



Prophets Teach Me How to Strengthen My Family

*What I the Lord have spoken, I have spoken . . . ;
whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my
servants, it is the same (D&C 1:38).*

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Families are ordained of God. Before we were born, we lived as spirit sons and daughters of Heavenly Father. When it was time for us to come to earth, Heavenly Father planned for us to come to a family. He knew that families were the best way to help us prepare to return to live with Him.

Heavenly Father calls prophets to testify of Jesus Christ and teach His gospel. Prophets help families know what they need to do to be happy and to return to live with Him.

We can read about the teachings of the prophets in the scriptures. We can listen to the prophet in general conference. If we listen carefully, we can learn what Heavenly Father wants us to do. When we obey the prophet's counsel, our faith will grow. We will be able to help strengthen our family. ●

Activity

Remove page 16 from the magazine, and mount it on heavier paper. As you listen to the prophet during general conference next month, listen for what he teaches that can help strengthen your family. In the picture frames, draw pictures of you and your family doing what the prophet taught. Put your pictures in a place where they can remind you and your family of what the prophet taught.

Note: This activity may be copied or printed from the Internet at friend.lds.org.

SHARING TIME IDEAS

September Theme: *Prophets teach me how to strengthen my family.*

(Note: All songs are from *Children's Songbook* unless otherwise noted; GAK = Gospel Art Picture Kit; *TNGC* = *Teaching, No Greater Call.*) Gospel art can also be found at gospelart.lds.org.

1. *Bible prophets teach me how to strengthen my family.*

Teach that throughout the ages God has called prophets to teach and guide His children. The stories of the first prophets on earth are found in the Bible. Review with the children some of the Bible prophets by singing the first eight verses of "Follow the Prophet" (pp. 110–11) without the chorus. Children could be invited to represent each prophet with a name tag or simple object. Help the children understand that even though Bible prophets lived long ago, their teachings still help us today. On separate pieces of paper, write the name of a Bible prophet with a scripture reference for one of his teachings. Examples: Isaiah—Isaiah 54:13 (teach children about the Lord); Malachi—Malachi 3:10 (pay tithing); Enoch—Moses 6:33 (serve the Lord); James—James 1:5 (ask of God). Place the papers around the room. Blindfold a child, and have the other children guide him or her to one of the pieces of paper by singing the chorus of "Follow the Prophet." Instruct them to sing louder when the child gets close to the paper and softer when he or she moves away. When the child finds a paper, have the children look up the scripture and read it together. Ask the children how the teaching can strengthen them and their families. Continue until all the papers are found. Bear testimony of a teaching of a Bible prophet that has strengthened you.

2. *Book of Mormon prophets teach me how to strengthen my family.* Explain to the children that Book of Mormon prophets saw our day and the dangers that our families face. Book of Mormon prophets teach us what Heavenly Father wants us to do to protect and strengthen our families. Using name tags or simple costumes, have children dramatize accounts of Book of Mormon prophets that teach principles that will strengthen our families (see "Dramatizations," *TNGC*, 165–66). For example: The story of Lehi leaving Jerusalem with his family, emphasizing Lehi's obedience to the Lord's commandments (see 1 Nephi 2:1–7). Have the child who portrayed Lehi read 2 Nephi 1:4, and then discuss with the children the result of Lehi's obedience. Ask: If the Lord protected and blessed Lehi's family for being obedient, what will the Lord do when your family is obedient? (He will protect and bless your family.) Sing the third verse of "Nephi's Courage" (pp. 120–21). If there is time, dramatize the account of Alma praying for his son Alma the Younger (see Mosiah 27:8–37). Talk about how praying for family members can help strengthen our families. Sing "A Child's Prayer" (pp. 12–13). Encourage the children to watch for examples of other Book of Mormon prophets they can follow.

3. *The prophet today teaches me how to strengthen my family.* Help the children memorize "What I the Lord have spoken, I have spoken . . . ; whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my

servants, it is the same" (D&C 1:38; see "Memorization," *TNGC*, 171–72). Tell the children you are going to describe one of the Lord's servants. Have them raise their hands when they recognize who it is: he worked in the printing business; his middle name starts with an S, which stands for *Spencer*; he is the 16th President of the Church; he is the living prophet on earth today. Show a picture of President Thomas S. Monson. Emphasize that as a prophet President Monson is one of the Lord's servants and when he speaks, it is as if the Lord is speaking. He tells us what the Lord wants us to do. Write on the board and have the children repeat "President Monson teaches me how to strengthen my family." Give each class a different quote by President Monson that teaches us how to strengthen our family (see conference issues of the *Ensign*, available in your meetinghouse library or in the Gospel Library at www.lds.org). Have the children discuss with their teacher things they could do to live that particular teaching in their homes. Invite a child in each class to share the teaching. Sing "We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet" (*Hymns*, no. 19). Bear testimony that when we listen to and follow the living prophet, we are listening to and following the Lord.

4. *I will hear the words of the prophets when I listen to general conference.* Tell the children the parable in which a nobleman told his servants to plant olive trees in his vineyard and to "build a tower, that one may overlook the land round about, to be a watchman upon the tower" (see D&C 101:44–45). Explain that the watchman on the tower has a better view and can see far off. He can help protect others by warning them when danger is coming. Teach the children that prophets and apostles are our watchmen on the tower. They have been called by the Lord to watch over and protect us. Sing verse nine of "Follow the Prophet" (pp. 110–11). Prepare the children to listen to the upcoming general conference by helping them learn the names and recognize the faces of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Play a matching game using individual pictures of each. Have the children look at the pictures and repeat the names. (Pictures can be found in the May and November issues of the *Ensign*.) On one side of the board, list the names of the First Presidency and the Twelve Apostles. On the other side of the board, post their pictures in random order. Let the children take turns matching the pictures with the names. Teach and testify that we can trust the living prophets. If we listen to and obey their words, we will be safe.

5. *Friend* references: "Follow the Prophet," Oct. 2004, 14–15; "My Family," Feb. 2004, 20–21; "Prophets Teach Me to Strengthen My Family," Oct. 2004, 40–41; "Follow the Prophet," Mar. 2006, 18–19; "Prophets," May 2003, 32–33; "Who Am I?" Jan. 2008, 15; "I Will Follow the Prophet Today," Oct. 2006, 14–15; "Prophets—Called of God for Us," Jan. 2001, 28.