



# THE TEMPLE TEACHES ABOUT THE GREAT PLAN OF SALVATION

*“And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” (John 17:3).*

## OBJECTIVE

To help class members understand that the plan of salvation is taught in the temple.

## PREPARATION

1. Before class begins, prepare a chalkboard or poster illustration of the incomplete diagram showing the plan of salvation (see page 3). (You may wish to make a similar incomplete diagram on a piece of paper for each class member to complete during class discussion.)
2. Make sure that each class member has access to a copy of the scriptures. Also provide a copy of the booklet *Preparing to Enter the Holy Temple* for each class member. These should have been ordered as part of the class materials.
3. You may want to assign several class members to help you with the second section of the lesson. You could give the scripture references mentioned under each part of the plan of salvation (premortal life, the Fall, etc.) to a class member and ask him or her to come to class prepared to summarize what these scriptures teach about the plan of salvation.
4. If the *Come unto Me* videocassette (53146) is available, you may want to show “Man’s Search for Happiness,” a 13-minute segment.

## LESSON PRESENTATION

### THE TEMPLE IS A SPIRITUAL SCHOOL

Invite someone to give an opening prayer.

Explain that the scriptures will be used in each lesson. Encourage class members to bring the scriptures to each class.

Distribute a copy of *Preparing to Enter the Holy Temple* to each class member. Explain that this is the student supplement for the course. Material from the booklet will be discussed throughout the lessons, and each class member should read the booklet during the weeks the course is taught.

Begin the lesson by explaining that the temple is a spiritual school that helps us learn more about the purpose of life and the plan of salvation.

Have class members read the following quotations, which explain some of what we learn in the temple:

President Gordon B. Hinckley said that the temple “becomes a school of instruction in the sweet and sacred things of God. Here we have outlined the plan of a loving Father in behalf of His sons and daughters of all generations. Here we have sketched before us the odyssey of man’s eternal journey from premortal existence through this life to the life beyond. Great fundamental and basic truths are taught with clarity and simplicity well within the understanding of all who hear” (“The Salt Lake Temple,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1993, 5–6).

President Brigham Young taught that the temple ordinance called the endowment gives us instruction necessary for eternal life: “Your endowment is, to receive all those ordinances in the house of the Lord, which are necessary for you, after you have departed this life, to enable you to walk back to the presence of the Father” (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, sel. John A. Widtsoe [1954], 416).

Have class members read John 17:3.

- What does this scripture teach about the most important knowledge we can obtain?

Explain that in the temple, we learn more about Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, and we are able to grow closer to Them. We learn about Their plan for us, which is referred to in the scriptures by various titles, such as the plan of redemption or plan of salvation.

- What has helped you learn about the plan of salvation thus far in your life?
- How has your understanding of the plan of salvation blessed your life?

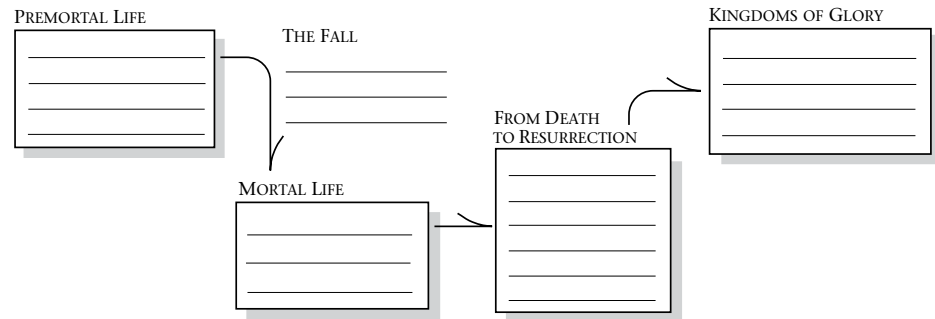
*“We will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them” (Abraham 3:25).*

#### **IN THE TEMPLE WE ARE TAUGHT THE PLAN OF SALVATION**

Explain that as part of the temple endowment, the plan of salvation is taught. This section of the lesson will help the class members prepare to understand these teachings in the temple.

Refer to the incomplete chalkboard illustration and review the following information, using the scriptures to help the class members understand the ideas. As the scriptures are discussed, write them on the appropriate lines on the chart (see the completed chart on page 5). If the class members have their own copies of the chart, have them add the scripture references to their charts.

If you have assigned class members to help you, ask them to present their information on the plan of salvation. Explain that this discussion will focus on the following questions: Where did we come from? Why are we here on earth? Where are we going after this life?



***Premortal Life***

1. We are spirit children of God, our Heavenly Father, and we lived with Him before coming to earth (see Romans 8:16–17).
2. Heavenly Father called a great council in heaven (see Abraham 3:22–23). He presented a plan for our eternal development and happiness, which is called the plan of salvation. We chose to follow His plan.
3. In harmony with the plan, Jesus Christ, the Firstborn Son of Heavenly Father, volunteered to be our Savior (see Moses 4:2; Abraham 3:27).
4. Lucifer, another son of God, rebelled against Heavenly Father’s plan and “sought to destroy the agency of man.” He and his followers were cast out of heaven and were denied the privileges of receiving a physical body and experiencing mortality. Throughout the ages, Satan, as Lucifer is now called, has tried to make all mankind miserable like himself by tempting them to be wicked (see Moses 4:1, 3–4; 2 Nephi 2:17–18).

***The Fall***

1. Adam and Eve were chosen to be the first of Heavenly Father’s children to come to earth and were placed in the Garden of Eden. At that time, their bodies were not mortal (see Moses 3:7–8, 21–23).
2. Adam and Eve chose to eat the fruit that God had forbidden them to eat. As a result, they were separated from God’s presence. This separation is called spiritual death. They became mortal, which means that their physical bodies would eventually die. They also

became able to have children. The change to the mortal condition is called the Fall (see 2 Nephi 2:19–25; D&C 29:40–41).

### ***Mortal Life***

1. All those who chose in the premortal life to follow Heavenly Father’s plan gain a physical body by being born on this earth. During our mortal life, we are tested to see whether we are willing to live by faith and obey Heavenly Father’s commandments when we are not in His physical presence (see Alma 34:32; Abraham 3:24–26).
2. In mortality, each person is free to choose whether he or she will follow God or follow Satan (see 2 Nephi 2:27).

### ***Death and Resurrection***

1. When we die, our spirits enter the spirit world, and our bodies remain on earth. This period of separation continues until the time of our resurrection. The spirits of the righteous are received into a state of peace and happiness, which is called paradise. The spirits of the wicked are placed in a state of darkness, which is sometimes referred to as a prison (see Alma 40:9–14; see also 1 Peter 3:19).
2. The Atonement and Resurrection of Jesus Christ provide the way for all mankind to overcome physical death by being resurrected. Resurrection means that our spirits and perfected bodies will be reunited for eternity (see 1 Corinthians 15:22; 2 Nephi 9:10–13; Alma 11:42–44).
3. The Atonement of Jesus Christ also provides the way for us to be forgiven and cleansed from sin so we can dwell in the presence of God. The Savior suffered for the sins of all mankind in the Garden of Gethsemane and on the cross. As a result of His Atonement, we can repent of our sins and receive forgiveness. As we live the gospel, we can qualify to receive the gift of eternal life and become like Him (see Mosiah 3:5–12).

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### ***Kingdoms of Glory***

At the time of resurrection, each person will be assigned to a kingdom of glory. Those who are righteous will inherit greater joy and blessings than those who do not obey God’s commandments (see 1 Corinthians 15:35, 40–42).

1. The telestial glory is for those who do not receive the gospel of Jesus Christ or the testimony of Jesus or the prophets of God, and who live sinful lives (see D&C 76:81–88, 98–103).
2. The terrestrial glory is for the honorable people of the earth who are deceived and for those who are not valiant in the testimony of Jesus Christ (see D&C 76:71–79).

3. The celestial glory is reserved for those who obey the commandments and receive the ordinances, overcome all things by faith in Jesus Christ, and become pure in heart (see D&C 76:50–70).

Ask class members to respond to the following questions:

- What did you learn about the plan of salvation that you did not know before?
- How do you feel when you think about Jesus Christ’s part in this great plan?
- How can we show Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ that we are grateful for Their plan?

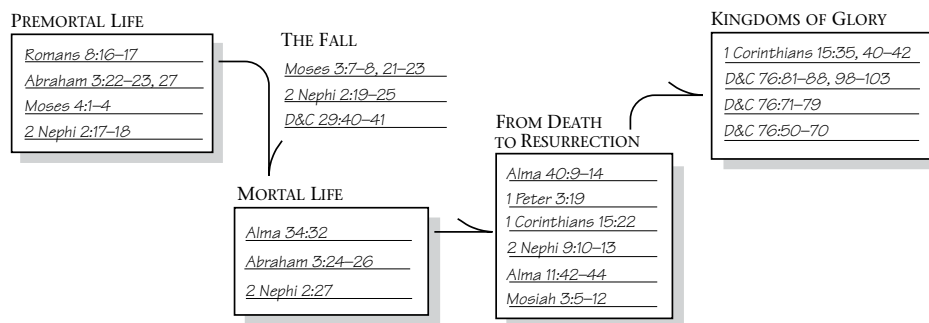
To emphasize the great importance of the Savior’s Atonement in the plan of salvation, write the third article of faith below the completed chart as shown.

### CONCLUSION

Emphasize that the temple provides us with knowledge about this plan, knowledge that brings great blessings into our lives. Bear your testimony about the blessings you have received because you understand the plan of salvation and live the principles of the gospel.

You may want to conclude by showing “Man’s Search for Happiness.”

Invite someone to give a closing prayer.



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