in the Church?

He looked like a prophet.

💡 Ask students what preconceived ideas people not of our faith might have about what a prophet would look like. Explain that in Nauvoo the Prophet Joseph Smith regularly went to the docks to meet Saints who had just traveled up the Mississippi River. Many had emigrated from lands as far away as Great Britain. A number of diaries report that when the converts arrived, they recognized the Prophet Joseph Smith as they looked over the crowd that came to meet the boat. They often identified him even though he was dressed like everyone else. When they saw him it was not uncommon for the Spirit to bear witness to them that he was indeed a prophet.

This also happened with President David O. McKay. Have a student read aloud the story in the last three paragraphs of “He Was Respected throughout the World” in the student manual (p. 153). Ask students:

- How might such experiences relate to Alma’s teachings in Alma 5:14?
- How can we receive the “image of God” in our countenances?
- What have you experienced in being near the prophet or in watching him on a general conference broadcast?

Explain that many people recognized that President McKay had a unique closeness to the Lord. Ask: Why do you suppose people not of our faith reacted as they did to President McKay?

Spirituality is the highest attainment of the soul.

💡 Write the word *spirituality* on the board, and ask students to define it. Write some of their answers on the board. After several students have had an opportunity to respond, add President David O. McKay’s definition: “Spirituality . . . is the consciousness of victory over self and of communion with the Infinite” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1956, 6).

Read and discuss with students “He Taught about Developing Spirituality” in the student manual (p. 158) to help them better understand spirituality. Ask:

- What do you think President McKay meant by the phrase “control of environment”?
- What do you think President McKay meant when he said, “You lose the soul unless you develop spirituality within”?

David O. McKay had many spiritual gifts.

- 💡 Divide the class into four groups and assign each group one of the following sections from the student manual (pp. 156–57): “He Had the Gift of Healing,” “He Opened the Eyes of a Blind Man,” “He Had the Gift of Discernment,” and “The Power of God Was with Him.” Ask them to review the principles illustrated in their section. Have a student from each group teach the class about the section studied by the group.

Explain that President David O. McKay had many gifts of the Spirit and blessed the lives of those with whom he came in contact. Discuss the following questions:

- Who is entitled to spiritual gifts in the Church? (any Latter-day Saint; bishops and other presiding leaders by nature of their calling are entitled to specific gifts; see D&C 46:8–33; 1 Corinthians 12:8–11; Moroni 10:8–19).
- What do you think Sister McKay might have meant when she said her husband was blessed with “pre-vision”? (see “The Power of God Was with Him” in the student manual, p. 157).

The Church has a single standard of morality.

- 💡 Ask students if they have heard about differing societal expectations of chastity for young men and young women. Discuss why these expectations have sometimes been different for men and women. Share the following statement by President David O. McKay:

“In The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints there is but one standard of morality. No young man has any more right to sow his wild oats in youth than has a young girl. He who is unchaste in young manhood is untrue to a trust given to him by the parents of the girl, and she who is unchaste in maidenhood is untrue to her future husband and lays the foundation of unhappiness in the home, suspicion, and discord. Do not worry about these teachers who encourage promiscuity and self-gratification. Just keep in mind this eternal truth, that chastity is a virtue to be prized as one of life’s noblest achievements” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1967, 7–8).

Ask students:

- In what way do you believe the moral climate in our culture has changed since the ministry of President McKay?
- Why is chastity a “virtue to be prized as one of life’s noblest achievements”?

He offered a guide to knowing when you are in love.

- 💡 Ask students what they consider to be the most important decision they will ever make. Some will suggest that who they marry ranks high as an important decision. Ask how a person knows whom to marry. Share the following counsel from President David O. McKay:

“You may ask, ‘how may I know when I am in love?’


“That is a very important question. A fellow student and I considered that query one night as we walked together. As boys of that age frequently do, we were talking about girls. Neither he nor I knew whether or not we were in love. Of course I had not then met my present sweetheart. In answer to my question, ‘How may we know when we are in love?’ he replied: ‘My mother once said that if you meet a girl in whose presence you feel a desire to achieve, who inspires you to do your best, and to make the most of yourself, such a young woman is worthy of your love and is awakening love in your heart.’

“I submit that . . . as a true guide” (*Gospel Ideals: Selections from the Discourses of David O. McKay* [1953], 459).

Discuss the following questions:

- How do many young people make the decision about whom to marry?
- What are the advantages of the guidelines President McKay described?

He served God and his fellowman throughout his long life.

 Conclude the lesson by telling students that, in his 97th year, President David O. McKay died at his Hotel Utah apartment at 6:00 a.m. on the Sabbath morning of January 18, 1970, thus culminating an earthly existence that began only 26 years after pioneers came into the Great Salt Lake Valley. He had served faithfully as an apostolic representative of the Savior for almost 64 years.

Review with students “President Joseph Fielding Smith Paid Him a Tribute” in the student manual (pp. 159–60). Then ask:

- What qualities did President David O. McKay emphasize in his life?
- What contributions did he make in building up the kingdom of God?

CHAPTER 10

Joseph Fielding Smith

TENTH PRESIDENT OF THE CHURCH



PART 1: THE EARLY YEARS

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

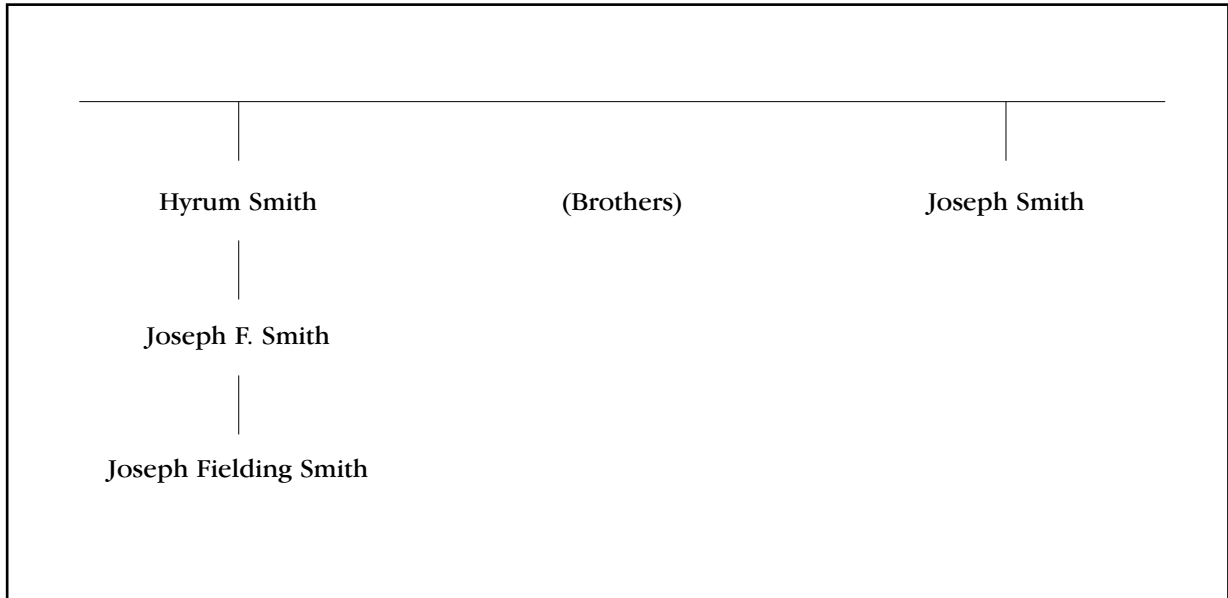
Joseph Fielding Smith was born July 19, 1876, near the end of President Brigham Young’s administration. In 1875, the year previous to Joseph Fielding Smith’s birth, the Salt Lake Tabernacle on Temple Square was dedicated. Five days after his birth, thousands of Latter-day Saints assembled in their new Tabernacle to commemorate the 29th anniversary of the arrival of the pioneers in the Great Salt Lake Valley.

Joseph Fielding Smith saw and knew every previous Church President except Joseph Smith and Brigham Young, and he also knew those who became President after him up to and including President Gordon B. Hinckley. In his youth he loved to hear the testimonies of Presidents John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, and Lorenzo Snow. Joseph Fielding Smith spent many hours listening to his father, President Joseph F. Smith, tell of his experiences with the Prophet Joseph Smith and other early pioneers.

EVENTS, HIGHLIGHTS, AND TEACHINGS

Joseph Fielding Smith was a grandson of Hyrum Smith.

💡 Write the following on the board:



Explain that Joseph Fielding Smith was a grandson of Hyrum Smith and a grandnephew of the Prophet Joseph Smith. Joseph Fielding Smith was the firstborn son of Joseph F. and Julina Lambson Smith. His father was an Apostle and a counselor in the First Presidency when he was born.

Remind students that Hyrum Smith had served as Assistant President of the Church, counselor in the First Presidency, Apostle, and Patriarch to the Church.

Joseph Fielding Smith and his father served as Apostles for a combined unbroken span of more than 100 years, from 1866–1972.

Ask: How might Joseph Fielding Smith’s family heritage have helped prepare him for his future service in the Church?

His birth came as an answer to prayer.

💡 Have students turn to 1 Samuel 1 and briefly review the story of Hannah and her prayer and promise to the Lord about having a son. Then ask:

- What was Hannah’s great desire? (see 1 Samuel 1:11).
- What was she willing to do if she could have a son?

Share the following description of Joseph Fielding Smith’s mother:

“Like Hannah of old, mother of the Prophet Samuel of biblical fame, Julina Smith had greatly longed for and prayed for a son, promising the Lord that if he would so bless her she would do all possible to see that the boy was reared to serve God, to be a credit to the Lord and to his own father. And like Samuel, Joseph Fielding took the agreement between mother and God seriously” (Joseph Fielding Smith Jr. and John J. Stewart, *The Life of Joseph Fielding Smith* [1972], 20).

Ask students: In what ways do you think Joseph Fielding Smith’s knowledge of his mother’s promise may have influenced him?

He was “born with a testimony.”

💡 Invite one or two students to share briefly the circumstances that helped them gain a testimony. Have them include how old they were when they knew that the restored gospel was true. Review and discuss with students “I Was Born with a Testimony” in the student manual (p. 164). Ask:

- Why may some be “born with a testimony,” others gain a testimony gradually, and still others learn the truth in a dramatic fashion?
- What is the relationship between feelings and knowledge as they relate to testimony? (see D&C 8:2–3).
- What recommendations do you have for those who do not feel that they have a testimony?

Joseph Fielding Smith loved and studied the scriptures all his life.

💡 Read the following recollection by Elder Joseph Fielding Smith, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“I am grateful that I have been born of goodly parents who taught me to walk in the light of the truth. From my earliest recollection, from the time I first could read, I have received more pleasure and greater satisfaction out of the study of the scriptures, and reading of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of the Prophet Joseph Smith, and the work that has been accomplished for the salvation of men, than from anything else in all the world” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1930, 91).

Ask a student to read the statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie in “He Was a Latter-day Scholar” in the student manual (p. 167). Then ask:

- How might these two statements be related?
- In what ways do our early decisions and interests prepare us for future responsibilities and service?

Share the following statement by President Joseph Fielding Smith, then President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“One of the responsibilities which the Lord has placed upon the members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is that they search the scriptures and lay up a store of knowledge, otherwise they cannot have the guidance of the Holy Ghost, notwithstanding they have been baptized and confirmed. Those who are ignorant of the gospel truths and unacquainted with the teachings that the Lord gave to the Fathers, cannot have the guidance of the Spirit of the Lord. Such people leave themselves open to temptation and deception by wicked, unscrupulous souls and are in grave danger of being led into folly and forbidden paths because they have no foundation in faith on which to build” (“Baptism before the Coming of Our Savior in the Flesh,” *Improvement Era*, Mar. 1964, 159).

Ask students: What are the dangers we face by not following President Smith’s counsel?

He learned to be responsible through hard work.

💡 Prior to class, invite one or more students to read “He Helped His Mother,” “He Was an Early Riser,” and “He Was a Hard Worker” in the student manual (pp. 164–65) and report what they learned about young Joseph Fielding Smith. After their reports, discuss the following questions with students:

- Why did Joseph Fielding Smith in later years say that his shoulders were “a little out of kilter”?
- What did you learn about the kind of older brother he was?
- In what ways do you think his experiences in his youth influenced his attitude toward work?

His patriarchal blessing guided his life.

💡 Tell students about when you received your patriarchal blessing and why it is important to you. Explain that when Joseph Fielding Smith was 20 years old, he received a patriarchal blessing from John Smith, Patriarch to the Church. Share the following excerpt from Joseph Fielding Smith’s blessing:

“Thou art numbered among the sons of Zion, of whom much is expected. Thy name is written in the Lamb’s Book of Life and shall be registered in the chronicles of thy fathers with thy brethren. It is thy privilege to live to a good old age and the will of the Lord that you should become a mighty man in Israel. Therefore, I say unto thee, reflect often upon the past, present, and future. If thou shalt gain wisdom by the experience of the past, thou shalt realize that the hand of the Lord has been and is over thee for good, and that

thy life has been preserved for a wise purpose. Thou shalt realize also that thou hast much to do in order to complete thy mission upon the earth. It shall be thy duty to sit in counsel with thy brethren and to preside among the people. It shall be thy duty also to travel much at home and abroad by land and water, laboring in the ministry, and I say unto thee, hold up thy head, lift up thy voice without fear or favor as the Spirit of the Lord shall direct, and the blessing of the Lord shall rest upon thee. His Spirit shall direct thy mind and give the word and sentiment that thou shalt confound the wisdom of the wicked and set at naught the councils of the unjust" (in A. William Lund, "Elder Joseph Fielding Smith," *Improvement Era*, Apr. 1950, 315).

Discuss the following questions:

- What promises in his blessing can you identify as being fulfilled? (List them on the board.)
- In what ways does personal obedience relate to patriarchal blessings?

Joseph Fielding Smith served a mission in England.

💡 Have students list on the board what they believe are important qualities of effective missionaries. Summarize the points you feel are important from "He Was Married before He Served a Mission" in the student manual (pp. 165–66). Explain that Joseph Fielding Smith encountered many challenges on his mission; many people at that time were antagonistic to missionaries and Church members. But Elder Smith chose to be faithful. He wrote:

"I know that the work I have been called to do is the work of God or I would not stay here one minute. . . . I know that our happiness is dependent upon my faithfulness while I am here. I should be willing to do this much for the love of mankind when our Savior could suffer as he did for us. . . . I am in the hands of our Heavenly Father and he will watch over me and protect me if I do his will" (in Smith and Stewart, *Life of Joseph Fielding Smith*, 114–15).

Ask students to recall the descriptions of John Taylor's and Wilford Woodruff's missions to England and contrast their experiences with that of Joseph Fielding Smith's. Discuss the following questions:

- Why is it inappropriate to measure the success of a mission by the number of people baptized?
- What attitudes did Elder Smith indicate contributed to his success as a missionary?

Joseph Fielding Smith's father taught him to seek excellence.

💡 If available, bring to class and display several books by Joseph Fielding Smith, or you may want to list on the board the following titles of works by him:

- *Doctrines of Salvation*
- *The Restoration of All Things*
- *The Way to Perfection*

- *The Progress of Man*
- *Answers to Gospel Questions*
- *Essentials in Church History*
- *Church History and Modern Revelation*
- *Man, His Origin and Destiny*
- *The Signs of the Times*
- *Seek Ye Earnestly*

Explain to students that Joseph Fielding Smith wrote 25 books on the gospel and Church history.

Joseph F. Smith was recognized as a gospel scholar and spent a large amount of time responding to the questions his son Joseph Fielding asked. Invite students to read “His Father Expected Excellence” and “He Learned Much from His Father” in the student manual (p. 166) and look for additional influences Joseph F. Smith had on his son. Ask:

- What subjects interested Joseph Fielding Smith?
- In what ways do you think Joseph Fielding’s interest in the gospel and Church history was influenced by his father?

Joseph Fielding Smith was known as a defender of the faith.

💡 Ask students where they turn for help when others ask challenging or critical questions about the Church and its doctrine. Ask: In addition to the scriptures and personal prayer, why are published talks and writings of the General Authorities helpful in answering difficult questions?

Explain that during his younger years Joseph Fielding Smith observed the heavy persecution of the Church when his father, Joseph F. Smith, was President. Joseph Fielding Smith had many opportunities to defend the Church. Invite a student to read “He Was a Defender of the Faith” in the student manual (pp. 166–67).

Tell students that for many years Joseph Fielding Smith wrote a monthly column for the *Improvement Era*, answering questions submitted by Church members. He was recognized as a great defender and teacher of gospel truths. His answers provided much help. The collection of answers was later printed in a five-volume series entitled *Answers to Gospel Questions*. If you have a copy available, you may want to read students a brief question and answer from one of its volumes.

PART 2: THE LATER YEARS

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

When Joseph Fielding Smith became President of the Church in 1970, he had served as an Apostle for almost 60 years and President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles for 18 years. When he became President of the Church, he was 93 years old, older at the time of ordination than any previous or subsequent Church President.

In 1970 the 500th stake of the Church was organized and the first stakes were formed in Asia (in Tokyo, Japan) and Africa (in Johannesburg, South Africa). There were just over 14,000 missionaries serving around the world. Church membership reached 2.9 million, with 537 stakes, 92 missions, and 13 temples. During the year of his death, in 1972, Church membership reached 3.2 million, with 592 stakes, 101 missions, and 15 temples (see *2003 Church Almanac* [2003], 473, 632).

EVENTS, HIGHLIGHTS, AND TEACHINGS

Joseph Fielding Smith was married and widowed three times.

💡 Write the following on the board:

- Louie Emily Shurtliff (April 26, 1898–March 30, 1908), 2 children
- Ethel Georgina Reynolds (November 2, 1908–August 26, 1937), 9 children
- Jessie Ella Evans (April 12, 1938–August 3, 1971)

Explain to students that Joseph Fielding Smith married Louie Emily Shurtliff on April 26, 1898, when he was 21 years old. They had two children before she died on March 30, 1908. On November 2, 1908, he married Ethel Georgina Reynolds, when he was 32 years old. They had nine children before she died on August 26, 1937. At age 61, on April 12, 1938, he married Jessie Ella Evans. She died on August 3, 1971.

Joseph Fielding Smith was known for his love of family. Read and discuss with students “He Found a New Wife and Mother for His Children” (p. 167) and “His Wife Described Him” (p. 169) in the student manual. Review and discuss “Jesse Evans Helped Add Much to His Zest for Living” in the student manual (pp. 169–70).

Share the following description of President Joseph Fielding Smith’s feelings for his wife Jessie when she passed away:

“From the pulpit he admonished husbands to be loving and devoted to their wives. But the sermon that touches me is his climbing nine blocks up Salt Lake City’s steep north avenues to the Latter-day Saint Hospital on a hot July day in 1971 and spending his 95th birthday anniversary sitting at the bedside of his sick wife Jessie. As her condition worsened, he stayed right with her day and night for several weeks . . . giving her what comfort and encouragement he could to the end. . . .

“The night Jessie died he kneeled in prayer with a son and poured out his heart to God. ‘It was a beautiful prayer,’ his son later commented. ‘There was no bitterness, no venting of grief, only a deep expression of thanks

that he had been blessed to have Aunt Jessie, that now she was free from pain, and his gratitude that they would be together again one day.'

“. . . A few days after Jessie's death a son was staying with him in his apartment. There was music playing on the radio. Joseph Fielding managed a smile and danced a little jig to the music, to show that his spirit was not vanquished. Upon his return home from a trip a few weeks later, his children had taken care to have the apartment look just like Aunt Jessie would have it for him. 'See, Father, it is just the same.' 'No,' he said, 'it is not the same. Not the same. But it will have to do' " (Joseph Fielding Smith Jr. and John J. Stewart, *The Life of Joseph Fielding Smith* [1972], 11–12).

He was called as an Apostle.

- 💡 Tell the students that as Joseph Fielding Smith attended the last session of the April general conference in 1910, one of the doorkeepers asked, “Well, Joseph, who is the new Apostle to be?” Joseph Fielding replied, “I don’t know. But it won’t be you, and it won’t be me” (see Smith and Stewart, *Life of Joseph Fielding Smith*, 175). He then went into the meeting and sat down.

His father, President Joseph F. Smith, opened the meeting. Following the opening hymns and prayer, Elder Heber J. Grant, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, presented the names of the General Authorities for a sustaining vote. Less than a minute before Elder Grant read the name of the new Apostle, Joseph Fielding Smith suddenly knew that he would fill the vacancy. (In the early days of the Church, calls were often given without a previous interview.) Discuss with students “He Was Called as an Apostle” and “Others Knew That He Would Be Called as an Apostle” in the student manual (pp. 167–68).

He served as Church historian.

- 💡 Write the following scripture references on the board: Doctrine and Covenants 21:1; 47:1, 3; 69:3. Ask students to read them to see what commandment the Lord gave early Church leaders. Have them list reasons for keeping accurate Church records.

Explain that Joseph Fielding Smith helped record Church history for nearly 70 years, from 1901 to 1970, which represents more than one-third of the Church’s history. In 1901 he began working in the Church Historian’s Office. He served as assistant Church historian from 1906 to 1921 when, at the death of Anthon H. Lund, he was called and sustained as Church historian. He served in this position for 49 years, longer than any previous historian.

He became President of the Church at age 93.

- 💡 Discuss the answers to the following questions:
- Which of the Church Presidents was the youngest when he began to serve? How old was he? (The Prophet Joseph Smith was sustained as First Elder of the Church on April 6, 1830, at age 24, and he was sustained as President of the high priesthood on January 25, 1832, at age 26.)
 - Who was the oldest when he started serving, and what was his age? (Joseph Fielding Smith became Church President on January 23, 1970, at age 93, and he was sustained on April 6, 1970.)

At age 93, President Joseph Fielding Smith was well prepared for this high calling, having served for nearly 60 years as an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ. No one else has become President of the Church in this dispensation at such an advanced age.

Hard work was an important part of Joseph Fielding Smith's life.

- 💡 Write the following statement by President Joseph Fielding Smith on the board. Invite students to discuss what this statement might reveal about him:

“No one should ever retire. I’ve known men who announced their retirement, and nature took them at their word!” (in Smith and Stewart, *Life of Joseph Fielding Smith*, 3).

Tell students that even at his advanced age, President Joseph Fielding Smith continued to work hard and was recognized for accomplishing much each day. Share the following from one biographer:

“At 95 he was still his own best sermon on non-retirement. I remember early one winter morning driving to Salt Lake City long before daylight. As I turned a corner near Temple Square, the headlight of my car brought into view an elderly man out walking in the cold, snowy air. It was Joseph Fielding. He was up every morning well before 6 o’clock, and put in a heavy day’s work. It was a lifelong habit, and one that he also instilled in his children. ‘People die in bed,’ he cautioned them. ‘And so does ambition.’ ” (Smith and Stewart, *Life of Joseph Fielding Smith*, 3; see also “He Enjoyed an Active Lifestyle” in the student manual, pp. 170–71).

Family home evening was emphasized.

- 💡 Read the following promises to students, and ask them to identify what the First Presidency in 1915 counseled Church members to do:

“If the Saints obey this counsel, we promise that great blessings will result. Love at home and obedience to parents will increase. Faith will be developed in the hearts of the youth of Israel, and they will gain power to combat the evil influence and temptations which beset them” (in James R. Clark, comp., *Messages of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. [1965–75], 4:339).

Remind students that during the presidency of Joseph F. Smith, the First Presidency introduced family home evening and recommended that Church members hold it regularly (see “Family Home Evening Was Introduced” in the student manual, pp. 101–2). Ask: In what ways can an effective family home evening give power to “combat the evil influences and temptations” we face?

Write the following dates on the board:

- 1915—family home evening was introduced; stake and ward leaders were encouraged to set aside at least one evening each month for home evening.

- 1965—weekly family home evenings were instituted and supported with lesson manuals.
- 1966—stakes were urged to avoid scheduling activities on a night they select for family home evenings.
- 1970—under the direction of President Joseph Fielding Smith, Monday night was designated as the uniform time throughout the Church for holding family home evening.

Ask a student to read the following counsel from President Joseph Fielding Smith, and have students suggest how regular family home evenings can help parents fulfill the responsibilities described in his statement:

“To all the families in Israel we say: The family is the most important organization in time or in eternity. Our purpose in life is to create for ourselves eternal family units. . . .

“To parents in the Church we say: Love each other with all your hearts. Keep the moral law and live the gospel. Bring up your children in light and truth; teach them the saving truths of the gospel; and make your home a heaven on earth, a place where the Spirit of the Lord may dwell and where righteousness may be enthroned in the heart of each member.

“It is the will of the Lord to strengthen and preserve the family unit” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1972, 13; or *Ensign*, July 1972, 27).

Discuss the following questions:

- What kind of emphasis does family home evening receive from current Church leaders?
- How does family home evening strengthen families?

Joseph Fielding Smith urged Church members to prepare for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

💡 Review with students “We Must Prepare for the Lord’s Coming” and “Christ Will Come in a Day of Great Wickedness” in the student manual (pp. 172–73), and discuss how the “earth is full of calamity.” Discuss:

- What indications do we have that the “signs that have been pointed out are here”?
- What responsibility do Church members have during this time of calamity and wickedness?

Ask a student to read aloud “We Must Raise a Voice of Warning” in the student manual (p. 173). Ask: How can we raise this voice of warning to Church members and people outside the Church?

Review with students “The Worldly Ignore the Warnings” and “The Saints Can Escape Only through Obedience” in the student manual (pp. 173–74). Ask: What specific things should we do to have peace during these times of calamity?

Joseph Fielding Smith was a special witness of Jesus Christ.

💡 Explain to students that for 60 years as an Apostle and for 3 years as Church President, Joseph Fielding Smith was a special witness of Jesus Christ. President

Smith knew his callings came from God and took his responsibilities very seriously. He urged Church members and all people to come to Christ and conform their lives to the Master's teachings. To the joy and blessing of the Saints, he taught and restated the principles of the gospel with exactness and clarity. He was truly a defender of the faith as foretold in his patriarchal blessing:

"I say unto thee . . . lift up thy voice without fear or favor as the Spirit of the Lord shall direct, and the blessing of the Lord shall rest upon thee. His Spirit shall direct thy mind and give the word and sentiment that thou shalt confound the wisdom of the wicked and set at naught the councils of the unjust" (in A. William Lund, "Elder Joseph Fielding Smith," *Improvement Era*, Apr. 1950, 315).

Write on the board "*His interest was in _____ and not in _____ or _____.*" Study with students "He Was True and Steady to the End" from the student manual (p. 176). As you review this section, have students fill in the blanks and discuss what they learned about President Smith.

Share the following warning from Elder Joseph Fielding Smith, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, about those who knowingly teach false doctrine:

"I tell you that these men who stand up and say that Jesus is not the Christ, that he was a great teacher, but not the Son of God, the Only Begotten of the Father, and thus lead many to deny the power of the resurrection and the divinity of Christ, are taking upon themselves a most terrible responsibility that should cause them to fear and tremble. I could not stand it to know that I had taught an untruth that would lead people to destruction. And when these men realize what they have done and that, not only their own souls have not been saved, but they have been the means of destroying the souls of other men, leading them away from truth and righteousness, I tell you that it shall be hard with them, and their punishment shall be most severe in eternity" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1923, 138–39).

On another occasion he testified:

"I know absolutely that Jesus Christ is the Only Begotten Son of God, the Redeemer of the world, the Savior of men insofar as they will repent of their sins and accept the gospel. Through his death he redeemed all men and took upon him that sacrifice which would relieve us of our sins that we may not answer for them if we will accept him and be true and faithful to his teachings. . . .

"I am grateful for my membership in this Church, for the opportunity that has been mine to serve. My desire is to prove true and faithful to the end" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1956, 58–59).

Share your testimony with your students.

CHAPTER 11

Harold B. Lee

ELEVENTH PRESIDENT OF THE CHURCH



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PART 1: THE EARLY YEARS

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In 1770, Harold B. Lee's third great-grandfather William Lee emigrated from Ireland and settled in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. His son Samuel Lee moved to Ohio, where his wife gave birth to Francis Lee, who embraced the restored gospel as an adult in Indiana. As Francis Lee and his family moved west toward the Salt Lake Valley in 1850, they met Francis's father, Samuel, who was en route to California. He accompanied them on their journey and joined the Church in 1851 in Tooele, Utah.

Harold B. Lee was born on March 28, 1899, in Clifton, Idaho. The Salt Lake Temple had been dedicated a few years earlier, in 1893, and Utah had been admitted into the United States in 1896 as the 45th state. Lorenzo Snow was President of the Church when Harold B. Lee was born. Brigham Young Academy became Brigham Young University in 1903. The Wright brothers flew an airplane at Kitty Hawk in 1903, and Henry Ford introduced the Model T automobile in 1908.

EVENTS, HIGHLIGHTS, AND TEACHINGS

A child of promise became the father of a prophet.

- 💡 Tell students that Harold B. Lee's grandmother Margaret McMurrin Lee conceived 11 times (between 1863 and 1875), but her babies were stillborn or lived only a few hours. Patriarch Abel Lamb of Salt Lake City gave Margaret a blessing in which he promised her that she would have a son. Later, she gave birth to Samuel Marion Lee Jr., who became the father of Harold B. Lee. She died when her baby was eight days old, and Samuel was raised by his Grandmother McMurrin in Salt Lake City.

Harold Bingham Lee was born into a religious and hardworking family.

- 💡 Ask a student to read aloud "He Was Born of Goodly Parents" (p. 179) and "His Mother's Care Had a Lasting Impression on Him" (pp. 180–81) in the student manual. Share the following tribute that Elder Harold B. Lee gave to his parents after he was called to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

"I thank God today for my parentage. My father and mother are listening, either in this great assembly or on the radio, if perchance they did not get into this meeting. I think perhaps this is my way of paying tribute to the two family names they gave me at my birth, Bingham and Lee. I trust I shall not disgrace those names. I have been blessed with a splendid father and a grand and lovely mother, one who didn't display often her affection, but showed her love in tangible ways that, as a child, I came early to recognize as true mother love.

"As just a high school boy I went away on a high school debating team. We won the debate. I came back and called mother on the telephone only to have her say: 'Never mind, Son. I know all about it. I will tell you when you come home at the end of the week.' When I came home she took me aside and said: 'When I knew it was just time for this performance to start I went out among the willows by the creek side, and there, all by myself, I remembered you and prayed God you would not fail' " (in Conference Report, Apr. 1941, 120).

Ask:

- What effect do you think parental prayers have upon their children?
- Do parents' prayers guarantee faithfulness in their children? Explain your answers.

Have a student read "He Grew Up in Clifton, Idaho" in the student manual (p. 179). Then ask:

- What characteristics do you think Harold B. Lee developed as a result of living on a farm?
- What advantages might this setting have had for raising their children in light and truth?

From his youth, Harold B. Lee learned to follow the Spirit.

- 💡 Have students think of times when someone was warned of danger by the Spirit. Ask them to read 2 Nephi 5:1–6. Then share the following story, told by Harold B. Lee:

"There was a severe thunderstorm raging near the mountain where our home was located. Our family, consisting of my grandmother, my mother, and two or three of the younger children, were seated in the kitchen before an open door, watching the great display of nature's fireworks. A flash of chain lightning followed by an immediate loud clap of thunder indicated that the lightning had struck very close.

"I was playing back and forth in the doorway when suddenly and without warning, my mother gave me a vigorous push that sent me sprawling backwards out of the doorway. At that instant, a bolt of lightning came down the chimney of the kitchen stove, out through the kitchen's open doorway, and split a huge gash from top to bottom in a large tree immediately in front of the house. Had it not been for Mother's intuitive action, and if I had remained in the door opening, I wouldn't be writing this story today" (in L. Brent Goates, *Harold B. Lee: Prophet and Seer* [1985], 41).

Like his mother, Harold B. Lee learned to follow such promptings. Have a student read "Harold, Don't Go Over There" in the student manual (pp. 179–80).

He taught school for four years before serving a mission.

- 💡 Ask students how they would feel about being a high school principal at their age. Ask them to suggest some of the challenges they might face. Explain that after graduating from the Oneida Stake Academy, Harold B. Lee was hired as a teacher at age 17. His first teaching assignment was in a one-room schoolhouse near Weston, Idaho. He remembered:

"Here in a one-room school, I had some real experience. With about twenty to twenty-five pupils, I had most of the grades represented from the first to the eighth grade. My program consisted of twenty-eight classes each day. So conscientious was I that I would count the youngsters on the grounds, and if they were all there, I would ring the bell, although it was many times not much after 8:30 A.M. [and school was scheduled to start

later]. Almost nightly I placed my school problems before the Lord, and although I never worried so much over a work, the Lord never deserted me and I learned some of the most valuable lessons of self-mastery of my life” (in Goates, *Harold B. Lee*, 51).

The next year, Harold B. Lee worked as principal of a school in Oxford, Idaho. Invite a student to read his account:

“In the following year I was employed at \$90 per month to become the principal of the district school at Oxford, Idaho, with Velma Sperry and Tressie Lincoln as associate teachers. Oxford had the reputation of having a rough crowd of boys, and the threat had been reported to me that I wouldn’t last long in the school as the principal. In solving the situation, my basketball experience stood me in good stead. Because of my good size, I taught these big boys, some of whom were older than I, to play basketball, and during the lunch hours, I dressed in basketball togs and played with and against them, but as fortune would have it, I maintained sufficient dignity to win their confidence as their principal, and also win the kind of friendship that has lasted even to this day” (in Goates, *Harold B. Lee*, 53).

Ask students: How did Harold B. Lee resolve the challenges he encountered as a teacher and a principal?

Harold B. Lee served in the Western States Mission.

- 💡 Tell students that Bishop Samuel Marion Lee and the Lee family knew that a mission for Harold would be a financial burden on the family. While he taught in Oxford, Idaho, Harold had given his income to help support the family. Now they would need to support him on his mission. However, the call came, and Harold B. Lee accepted it. Accompanied by his father, he received his endowment on November 6, 1920, in the Logan Temple. He was set apart by Elder B. H. Roberts of the Seventy in Salt Lake City, Utah, on November 9, 1920, and he left for his mission the next day.

Have a student read the first two paragraphs of “He Received a Mission Call” in the student manual (p. 182). Tell students that on one occasion the mission president at the last moment was unable to attend the first part of a conference in Sheridan, Wyoming, and asked Elder Lee to take his place. Elder Lee wrote in a letter:

“I told the president he was giving me a bigger bite than I could chew, but if the best I could do was all right, that I would go. He said there was no one else he would rather trust and the Church would pay my expenses. I did the best I could—preached, played the piano, conducted the singing, and helped settle the difficulties in the branch. When President Knight arrived on Monday, Elder Scadlock insisted that I talk again, but I graciously declined and played the part of wisdom. While there, the president took me into his confidence more than he has ever done before and took me with him wherever he went.

I wish I could tell you more details (letters are unable to convey the thoughts intended) regarding the value of this trip to me, coming, as it has, at the close of my mission when many thoughts have crowded themselves upon me to make me more appreciative and humble in the responsibility that is mine" (in Goates, *Harold B. Lee*, 70–71).

Ask students: Even though Harold B. Lee felt inadequate with the assignment from the mission president, how did the Lord bless him for his obedience?

Harold B. Lee returned to Clifton, Idaho.

💡 Tell students that Harold B. Lee returned home from his mission in December 1922. The excitement of his return and the spirit of the Christmas season quickly passed as he learned of the family's financial struggles to keep him on a mission. An economic depression had especially affected farmers, and the Lee family as well.

For a short time, Harold B. Lee worked hard on the family farm. When an opportunity came to teach a class in the Clifton Ward, he accepted it with enthusiasm. Later, he presided over an elders quorum. Ask: How did he make the best of a difficult situation?

Tell students that during this difficult time Harold B. Lee and his family made a momentous decision that influenced the rest of his life. He recorded:

"We have decided unanimously that I should go to work to get ahead financially, so I will return to Salt Lake and find employment as soon as possible. I'm going to do the right, as the Lord directs" (in Goates, *Harold B. Lee*, 83).

Ask: When should the family become involved in making personal decisions?

Harold B. Lee married Fern Tanner and began his family.

💡 Tell students that Harold B. Lee had briefly met Fern L. Tanner on his mission in Denver, Colorado. They corresponded for a time. Then, when Elder Lee returned home from his mission, he visited her in Salt Lake City. Of this visit, he wrote:

"We talked far into the night, I think more as missionary friends than as sweethearts. There was much to ask and much to tell. Both of us had experienced joys and disappointments, but through it all we had gained a deep testimony of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the real value of which we then but little realized" (in Goates, *Harold B. Lee*, 75).

Harold B. Lee married Fern Tanner on November 14, 1923, in the Salt Lake Temple. He had attended school during the summer at the University of Utah, and he continued to attend school during the first years of their marriage. He began work as the principal of the Whittier School in the fall of 1923.

Tell students that the Lees had two children. Share the following record from Harold B. Lee's journal:

"The first year of our married life was a glorious honeymoon in which we made preparations for our first baby. Despite the fact that we carefully followed the instructions of Dr. A. C. Callister, Fern came near losing her life from a serious hemorrhage when our baby [Maurine] was born.

"Maurine was born September 1, 1924. Within fifteen months our second baby came. Fern had been in constant labor pain for sixty hours before Helen was born on November 25, 1925. With her birth we saw the beginning of a sweet companionship of close sisters that developed with each year of their lives" (in Goates, *Harold B. Lee*, 84–85).

Ask students:

- What sacrifices do parents often make in bringing children into the world?
- What challenges do they face in raising children?

Harold B. Lee participated in education, business, and public service.

💡 Explain that before his call to the apostleship, Harold B. Lee was a principal in the Granite School District (1923–28). When he was not teaching during the summers, he did other work to supplement his income. In 1928 he began working as a salesman and later as a manager for Foundation Press, Inc. At this job his fixed salary exceeded his teaching income, and he also received commissions. The Lees bought a house from Fern Lee's parents in 1928. In December 1932 Harold B. Lee was appointed as a city commissioner in Salt Lake City, to replace a commissioner who had died. He was later reelected to that position, and he continued as a commissioner until he resigned in 1936 to respond to an assignment as managing director of the Church welfare program, which was called at that time the Church Security Program. He continued in this position until his call as an Apostle.

Harold B. Lee was called as a stake president during the Great Depression.

💡 Tell students that during the years of his employment as a teacher, salesman, and city commissioner, Harold B. Lee was also actively involved in Church service and in his family life. Among other opportunities for Church service during this period, he was called as the president of the Pioneer Stake (in Salt Lake City) on October 26, 1930.

Invite students to share what they know or have heard about the Great Depression of the 1930s. Ask them what it might have been like to live during that time.

Review with them "The Lord Prepared Him to Serve the Needy" in the student manual (pp. 182–83). Then ask:

- How would you describe the living conditions of the Lee family at this time?
- Why was he able to serve the needy so well?

As you read the first five paragraphs of "He Sought Earnestly to Know the Needs of the Saints" in the student manual (pp. 183–84), have students note how President Lee worked to meet the needs of the Saints in his stake. Ask:

- What did President Lee discover about his stake after surveying Church members?

- What is the role of priesthood leaders in identifying the needs of Church members?

Tell students that once President Lee and other leaders identified the basic needs of their people (food, clothing, and employment), then they were able to match the needs with resources. Share some or all of the following information:

Food—Local farmers were contacted and contracts were negotiated for unemployed members of the Pioneer Stake to assist in harvesting their crops in exchange for a percentage of the harvest.

Clothing—Many sisters “were productively involved in mending or making clothing and bedding for the use of the needy in the stake” (Francis M. Gibbons, *Harold B. Lee: Man of Vision, Prophet of God* [1993], 110).

Employment—“As President Lee and his brethren surveyed the resources of the stake, they found a large pool of unemployed artisans—bricklayers, carpenters, masons, painters, and laborers—who wanted to work but who could not find employment. Again, President Lee’s ingenuity found a way to match resources with needs. The result was the construction of the Pioneer Stake Gymnasium. . . . Much of the material for the gymnasium was obtained from old buildings that the stake workers demolished with the approval of their owners. What little money was needed for new materials came from a donation of the First Presidency, forty-five hundred dollars, and from the sale of surplus commodities realized from the operation of the stake storehouse. The workers on the gymnasium were compensated by receiving ‘pay slips,’ which could then be used to purchase food, clothing, and other commodities at the storehouse” (Gibbons, *Harold B. Lee: Man of Vision*, 115–16).

Ask students:

- What do you learn about President Lee’s concern, ingenuity, and inspiration?
- How can the principle of identifying needs and assessing resources be applied to your personal challenges?

Explain that Harold B. Lee was closely involved with the development of the Church welfare program. Church leaders recognized that several local stakes had begun welfare programs in answer to the high unemployment. The First Presidency asked President Harold B. Lee, then stake president of the Pioneer Stake, to develop a welfare program that could be used throughout the Church.

For more details about his involvement in the welfare program, review and discuss “The First Presidency Called Him to Further Develop the Church Welfare System” in the student manual (pp. 184–85). Refer students to the last two paragraphs of that section, and ask:

- Who are the “fountainheads of truth” whom we must follow today?
- According to Elder Lee, what is required of Church members in order to receive the “grandest things yet to come”?

PART 2: THE LATER YEARS


HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

When Harold B. Lee returned from the Western States Mission in 1922, the Church was in a time of great growth and development. By the end of 1922, Church membership had grown to more than 566,000. Two temples were dedicated in the years following his mission, one in Alberta, Canada, in 1923, and the other in Mesa, Arizona, in 1927. The institute of religion program came into being in 1926, and the 100th stake of the Church was organized in 1928.

During 1972, when Harold B. Lee became President of the Church, Church membership had grown to 3.2 million, with 592 stakes, 101 missions, and 15 temples. Elder Lee served as a General Authority for over 32 years, including 1 1/2 years as President of the Church. Near the time of his death on December 26, 1973, Church membership had increased to 3.3 million, with 630 stakes and 108 missions (see *2003 Church Almanac* [2003], 473, 631–32). President Lee passed away at the age of 74, one of the youngest to die since the Prophet Joseph Smith.

EVENTS, HIGHLIGHTS, AND TEACHINGS

He was called and ordained as an Apostle.

-  Tell students that when Harold B. Lee awoke on April 5, 1941, before the Saturday morning session of general conference, he had an interesting experience. Then share what he wrote:

“Before I arose from my bed I received a definite impression that I would be named a member of the Quorum of the Twelve” (in L. Brent Goates, *Harold B. Lee: Prophet and Seer* [1985], 157).

That evening he was called as an Apostle. Read his account of that experience:


“I was sitting in the audience attending the general priesthood meeting as the managing director of the Church Welfare Program. At the conclusion, President J. Reuben Clark, who was conducting the meeting, called my name out and asked that I come to the stand to meet Bishop Joseph L. Wirthlin. Bishop Wirthlin did have a matter of business to mention to me, but it was really a way to have me meet with President Heber J. Grant.

“When I arrived at the stand, Elder Joseph Anderson said that the President was waiting for me in the General Authorities’ room. It amazed me and I immediately sensed that there was something more than just a social visit that President Grant had in mind. It was then that he announced to me that I had been named . . . to the Quorum of the Twelve to fill the vacancy which had been created by the death of Senator Reed Smoot” (in Goates, *Harold B. Lee*, 157).

Have a student read “He Was Called as an Apostle” in the student manual (pp. 185–86). Ask students:

- How did Harold B. Lee respond to his call as an Apostle?
- How was he strengthened as a special witness of Jesus Christ?

Elder Harold B. Lee loved to teach the gospel.

 Invite students to share their feelings and experiences about effective family scripture study. Share the following about the Lee family by Helen Lee Goates, Harold B. Lee’s daughter:

“Whenever we had a question as we prepared for a two-and-a-half-minute talk we were to give, or whenever anything was discussed around the dinner table requiring an answer, we’d ask, ‘What about this, Dad? What do you think?’ He would reply, ‘Get out your scriptures, girls, and let’s see what the Lord says about it.’ He would get his book, too, and have us turn to the right scripture and we’d read together what we needed to know. There were many times when I would think how much easier and quicker it would be if Daddy would just give us the answer. But I came to understand later that he was once again giving us a wonderful opportunity to learn important lessons. In so doing, he taught us that the scriptures were where we turn first for our answers” (in Goates, *Harold B. Lee*, 123).

Tell students that Elder Harold B. Lee also loved to teach the Saints from the scriptures. Share the following statement he gave at a priesthood leadership session in 1972:

“There are among us many loose writings predicting the calamities which are about to overtake us. Some of these have been publicized as though they were necessary to wake up the world to the horrors about to overtake us. Many of these are from sources upon which there cannot be unquestioned reliance.

“Are you priesthood bearers aware of the fact that we need no such publications to be forewarned, if we were only conversant with what the scriptures have already spoken to us in plainness?

“Let me give you the sure word of prophecy on which you should rely for your guide instead of these strange sources which may have great political implications.

“Read the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew—particularly that inspired version as contained in the Pearl of Great Price (Joseph Smith—Matthew).

“Then read the forty-fifth section of the Doctrine and Covenants where the Lord, not man, has documented the signs of the times.


“Now turn to section 101 and section 133 of the Doctrine and Covenants and hear the step-by-step recounting of events leading up to the coming of the Savior.

“Finally, turn to the promises the Lord makes to those who keep the commandments when these judgments descend upon the wicked, as set forth in the Doctrine and Covenants, section 38.

“Brethren, these are some of the writings with which you should concern yourselves, rather than commentaries that may come from those whose information may not be the most reliable and whose motives may be subject to question. And may I say, parenthetically, most of such writers are not handicapped by having any authentic information on their writings” (*Teachings of Harold B. Lee*, ed. Clyde J. Williams [1996], 399).

Ask: What concerns did Harold B. Lee have about relying on questionable sources and “loose writings” rather than on the scriptures for our doctrinal understanding?

Elder Harold B. Lee chaired the Church Correlation Committee.

 Explain that during the administration of President David O. McKay, the First Presidency sought to strengthen the Church and individual families by correlating Church efforts in welfare, missionary work, genealogy, education, home teaching, and family home evening. This effort was the beginning of the correlation of all programs and curriculum for the worldwide Church. Elder Harold B. Lee was given the responsibility to chair this committee.

Review with students Elder Lee’s teachings on the purpose and power of priesthood correlation in “The Principles of Priesthood Correlation Were Developed,” “The Priesthood Is Expected to Lead,” “The Whole Effort of Correlation Is to Strengthen the Home,” and “Church Programs Support the Home” in the student manual (pp. 186–88). Then discuss the following questions:

- How did Elder Lee describe the major purpose of Church correlation?
- What benefits have come to the Church because of this correlation?
- How might we sometimes “mistake the scaffolding for the soul”? (see “Church Programs Support the Home”).

Share the following statement by Elder Harold B. Lee:

“All that we do is to be done ‘with an eye single to the glory of God.’ [D&C 82:19.] And what was the glory of God? As the Lord explained it to Moses, it was to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man. . . . In all our efforts in the . . . correlation program we have kept these observations always in mind. Simply stated, our two sole objectives in correlation were to keep the priesthood functioning as the Lord has clearly defined it, with the auxiliary organizations properly related thereto, and secondly that the parents and the family magnify their callings as the Lord has commanded. And so we see that everything that is done should be done with that one question in mind: does this activity further the interest of the kingdom, are we keeping our eye single to that prime purpose of the Lord’s organization—to save souls and to bring to pass the immortality and the eternal life of man?” (Address given at Sunday School general conference, Oct. 2, 1970, Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 7).

The Savior guides the leaders of His Church.

- 💡 Share the following testimony of Elder Harold B. Lee, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, regarding the Savior:

“With all my soul and conviction, and knowing the seriousness and import of that testimony, I tell you that I know that he lives. I am conscious of his presence much of the time when I have needed him most; I have known it out of the whisperings of the night, the impressions of the daytime when there were things for which I was responsible and on which I could receive guidance. So I testify to you and tell you that he is closer to the leaders of this Church than you have any idea. Listen to the leaders of this Church and follow their footsteps in righteousness, if you would learn not only by study but also by faith, which testimony I bear most humbly and sincerely in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1968, 131–32).

Ask students: Why is it important to know that the Lord “is closer to the leaders of this church than you have any idea”?

Discuss with students some recent counsel of Church leaders. Invite them to discuss how following the prophet might protect them physically and spiritually. Invite a student to read the last paragraph of “Following the Prophet Protects the Sanctity of Our Homes” in the student manual (p. 190). Discuss answers to the following questions:

- Why does safety only come from following the counsel of the Lord’s prophet?
- What should you do when your personal views conflict with the counsel of the prophet?
- What promises are given to those who are obedient to a prophet’s counsel?

Harold B. Lee became President of the Church.

- 💡 Ask students to review “Highlights in the Life of Harold B. Lee” in the student manual (p. 178) and note when Harold B. Lee was called as an Apostle and when he became President of the Church. Ask:

- How long did he serve as an Apostle?
- How long was his presidency?

Ask one student to read the second paragraph of “He Became President of the Church” and another student to read “His Heart and Mind Went Out in Love to Every Latter-day Saint” in the student manual (p. 190).

He taught the Saints how and where to gather.

- 💡 Ask students to describe how the Lord gathered the Saints in the early days of the Church. Ask: How would you say the Lord is gathering the Saints today?

Share the following insight from President Harold B. Lee:

“Today we are witnessing the demonstration of the Lord’s hand even in the midst of his saints, the members of the Church. Never in this dispensation, and perhaps never before in any single period, has there been such a feeling of urgency among the members of this church as today. Her boundaries are being enlarged, her stakes are being strengthened. In the early years of the Church specific places to which the Saints were to be gathered together were given, and the Lord directed that these gathering places should not be changed, but then he gave one qualification: ‘Until the day cometh when there is found no more room for them; and then I have other places which I will appoint unto them, and they shall be called stakes, for the curtains or the strength of Zion.’ (D&C 101:21.)

“At the Mexico City Area Conference last August, Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Council of the Twelve, in a thought-provoking address, made some comments pertinent to this subject, and I quote a few sentences from his address:

“ ‘ . . . Now I call your attention to the facts, set forth in these scriptures, that the gathering of Israel consists of joining the true church; of coming to a knowledge of the true God and of his saving truths; and of worshiping him in the congregations of the Saints in all nations and among all peoples. . . . ’

“Elder McConkie then concluded with this statement, which certainly emphasizes the great need for the teaching and training of local leadership in order to build up the church within their own native countries:

“ ‘The place of gathering for the Mexican Saints is in Mexico; the place of gathering for the Guatemalan Saints is in Guatemala; the place of gathering for the Brazilian Saints is in Brazil; and so it goes throughout the length and breadth of the whole earth. Japan is for the Japanese; Korea is for the Koreans; Australia is for the Australians; every nation is the gathering place for its own people’ ” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1973, 6–7; or *Ensign*, July 1973, 4–5).

Ask students:

- According to this statement, how would you define the gathering of the Saints?
- Where are the Saints to be gathered in our day?
- What strength can come to the Saints for gathering within their own lands?
- How can we build up the Church in our own areas?


President Lee taught and warned the Saints against the challenges of our day.

☞ Refer to the following sections in the student manual and give a brief summary of President Harold B. Lee’s teaching from each one (see summary examples in parentheses):

- “The Members of the Church Must Prepare Themselves for the Conflict with Evil” (p. 191). (The Lord will protect us from evil influences if we will follow the leadership of the priesthood.)
- “Safety Comes from Keeping God’s Commandments” (pp. 191–92). (As Church members support Church leaders and keep the commandments, they receive the Lord’s protection.)

- “The Church Is a Defense and a Refuge” (p. 192). (The Church is a force of opposition against the evil influences of the world. Church members are protected from these evil influences as they live the teachings of the Church by obeying God’s commandments.)
- “The Destructive Influences of the World Are Threatening the Family” (pp. 192–93). (Holding family home evenings will strengthen our homes and protect families from the destructive influences of the world.)
- “The Objective of the Church Is to Help the Saints Meet the Problems of the Day” (p. 193). (The Church is organized to help its members “meet every problem in this modern and changing world.”)
- “The Greatest Miracles Are the Healing of Sick Souls” (p. 193). (The Church is reaching out to help “those who are sick in soul and spirit and are downhearted and distraught.”)

The record of his service was written in the hearts and minds of people.

 Tell students that Harold B. Lee was President of the Church for just under eighteen months. Although he served only a short time as President, he influenced the Church greatly.

Ask: What programs did Harold B. Lee direct that we still have in the Church today? Explain that when Harold B. Lee became President of the Church, he reflected on the contributions of his predecessors and on his new calling. Share what he said:

“On the sacred occasion three months ago when I began to sense the magnitude of the overwhelming responsibility which I must now assume, I went to the holy temple. There, in prayerful meditation, I looked upon the paintings of those men of God—true, pure men, God’s noblemen—who had preceded me in a similar calling.

“A few days ago in the early morning hours, in my private study at home and all alone with my thoughts, I read the tributes paid to each of the Presidents by those who had been most closely associated with each of them.

“Joseph Smith was the one whom the Lord raised up from boyhood and endowed with divine authority and taught the things necessary for him to know and to obtain the priesthood and to lay the foundation for God’s kingdom in these latter days.

“There was President Brigham Young, who was foreordained before this world was, for his divine calling to lead the persecuted Saints in fleeing from the wrath that threatened the Saints in those early gathering places in Missouri and Illinois and to pioneer the building of an inland commonwealth in the tops of these majestic mountains, to fulfill God’s purposes.

“To look upon the features of President John Taylor was to gain a realization that here was one, as President Joseph F. Smith spoke of him, ‘One of the purest men I ever knew. . . .’

“As I saw the sainted face of President Wilford Woodruff, I was aware that here was a man like Nathanael of old, in whom there was no guile, and susceptible to the impressions of the Spirit of the Lord, by whose light

he seemed to almost always walk 'not knowing beforehand the thing he was to do.'

"While President Lorenzo Snow had but a brief administration, he had a special mission to establish his people on a more solid temporal foundation by the determined application of the law of sacrifice, to relieve the great burdens placed upon the Church because of mistakes and errors which had unwittingly crept in.

"When I want to seek for a more clear definition of doctrinal subjects, I have usually turned to the writings and sermons of President Joseph F. Smith. As I looked upon his noble stature, I thought of the nine-year-old boy helping his widowed mother across the plains and the 15-year-old missionary on the slopes of Haleakala on the isle of Maui being strengthened by a heavenly vision with his uncle, Joseph Smith. It was he who presided during the stormy days when an antagonistic press maligned the Church, but his was the steady arm by the Lord's appointment to carry off the Church triumphantly.

"I suppose I never drew closer to the meaning of a divine calling than when President Heber J. Grant placed his hands upon my shoulders and, with a deep feeling akin to mine, announced my calling to be an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ. As his picture looked down upon me, there came again to my mind the prophetic words of his inspired blessing when I was ordained in the holy temple under his hands.

"President George Albert Smith was a disciple of friendship and love. He was indeed a friend to everyone. My gaze at his likeness seemed to give me a warmth of that radiance which made every man his friend.

"Tall and impressive was President David O. McKay, as he now looked at me with those piercing eyes, which always seemed to search my very soul. Never was I privileged to be in his presence but that I felt for a brief moment, as I had done on so many occasions, that I was a better man for having been in his company.

"To him who sought no earthly honors, but whose whole soul delighted in the things of the spirit, President Joseph Fielding Smith was there with his smiling face, my beloved prophet-leader who made no compromise with truth. As 'The finger of God touched him and he slept,' he seemed in that brief moment to be passing to me, as it were, a sceptre of righteousness as though to say to me, 'Go thou and do likewise.'

"Now I stood alone with my thoughts. Somehow the impressions that came to me were, simply, that the only true record that will ever be made of my service in my new calling will be the record that I may have written in the hearts and lives of those with whom I have served and labored, within and without the Church" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1972, 18–19; or *Ensign*, Jan. 1973, 23–24).

President Spencer W. Kimball, speaking at the funeral of President Harold B. Lee, gave the following record of President Lee's life as it was written in his heart during the years he served with President Lee:

“ ‘A giant redwood has fallen.’ These words, spoken by President Harold B. Lee himself at the funeral of a former stake president, seem very appropriate today. A giant redwood has fallen and left a great space in the forest.

“A giant of a man he was. . . .

“A giant whose shadow fell across the world, bringing under it the influence of the gospel to millions of members and friends of the Church.

“A giant, who, while carrying the challenges of the apostleship and the First Presidency under divine influence, anxiously still took time to share his thoughts and his counsel with countless thousands on an individual basis.

“A great giant, who, with inspiration, made the experiences, stories, and the counsel of the scriptures find place in the hearts and minds of men the world over.

“A giant who reached into the inner recesses of his listeners' hearts to plant understanding, vision, direction, and comfort.

“A great giant who represented our Father in heaven to all of his children and bore them comfort, strength, and godly influence.

“A master teacher, who, much like the Savior, took the ordinary experiences of today to teach the will of the Lord.

“Yes, among our generations has walked one of God's most noble, powerful, committed, and foreordained giant redwoods—President Harold B. Lee” (“A Giant of a Man,” *Ensign*, Feb. 1974, 86–87).

Conclude by sharing your testimony of the importance of President Harold B. Lee's contributions to the Church.

CHAPTER 12

Spencer W. Kimball

TWELFTH PRESIDENT OF THE CHURCH



PART 1: THE EARLY YEARS

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

When Spencer Woolley Kimball was born in 1895, Utah was one year away from becoming the 45th state of the United States. The Salt Lake Temple had been dedicated in 1893, only two years earlier. The first modern Olympics were held in Athens, Greece, in 1896.

In 1898, when Spencer was three, his father, Andrew Kimball, accepted a call to go to southeastern Arizona and serve as stake president. The Kimball family settled in Thatcher, Arizona. Over time, the family adjusted to the harsh and arid climate. Andrew Kimball served as stake president there until his death in 1924.

EVENTS, HIGHLIGHTS, AND TEACHINGS

The principles of the gospel were taught in the Kimball home.

- 💡 Have students study the picture on page 168 of this manual, and discuss what they believe is happening at the dinner table. Ask a student to read the following statement, and have students look for traditions of the Kimball family that they would like to incorporate into their own families:

“Church and gospel had central importance in Spencer’s earliest memories. Always, it seemed to him, Ma had sat with her children on the fourth row of the Thatcher meetinghouse for Sunday School and sacrament meeting. Always the family knelt before meals to pray, their chairs turned back from the table, dinner plates upside down. Always there were night prayers at Ma’s knee. Always there was fasting. Always tithing. ‘I feel sorry for children who must learn these important lessons after they are grown, when it is so much harder.’ For Spencer the lessons were a basic part of childhood.

“Again and again Spencer watched his parents take their problems to the Lord. One day when Spencer was five and out doing his chores, little one-year-old Fannie wandered from the house and was lost. No one could find her. Clare, sixteen, said, ‘Ma, if we pray, the Lord will direct us to Fannie.’ So the mother and children prayed. Immediately after the prayer Gordon walked to the very spot where Fannie was fast asleep in a large box behind the chicken coop. ‘We thanked our Heavenly Father over and over,’ Olive recorded in her journal. ‘We could think of nothing else all evening.’ When her horses bolted on the road to Safford, Olive was terrified that someone would be hurt and the buggy broken. ‘We were frightened awfully. But the Lord heard my silent prayers and we got the horse stopped. Praise be to our Heavenly Father for His goodness to us.’

“One afternoon that same year Spencer walked with his mother up the dusty road to Bishop Zundel’s house. ‘Why are we going?’ he asked. She told him it was to take the tithing eggs. ‘Are tithing eggs different than other eggs?’

Then Olive reminded her boy how he separated one egg from ten when he gathered them. She told him why he did so, that one belonged to Heavenly Father, nine to them. From that time gathering eggs had another dimension to it. During breakfast at haying time Andrew would tell his boys: ‘The best hay is on the west side of the field. Get your load for the tithing barn from that side. And load it full and high’ ” (Edward L. Kimball and Andrew E. Kimball, *Spencer W. Kimball: Twelfth President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* [1977], 31).

Ask students: What principles can be extracted from this story of the Kimball family that are valuable for families today?


Display the picture of the two trees on page 169 of this manual. Explain that although Spencer lost his mother, Olive Kimball, when he was 11 years old and his father, Andrew Kimball, when Spencer was 29, their love, example, and gospel teachings provided a solid root system for his life. Read and discuss the following statement by President Spencer W. Kimball:

“It seems that some among us . . . want bountiful harvests—both spiritual and temporal—without developing the root system that will yield them. There are far too few who are willing to pay the price, in discipline and work, to cultivate hardy roots. Such cultivation should begin in our youth. Little did I know as a boy that daily chores in the garden, feeding the cattle, carrying the water, chopping the wood, mending fences, and all the labor of a small farm was an important part of sending down roots, before being called on to send out branches. I’m so grateful that my parents understood the relationship between roots and branches” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1978, 113; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1978, 75).

Ask students:

- What is the relationship between roots and branches mentioned by President Kimball?
- How can we determine the strength of our roots in gospel principles?

Spencer determined that he would remain faithful.

 Ask students what generation they are in the Church. (Some may have recently joined the Church, while others may be fifth- or sixth-generation members.) Ask: If your ancestors were Church members, do you feel your faith is as strong as theirs? Why, or why not?

Explain that Spencer W. Kimball was a third-generation member (first—Heber C. Kimball, second—Andrew Kimball, third—Spencer W. Kimball). As a young boy he knew some Church members who had personally known the Prophet Joseph Smith. Read the following paragraph:

“Thatcher was a Mormon town. On July 24 there was always a Pioneer Day celebration, remembering the day the first Saints had reached Salt Lake Valley in 1847. Every year there was a parade, with Indians and firecrackers and handcars, bunting and bonnets. Then at the commemoration in the Thatcher meetinghouse, all those who had seen the Prophet Joseph were seated on a raised platform. There were still seven the year Spencer was eleven, and he watched as year by year their number dwindled” (Kimball and Kimball, *Spencer W. Kimball*, 29).

Share the following experience that Elder Spencer W. Kimball, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, remembered from early in his life:

“When I was a youngster, a stirring challenge came to me that moved me not a little. I cannot remember who issued the challenge nor under what circumstances it came. I remember only that it struck me like a ‘bolt out of the blue heavens.’ The unknown voice postulated:

“ ‘The “Mormon Church” has stood its ground for the first two generations—but wait till the third and fourth and succeeding generations come along! The first generation fired with a new religion developed a great enthusiasm for it. Surrounded with bitterness, calumny of a hostile world, persecuted “from pillar to post,” they were forced to huddle together for survival. There was good reason to expect they would live and die faithful to their espoused cause.

“ ‘The second generation came along born to enthusiasts, zealots, devotees. They were born to men and women who had developed great faith, were inured to hardships and sacrifices for their faith. They inherited from their parents and soaked up from religious homes the stuff of which the faithful are made. They had full reservoirs of strength and faith upon which to draw.

“ ‘But wait till the third and fourth generations come along,’ said the cynical voice. ‘The fire will have gone out—the devotion will have been diluted—the sacrifice will have been nullified—the world will have hovered over them and surrounded them and eroded them—the faith will have been expended and the religious fervor leaked out.’

“That day I realized that I was a member of the third generation. That day I clenched my growing fists. I gritted my teeth and made a firm commitment to myself that here was one ‘third generation’ who would not fulfill that dire prediction” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1969, 18–19).

Ask students:

- What evidence do the Church members of today show of devotion, faith, and sacrifice?
- How can we avoid having our faith diluted by our involvement in the world?

He worked hard to learn.

- 💡 Ask students to think of goals they have set for themselves. Explain that when Spencer W. Kimball was 14 years old he followed the counsel of a Church leader to read the scriptures. Review with students “When He Was Young He Set a Goal to

Read the Bible” in the student manual (p. 198). Ask: In what ways do you think this attention to the scriptures early in his life helped prepare him for his later callings?

Ask students to identify times in their lives when opportunities presented themselves and decisions had to be made. Read the following statement:

“In 1910, as Spencer finished eighth grade, he began thinking about the LDS Academy in Thatcher. It was a big building, two stories high, and a bit frightening. As grade-school graduation neared, everyone asked everyone else, ‘Are you going on to the Academy?’ Most were not. Some of them intended to marry, some to work, some hadn’t the money to go on. But Spencer and a few others ‘bravely determined to continue our training into high school’ ” (Kimball and Kimball, *Spencer W. Kimball*, 59).

Have students read “He Was a Scholar and an Athlete” in the student manual (pp. 198–99), and discuss how Spencer’s decision to further his education blessed his life.

He learned of his mission call at his graduation.

- 💡 Ask returned missionaries to describe the day they received their calls. Encourage them to share how they prepared for that day, how they felt when they received the call, and who was present when the call was opened. Share the following experience of Spencer W. Kimball when he learned that he would serve a mission:

“In 1914 Spencer went to graduation exercises, thinking that fall would find him at the University of Arizona along with a few others of his class. As part of the graduation exercises he gave a speech as class president, sang in a quartet, and sang a baritone solo, ‘The Plains of Peace.’ Andrew Kimball [his father], president of the board, delivered an address. In the course of it he announced that Spencer would not be in college next fall; he would be on a mission. Lela Udall, a classmate, remembered: ‘I thought Spencer was going to pass out.’ Spencer, in his journal, expressed the shock more mildly: ‘Father informed me in these exercises before all the people that I was to be called on a mission. This took me by surprise for I had been planning to go to college.’ But he would do it. He had no objection to the idea of a mission; it had just come unexpectedly.

“Four days after graduation he was at work in Globe, eighty miles west. His job had already been arranged. Two summers back his father, hard-pressed financially, had helped him find a job with the Anderson-Blake Dairy at \$47.50 a month plus meals and a bunk. The second and third summers he earned \$62.50 a month at a different Globe dairy. Except for tithing and an occasional five-cent ice cream or chocolate bar—‘once in a while I would indulge myself’—Spencer had saved his whole wage to pay for books, clothes, and pocket money at Gila Academy through the winter. Now the money would go for his mission” (Kimball and Kimball, *Spencer W. Kimball*, 68–69).

Ask students:

- Using Spencer W. Kimball’s example, in what ways can being financially self-reliant help provide stability and security?

- How might financial self-reliance help us serve in the gospel?
- What can we learn from Spencer W. Kimball's willingness to go on a mission?

He was a dedicated and committed missionary.

- 💡 Review with students “He Was a Dedicated and Committed Missionary” in the student manual (pp. 199–200). Ask: Why was his mission assignment to the Swiss-German Mission changed to a mission in the United States?

Explain that early in his mission, Spencer W. Kimball was a little discouraged by the difficulties he encountered. His father, Andrew Kimball, wrote him a letter of encouragement:

“Your hard experiences will enable you to know just a little of what it costs to be a Latter-day Saint and something of what your father and grandfather waded through. Keep up a good courageous spirit, but don't get to think it is too much for you to bear. It will all come out well and you will have something to tell your posterity” (in Kimball and Kimball, *Spencer W. Kimball*, 76).

Ask: How can struggle and sacrifice strengthen our commitment to living the gospel?

During times of uncertainty, Spencer W. Kimball moved forward with faith.

- 💡 Invite returned missionaries to express how they viewed the future shortly after their return from their missions. Help students understand that even under ideal circumstances, returned missionaries can have feelings of uncertainty. Explain that when Spencer W. Kimball returned from his mission in January 1917, World War I was being fought. Although a gifted student, he could not pursue education or career opportunities because he awaited active duty in the military. During this period he fell in love with Camilla Eyring, and they married on November 16, 1917. Not until the armistice was signed on November 11, 1918, could Spencer and Camilla pursue life with more certainty. Read the following paragraph, and ask students to listen for President Spencer W. Kimball's counsel regarding important decisions that must be made during uncertain times:

“You may not yet have chosen your business or profession or life's work, but there are many generalities which you can already set up in your lives, even though you may not yet know whether you will be a lawyer or a doctor or a teacher or an engineer. There are decisions you should already have made or now be making. What are you going to do in the years between now and your marriage?” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1974, 125; or *Ensign*, May 1974, 87).

Ask: What decisions should you make now that are critical for your future?

Leadership opportunities came early to Spencer W. Kimball.

- 💡 Have students review “Leadership Opportunities Prepared Him for His Apostleship” in the student manual (p. 201), and ask them to identify the outstanding characteristics of Spencer W. Kimball's leadership.

Spencer and Camilla met life's challenges with faith in the Lord and trust in each other.

- 💡 Explain that one of the most challenging times for Spencer and Camilla Kimball came when their young son Edward contracted polio and was taken to California for treatment. Camilla cared for Edward in California while Spencer cared for the rest of the family in Arizona. Share the following excerpt from a November 14, 1933, letter Camilla wrote to Spencer during this time:

“The day you receive this note will mark the sixteenth anniversary of our wedding. Our first separation on that day. I wanted to tell you again as I perhaps do too often how much I love and appreciate you. Every year increases my love and respect. This separation is bitterly hard but it has made me realize more than ever before how much I have to be thankful for. The fact that never once in the time of our acquaintance have I found cause to doubt or mistrust is I consider one of the foundation stones upon which real happiness and contentment in marriage is built. The attraction of sex and other things of course combine to make the perfect union but without confidence there can be nothing lasting.

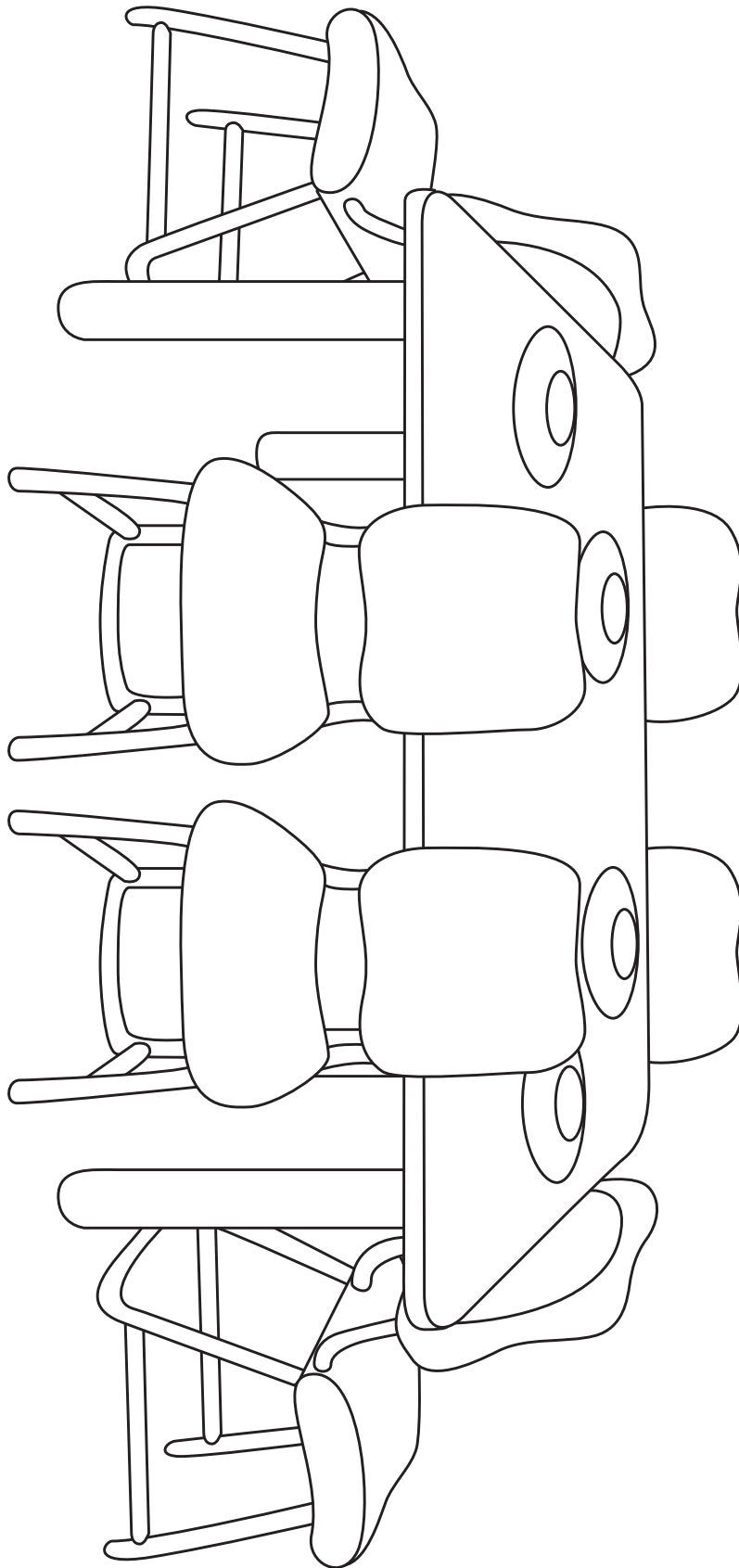
“I feel that our trouble has drawn us even closer together in spirit though temporarily we are separated.

“My constant prayer is that God will preserve the unity of our family and that we may soon all be together again. The joy of that day will be unmeasurable.

“How I long for you and the strength received from your beautiful character. There is no other so fine and so true.

“Your devoted wife, Camilla” (in Kimball and Kimball, *Spencer W. Kimball*, 140–41).

Ask students: How does Spencer W. Kimball’s example help us learn to deal with our own adversities?





PART 2: THE LATER YEARS

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

When Spencer W. Kimball became President in 1973, Church membership was around 3.3 million, with 630 stakes, 108 missions, and 15 temples (see *2003 Church Almanac* [2003], 473, 632). The Washington D.C. Temple was dedicated in 1974. On April 3, 1976, two revelations (now identified as Doctrine and Covenants sections 137 and 138) were added to the standard works. In 1978, Official Declaration 2 was accepted as the binding word of the Lord. In 1979, the Nauvoo Illinois Stake became the 1,000th stake in the Church. Revised editions of the scriptures were published in 1979 and 1981. In 1985, the year of President Kimball's death, Church membership had grown to 5.9 million, with 1,582 stakes, 188 missions, and 37 temples (see *2003 Church Almanac*, 473, 632).

EVENTS, HIGHLIGHTS, AND TEACHINGS

Spencer W. Kimball was called as an Apostle.

- 💡 Ask if class members have ever received a call to Church service and wondered if they were equal to the task. Explain that Spencer W. Kimball had similar feelings when, under the direction of President Heber J. Grant, he was called to be an Apostle by President J. Reuben Clark Jr. Invite a student to read “He Was Humbled by His Calling” in the student manual (p. 202). Have students listen for how Elder Kimball relied on the Lord to overcome his feelings of inadequacy. Ask: How did the Lord strengthen Elder Kimball in his call to be an Apostle?

Review with students “An Apostle Is a Special Witness of Christ” in the student manual (p. 203).

Spencer W. Kimball loved the children of Lehi.

- 💡 Tell students that Spencer W. Kimball was told in his patriarchal blessing that he would have an influence upon the children of Lehi. His father, Andrew Kimball, had served as a missionary and mission president in Indian Territory in the southwestern United States. Spencer had grown up in Arizona, where his family had occasional contact with Native Americans. Then, about three years after he was called to be an Apostle, Elder Kimball was assigned to chair the Church Indian Committee. He was called by President George Albert Smith to look after people of Native American descent. On September 13, 1946, he recorded in his journal:

“I went down to the office of President George Albert Smith at his request. . . . We talked about the Navajos in the mission. He then said, ‘Now I want you to look after the Indians—they have been neglected. You watch all the Indians. I want you to have charge and look after all the Indians in all the world and this includes those in the Islands also.’

“I told him I would do my best. I told him that this commission . . . fulfilled my patriarchal blessing literally. . . . He indicated that he wished me to lead this committee in a vigorous program for all the Indians in all the world” (in Boyd K. Packer, “President Spencer W. Kimball: No Ordinary Man,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1974, 12).

Invite a student to read aloud “He Had a Great Love for the Children of Lehi” in the student manual (pp. 202–3). Ask:

- Who has been given the responsibility to help fulfill promised blessings to the children of Lehi?
- What did President Kimball ask Church members to do for the Indians?
- What do you think it means to be “nursing fathers and mothers”?

Elder Kimball followed the example of his father.

- 💡 Share the following information describing the love and service Spencer W. Kimball’s father, Andrew, gave as a stake president in Arizona:

“People came to him at all hours of the day and evening with their business and Church and family troubles. ‘They came in the field while we loaded hay,’ remembered Spencer. ‘They came in the corral while we milked the cows, they came before breakfast while we worked in the garden and among the flowers and always went away blessed.’ Many a Kimball meal was delayed until Andrew could get free. To service the miserable, Andrew started keeping two handkerchiefs in the tail of his Prince Albert coat, one for himself, one for others” (Edward L. Kimball and Andrew E. Kimball Jr., *Spencer W. Kimball: Twelfth President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* [1977], 24).

Tell students there is an adage that states “Like father, like son.” (Write it on the board.) Ask students to note the similarity between the father (Andrew) and the son (Spencer) as you read the following statements about President Spencer W. Kimball from Elder Neal A. Maxwell, who was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“His many visits to the sick in homes and hospitals were legendary. One hospital patient, who himself had been through the trauma of open heart surgery, received a surprise visit from President Kimball. This dear brother had been under the influence of tobacco but reported, ‘Although I had cut way down at that time, I’ve never touched another cigarette since I held the hand of the prophet!’ . . .

“It is impossible to estimate how many thousands have been helped along the sometimes rocky road of repentance by reading President Kimball’s *Miracle of Forgiveness* or how many thousands have been steadied in the midst of their adversities by reading *Faith Precedes the Miracle*” (“Spencer, the Beloved: Leader-Servant,” *Ensign*, Dec. 1985, 13).

Ask students to think of positive traits they have inherited or learned from family members.

He taught Church members of the miracle of forgiveness.

- 💡 Hold up copies of three or four well-known books written by Presidents of the Church or members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (such as *Jesus the Christ* and *A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*). Explain that Spencer W. Kimball appreciated and recognized how gospel-centered books written by his colleagues blessed members of the Church. However, he had determined that he would leave the

writing of books to others who he thought were more talented. During his service as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, Elder Kimball spent countless hours interviewing, encouraging, and counseling people who found themselves in need of repentance. Read the following:

“All these experiences with people in great need of repentance and forgiveness led ultimately to a book. He had started with jotting down scriptures for people to study, then he developed some lists for recurring problems. By 1959 he had finally decided that there was need in the Church for ‘an extensive treatise on repentance.’ He spent untold hours over the next ten years, primarily during the time in the summer and at Christmas when the General Authorities had no regular assignments and were expected to rest. He never stinted his regular work to write; writing was an extra” (Kimball and Kimball, *Spencer W. Kimball*, 383–84).

If available, hold up a copy of *The Miracle of Forgiveness*, and tell students that reading it has helped many people feel the merciful forgiveness of the Lord.

Spencer W. Kimball became the twelfth President of the Church.

💡 Explain that many Church members felt that because of President Harold B. Lee’s relatively young age (early 70s), his administration would be a long one. Church members were surprised and shocked at his early death. Read the following statement from Elder Neal A. Maxwell regarding the unexpected change that occurred in December 1973:

“Whereas the presiding role of most other latter-day prophets had been expected by Church members, the coming of President Spencer W. Kimball to the presidency of the Church was not generally anticipated. But how quickly the full mantle fell upon him” (*Ensign*, Dec. 1985, 10).

Ask: What do you think Elder Maxwell meant by “how quickly the full mantle fell upon him”? (see 2 Kings 2:9–15).

Read the following to help students understand how quickly the change occurs in presiding authority. D. Arthur Haycock, secretary of President Harold B. Lee, remembered this incident following the death of President Lee:


“On this sad occasion . . . I learned a great and fundamental lesson in priesthood and Church government. . . . President [Marion G.] Romney was a member of the First Presidency, while President Kimball was the President of the Quorum of the Twelve. As soon as President Romney arrived [at the hospital before President Lee died], President Kimball turned to him and said, ‘President Romney, what would you like me to do?’ At the moment there seemed little that any of us could do, except pray and wait. A short time later, the doctor came and gave us the awful

news that President Lee was dead. Quietly, President Romney, knowing that the First Presidency was now dissolved at that precise moment and that the mantle had fallen upon President Kimball, turned to him and said, 'President Kimball, what would you like me to do?' " ("No Ordinary Man," *New Era*, Dec. 1982, 14).

Share the following words from President Spencer W. Kimball at President Lee's funeral:

"President Lee has gone. I never thought it could happen. I sincerely wanted it never to happen. I doubt if anyone in the Church has prayed harder and more consistently for a long life and the general welfare for President Lee than my Camilla and myself. I have not been ambitious. I am four years older than Brother Lee (to the exact day, March 28). I have expected that I would go long before he would go. My heart cries out to him and for him. How we loved him!" ("A Giant of a Man," *Ensign*, Feb. 1974, 86).

The Lord renewed his health and strength.

 Have the students read "He Had Cancer of the Throat and Vocal Cords" in the student manual (pp. 203–4). Tell them that in 1972 medical doctors recommended open heart surgery for President Spencer W. Kimball, then Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, to correct the damage sustained in an earlier heart attack. As President Kimball contemplated his long history of health problems and the weakened condition he was in, he sought the counsel of the First Presidency. Share the following:

"In pondering proposed surgery, there was an episode in 1972 which is both inspiring and sobering. Elder (then Dr.) Russell M. Nelson described that dramatic moment:

" 'In the month of March, I joined with President Kimball as he assembled his wife and the First Presidency. President Kimball said, "I am an old man. I am ready to die. It is time for a younger man to come to the Quorum and do the work I can no longer do." President Lee interrupted and pounded his fist on the desk and said, "Spencer, you have been called not to die but to live." President Kimball then humbly and submissively announced, "In that case, I will have the operation." Sister Kimball wept. The decision had been made' " (in Neal A. Maxwell, *Ensign*, Dec. 1985, 10).

Explain that President Kimball lived for many years after this operation. Two years later, when he became President of the Church, the Lord had renewed his health and strength and he taught with power and authority. Share the following account

from Elder William Grant Bangerter, who was a member of the Seventy, of a meeting of Church leaders shortly after Spencer W. Kimball became President:

“He had not spoken very long when a new awareness seemed suddenly to fall on the congregation. We became alert to an astonishing spiritual presence, and we realized that we were listening to something unusual, powerful, different from any of our previous meetings. It was as if, spiritually speaking, our hair began to stand on end. Our minds were suddenly vibrant and marveling at the transcendent message that was coming to our ears. With a new perceptiveness we realized that President Kimball was opening spiritual windows and beckoning to us to come and gaze with him on the plans of eternity. It was as if he were drawing back the curtains which covered the purpose of the Almighty and inviting us to view with him the destiny of the gospel and the vision of its ministry” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1977, 38; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1977, 26).

Share your testimony of how the Lord renews His prophets and all those who serve Him and keep His commandments.

He warned against the love of worldly wealth.

- 💡 Have the students read “He Warned Against the Love of Worldly Wealth” in the student manual (pp. 204–5). Have them note the questions Elder Kimball asked about the ultimate ownership of things in this world. Then ask: According to Elder Kimball, in what ways does the Lord desire that we use what He has given us?

He urged Church members to preach the gospel.

- 💡 Invite a student to read Matthew 28:19–20. Then ask students: How does this commandment apply to the restored Church?

Explain that in the meeting referred to in Elder Bangerter’s statement above, President Spencer W. Kimball taught about the responsibility of Church members to share the gospel, and he admonished them to “lengthen their stride.” Share the reaction of President Ezra Taft Benson, then President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, to President Kimball’s talk:

“President Kimball, our hearts rejoice in this masterful address. I think I can say very safely that no greater address has been given before any seminar—nothing more timely. . . . I am sure we all join in saying God bless you and thank you. Surely there is no doubt, my brethren, after this message this morning that there is in very deed a prophet in Israel” (in Neal A. Maxwell, *Ensign*, Dec. 1985, 10).

Read “When the World Will Be Converted” in the student manual (p. 206), and ask students to look for how President Kimball applied Matthew 28:19–20 to our day. Then ask:

- What evidence do we have that Church members responded to President Kimball’s admonitions? (The number of stakes doubled in nine years. The gospel was preached in many new nations. New temples were built to meet the needs of a growing worldwide Church).
- What are you doing to keep this commandment to share the gospel?

Every worthy and able young man should serve a mission.

- 💡 Hold up some money, and ask students how the money might relate to President Spencer W. Kimball and missionary work. Explain that when President Kimball visited members around the world, he often gave young boys money, with encouragement to start saving for a mission. He frequently taught the Saints all over the world the importance of sending their sons on missions and declared that “every LDS male who is worthy and able should fill a mission” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1974, 126; or *Ensign*, May 1974, 87).

Review and discuss the following statement from President Spencer W. Kimball:

“Right decisions are easiest to make when we make them well in advance, having ultimate objectives in mind; this saves a lot of anguish at the fork, when we’re tired and sorely tempted. . . .

“The time to decide on a mission is long before it becomes a matter of choosing between a mission and an athletic scholarship. The time to decide on temple marriage is before one has become attached to a boy friend or girl friend who does not share that objective. The time to decide on a policy of strict honesty is before the store clerk gives you too much change. The time to decide against drugs is before a friend you like teases you for being afraid or pious. The time to decide that you will settle for nothing less than an opportunity to live eternally with our Father is now, so that every choice we make will be affected by our determination to let nothing interfere with attaining the ultimate goal” (*Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball [1982], 164–65).

Ask students: According to President Kimball, why should Church members make the choice to serve a mission early in life?

The blessings of the priesthood and the temple were extended to all worthy members of the Church.

- 💡 Invite a student to read aloud “Every Faithful, Worthy Man in the Church May Receive the Holy Priesthood” in the student manual (p. 210). Ask: What impact did this revelation have on the worldwide spread of the gospel?

You may want to read Official Declaration 2 with the class. The meditation and prayers of President Spencer W. Kimball are worth noting in this declaration.

New editions of the scriptures were produced.

- 💡 Invite a student to read aloud Ezekiel 37:15–17 and 2 Nephi 3:12. Then ask:
- What are the sticks of Joseph and Judah?
 - How have they grown together and become one?

If they are available in your language, hold up copies of the Latter-day Saint editions of the Bible and the triple combination, which were prepared during President Kimball’s administration. Explain that President Kimball commissioned Elders Thomas S. Monson, Boyd K. Packer, and Bruce R. McConkie to serve as the Scriptures Publication Committee of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and format a new volume of scripture “to assist in improving doctrinal scholarship throughout the Church” (in Bruce T. Harper, “The Church Publishes a New Triple Combination,” *Ensign*, Oct. 1981, 9). This massive assignment came to fruition

with the publication of a Latter-day Saint English edition of the Bible in 1979 and the triple combination in 1981.

Share the following statement from Elder Boyd K. Packer with students:

“The stick or record of Judah—the Old Testament and the New Testament—and the stick or record of Ephraim—the Book of Mormon, which is another testament of Jesus Christ—are now woven together in such a way that as you pore over one you are drawn to the other; as you learn from one you are enlightened by the other. They are indeed one in our hands. Ezekiel’s prophecy now stands fulfilled.

“With the passing of years, these scriptures will produce successive generations of faithful Christians who know the Lord Jesus Christ and are disposed to obey His will.

“The older generation has been raised without them, but there is another generation growing up. The revelations will be opened to them as to no other in the history of the world. Into their hands now are placed the sticks of Joseph and of Judah. They will develop a gospel scholarship beyond that which their forebears could achieve. They will have the testimony that Jesus is the Christ and be competent to proclaim Him and to defend Him” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1982, 75; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1982, 53).

Ask students: In what ways do these scriptures assist us in our understanding of the Lord’s words? (expanded chapter headings and footnotes, a topical guide, Bible Dictionary or Guide to the Scriptures, improved maps, and so forth).

Two revelations were added to the standard works of the Church.

- 💡 Hold up a triple combination and ask students what revelations were added to the standard works during the administration of President Spencer W. Kimball. Explain that Doctrine and Covenants 137 and 138 are the most recent canonized revelations, and Official Declaration 2 is an announcement about a revelation.

Share the following comment from Elder Boyd K. Packer:

“As a very direct outgrowth of the scripture project, two new revelations were added to the Doctrine and Covenants. That had not occurred in over a hundred years. And before the books were closed, there came the glorious revelation on the priesthood, just in time to be bound with all else that the Lord has revealed to His Saints in this, the dispensation of the fulness of times” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1982, 75–76; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1982, 53).

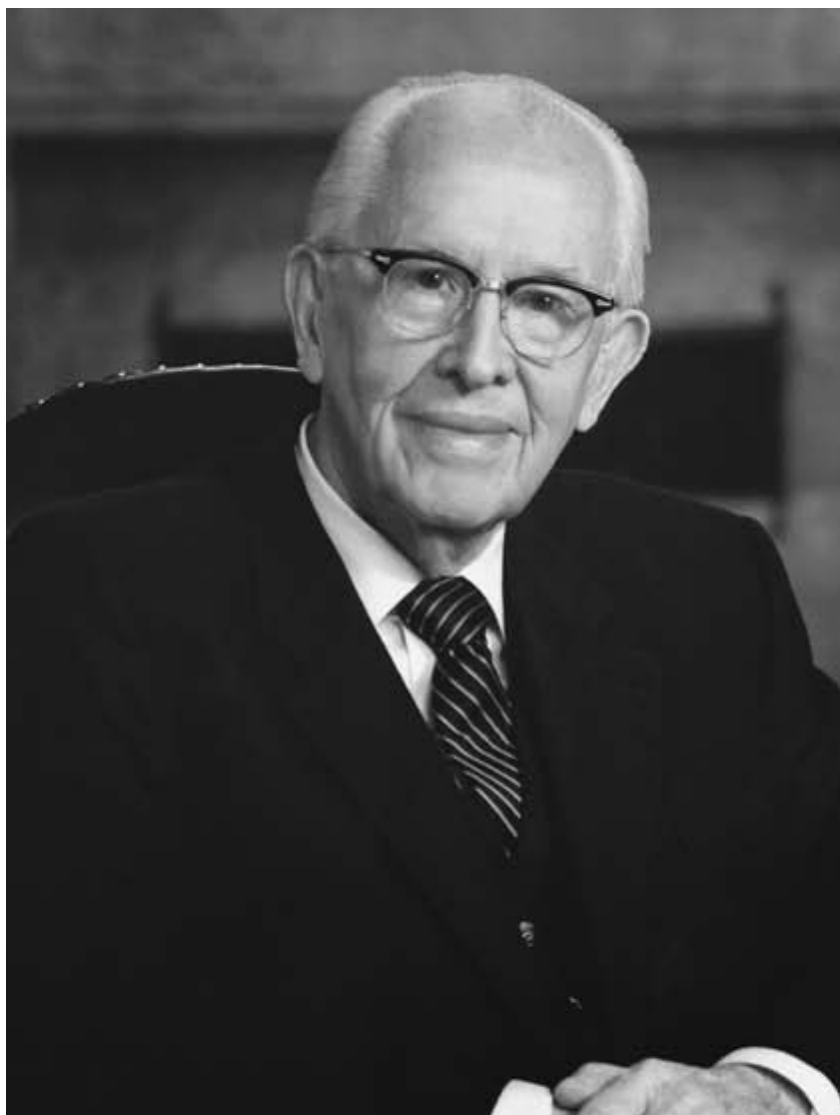
Explain that Doctrine and Covenants 137 and 138 provide additional scriptural clarification of the doctrine of salvation for the dead. In Doctrine and Covenants 137:7, the Lord teaches that “all who have died without a knowledge of this gospel, who would have received it if they had been permitted to tarry, shall be heirs of the celestial kingdom of God.” Doctrine and Covenants 138 reveals that between the Lord’s death and resurrection, He organized the preaching of the gospel in the spirit world.

Conclude by sharing your testimony of President Spencer W. Kimball and how his significant contributions to the Church continue to influence members worldwide.

CHAPTER 13

Ezra Taft Benson

THIRTEENTH PRESIDENT OF THE CHURCH



PART 1: THE EARLY YEARS

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Ezra T. Benson, the great-grandfather of President Ezra Taft Benson, was the first Apostle called to the Quorum of the Twelve after the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith. He traveled with the first group that entered the Salt Lake Valley on July 24, 1847. George T. Benson, the grandfather of Ezra Taft Benson, was born at Garden Grove, Iowa, in 1846. George T. Benson's son George T. Benson Jr. became the father of Ezra Taft Benson. To this strong pioneer heritage President Ezra Taft Benson added his legacy of service and devotion to the Lord.

When Ezra Taft Benson was born on August 4, 1899, in Whitney, Idaho, Harold B. Lee was only a few months old and Spencer W. Kimball was four years old. Lorenzo Snow was President of the Church. The Salt Lake Temple had been dedicated six years earlier, and Utah had become a state only three years earlier.

EVENTS, HIGHLIGHTS, AND TEACHINGS

A priesthood blessing helped save Ezra Taft Benson's life.

- 💡 Explain that Ezra Taft Benson was born in a small farming community in southern Idaho, surrounded by an anxious and worried family. After a difficult delivery, the doctor had little hope for the new baby's survival. A priesthood blessing from his father and the inspired actions of his grandmothers preserved his life. Share the following:

“President Benson was born August 4, 1899, in Whitney, Idaho, the son of George T. Benson, Jr., and Sarah Dunkley Benson. He was the first of 11 children.

“At birth he was in critical condition. The doctor told the family he would try to save the mother, but he held little hope for the child.

“But as President Benson himself explained: ‘The faith of my father, the administrations of the priesthood, and the quick action of my two grandmothers, who placed me first in a pan of cold water and then in a pan of warm water alternately, brought forth a husky yell to the joy of all’ ” (Mark E. Petersen, “Ezra Taft Benson: ‘A Habit of Integrity,’ ” *Ensign*, Oct. 1974, 22–23).

He had faithful and capable parents.

- 💡 Review “He Was Raised in a Wonderful Family” in the student manual (p. 215), and list on the board the qualities and practices of the Benson family. Ask:
- What qualities and practices of the Benson family would you like to have in your own home?
 - How did recreation help build unity in the Benson family?

Tell students that Ezra Taft Benson recognized and appreciated the efforts of his parents and often expressed gratitude for a loving and caring home. He later taught:

“Our parents deserve our honor and respect for giving us life itself. Beyond this they almost always made countless sacrifices as they cared for and nurtured us through our infancy and childhood, provided us with the necessities of life, and nursed us through physical illnesses and the emotional stresses of growing up. In many instances, they provided us with the opportunity to receive an education, and, in a measure, they educated us. Much of what we know and do we learned from their example. May we ever be grateful to them and show that gratitude” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1989, 6; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1989, 6).

His father was a powerful influence on him.

💡 Share the following with students:

“From the time he could walk, ‘T.’, as young Ezra was nicknamed, was his father’s shadow—riding horses, working in the fields, hitching up the horse and buggy for meetings, playing ball and swimming in the creek. He had a rich sense of heritage, stemming from his birthright as Ezra T. Benson’s eldest great-grandson, but also because he idolized his father and, as a young boy, felt an unusual sense of security and deep pride in who he was. Years later, after George Benson died, his eldest son overheard one of the few non-Mormons in Whitney say, ‘Today we buried the greatest influence for good in Cache Valley.’ Without question, George Benson was a powerful influence in the life of his eldest son” (Sheri L. Dew, *Ezra Taft Benson: A Biography* [1987], 14).

Ask: What can you do to be a good influence in the lives of your posterity?

Faithful home teachers strengthened the Benson family.

💡 Ask those students who grew up as members of the Church to comment about their childhood memories of home teachers visiting their home. Share with the class President Ezra Taft Benson’s reminiscences of home teachers coming to his parents’ home:

“We always knew they would come. I can’t remember one miss. And we would have a great visit. They would stand behind a chair and talk to the family. They would go around the circle and ask each child how he or she was doing and if we were doing our duty. Sometimes Mother and Father would prime us before the ward [home] teachers came so we would have the right answers. But it was an important time for us as a family. They always had a message, and it was always a good one.

“We have refined home teaching a lot since those early days in Whitney. But it is still basically the same. The same principles are involved: caring, reaching out, teaching by the Spirit, leaving an important message each month, and having a concern and love for each member of the family” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1987, 63–64; or *Ensign*, May 1987, 51).

Invite a student to share a positive personal experience he or she has had as a home or visiting teacher.

His father was called on a mission.

- 💡 Tell students that when Ezra Taft Benson was 12 years old, his grandfather Bishop George T. Benson Sr. submitted the name of his son George T. Benson Jr. (Ezra's father) to serve as a missionary. President Benson later spoke of this event and the blessings that came into their home when his father was called on a mission:

“When I think of how we show faith, I cannot help but think of the example of my own father. I recall vividly how the spirit of missionary work came into my life. I was about thirteen years of age when my father received a call to go on a mission. . . .

“As Father drove the horse homeward [from a meeting], Mother opened the mail, and, to their surprise, there was a letter from Box B in Salt Lake City—a call to go on a mission. No one asked if one were ready, willing, or able. The bishop was supposed to know, and the bishop was Grandfather George T. Benson, my father's father.

“As Father and Mother drove into the yard, they were both crying—something we had never seen in our family. We gathered around the buggy—there were seven of us then—and asked them what was the matter.

“They said, ‘Everything's fine.’

“ ‘Why are you crying then?’ we asked.

“ ‘Come into the living room and we'll explain.’

“We gathered around the old sofa in the living room, and Father told us about his mission call. Then Mother said: ‘We're proud to know that Father is considered worthy to go on a mission. We're crying a bit because it means two years of separation. You know, your father and I have never been separated more than two nights at a time since our marriage—and that's when Father was gone into the canyon to get logs, posts, and firewood.’

“And so Father went on his mission. Though at the time I did not fully comprehend the depths of my father's commitment, I understand better now that his willing acceptance of this call was evidence of his great faith. Every holder of the priesthood, whether young or old, should strive to develop that kind of faith” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1986, 60; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 45–46).

“I am grateful for the great missionary program of the Church. My father's family consisted of eleven children. All eleven of us have filled missions. My wife also filled a mission and had the pleasure of her widowed mother serving with her for the last six months. When my own father went on a mission, I remember, as the eldest son, the letters that he wrote from the mission field in the Midwest. There came into that home a spirit of missionary work that has never left it, for which I am humbly grateful” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1985, 8; or *Ensign*, May 1985, 8).

Ask students: What can we do to build a legacy of missionary work within our own families?

He taught how to rise above criticism.

💡 Have students review “He Learned Much from His Early School Experiences” in the student manual (pp. 215–16), and discuss the following:

- How did a clear conscience help Ezra Taft Benson rise above unjust criticism?
- What do you think President Benson meant by “avoiding even the appearance of evil” and by not judging others’ “actions simply on appearances”?

A strong work ethic enabled Ezra Taft Benson to develop his talents.

💡 Read the following recollection of Ezra Taft Benson and the commentary following it:

“When I was sixteen, a neighbor gave me the job of thinning a full acre of beets. This was considered a large day’s work even for an experienced adult farmhand; it was back-breaking, done in a bent-over position, using a wide bladed hoe on a handle about eight inches long. I started at sunup. When the sun went down that night, I was dead tired, but the full acre was thinned. My employer was so surprised—he told me later that he had expected the job to take a couple of days—that he gave me two five-dollar gold pieces and two silver dollars. Never before, nor since, have I felt quite so wealthy—nor quite so sure that I was the physical equal of any living man.

“Like most farm boys, I grew up believing that the willingness and ability to work is the basic ingredient of successful farming. Hard, intelligent work is the key. Use it, and your chances for success are good. As an adult, this principle deepened into one of the mainsprings of my life” (*Cross Fire: The Eight Years with Eisenhower* [1962], 15–16).

“William Poole, Ezra’s cousin, explained the significance of the feat: ‘I would stake out three-fourths of an acre of beets and get up before sunrise and work until dark to finish. “T” was the first person I remember who thinned an acre of beets in one day.

“ ‘Uncle George taught all the boys to work hard,’ William continued. ‘My father liked to hire “T” to pitch hay because he worked hard. I liked to tromp hay for “T” because he could pitch a fork of hay exactly where I needed it.’


“As a teenager, Ezra dug trenches for the pipes that brought water from a nearby spring through underground pipes into the Benson home, and postholes for the posts that supported wires that carried electricity into Whitney. He also drove teams into the nearby forests with his father to fell timber for derricks or fences. Sometimes he slept under a load of timber to escape the elements” (*Dew, Ezra Taft Benson*, 41).

Ezra Taft Benson had a lifelong love for the Boy Scouts of America.

💡 Review with students “Scouting Became a Lifelong Love” in the student manual (pp. 216–17), and discuss the following:

- What are some ways that Ezra Taft Benson developed a rapport with his Scouts?
- How did that rapport help him in his leadership responsibilities?

He served a mission in England.

 Tell students that following his graduation from the Oneida Stake Academy in Preston, Idaho, Ezra Taft Benson enrolled at Utah State Agricultural College (now Utah State University) in Logan, Utah. Like many young people in the Church today, he interrupted his studies to accept a mission call. He was called to England in 1921. For part of his mission, President David O. McKay was his mission president. Elder Benson did not find the people as receptive to the gospel as the early missionaries did in the opening decades of the Restoration. Adversity was plentiful. Later, as President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, President Benson spoke of the opposition and misunderstandings that the people of England had toward the Church:

“I was a young missionary in northern England in 1922. Opposition to the Church became very intense. It became so strong that the mission president asked that we discontinue all street meetings, and in some places tracting was also discontinued. The opposition started largely among the ministers, and it became very, very severe. They didn’t know anything about us to speak of. I remember tracting one day when a lovely lady came to the door. We were having a nice conversation and the name *Mormon* was mentioned by my companion. Her husband came to the door in a Navy uniform, and he said, ‘Oh, you can’t tell me anything about those old Mormons. I’ve been in the British Navy for twenty years. We sailed right into Salt Lake port, and they wouldn’t even let us land.’ That was so typical of what they knew about us in those days.

“My companion and I had been invited to travel over to South Shields, on the northwest coast, and speak in the sacrament meeting.

“In the letter of invitation, we were promised there would be a number of nonmembers present. They said, ‘Many of our friends do not believe the lies that are printed about the Church.’

“We fasted and prayed sincerely and went to the sacrament meeting. The hall was filled. My companion had planned to talk on the first principles, and I had studied hard in preparation for a talk on the Apostasy. There was a wonderful spirit in the meeting. My companion spoke first and gave an excellent inspirational message. I followed and talked with a freedom I had never before experienced in my life. When I sat down, I realized that I had not mentioned the Apostasy. I had talked about the Prophet Joseph Smith and had borne my witness of his divine mission and of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon. I couldn’t hold back the tears.

“After the meeting ended, many people came forward, several of whom were nonmembers, and said to us, ‘Tonight we received a witness that Mormonism is true. We are now ready to consider baptism.’

“This was an answer to our prayers, for we had prayed to say only those things which would touch the hearts of the investigators” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1984, 63–64; or *Ensign*, May 1984, 44).

Ask students: How can Church members learn to rely on the Spirit in sharing the gospel?

Point out that Elder Benson and his companion were inspired after fasting, prayer, and hard study. Discuss how these things help in preaching the gospel and in receiving guidance from the Spirit.

Ezra Taft Benson married Flora Smith Amussen in the Salt Lake Temple.

- 💡 Review with students “He Married Flora Amussen, His Lifelong Companion” in the student manual (p. 218). Ask: In what ways did Brother and Sister Benson provide a pattern for young people in their courtship?

He was content to spend the rest of his life on the farm.

- 💡 Explain that upon completion of his graduate degree in June 1927 from Iowa State College, Ezra and Flora Benson returned to an 80-acre farm in Whitney, Idaho, where they farmed until 1929. He later recalled, “We were home, and we expected to spend the rest of our lives there” (in Dew, *Ezra Taft Benson*, 41).

Because of Ezra Taft Benson’s farming abilities, the county commissioners offered him a job as the county agricultural agent. He eventually accepted the job and was enthusiastic to help others improve their crops and farm management. Later, he was invited to work for the University of Idaho in Boise, Idaho. In Boise, he also served as counselor in the stake presidency and then as president of the Boise Stake. In 1939 Ezra accepted an offer in Washington, D.C., to serve as secretary of a national organization representing about 1.6 million farmers. In 1940 he was called for a second time as a stake president, this time in the newly created Washington D.C. Stake.

Ask students: How can we follow Ezra Taft Benson’s example to find time to serve with dedication in the Church while also gaining an education or pursuing a career?

PART 2: THE LATER YEARS

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

When Ezra Taft Benson became President of the Church in 1985, the Church had about 5.9 million members, with 1,582 stakes, 188 missions, and 36 temples. In 1994, the year he died, the Church had grown to almost nine million members, with 2,008 stakes, 303 missions, and 46 temples (see *2003 Church Almanac* [2003], 474, 632). During his administration the political landscape of the world was transformed. Many nations abandoned communism and adopted various forms of democracy and market economies. The Berlin Wall came down, and the Cold War ended in 1989. Missions began to be organized in many new countries, yielding a great harvest of converts along with new branches, wards, and stakes. Elsewhere in the world, the space shuttle *Challenger* exploded just over a minute after liftoff in 1986, the 1991 Gulf War was fought over the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq, and the Internet became available to private users in 1992.

In the Church, stake seventies quorums were dissolved, and seventies were absorbed into elders quorums or high priests groups in their wards in 1986, and the BYU Jerusalem Center for Near Eastern Studies was dedicated in 1989.

EVENTS, HIGHLIGHTS, AND TEACHINGS

At age 44, Ezra Taft Benson was called as an Apostle.

- 💡 Tell students that on July 26, 1943, Ezra Taft Benson learned that President Heber J. Grant wanted to meet with him. Ezra met with President Grant in his home, where the aged President was resting. President Grant then informed him of his calling to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Review with students Elder Benson's reaction, which he recorded in his journal, as found in "He Was Called to the Apostleship" in the student manual (pp. 219–20). Read and discuss the following excerpts from the first address that Elder Ezra Taft Benson gave as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve:

"I am grateful beyond my power of expression for the blessings which have come to me, and particularly for this great honor that has come to one of the weakest of your number. . . .

"I must confess I had no premonition of this call, even of the shortest duration. . . .

"I tremble as I contemplate the great responsibilities and obligations which this call entails. . . . More than anything else, . . . I desire the love and confidence of the Priesthood of this Church, and I pray the Lord to give me strength that I may merit that love and confidence" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1943, 19, 21).

He reopened the missions in post-war Europe.

- 💡 Ask students to list areas around the world where the Church has sent emergency supplies. Then have them read the first four paragraphs of "He Went on a Mission to Help the Suffering Saints in Europe" in the student manual (p. 220). Ask: How have Elder Benson's efforts helped the worldwide missionary work of the Church?

Elder Benson served as the United States Secretary of Agriculture.

- Review with students “He Was United States Secretary of Agriculture” in the student manual (pp. 221–22). Have them look for opportunities Elder Ezra Taft Benson had to influence others for good while serving in the United States government. Share with students President Benson’s teachings on the responsibility of Church members:

“Improve your community by active participation and service. . . . Do something meaningful in defense of your God-given freedom and liberty” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1988, 58; or *Ensign*, May 1988, 51).

“We all have a special citizenship responsibility. As the Prophet Joseph Smith said, ‘It is our duty to concentrate all our influence to make popular that which is sound and good, and unpopular that which is unsound’ [*History of the Church*, 5:286]. We must elect men to public office with a mandate higher than the ballot box. Yes, read what the Lord has said on this important subject in the ninety-eighth section of the Doctrine and Covenants and then read what He has said regarding our inspired Constitution in the one hundred first section. The days ahead are sobering and challenging and will demand the best within each of us if we are to preserve our freedom” (*The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson* [1988], 674).

He put the needs of his family first.

- Have a student read “The Bensons Were a Close Family” in the student manual (pp. 222–23). Ask students:

- What message did Elder Benson give by turning down an invitation to attend a banquet?
- How can we give top priority to our families?

Ask a student to read aloud “Pray for Dad” in the student manual (p. 223). Ask: What can we do to strengthen family members to meet the challenges they face in life?

Read “He Taught about the Importance of the Home” in the student manual (pp. 223–24). Ask: According to Elder Benson, what can we do in our communities to safeguard and strengthen the home?

He spoke often about the virtues of freedom.

- Ask students to list the freedoms they enjoy. Explain that in October 1944, just one year after his calling as an Apostle, Elder Ezra Taft Benson gave a discourse on freedom that inspired the membership of the Church. Read and discuss the following excerpts from his address:

“Our earliest American fathers came here with a common objective—freedom of worship and liberty of conscience. The Pilgrim Fathers, the Puritans in New England, the Quakers in Pennsylvania, the Catholics in Maryland, the Lutherans in Georgia, and the Huguenots in Virginia, all came seeking God and the enjoyment of God-given, self-evident rights based on eternal principles. Familiar with the sacred scriptures, they

believed that liberty is a gift of heaven. . . . They acknowledged their dependence upon God as they exhibited their humble faith in, and devotion to, Christian principles. . . .

“In framing that great document [the Constitution of the United States] . . . , our early leaders called upon a kind Providence. Later the product of the constitutional convention was referred to as our God-inspired Constitution. They had incorporated within its sacred paragraphs eternal principles supported by the holy scriptures with which they were familiar. It was established ‘for the rights and protection of all flesh according to just and holy principles.’ Later the Lord himself declared, ‘I established the Constitution of this land, by the hands of wise men whom I raised up unto this very purpose’ [D&C 101:80]. . . .

“Scientific research has confirmed the inspired record of great nations which have inhabited this land. Each of these nations prospered as long as it yielded obedience to God. They also became great powers. Great material blessings came to them. But they forgot God. The ancient ruins of Central, South, and North America bear silent testimony to their destruction. What of the future of our great nation? The history of men and nations clearly teaches that only that nation is blessed ‘whose God is the Lord’ ” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1944, 128–130, 134).

Ask students:

- According to Elder Benson, why did the Lord establish the Constitution of the United States? (see also D&C 98:5–6; 101:77, 80).
- What did Elder Benson say is necessary for the maintenance of freedom?

He became President of the Church.

 Remind the students that Ezra Taft Benson became President of the Church on November 10, 1985. In his first conference address as President of the Church, he made this statement:

“We don’t need changed programs now as much as we need changed people” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1986, 3–4; or *Ensign*, May 1986, 4).

Ask: What do you think that counsel meant? Review “He Became President of the Church” in the student manual (pp. 224–25). Then ask:

- In what ways can the “threefold mission of the Church,” which President Benson emphasized, assist in fulfilling the all-encompassing mission to invite all to come unto Christ?
- What can we do individually to contribute to that mission?

“The Book of Mormon must be reenthroned in the minds and hearts of our people.”

💡 Read and discuss the following statement from President Ezra Taft Benson:

“Unless we read the Book of Mormon and give heed to its teachings, the Lord has stated in section 84 of the Doctrine and Covenants that the whole Church is under condemnation: ‘And this condemnation resteth upon the children of Zion, even all’ (D&C 84:56). The Lord continues: ‘And they shall remain under this condemnation until they repent and remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments which I have given them, not only to say, but to do according to that which I have written’ (D&C 84:57). . . .

“The Book of Mormon has not been, nor is it yet, the center of our personal study, family teaching, preaching, and missionary work. Of this we must repent. . . .

“We have made some wonderful strides in the past. We will be lengthening our stride in the future. To do so, we must first cleanse the inner vessel by awaking and arising, being morally clean, using the Book of Mormon in a manner so that God will lift the condemnation, and finally conquering pride by humbling ourselves” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1986, 4, 6; or *Ensign*, May 1986, 5–7).

Ask students:

- For what reason did President Benson say that the Church was under condemnation?
- What did he say is a key to removing this condemnation?

Hold up a copy of the Book of Mormon, and share your testimony of how it can bless lives. Read the following statements about the Book of Mormon and ask students to look for other specific ways it can bless their lives. Quoting President Marion G. Romney, who was a counselor in the First Presidency, President Benson stated:

“I feel certain that if, in our homes, parents will read from the Book of Mormon prayerfully and regularly, both by themselves and with their children, the spirit of that great book will come to permeate our homes and all who dwell therein. The spirit of reverence will increase; mutual respect and consideration for each other will grow. The spirit of contention will depart. Parents will counsel their children in greater love and wisdom. Children will be more responsive and submissive to that counsel. Righteousness will increase. Faith, hope, and charity—the pure love of Christ—will abound in our homes and lives, bringing in their wake peace, joy, and happiness” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1986, 5; or *Ensign*, May 1986, 6).

President Benson later said:

“May 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.

“This sacred volume was written for us—for our day. Its scriptures are to be likened unto ourselves (see 1 Nephi 19:23)” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1989, 3; or *Ensign*, May 1989, 4).

Review with students “I Have a Vision of Flooding the Earth with the Book of Mormon” in the student manual (p. 226). Discuss answers to the following questions:

- What are some methods that could be used to flood the earth with the Book of Mormon?
- What is there about the Book of Mormon that can bring people to a better understanding of Jesus Christ?

Read with students “He Gave a Blessing of Increased Discernment and Understanding” in the student manual (p. 226), and point out in the last paragraph the promises and conditions President Benson gave.

He counseled members of the Church.

- 💡 Divide the class into five groups, and assign each group to study one of the following sections in the student manual: “He Counseled the Youth to Be Clean” (p. 227), “He Counseled Single Adult Men to Pursue the Goal of a Celestial Marriage” (pp. 227–28), “He Counseled Single Adult Sisters to Keep the Goal of a Celestial Marriage” (p. 228), “He Counseled Fathers on Their Eternal Calling” (p. 229), and “He Counseled Mothers about the Nobility of Their Work” (p. 229).

Ask students to prepare to give a brief summary of President Ezra Taft Benson’s counsel to Church members. Have one member of each group share that counsel with class members. As appropriate, discuss the details of President Benson’s counsel with the students.

He warned Church members to beware of pride.

- 💡 Review with students “He Warned against Pride” in the student manual (p. 230), and list on the board the symptoms of pride mentioned by President Ezra Taft Benson. Ask:
- Which symptoms do you consider the most prevalent?
 - Which symptoms do you consider the most serious?
 - What are some antidotes to pride suggested by President Benson?

He bore testimony of Christ.

- 💡 Read President Ezra Taft Benson’s testimony in “We Believe in Christ” in the student manual (pp. 230–31). Discuss answers to the following questions:
- Why is following Christ the answer for problems in the world?
 - In what ways can we turn our lives over to God, as President Benson directs us to do?

President Howard W. Hunter gave a tribute to President Benson.

- 💡 Read with students “The Passing of a Prophet” in the student manual (p. 231). Share the following tribute that President Howard W. Hunter gave following President Ezra Taft Benson’s death:

“My heart is heavy today at the passing of our beloved prophet and President, Ezra Taft Benson. We have lost a dear friend, a wise and experienced associate in the presiding councils of the Church, and an inspired prophet of God.

“We miss him deeply on this day in which we have gathered to pay our last respects to him. I feel his loss in a particularly personal way. For nearly thirty-five years, we sat together in the Council of the Twelve Apostles. He was always sensitive and kind to me and to all of his Brethren in the sweet association we have there. For ten of those years, President Benson presided over the Council of the Twelve. Oh, how we thrilled at his guidance. He was a gifted leader, a superb administrator. We all felt the keenness of his mind and the power of his priesthood as he led us.

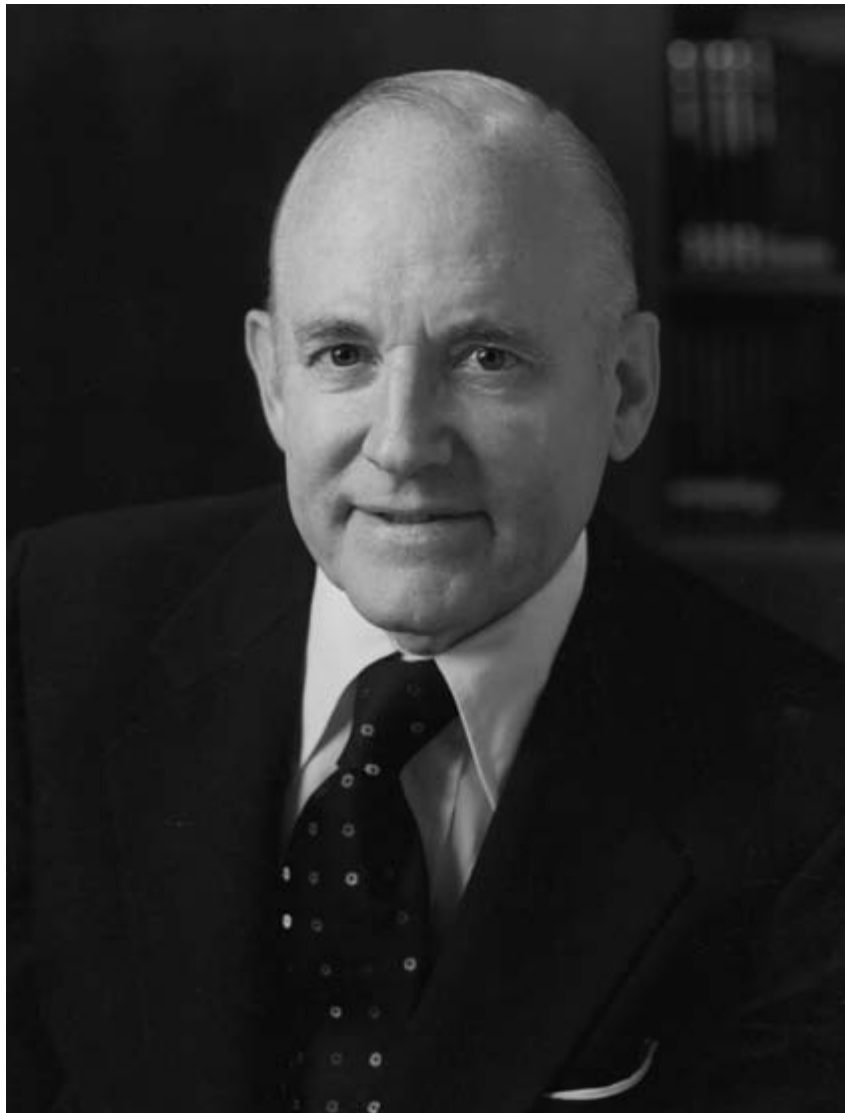
“I saw the mantle of prophetic leadership settle upon his shoulders. I felt his humility and his dependence on the Lord as he stepped into the sacred office he would now hold. I heard his voice rise to new levels of spiritual eloquence and divine utterance. Now that mighty voice is stilled, and we mourn with the entire Church at the silence” (“A Strong and Mighty Man,” *Ensign*, July 1994, 41).

Conclude the lesson by sharing your testimony of the prophetic calling of President Ezra Taft Benson and of his significant influence and counsel to Church members in our day.

CHAPTER 14

Howard W. Hunter

FOURTEENTH PRESIDENT OF THE CHURCH



PART 1: THE EARLY YEARS


HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

When Howard W. Hunter was born on November 14, 1907, in Boise, Idaho, his father was not yet a member of the Church. (His father, John William Hunter, joined the Church in 1927.) His mother, Nellie Hunter, participated actively in the Church, and she taught her children the gospel. William Hunter supported his wife in this endeavor and occasionally attended church as well.

Joseph F. Smith was President of the Church when Howard W. Hunter was born. The year before his birth, an earthquake destroyed much of San Francisco. In South Africa, Ghandi took an oath of passive nonviolent resistance in 1906 against government oppression. In 1908 Henry Ford introduced the Model T Ford, which began the age of the automobile.

EVENTS, HIGHLIGHTS, AND TEACHINGS

As a child, Howard W. Hunter showed compassion.


 Share the following account about Howard W. Hunter as a boy:

“His sister, Dorothy Hunter Rasmussen, . . . remembered this tender incident when they were children together. ‘Howard always wanted to do good and to be good. A wonderful brother, he looked out for me. He was kind to our mother and father. Howard loved animals and regularly brought home strays.’ There was an irrigation ditch by their house, and one day several boys in the neighborhood, not members of the Church, were throwing a kitten in the ditch. It would get out, then they would throw it in again. They did this over and over until they got tired of their game. ‘Howard came by and picked [the kitten] up; it was lying there almost dead, and he brought it home. Mother was afraid it was dead, but they wrapped it in a blanket and put it near the warm oven and nursed it.’ It lived, and they had the cat for years. ‘He was . . . so kind,’ Dorothy said. ‘I have never known my brother to do a wrong thing in my life’ ” (James E. Faust, “The Way of an Eagle,” *Ensign*, Aug. 1994, 4, 6).

Ask: What do we learn about Howard W. Hunter from this story? Share the following statement from President Howard W. Hunter:

“We are at a time in the history of the world . . . when we must . . . act more like the Savior would expect his disciples to act. We should at every opportunity ask ourselves, ‘What would Jesus do?’ and then act more courageously upon the answer” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1994, 118; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 87).

He wanted to join the Church.

 Review as a class “His Parents and Early Years Helped Shape Him” in the student manual (pp. 234–35). Then ask:

- How did Howard and the Church leaders recognize the stewardship of Howard’s father?

- Why did Howard want to receive the priesthood so much?

As a teenager, he pledged to help build the new tabernacle.

💡 Explain that for most of the history of the Church, local members helped finance the building of chapels and temples in their areas. Often members not only contributed money but also their time to construct the buildings. As the Church grew, however, contractors were hired to construct the buildings. In 1960, local financial participation was 70/30 (the Church paid 70 percent and the local members were expected to raise 30 percent of the funds; members were interviewed by priesthood leaders and asked to contribute to the “Building Fund”). In 1982 that ratio changed to 96/4, and then to 100/0 in 1990.

When Howard W. Hunter was 15 years old, plans to build a tabernacle for the members in the Boise, Idaho, area were announced. Share the following information:

“The Saints in Boise met to discuss a proposal to build a tabernacle, which would serve as a center for both the stake and the new ward. When an appeal for pledges was made, Howard raised his hand and made the first one—twenty-five dollars, a substantial sum for that time, especially for a teenager. ‘I worked and saved until I was able to pay my commitment in full,’ he remembers.

“The tabernacle was completed two years later and dedicated by President Heber J. Grant” (Eleanor Knowles, *Howard W. Hunter* [1994], 41).

Ask students:

- Why is a willingness to contribute one’s money to the Church a test of faith?
- What personal satisfaction can come from such contributions?
- How can members help care for Church buildings in these times when they are not required to donate directly to a building fund or help in the construction of the buildings?

He learned the importance of hard work.

💡 Invite students to count the number of different jobs they have had since they were eight years old. Then ask:

- What is the most unusual job you have ever had?
- Which job was the most difficult? Why?

Explain that Howard W. Hunter was known as a dependable and hard worker all of his life. Share the following list of work he did regularly or jobs he had before he was 21 years old:

- Feeding chickens and cleaning their pens
- Helping with home canning
- Working in the garden
- Caring for fruit trees and berry bushes
- Mowing lawns and doing yard work
- Working as a cashier’s helper

- Delivering telegrams and selling newspapers
- Working as a golf caddy
- Working in a hotel
- Clerking in an art store
- Playing in several orchestras
- Working as an assistant manager in a pharmacy
- Organizing and leading his own band
- Working for a newspaper publisher
- Selling shoes
- Purchasing a building and making it into a dinner-dance hall
- Selling music (list adapted from Knowles, *Howard W. Hunter*, 42–61).

Ask students: What impresses you most about this list, and what does it indicate about Howard W. Hunter?

Invite students to review “He Became an Eagle Scout,” “He Was a Young Entrepreneur,” and the last two paragraphs of “Experiences of His Early Youth Showed His Determination and Strength” in the student manual (pp. 235–36). Have them look for a common theme in all three accounts. Then ask: How did young Howard use his time effectively?

His father joined the Church.

- 💡 Review with students “He Organized Hunter’s Croonaders” in the student manual (pp. 236–37). Remind them that when Howard W. Hunter was in high school he organized his own orchestra, called “Hunter’s Croonaders.” The orchestra played at many high school socials in his hometown of Boise, Idaho. A few months after graduating from high school, in June 1926, he and his orchestra received an invitation to play on a cruise ship that sailed to Japan, China, and the Philippines. While Howard was away, his father was baptized.

Ask if any students have witnessed the baptism of a parent and would be willing to share their feelings about the experience.

He experienced a turning point in his life in Sunday School.

- 💡 Ask students if they can recall a time when a spiritual light seemed to go on in their minds and the gospel became a more important part of their life. Invite one or two students to share their experiences if they feel comfortable doing so. Ask some students to take turns reading “A Sunday School Lesson Encouraged Him to Receive His Patriarchal Blessing” in the student manual (p. 237). Ask:

- What led to a spiritual awakening in Howard W. Hunter’s life?
- How can we prepare ourselves better for these kinds of spiritual awakenings?

He committed himself to marriage, family, and the gospel.

- 💡 Ask students if any of them have ever desired to be in a performing group and travel the world. Then explain that Howard W. Hunter was a very successful and talented musician. He had the potential of making entertainment a lifelong career. Concerning his experience as an entertainer, he said:

“It was glamorous in some respects, and I made good money, but the association with many of the musicians was not enjoyable because of their drinking and moral standards” (in Knowles, *Howard W. Hunter*, 91).

Have a student read “He Married Clara Jeffs” in the student manual (pp. 237–38). Then ask: Why did he find marriage and a professional music career incompatible?

Ask students to reflect on choices they face now that may not be compatible with gospel standards or with marriage and family life. As you share the following statements from Howard W. Hunter regarding marriage, invite students to note ways in which he was true to his own counsel:

“To you who are unmarried men: Don’t put off marriage because you are not in a perfect career and financial position. Do not, however, rush into a relationship without proper forethought and inspiration. Prayerfully seek the Lord’s guidance on this matter. Stay worthy of receiving that divine assistance. Remember that as a priesthood bearer you have the obligation to take the lead in seeking eternal companionship” (“The Church Is for All People,” *Ensign*, June 1989, 77).

“[Marriage] is a learned behavior. Our conscious effort, not instinct, determines the success. The motivating force stems from kindness, true affection, and consideration for each other’s happiness and welfare.

“Prior to marriage we looked at life from our own point of view, but after stepping over that threshold, we began to consider it from another’s viewpoint also. There is a necessity to make sacrifices and adjustments as manifestations of reassurance and love.

“It is often said that being happily and successfully married is generally not so much a matter of marrying the right person as it is *being the right person*. Statistics showing the high rate of divorce might indicate unwise choices of partners. If they had married other persons, the particular problem might have been eliminated, but surely another problem would have been in its place. A wise choice of a partner is a large contribution to a successful marriage, yet the conscious effort to do one’s part fully is the greatest element contributing to success” (*The Teachings of Howard W. Hunter*, comp. Clyde J. Williams [1997], 130).

Explain that as Howard W. Hunter and Claire Jeffs prepared for marriage, they made decisions and commitments for their life together, one of which was the decision to live the law of tithing. He later recalled:

“We resolved that we would live this law throughout our marriage and tithing would come first” (in Knowles, *Howard W. Hunter*, 81).

Howard and Claire Hunter faced a tragic loss early in their marriage.

- 💡 Tell students that on March 20, 1934, Howard and Claire Hunter's first child was born—a boy they named Howard William Hunter Jr. Then share the following account:

“That summer, as Howard was settling into his work-and-school routine, he and Claire noticed that their baby son, Billy, seemed lethargic. The doctor diagnosed the problem as anemia. Howard gave blood for a transfusion, and Billy recovered briefly, then suffered a relapse. In early September he was admitted to a hospital for additional tests, and Howard gave blood for another transfusion.

“When there was still no improvement, the worried parents took him to Children’s Hospital, where tests finally revealed that an intestinal diverticulum had ulcerated, causing loss of blood. The doctors recommended surgery.

“ ‘We were assured that the surgeons selected were outstanding in this field, so we gave our consent,’ Howard wrote. ‘At the time of surgery, I was taken into the room on a table beside him and gave blood during the operation. At the conclusion, the doctors were not encouraging.

“ ‘We stayed with him constantly for the next seventy-two hours, which the doctors said would be the critical period. On the evening of the third day they told us it would be better for us to go home and get some rest. We had not been home long when a call came asking us to return to the hospital because there had been a turn for the worse. Later that night, October 11, 1934, he slipped quietly away as we sat by his bed. We were grief-stricken and numb as we left the hospital into the night.’

“Two days later, after a ‘lovely, comforting service,’ the earthly body of little Howard William Hunter Jr. was interred in a grave beside that of his grandfather, Jacob Ellsworth Jeffs” (Knowles, *Howard W. Hunter*, 86).

Ask: Which principles of the gospel might have given the Hunters comfort in their time of sorrow and loss?

Finding time to study in law school was a challenge.

- 💡 Tell students that after he got married, Howard W. Hunter decided to study law. Review with students “He Was Interested in Law” in the student manual (pp. 238–39). His studies were intense. When his son John was born, Howard took his textbooks to the hospital. Share the following incident:


“When Claire, who had been awaiting the birth of their second child, announced one Sunday evening that it was time to go to the hospital, he grabbed one of his textbooks, *Blackstone’s Commentary on the Law*, and rushed her to Methodist Hospital of Southern California. She was put to bed immediately, and he remained with her until the medication she had been given took effect and she fell asleep. Then he went back to his studies” (Knowles, *Howard W. Hunter*, 90).

He recalled:

“To work all day and go to school at night, and, in addition, to find the time to study was not an easy task. . . . Our social life was almost nil other than visits to our families” (in Knowles, *Howard W. Hunter*, 91).

Ask: How can we maintain balance in a busy lifestyle?

Howard W. Hunter’s parents gave him a wonderful birthday surprise.

 Ask students what their favorite birthday gift was. Explain that Howard W. Hunter served as the stake president of the Pasadena Stake from 1950 to 1959. While he attended the Mesa Arizona Temple with members of his stake in 1953, Howard’s parents surprised him on his 46th birthday (November 14). Share with students the following experience:

“While I was speaking to the congregation . . . my father and mother came into the chapel dressed in white. I had no idea my father was prepared for his temple blessings, although Mother had been anxious about it for some time. I was so overcome with emotion that I was unable to continue to speak. President Pierce [the president of the temple] came to my side and explained the reason for the interruption. When my father and mother came to the temple that morning they asked the president not to mention to me that they were there because they wanted it to be a birthday surprise. This was a birthday I have never forgotten because on that day they were endowed and I had the privilege of witnessing their sealing, following which I was sealed to them” (Howard W. Hunter, in Knowles, *Howard W. Hunter*, 135).

Later, Howard W. Hunter’s sister, Dorothy, was sealed to their parents in the Los Angeles California Temple, which, he commented, “completed the eternal bonds of our family” (in Knowles, *Howard W. Hunter*, 135).

Ask if any of the students were sealed to their parents when they were older. Then ask if they would be willing to share their feelings about being sealed to their parents.

PART 2: THE LATER YEARS

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In 1994, the year Howard W. Hunter became President of the Church, Church membership reached about nine million, with 2,008 stakes, 303 missions, and 46 temples (see *2003 Church Almanac* [2003], 474, 632). In 1994 the Church launched a Web site for family history. President Hunter dedicated two temples during his administration: the Orlando Florida Temple in 1994 and the Bountiful Utah Temple in 1995. They became the 46th and 47th operating temples in the world. In December 1994, the 2,000th stake of the Church was organized in Mexico City. Howard W. Hunter served as Church President for just nine months, a shorter period than any other Church President. During 1995, the year he died, Church membership grew to 9.3 million, with 2,150 stakes, 307 missions, and 47 temples (see *2003 Church Almanac*, 474, 632). President Hunter passed away on March 3, 1995.

EVENTS, HIGHLIGHTS, AND TEACHINGS

Howard W. Hunter was called as an Apostle.

- 💡 Tell students that while Howard and Claire Hunter lived in California, he attended law school and established a law practice. After he completed law school, he served as a bishop from 1940 to 1946, and then he served as a stake president from 1950 to 1959. You may want to review with students “He Was Called to Be a Bishop and then a Stake President” in the student manual (p. 239).

Ask a student to read “He Was Called to Be an Apostle” and “He Expressed His Feelings about Being an Apostle” in the student manual (pp. 240–41). Ask students:

- How would you characterize the manner in which Elder Hunter received his call to be an Apostle?
- In what ways might his example be considered an appropriate way to receive any calling?

He taught that Church members should act on their beliefs.

- 💡 Ask students what characterizes a Christian. Elder Howard W. Hunter taught how actions must follow and confirm beliefs. Invite a student to read the following statement, and then discuss how it applies to our lives:

“Belief must be realized in personal achievement. Real Christians must understand that the gospel of Jesus Christ is not just a gospel of belief; it is a plan of action. His gospel is a gospel of imperatives, and the very nature of its substance is a call to action. He did not say ‘observe’ my gospel; he said ‘live’ it. He did not say, ‘Note its beautiful structure and imagery’ he said, ‘Go, do, see, feel, give, believe!’ The gospel of Jesus Christ is full of imperatives, words that call for personal commitment and action” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1967, 115).

He comforted and counseled parents with wayward children.

- 💡 Tell students that one of the most heartrending experiences for faithful parents is when one or more of their children rebel. Sometimes children rebel even when parents have faithfully taught them the gospel. Often feelings of failure and guilt overwhelm parents as they blame themselves for their children's decisions not to live the gospel. Have students read "He Spoke to Concerned Parents" in the student manual (pp. 246–47).

Ask: What was Elder Hunter's definition of a successful parent?

He cared for his wife, Claire, after she had a stroke.

- 💡 Remind students that in 1983 Claire Hunter passed away after many years of health problems. During her illness, Elder Howard W. Hunter cared lovingly for his wife. Read with students "His Wife Died" in the student manual (p. 246).

Ask students: How did Elder Hunter demonstrate his love for his wife?

Several years after the death of his wife, President Hunter wrote:

"This would have been Claire's eighty-fifth birthday. I left the office early and drove to the City Cemetery. It was a clear, cold day and the snow on the grass was about four inches deep. As I made a path through the snow and stood at her grave side, I had a feeling of the loneliness and then thought how alone she must feel away from her family and the grandchildren she loved. Those feelings still persisted after I got home and saw the things that bear her touch" (in Eleanor Knowles, *Howard W. Hunter* [1994], 275–76).

Ask: What do you like about President Hunter's attitude toward his wife?

Tell students that about seven years after the death of his wife, President Hunter announced to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles that he was getting married again. Read together "He Married Inis Bernice Egan" in the student manual (p. 249). Then ask: How did his marriage to Inis bless him at this time in his life?

President Hunter taught that we should center our lives on Christ.

- 💡 Ask students to list some things that keep us from focusing our lives on the Savior. Have them read "We Should Center Our Lives on Christ" in the student manual (p. 249), and discuss what needs to be done to be "permanently right." Then ask: According to what President Hunter taught, what might be some of the "successes" that keep us from centering our lives on Christ?

Share your testimony that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the Lord's Church, that He leads it, and that we look to Him and His chosen leaders for guidance in life. Explain that faithful members center their lives and actions on Him and trust that eternal blessings will follow.

Read the following statement from President Howard W. Hunter, and ask students to be prepared to discuss what "good causes" are:

"We recognize that much good comes from individuals and organizations who reach out to remedy the ills of the world. We encourage you to follow the scriptural admonition to be anxiously engaged or actively involved in good causes in the Church and in your neighborhoods, communities, and

even throughout the world (see D&C 58:27). Yet we also maintain that without taking Christ into their lives and accepting his gospel, with its saving ordinances and covenants, people will not reach their true potential in this life or in the hereafter” (“To the Women of the Church,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1992, 96).

Share the following statement from Elder Howard W. Hunter, and discuss how it applies to how each of us can achieve greatness:

“We have an unlimited number of opportunities to do the many simple and minor things that will ultimately make us great. . . . To those who are doing the commonplace work of the world but are wondering about the value of their accomplishments; to those who are the workhorses of this Church, who are furthering the work of the Lord in so many quiet but significant ways; to those who are the salt of the earth and the strength of the world and the backbone of each nation—to you we would simply express our admiration. If you endure to the end, and if you are valiant in the testimony of Jesus, you will achieve true greatness and will live in the presence of our Father in Heaven” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1982, 28; or *Ensign*, May 1982, 20).

The Jerusalem Center for Near Eastern Studies was established.

- 💡 Ask students to list some of the educational programs and opportunities sponsored by the Church. Then ask: Why is education so important in the Church?

Explain that President Howard W. Hunter was very influential in securing permission to build the Brigham Young University Jerusalem Center in the Holy Land. Divide the students into four groups and assign each group to read and report on one of the following sections in the student manual: “He Traveled the World in His Apostolic Calling” (p. 241), “The Orson Hyde Memorial Garden Was Constructed” (pp. 242–43), “All Are Alike unto God” (p. 243), and “The Jerusalem Center Was Built” (pp. 243–44).

As students prepare their reports, have them look for challenges the Church faced in building the Jerusalem Center and how the talents and determination of Elder Howard W. Hunter, Elder James E. Faust, and Jeffrey R. Holland, then president of Brigham Young University, helped resolve those challenges.

He faced a critical threat.

- 💡 Share with students that President Howard W. Hunter demonstrated uncommon courage at a fireside on the Brigham Young University campus on February 7, 1993. Review this experience (along with another in Jerusalem) in “He Was Calm When His Life Was Threatened” in the student manual (p. 250). Then ask:
 - What was the source of President Hunter’s confidence in the face of such dangers?
 - What can we learn from President Hunter about how to face challenges of our own?

He urged Church members to love the temple.

- 💡 Ask students to review “Highlights in the Life of Howard W. Hunter” in the student manual (p. 233). Have them determine when Howard W. Hunter became President

of the Church and for how long he served as President (nine months). Tell them that one of President Hunter's main themes during his short time as President of the Church was the importance of the temple. Have them read "Every Member Should Be Temple Worthy" in the student manual (p. 251).

He bore testimony as a special witness of Jesus Christ.

- 💡 Ask students how they would define "a special witness of Christ." Explain that this designation is reserved for Apostles of the Lord, who have the ordination and keys to bear witness to the world of Jesus Christ. Share with students the following witness of Elder Howard W. Hunter, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

"In our day the Lord has again called Apostles. These Apostles have been ordained as special witnesses of Christ in all the world. They know of the reality of Christ and his redemption with a certainty born of the Spirit.

"As an ordained Apostle and special witness of Christ, I give to you my solemn witness that Jesus Christ is in fact the Son of God. He is the Messiah prophetically anticipated by Old Testament prophets. He is the Hope of Israel, for whose coming the children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had prayed during the long centuries of prescribed worship.

"He suffered in the Garden of Gethsemane and died on the cross, giving his sinless life as a ransom for every soul who enters mortality. He did in very fact rise from the dead on the third day, becoming the firstfruits of the resurrection and overcoming death.

"It is by the power of the Holy Ghost that I bear my witness. I know of Christ's reality as if I had seen with my eyes and heard with my ears. I know also that the Holy Spirit will confirm the truthfulness of my witness in the hearts of all those who listen with an ear of faith" ("An Apostle's Witness of Christ," *Ensign*, Jan. 1984, 69–70).

Ask students: What does "listen with an ear of faith" mean?

Read with students "He Bore a Strong Witness of Christ" in the student manual (p. 251). Ask them to contemplate what they can do to "fulfill God's purposes in this season of [their] lives."

Read aloud "He Was Paid a Final Tribute" in the student manual (p. 252), and conclude with your testimony.

CHAPTER 15

Gordon B. Hinckley

FIFTEENTH PRESIDENT OF THE CHURCH



PART 1: THE EARLY YEARS

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

When Gordon Bitner Hinckley was born on June 23, 1910, Joseph F. Smith was President of the Church and the Church had almost 400,000 members. The Church had four operating temples—the Salt Lake Temple, the St. George Utah Temple, the Logan Utah Temple, and the Manti Utah Temple.

Gordon B. Hinckley’s grandfather Ira Hinckley joined the Church in Nauvoo, Illinois, as a teenager and traveled with the pioneers to Utah in 1850. He accepted an assignment to build Cove Fort in Utah, and he served as the president of the Millard Stake in central Utah. Gordon’s father, Bryant Hinckley, was a counselor in the stake presidency of the Liberty Stake in Salt Lake City for about 18 years, and then he served as stake president for another 11 years.

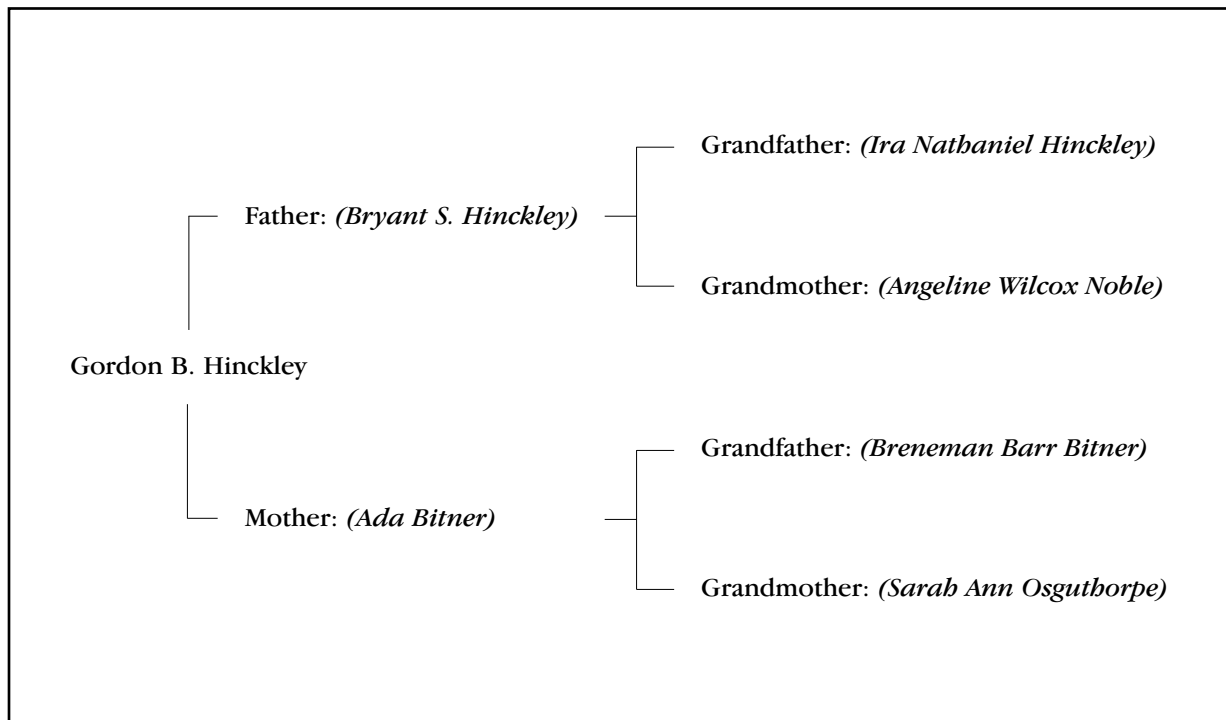
EVENTS, HIGHLIGHTS, AND TEACHINGS

Gordon B. Hinckley’s parents and grandparents set an example of faith.

- 💡 Prepare a worksheet for every two students using the material below. Have each pair of students use the student manual to find answers to the questions. Review their answers as a class. *(The answers are provided in parentheses.)*

Use the information from sections “Highlights in the Life of Gordon B. Hinckley,” “He Descended from a Pioneer Heritage,” “His Father Was Strong and Faithful,” and “Gordon B. Hinckley Was Born” in the student manual (pp. 254–56) and find answers to the following:

1. Fill in the following brief pedigree chart for Gordon B. Hinckley:



2. What leadership role did Gordon B. Hinckley's forebear Thomas Hinckley have in early Massachusetts? *(He was governor of Plymouth Colony.)*
3. Why was Gordon B. Hinckley's grandfather Ira Hinckley important to the Saints who traveled the main road between northern and southern Utah? *(He built and managed a fort where travelers could find shelter, food, and safety.)*
4. Describe Bryant Hinckley's education and employment experience. *(He attended Brigham Young Academy in Provo, Utah; then Eastman Business College in Poughkeepsie, New York; he taught at Brigham Young Academy; then was principal of the LDS Business College in Salt Lake City, Utah.)*
5. What happened to Bryant's first wife in July 1908, and how many children did they have at the time? *(She died; they had eight children.)*
6. Where did Bryant meet his second wife, and what was her name? *(At the LDS Business College; her name was Ada Bitner.)*
7. What was unique about the future of their first son? *(He became the Church President.)*
8. How old was Gordon when his mother died? *(He was 20 years old.)*
9. How old was he when he graduated from the University of Utah? *(He was 21 years old.)*
10. What did he do after he graduated? *(He served a mission in the British Isles.)*

Tell students that soon after Gordon B. Hinckley became President of the Church, he reflected on the heritage he received from his parents and ancestors:

"My grandfather as a boy was baptized in the summer of 1836 in Ontario, Canada. His widowed mother eventually brought her two boys to Springfield, Illinois. From there my grandfather walked to Nauvoo, where he listened to the Prophet Joseph Smith. When the exodus of our people occurred in 1846, he was an eighteen-year-old youth of strength and capacity and faith. He was a skilled builder of wagons and a blacksmith. He was among those whom President Young requested to remain for a time in Iowa to assist those still on the westward trail. He married in 1848 and set out for this valley in the spring of 1850.

"Somewhere along that wearisome trail, his young wife sickened and died. With his own hands he dug a grave, split logs to make a coffin, lovingly buried her, then tearfully took their eleven-month-old child in his arms and marched on to this valley.

"He was among those who repeatedly were called by President Young to undertake a variety of difficult assignments incident to the establishment of our people in these mountain valleys. He served as president of the Millard Stake of Zion when there were only a handful of stakes, and when it included a vast area of central Utah, traveling thousands of miles by horse and buggy in the discharge of his ministry. He gave so generously of his substance in the establishment of schools that his once substantial estate was small at the time of his death.

"My father was similarly a man of great faith who served the Church without reservation in many trusted capacities. For a number of years he presided over what was then the largest stake in the Church, with more

than 15,000 members. My mother and grandmothers were likewise women of great faith whose lives were not always easy because of requirements made upon them by the Church. But they did not complain. They met their responsibilities with cheerfulness and devotion” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1995, 92–93; or *Ensign*, May 1995, 69–70).

His parents taught him to have faith in Jesus Christ.

💡 Explain to students that in addition to providing examples of righteousness, Gordon B. Hinckley’s parents taught him faith in Jesus Christ. President Hinckley later recalled the beginnings of spiritual growth in his life:

“The earliest instance of which I have recollection of spiritual feelings was when I was about five years of age, a very small boy. I was crying from the pain of an earache. There were no wonder drugs at the time. That was 85 years ago. My mother prepared a bag of table salt and put it on the stove to warm. My father softly put his hands upon my head and gave me a blessing, rebuking the pain and the illness by authority of the holy priesthood and in the name of Jesus Christ. He then took me tenderly in his arms and placed the bag of warm salt at my ear. The pain subsided and left. I fell asleep in my father’s secure embrace. As I was falling asleep, the words of his administration floated through my mind. That is the earliest remembrance I have of the exercise of the authority of the priesthood in the name of the Lord.

“Later in my youth, my brother and I slept in an unheated bedroom in the winter. People thought that was good for you. Before falling into a warm bed, we knelt to say our prayers. There were expressions of simple gratitude. They concluded in the name of Jesus. The distinctive title of Christ was not used very much when we prayed in those days.

“I recall jumping into my bed after I had said amen, pulling the covers up around my neck, and thinking of what I had just done in speaking to my Father in Heaven in the name of His Son. I did not have great knowledge of the gospel. But there was some kind of lingering peace and security in communing with the heavens in and through the Lord Jesus” (in Conference Report, Apr. 2000, 86; or *Ensign*, May 2000, 70).

Ask: What opportunities do parents have to teach their children? Then read with students “The Hinckleys Held Family Home Evening” in the student manual (p. 257). Encourage them to take at least one opportunity to share their testimony to family members or to share their love for some aspect of the gospel.

Read the following statement from President Gordon B. Hinckley, then a counselor in the First Presidency:

“The most persuasive gospel tract is the exemplary life of a faithful Latter-day Saint. We live in a time when the pressures of life make it so easy and so tempting, in fulfillment of the words of Nephi, to commit ‘a little sin; yea, lie a little, take the advantage of one because of his words, dig a pit for thy neighbor; . . . turn aside the just for a thing of naught and revile against that which is good.’ (2 Ne. 28:8, 16.)

“Said the Savior while speaking on the mount: ‘Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.’ (Matt. 5:16.)

“If we as a people will walk with integrity, will be honest and moral in our actions, will put into our lives the simple and basic and wonderful principle of the Golden Rule, others will be led to inquire and learn. We shall become as a city set upon a hill whose light cannot be hid. (See Matt. 5:14.)” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1982, 68; or *Ensign*, May 1982, 45).

Invite students to discuss how parents can be a “most persuasive gospel tract” in the lives of their children.

He learned the value of hard work early in life.

💡 Invite students to look for answers to the following questions as they read “He Learned Lessons in His Youth” in the student manual (pp. 256–57):

- What was the lesson Gordon B. Hinckley learned from the “monster of a furnace”?
- How do you feel his ability to work hard has contributed to what he has accomplished as a Church leader?

Share the following experience from President Gordon B. Hinckley, then a counselor in the First Presidency:

“A week ago I had an interesting experience. Without any official assignment, I attended a stake conference in a rural area of southeastern Utah. The stake president and his wife had invited Sister Hinckley and me to stay at their home. While he conducted his Saturday afternoon meeting, we rode about the stake, visiting a half-dozen little towns, in each of which there is a Church meetinghouse. We noted that the lawns were green and the buildings nicely kept, although they are small and some of them are old. We drove about and looked at the homes, modest in their appearance, but in almost every case there was neatness and beauty with flowers in bloom. Having a free Saturday and Sunday, I had wanted to make this trip simply to thank the people for their faith and faithfulness and to express my love to them. Most of them are farm folk who work hard for a small return. But they know a great truth. They know the law of the harvest—‘Whatsoever ye sow, that shall ye also reap.’ (D&C 6:33.)

“They know that you do not reap wheat after sowing oats. . . . They know that if you are to build another great generation, you must work with vision and faith. You must dream and plan, serve and sacrifice, pray and labor” (“Rise to the Stature of the Divine within You,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1989, 94).

Books and education were important to the Hinckley family.

💡 Explain to students that not only can we learn to work while in our youth, but we can develop a love for learning that will bless us throughout our lives. The desire to learn and the ability to work often go together. Review with students “The Hinckley Family Valued Learning in the Home” in the student manual (pp. 257–58). Have the

students look for specific opportunities the Hinckley family provided to encourage learning, and, as you review the section, list these things on the board. Then ask:

- How would the placement of good books around the house encourage the children to read?
- How do you think the writings of the prophets and great thinkers influenced Gordon B. Hinckley?

In his youth, Gordon B. Hinckley received a strong testimony of Joseph Smith.

- 💡 Ask students if they remember when they first knew that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God. Perhaps they have wondered how Church leaders such as President Gordon B. Hinckley obtained their testimonies of the Prophet Joseph Smith. Review and discuss “He Received a Strong Testimony of Joseph Smith” in the student manual (p. 259). Ask students if any of them have had a similar experience with a hymn.

He learned how to answer difficult questions.

- 💡 Like many other Church members, young Gordon B. Hinckley had many questions about the Church and the gospel. He had a sincere desire to find answers, and he overcame his doubts. Review with students “His Faith Transcended His Doubts” in the student manual (p. 260). Ask students to notice how Bryant Hinckley answered his son’s questions.

The approach Gordon B. Hinckley learned from his parents helped him later in his life. He often graciously answered questions asked of him by his children, Church members, and the media. Once he was invited to the prestigious Harvard Club in midtown Manhattan, New York, where an impressive roster of guests were assembled, including newspaper and television editors. Share with students the following account of that event:

“The thirty or so opinion leaders were seated in such a way that all had easy access to each other. After lunch, Elder Maxwell introduced President Hinckley, referring in so doing to his experience as a young missionary preaching to hecklers in London’s Hyde Park. . . . At that, the tone was set for a congenial and sometimes humorous interchange. President Hinckley continued with an overview of the international scope of the Church, commented on its missionary, humanitarian, and educational pursuits, and then offered to answer questions.

“Some of the inquiries that followed were predictable. One question centered on the issue of women and the priesthood, another on excommunication and dissent within the Church. Another comment dealt with the Church’s emphasis on family history research, and one media executive asked President Hinckley to elaborate on misconceptions that surrounded the Church and its members. He answered each question candidly and without hesitation or any hint of awkwardness. Toward the end of the discussion one guest offered: ‘President Hinckley, you are obviously not afraid to answer the tough questions. It has been my perception in the past that there were certain secretisms to the workings of the Church. By your very presence, you indicate to me an openness. Is this a new openness, and is the Church concentrating on opening up some of its formerly less known facets to the public?’ President Hinckley responded: ‘There is only one situation that we

don't talk about, and that is the sacred work that takes place in our temples. . . . We enter into covenants and ordinances there that are sacred and of a character that we don't talk about in public. . . . But the door is wide open on everything else' " (Sheri L. Dew, *Go Forward with Faith: The Biography of Gordon B. Hinckley* [1996], 537–38).

Discuss answers to the following questions:

- How can we share the gospel candidly with people around us without being offensive?
- How can we respond to questions for which we may not have answers?

He served a mission in England.

💡 Ask students if they know where Gordon B. Hinckley served his mission. (The European Mission, with headquarters in London, England.) Ask if any students can describe how he financed his mission. Review with students “His Mother Died” and the first two paragraphs of “He Was Called on a Mission to England” in the student manual (p. 261). Then invite a student to read how Elder Hinckley overcame discouragement and became a skilled missionary in the rest of “He Was Called on a Mission to England” (pp. 261–63). Ask:

- What do you think “throwing oneself into the work” means?
- How did Gordon B. Hinckley’s mission contribute to his ability to think fast and “speak quickly on [his] feet”?

Gordon married Marjorie Pay.

💡 Invite students to share what they know about the courtship and marriage of Marjorie Pay and Gordon B. Hinckley. Refer to the student manual as needed (see “He Found an Eternal Companion,” “There Was a Period of Adjustment to Marriage,” and “He Built a Home,” pp. 263–64). Discuss answers to the following questions:

- When did Gordon and Marjorie Pay meet, and what impressed Gordon the most about Marjorie?
- What are some of President Hinckley’s earliest memories of Marjorie?
- What kinds of adjustments did Marjorie struggle with during the first years of marriage?
- How did family members describe life in their first house?

Share with students the following tribute President Hinckley wrote to his wife, Marjorie. Have students listen for specific ways Sister Hinckley supported her husband:

“When our children were young, you seldom traveled with me. I would be gone for as long as two months at a time. There were not even telephone calls permitted in those days. We wrote letters. You never complained. How wonderful it was to come home and be held warmly in your arms and those of our children.

“Now in more recent years we have traveled far and wide together. We have visited every continent. We have held meetings in the great cities of the world and in many smaller ones. We have met the distinguished of the earth. We have

spoken to millions who have appreciated you so greatly. With your familiar words you have won the love of all who have heard you. Your down-to-earth good sense, your sparkling and refreshing wit, your quiet and unfailing wisdom, and your tremendous and ever constant faith have won the hearts of all who have listened to you.

“You have been my critic and my judge. You have seen to it that my shoes were shined, my suit pressed, my tie straight. You have pushed aside the flattery that comes with public life, and winnowed the kind and sincere words of honest and loving friends. You have held at bay that old fraud of adulation and kept my feet planted on the solid earth. How I appreciate you” (in Virginia H. Pearce, *Glimpses into the Life and Heart of Marjorie Pay Hinckley* [1999], 194).


You may want to use the following statements from Elders David B. Haight and L. Tom Perry, members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, regarding Sister Hinckley’s influence on her husband:

“President Hinckley’s marriage to his sweetheart, Marjorie Pay, added spiritual strength and increased desire to advance our Lord’s work. She has been a most inspiring companion” (David B. Haight, in Conference Report, Apr. 1995, 49; or *Ensign*, May 1995, 37).

“Much will be said, written, and recorded about President Hinckley during the time he presides over the Church. Much less will be recorded about his dear companion, Marjorie. . . . What an example she has been and will continue to be to the women of the Church and to all the world. She is such a loyal, supportive companion to our President. . . .

“Over the years my wife and I have had the privilege of traveling on many assignments with President and Sister Hinckley. In our travels we have always found Sister Hinckley so positive and cheerful. Her enthusiastic and supportive attitude clearly lifts her husband. Often the trips have been long and tiring. Schedules may not have been ideal. Accommodations may not have been four star, sometimes way below. But in the midst of turmoil, discomfort, or challenge, Sister Hinckley has maintained her composure and her naturally happy disposition. Each time we would step off a plane to greet the Saints at a new destination, her kind and loving spirit was contagious. She has set a standard of support for priesthood-leader husbands that literally brings out the best in them” (L. Tom Perry, in Conference Report, Apr. 1995, 97–98; or *Ensign*, May 1995, 72–73).

Gordon B. Hinckley was tutored by the Lord through his many assignments.

-  Ask students to suggest what was unique about Gordon B. Hinckley’s employment prior to being called to serve as a General Authority. Explain that for many years he worked at Church headquarters in various capacities. Explain that his assignments helped him to have deep feelings for and an understanding of Church members. Share and discuss the following observation from Elder Boyd K. Packer, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and ask students to be prepared to describe what the “Heartbreak Committee” is:

“Perhaps it is essential for one who is to serve with humility and distinction in the kingdom of God to be given, as a blessing, some characteristic or attribute which causes him to regard himself as inadequate.

“Such a ‘gift’ does not often show itself on the surface. Usually it is hidden deep within, and it shows in many small ways that an individual has learned the lesson that Moses learned when, emerging from a great vision, he said: ‘Now, for this cause I know that man is nothing, which thing I never had supposed.’ (Moses 1:10.)


“Somewhere in the make up of Gordon B. Hinckley there is such a tempering feeling. Perhaps it centers in his admission that as a boy he was shy. Without this ‘gift,’ high station would have made him oblivious to the feelings and the needs of the rank and file of humanity, to the widow and her mite, to the poor among men. But he is not oblivious to her or to them; they are constantly on his mind. ‘I have a feeling for the rank and file of the Church because I am one of them,’ he has said.

“Brother Hinckley served for several years on what was informally called the ‘Heartbreak Committee.’ There the cases of those who had seriously transgressed were considered. He has sympathetic love for those who suffer from guilt, and particularly the innocent who are affected by it.

“That regard for the rank and file is there when he grumbles (that is the correct word) about such things as misused authority, domineering executives, academic elitism, unreasonable conduct in family life, or worldly pretensions” (“President Gordon B. Hinckley: First Counselor,” *Ensign*, Feb. 1986, 7).

Ask: How might an understanding of one’s inadequacy enable one to serve better in the kingdom of God?

He is like an anchor to his family.

 Share the following statement from one of President Gordon B. Hinckley’s children about his influence on their family. Invite students to consider how President Hinckley’s testimony and example influenced this child.

“I don’t recall discussing many of my concerns with Dad, but in my heart I knew he knew the gospel was true, and that was terribly important to me. He was like an anchor. Not because he talked overtly about his feelings, but I simply sensed that he knew. God was real and personal to him. And when he prayed, I learned about the depth of his faith. He prayed for us, for those who were ‘downtrodden and oppressed’ and ‘alone and afraid.’ One phrase he used often was ‘We pray that we may live without regret’ ” (Richard Gordon Hinckley, in M. Russell Ballard, “President Gordon B. Hinckley: An Anchor of Faith,” *Ensign*, Sept. 1994, 11).

Ask students:

- What was one of the phrases President Hinckley often used? What does that mean to you?
- What are some things fathers and mothers may do to let their children know they have a testimony of the gospel, even if they may not verbalize it frequently?

PART 2: THE LATER YEARS

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Before becoming Church President, Gordon B. Hinckley served for almost 14 years as a counselor in the First Presidency. He has overseen the dedication of more temples than all of the other previous General Authorities combined. When President Hinckley was called to serve in the First Presidency in 1981, 21 temples had been dedicated, counting the Kirtland and Nauvoo Temples. From June 1983 to June 2004, he dedicated or rededicated more than 84 of the 120 temples in operation. This period was one of the most intense temple building periods in the history of this dispensation. In addition to temples, President Hinckley oversaw many other significant Church projects. For example, the Conference Center, seating 21,000, was built to accommodate a larger general conference congregation than the historic Salt Lake Tabernacle and was dedicated in October 2000.


In 1995, when Gordon B. Hinckley became President of the Church, the membership of the Church was over 9.3 million, with 2,150 stakes, 307 missions, and 47 temples (see *2004 Church Almanac* [2004], 444, 582). By the end of 2003 the Church had grown to 11.98 million members, with 2,624 stakes, 337 missions, and 116 temples (see Conference Report, Apr. 2004, 26; or *Ensign*, May 2004, 26).

In addition to undertaking the most vigorous temple building period in the history of the Church, under President Hinckley's inspired leadership the Church instituted other significant programs. In an effort to remedy the cycle of poverty created by limited abilities, President Hinckley introduced the Perpetual Education Fund. Through that fund, loans are "made to ambitious young men and women, for the most part returned missionaries, so that they may borrow money to attend school" and learn good employment skills (in Conference Report, Mar.–Apr. 2001, 68; or *Ensign*, May 2001, 52).

On January 11, 2003, the first Worldwide Leadership Training Meeting was broadcast to stake centers throughout the world to more effectively train the increasing number of new leaders in the Church. And in April 2004, due to the growth of the Church, the sixth Quorum of the Seventy was organized.

EVENTS, HIGHLIGHTS, AND TEACHINGS

Gordon B. Hinckley was called as an Apostle.

 Review and discuss with students "He Was Called to the Apostleship" in the student manual (pp. 264–65), and read the following statement from Elder Gordon B. Hinckley from his first general conference talk as a new Apostle:

"Sister Romney told me yesterday afternoon that she knew that I was the one to be sustained because of the appearance of my eyes when she talked with me yesterday morning. I confess that I have wept and prayed.

"I think I feel some sense of the burden of this responsibility to stand as a witness of the Lord Jesus Christ before a world that is reluctant to accept him. 'I stand all amazed at the love Jesus offers me.' I am subdued by the confidence of the Lord's Prophet in me, and by the expressed love of

these, my brethren. . . . I pray for strength; I pray for help; and I pray for the faith and the will to be obedient. I think that I need—and I feel that all of us need—discipline, if this great work is to roll forward as it is ordained to do” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1961, 115–16).

Ask students:

- How old was Gordon B. Hinckley and how long had he worked at Church headquarters when he was called as an Apostle?
- How did the lives of his grandfather and father influence Elder Hinckley’s feelings toward his calling as an Apostle?
- In what ways do we need to discipline ourselves to help this “great work roll forward”?

He loves the peoples of the world.

- 💡 Ask students to describe the feelings many returned missionaries express for the people and lands in which they served. Discuss why they often feel very close to those they served, even when cultures and living conditions may have been a difficult adjustment. Explain that President Gordon B. Hinckley has traveled extensively during his Church service and has developed a love for the Saints and people everywhere he has been, just as he has developed a deep love for the people of Asia.

Display the map of southeast Asia, including the city of Hong Kong and the lands of Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and the Philippines, on page 219 of this manual. Explain that, prior to his call as an Apostle, Gordon B. Hinckley was assigned, as an Assistant to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, to supervise the work of the Church in these and other locations in Asia. Read to students the following description of his then limited knowledge of the land he was asked to oversee:

“What Elder Hinckley knew about Asia and its peoples didn’t extend much beyond what he could read in an encyclopedia. He knew that it lay halfway around the world, that it covered an immense area (approximately 30 percent of the world’s land mass), that it was home to some of the world’s most densely populated cities and approximately half its population, and that the various languages spoken there bore no resemblance to English. He couldn’t remember having ever associated closely with anyone of Oriental descent, and he had no particular feeling for the Asian peoples” (Sheri L. Dew, *Go Forward with Faith: The Biography of Gordon B. Hinckley* [1996], 210).

Ask: Why might this call have been given to Elder Hinckley when he knew so little about the land and people he was to serve?

Tell students that during the early 1960s Elder Hinckley traveled frequently and for numerous weeks at a time to Asian countries. List on the board the following work he did in these lands: he taught and directed mission presidents, motivated and instructed missionaries, taught and tended to the needs of the Saints, helped purchase lands for Church buildings, and developed leaders.

Read the following and ask students to listen for descriptions of how Elder Hinckley felt about the people of Asia with whom he worked:

“Elder Hinckley had an affinity for the Asians. He admired the integrity, resourcefulness, and work ethic of these determined people, and he was attracted to their manner, which though somewhat formal was gracious and accommodating. Though the Church was small and struggling, he saw potential in the modest core of members” (Dew, *Go Forward with Faith*, 220).

Ask: How has the Church grown in these Asian countries since Elder Hinckley was first assigned to supervise the Church in Asia? (You may want to display the map with the temples and numbers of stakes indicated, on page 220 of this manual.)

Years later, in 1987, President Hinckley described the growth of the Church in Asian countries and the faith of Asian members:

“In 1960, only twenty-seven years ago, I was given an assignment by the First Presidency to work with the mission presidents, the missionaries, and the Saints in Asia. The Church was weak and small in that part of the earth. The seed had been planted in Japan, Taiwan, and Korea by faithful Latter-day Saints in military service. But it was tiny and unstable. We had no buildings of our own. We met as small groups in rented houses. In winter they were cold and uncomfortable. Converts came into the Church. But some, lacking faith, soon left. However, there remained a residual of strong and wonderful men and women who looked beyond the adversity of the moment. They found their strength in the message, not in the facilities. They have remained faithful to this day, and their numbers have been added to by the tens and tens of thousands.

“A few Sundays back we held a regional conference in Tokyo. The spacious hall was filled to capacity. There were almost as many present on that occasion as there are assembled in the Salt Lake Tabernacle this morning. The Spirit of the Lord was there. An attitude of faith filled that vast congregation. For me, who had known those days when we were weak and few in number, it was a miracle to behold, for which I give thanks to the Lord.

“We had a similar experience in Hong Kong, where there are now four stakes of Zion.

“Then in Seoul, Korea, my heart was touched as we entered the largest hall in that great city to find every seat taken by members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and their invited guests. A magnificent choir of 320 voices opened with the strains ‘Oh, how lovely was the morning’ (‘Joseph Smith’s First Prayer,’ *Hymns*, no. 26). It was a moving expression of the first vision of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

“I had known South Korea in its days of poverty and reconstruction following the terrible war. When first I went there, we had six missionaries in Seoul and two in Pusan. Some were ill with hepatitis. Today there are four thriving missions in that land, with some six hundred missionaries. Many of the missionaries are sons and daughters of Korea. They include bright and

beautiful young women in whose hearts burns the light of faith. They include young men who leave schooling for a season in order to serve missions. These young men are under tremendous pressures because of military requirements as well as educational demands, but they have faith in their hearts.

“When first I went to South Korea, there were two or three tiny branches. Today there are one hundred fifty local units of the Church, both wards and branches. Then it was a small, isolated district of the Northern Far East Mission. We had no chapels. Today there are fourteen stakes with forty-seven chapels built and owned and another fifty-two under lease, with others under construction.


“I felt a spirit in that congregation three weeks ago that touched me to the depths of my soul. I saw the sweet fruits of faith. I knew of the early struggles in establishing an unknown church. I knew of the poverty of the people. Now there is strength. There is an undreamed-of measure of prosperity. There is a warm spirit of fellowship. There are families of devoted husbands and wives and good and beautiful children.

“These are people I love, and I love them because of their faith. They are intelligent and well educated. They are hardworking and progressive. They are humble and prayerful. They are an example to others across the world” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1987, 66–67; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, 53).

Ask students:

- Considering President Hinckley’s statements about growth in the Church, in what ways have you seen the Church grow in your area?
- Who are examples to you of faithful Latter-day Saints?

He served as a counselor to three Presidents of the Church.

 Ask students the following questions:

- Who were the three Church Presidents who served prior to President Gordon B. Hinckley? (Spencer W. Kimball, Ezra Taft Benson, and Howard W. Hunter.)
- What calling did President Hinckley have that directly served these three men? (He was a counselor to each of them.)

Explain that President Gordon B. Hinckley served as a counselor in the First Presidency for almost 14 years. Serving with three Church Presidents gave him an increased understanding of Church operations. When the Church President and the other counselors faced physical challenges, many of the First Presidency responsibilities fell upon him. He reported that it was “a very heavy and overwhelming responsibility. . . . It was an almost terrifying load at times.” Read with students the section “He Was Called to Be a Counselor in the First Presidency” in the student manual (pp. 265–66). Then ask:

- How did President Hinckley’s callings as a counselor in the First Presidency prepare him for his service as Church President?
- What did the Lord’s words “Be still and know that I am God” (D&C 101:16) mean to President Hinckley during a particularly difficult time?
- How might this answer to President Hinckley’s prayer help you?

“The Family: A Proclamation to the World” was issued.

- 💡 Explain that in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints the First Presidency and the Quorum of Twelve Apostles have occasionally issued official statements called “proclamations.” Other official statements that do not carry the proclamation label are “official declarations” and “doctrinal expositions.” All of these official pronouncements by the leaders of the Church are solemn and serious in nature for Church members and others in the world.

On September 23, 1995, President Gordon B. Hinckley read “The Family: A Proclamation to the World” at the general Relief Society meeting, and explained why it was issued. Review with students “He Explained the Need for the Proclamation on the Family” in the student manual (p. 271). Then ask:

- Who was this proclamation given to? (see official title).
- How can the proclamation on the family help the world?

Share and discuss with students the following statements from President Hinckley:

“Why do we have this proclamation on the family now? Because the family is under attack. All across the world families are falling apart. The place to begin to improve society is in the home. Children do, for the most part, what they are taught. We are trying to make the world better by making the family stronger” (“Inspirational Thoughts,” *Ensign*, Aug. 1997, 5).

“A nation will rise no higher than the strength of its homes. If you want to reform a nation, you begin with families, with parents who teach their children principles and values that are positive and affirmative and will lead them to worthwhile endeavors. . . . Parents have no greater responsibility in this world than the bringing up of their children in the right way, and they will have no greater satisfaction as the years pass than to see those children grow in integrity and honesty and make something of their lives” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1996, 67–68; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 48–49).

He taught about the importance of families.

- 💡 Divide the class into five groups and assign them to read and discuss the following sections from the student manual: “He Taught the Importance of Motherhood” (pp. 267–68), “Selfishness Is a Major Cause of Divorce” (p. 268), “Marriage Should Be an Eternal Partnership” (pp. 268–69), “God Bless You, Mothers!” (pp. 271–72), and “Rear Your Children in the Ways of the Gospel” (p. 272). Ask the groups to take three to five minutes to discuss the principles taught in these sections. Then have a student from each group give a short summary to the class about how they can act on these principles.

The dedication of the Nauvoo Illinois Temple fulfilled a dream of President Hinckley’s father.

- 💡 If available, display a picture of the Nauvoo Illinois Temple. Explain that the history leading up to the dedication of the Nauvoo Temple in June 2002 was different from that of any other temple. Ask students: Why is the Nauvoo Temple unique? (The Saints had previously built a temple in Nauvoo, only to be driven away from it by persecution. The building was later destroyed by fire in 1848.)

Tell students that another unique circumstance involved President Gordon B. Hinckley's father. In the 1930s when Gordon B. Hinckley's father, Bryant Hinckley, was the mission president for the Northern States Mission, he traveled to Nauvoo to begin an acquisition and restoration project for the Nauvoo area. Bryant Hinckley described the conditions of Nauvoo then and his vision of its restoration:

"The once prosperous and beautiful city that surrounded it has dwindled into a forgotten village with less than a thousand people. Some of the old Mormon homes are still standing, mellowed with age and lovely; many are gone, but the green hills and the rolling Mississippi remain, and over it all lies the somber atmosphere of a vanished glory. No other spot in this fair land has a more fascinating and a more dramatic history. . . .

"From this small center began a new chapter in the great story of pioneering and colonization in America. Impoverished and persecuted, these people did not waste their time mourning over their misfortunes, but forgot their troubles and went to work. . . .


"Nauvoo is destined to become one of the most beautiful shrines of America and one of the strong missionary centers of the Church" ("The Nauvoo Memorial," *Improvement Era*, Aug. 1938, 458, 511).

Explain that Bryant Hinckley died in 1961. In 1999 President Gordon B. Hinckley announced in general conference that the Nauvoo Temple would be rebuilt. Share this review by President Hinckley from a later conference:

"Under the prompting of the Spirit, and motivated by the desires of my father, who had served as mission president in that area and who wished to rebuild the temple for the centennial of Nauvoo but was never able to do so, we announced in the April conference of 1999 that we would rebuild that historic edifice.

"Excitement filled the air. Men and women came forth with a desire to be helpful. Large contributions of money and skills were offered. . . . No expense was spared. We were to rebuild the house of the Lord as a memorial to the Prophet Joseph and as an offering to our God. On the recent 27th of June, in the afternoon at about the same time Joseph and Hyrum were shot in Carthage 158 years earlier, we held the dedication of the magnificent new structure. It is a place of great beauty. It stands on exactly the same site where the original temple stood. Its outside dimensions are those of the original. It is a fitting and appropriate memorial to the great Prophet of this dispensation, Joseph the Seer" (in Conference Report, Oct. 2002, 4; or *Ensign*, Nov. 2002, 6).

President Hinckley urged Church members to use the temples.

 Tell students that President Gordon B. Hinckley has dedicated more temples than all of the other prophets before his time combined. When he first became a General Authority in April 1958, the Church only had 10 temples in operation and President David O. McKay was about to dedicate the 11th temple, in Hamilton, New Zealand. When President Hinckley was called to serve in the First Presidency in 1981, 21 temples had been dedicated during this dispensation,

counting the Kirtland and Nauvoo Temples. From June 1983 to June 2004, President Hinckley dedicated or rededicated more than 84 of the 120 temples in operation.

Review with students “The Church Is Not Complete without Temples” and “He Planned to Have One Hundred Temples by the Year 2000” in the student manual (pp. 272–73). Then ask: Why has President Hinckley emphasized so strongly the building of temples throughout the world?

Share President Hinckley’s urging that Church members use the temples:

“These wonderful buildings of various sizes and architectural designs are now scattered through the nations of the earth. They have been constructed to accommodate our people in carrying forward the work of the Almighty, whose design it is to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man (see Moses 1:39). These temples have been constructed to be used. We honor our Father as we make use of them.

“At the opening of the conference, I urge you, my brethren and sisters, to utilize the temples of the Church.

“Go there and carry forward the great and marvelous work which the God of heaven has outlined for us. There let us learn of His ways and His plans. There let us make covenants that will lead us in paths of righteousness, unselfishness, and truth. There let us be joined as families under an eternal covenant administered under the authority of the priesthood of God.

“And there may we extend these same blessings to those of previous generations, even our own forebears who await the service which we can now give.

“May the blessings of heaven rest upon you, my beloved brethren and sisters. May the Spirit of Elijah touch your hearts and prompt you to do that work for others who cannot move forward unless you do so. May we rejoice in the glorious privilege that is ours, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ, amen” (in Conference Report, Oct. 2002, 5; or *Ensign*, Nov. 2002, 6).

Share your testimony of temple work.

President Hinckley is ever positive and optimistic.

💡 Ask students how they would describe President Gordon B. Hinckley. Share Sister Hinckley’s description of her husband, and then share President Hinckley’s counsel:

“[Sister Hinckley] notes how he is eternally optimistic, always reassuring concerned individuals that ‘things will come out well in the end’ ” (cited in Neal A. Maxwell, “President Gordon B. Hinckley: The Spiritual Sculpturing of a Righteous Soul,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1982, 11).

“Things will work out. If you keep trying and praying and working, things will work out. They always do. If you want to die at an early age, dwell on the negative. Accentuate the positive, and you’ll be around for a while” (in Dew, *Go Forward with Faith*, 423).

Ask students: In what ways do you think this optimism is reflected in the work President Hinckley is called to do?

He helped lead the Church “out of obscurity.”

- 💡 Read and discuss with students “He Is at Ease with the Media” in the student manual (p. 270). President Hinckley’s interviews and discussions with national and worldwide media have helped dispel negative attitudes and perceptions about the Church.

He faced a somber time.

- 💡 Share the following paragraphs from President Gordon B. Hinckley’s concluding remarks at the April 2004 general conference:

“Some of you have noticed the absence of Sister Hinckley. For the first time in 46 years, since I became a General Authority, she has not attended general conference. Earlier this year we were in Africa to dedicate the Accra Ghana Temple. On leaving there we flew to Sal, a barren island in the Atlantic, where we met with members of a local branch. We then flew to St. Thomas, an island in the Caribbean. There we met with a few others of our members. We were on our way home when she collapsed with weariness. She’s had a difficult time ever since. She’s now 92, a little younger than I am. I guess the clock is winding down, and we do not know how to rewind it.

“It is a somber time for me. We’ve been married for 67 years this month. She is the mother of our five gifted and able children, the grandmother of 25 grandchildren and a growing number of great-grandchildren. We’ve walked together side by side through all of these years, coequals and companions through storm and sunshine. She has spoken far and wide in testimony of this work, imparting love, encouragement, and faith wherever she’s gone” (in Conference Report, Apr. 2004, 107; or *Ensign*, May 2004, 103–4).

Two days later, on April 6, 2004, President Hinckley’s wife, Marjorie Pay Hinckley, passed away. Share the following from an *Ensign* article written after she died:

“For 67 years, Marjorie Pay Hinckley kept pace with her husband, President Gordon B. Hinckley, as he traveled the world. On 6 April 2004, her mortal journey ended. Surrounded by family and loved ones, Sister Hinckley quietly passed from this world to the next due to causes incident to age. Born on 23 November 1911, she was 92.

“Often expressing surprise at the course her life had taken, Sister Hinckley often joked, ‘How did a nice girl like me end up in a mess like this?’ In an interview with Church magazines several months before her death, Sister Hinckley said, ‘Well, it turned out better than I expected. It has been a good life.’ Known for her caring heart and quick wit, she told Church magazines, ‘If we can’t laugh at life, we are in big trouble’ (see ‘At Home with the Hinckleys,’ *Liahona*, Oct. 2003, 32–37; *Ensign*, Oct. 2003, 22–27), and at her funeral services she was eulogized as ‘charity personified’ ” (“Marjorie Pay Hinckley Dies at 92,” *Ensign*, May 2004, 124).

President Hinckley testifies of the Savior.

- 💡 Explain that prophets testify of the divinity of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. They are special witnesses of the Savior. Share the following testimony President Gordon B. Hinckley shared while serving as a counselor to President Ezra Taft Benson. Have students look for the “crowning element of our faith” and what our Redeemer brings to us:

“The crowning element of our faith is our conviction of our living God, the Father of us all, and of His Beloved Son, the Redeemer of the world. It is because of our Redeemer’s life and sacrifice that we are here. It is because of His sacrificial atonement that we and all of the sons and daughters of God will partake of the salvation of the Lord. ‘For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive’ (1 Corinthians 15:22). It is because of the sacrificial redemption wrought by the Savior of the world that the great plan of the eternal gospel is made available to us, under which those who die in the Lord shall not taste of death but shall have the opportunity of going on to a celestial and eternal glory.

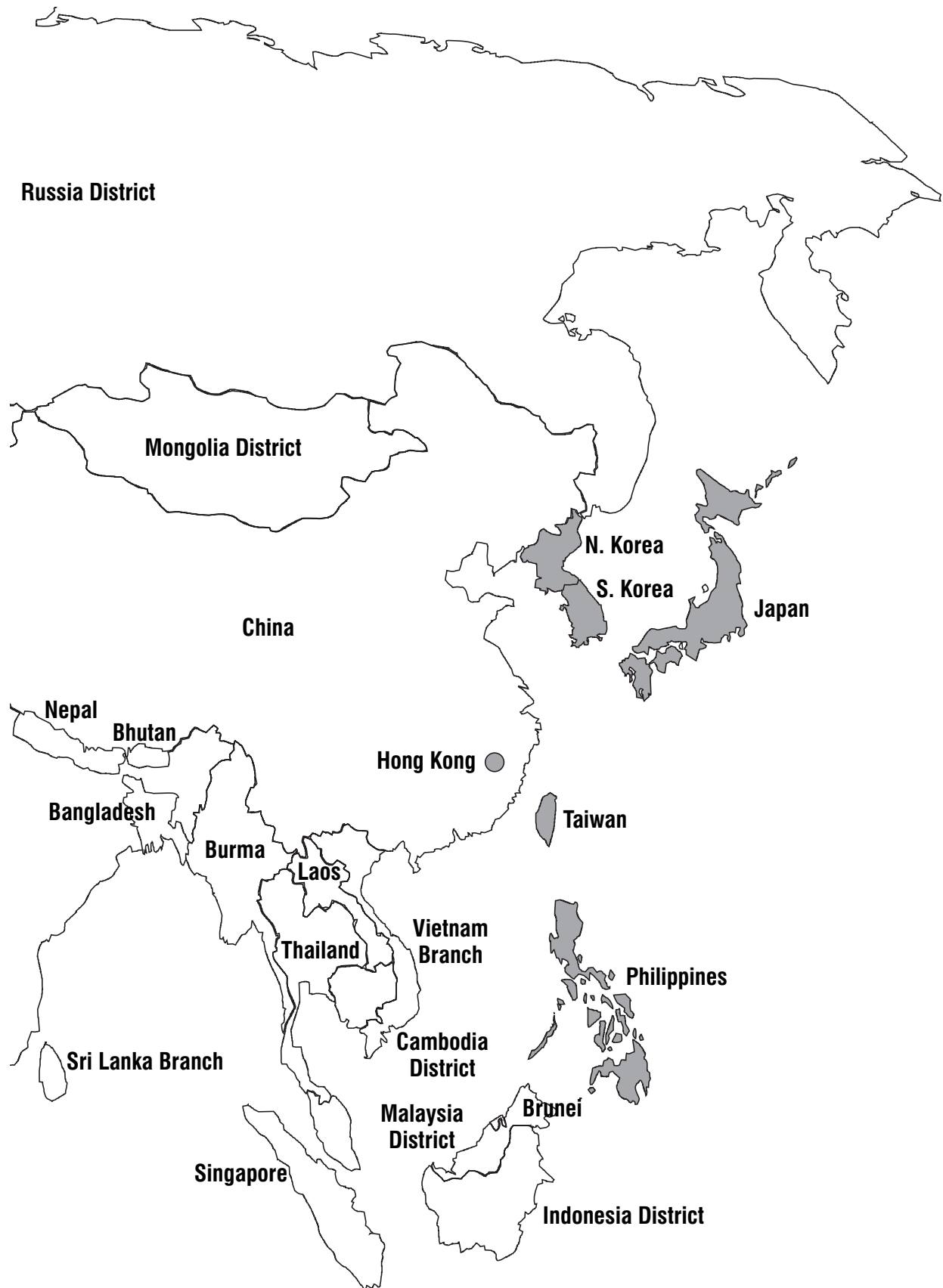
“In our own helplessness, He becomes our rescuer, saving us from damnation and bringing us to eternal life.

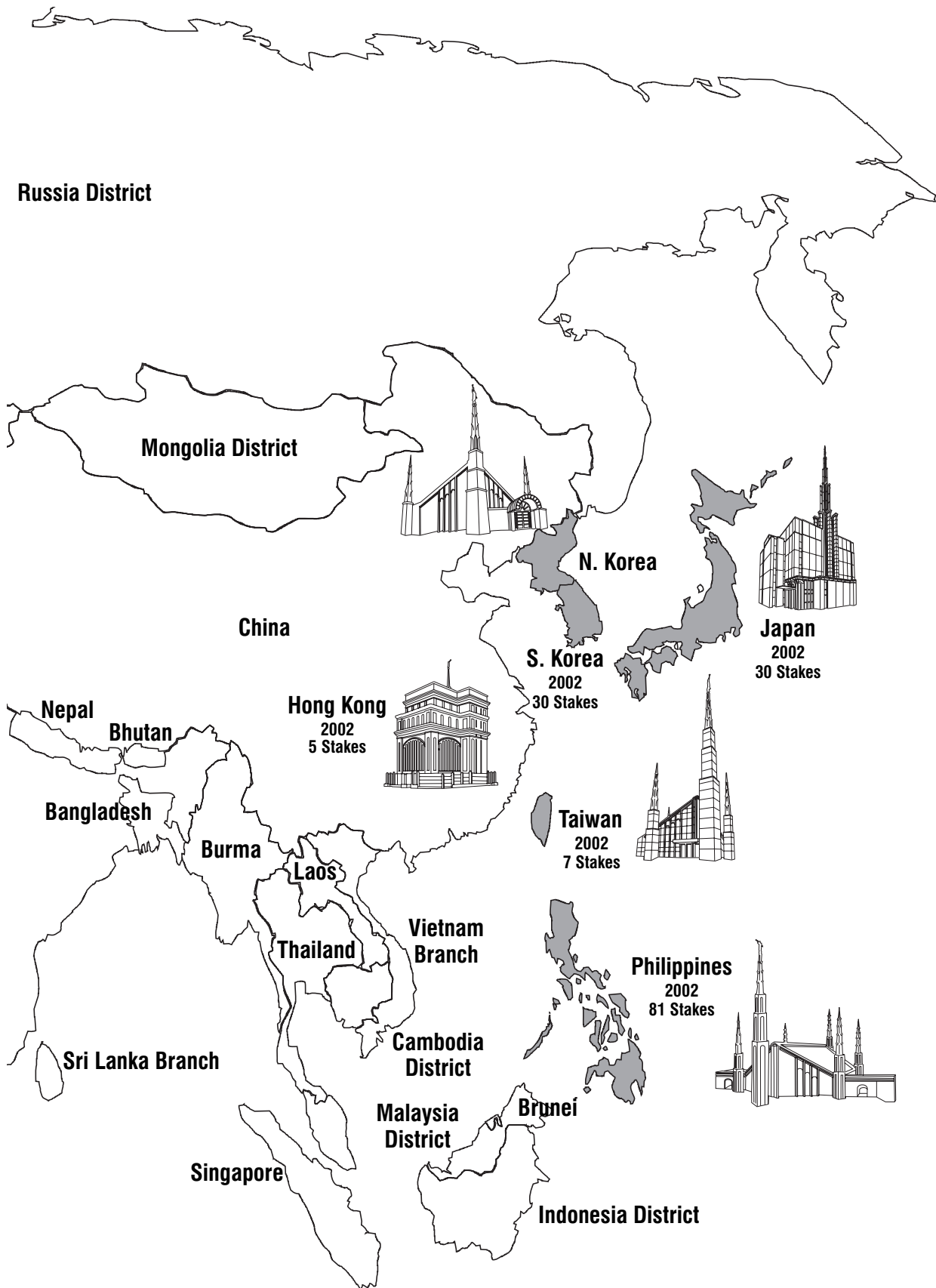
“In times of despair, in seasons of loneliness and fear, He is there on the horizon to bring succor and comfort and assurance and faith. He is our King, our Savior, our Deliverer, our Lord and our God” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1991, 77–78; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1991, 54).

Review with students “I Know . . .” in the student manual (p. 277), and ask them to list some of the things President Hinckley knows. Then ask: How are you strengthened by knowing President Hinckley’s testimony of these things?

“I know that my Redeemer lives.”

- 💡 President Gordon B. Hinckley wrote the words to the hymn “My Redeemer Lives” (*Hymns*, no. 135). Invite the class to sing the hymn, and have students look for a principle or doctrine upon which they would be willing to express their feelings.
- Share your testimony of the divine calling of latter-day prophets who have led the Church, each complementing the work of the preceding prophets to help bring people to Jesus Christ.







THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

