

# I have a hard time reading the scriptures because the language is different from what I'm used to. How can I understand them better?

**W**hen you start learning a new language or a new subject in school, how quickly do you learn it? You probably don't expect to understand everything immediately, right? For most people, it takes time and work.

Studying the scriptures can be like that; it takes time and effort to learn the language of the scriptures, but help is available. Here are a few ideas to improve your understanding of the scriptures:

1. Pray to understand what you are reading.
2. Set aside regular time to study and search the scriptures.
3. Use the resources available at [lds.org/scriptures/study-helps](https://lds.org/scriptures/study-helps).
4. Ponder what you are reading, and then write down your impressions, thoughts, and feelings.
5. Talk with parents, Church leaders or teachers, or seminary teachers for help understanding especially difficult parts.

When Jesus visited the Nephites, He taught them out of the scriptures and asked them to “go ye unto your homes, and ponder upon the things which I have said, and ask of the Father, in my name, that ye may understand, and prepare your minds for the morrow, and I come unto you again” (3 Nephi 17:3).

That counsel still applies to us today. When we take the time to study and ponder the scriptures, great blessings will come to us as we begin to understand and apply what we learn. **NE**



## Begin with Prayer

Begin your scripture study with prayer.

Tell Heavenly Father that you are trying to

understand His word, and ask Him to send His Spirit to help you. After this first step, try reading the stories you already know, such as Nephi's family leaving Jerusalem, God commanding Abraham to sacrifice Isaac, Jesus Christ healing the lepers, or Joseph Smith's First Vision.

Reading at least a little bit every day shows Heavenly Father that you are willing to sacrifice time and make the effort to understand His word.

*Erica C., 17, Kansas, USA*

## Attend Seminary

An amazing thing about seminary is that it helps me understand things much better. Without seminary, I don't think that I would fully appreciate all of the amazing things the scriptures talk about. You don't just read, but you study, ponder, and realize so many new things.

*Jillian J., 16, Utah, USA*



## Pray and Fast

I am learning to speak English, and since the scriptures

are not in my native

language, I often do not understand the scriptures. I have a hard time with it, but I pray and my Heavenly Father answers me and helps me to

understand what I am reading. Bring yourself closer to Heavenly Father by praying and fasting. Call on Him in the name of Jesus Christ and ask for help. Without Him, nothing will work out, but with Him, everything will be OK, more peaceful, and more comfortable.

*Feven J., 15, Colorado, USA*



### Find What the Stories Are Saying

If you pray to know what the words are trying to convey to you, knowledge will come. Then you will be able to find out for yourself what the stories are saying to you through God's words.

*Emily H., 14, Georgia, USA*



### Take Time to Ask for Help

Take time to ask for guidance from the Lord to help you understand what you will read. Study more about the language of the scriptures. You can seek guidance from your parents and ask them to help you.

*Nino L., 17, Philippines*

### Have Faith

Sometimes the language they use in the scriptures is confusing, and it can be hard to understand what the stories are trying to teach you. Try saying a prayer before you read and ask Heavenly Father to send the Spirit

to help you more clearly understand the scriptures. Then have faith that the Spirit will enlighten your understanding, open your mind, and testify of the truthfulness of the words to you.

*Angela L., 15, Texas, USA*



### Get Help Books

Read the scripture manuals that the Church has available (at [lds.org/go/manualsNE516](https://lds.org/go/manualsNE516)). If you are confused about what you are reading, you can look in the manuals for additional help. They have helped me a lot to understand the scriptures.

*Aden S., 14, Utah, USA*



### Read Consistently

Like any other skill, scripture study takes practice and effort to reap the full rewards and to understand the language. By reading each day, you show the Lord



### KEEP READING

“Make scripture reading a part of your regular routine, and the blessings will

follow. There is in the scriptures a voice of warning, but there is also great nourishment.

“If the language of the scriptures at first seems strange to you, keep reading. Soon you will come to recognize the beauty and power found on those pages.”

**President Boyd K. Packer (1924–2015), President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “The Key to Spiritual Protection,” Ensign, Nov. 2013, 27.**

you are humble and teachable so He will help you learn little by little as you look to His word for guidance. Reading each day helps me better understand gospel principles, and I learn more each time I open them and invite the Spirit into my life.

*Samantha S., 18, Arizona, USA*

*Responses are intended for help and perspective, not as official pronouncements of Church doctrine.*

## UPCOMING QUESTION

“How can I know if I’m ready to receive my patriarchal blessing, and how do I prepare?”

Send your answer and photo by June 15, 2016.

Go to [newera.lds.org](https://newera.lds.org), click “Submit Your Work,” sign in with your LDS Account, and then select “New Era” under “Choose Magazine.” Click “Add File” to select your file and your photos, and then click “Submit” to upload.

Responses may be edited for length or clarity.