



Scriptures

Chapter 10

The Scriptures Are Available to Us Today

- What are some of the blessings that we enjoy today because the scriptures are so accessible?

When the Lord's servants speak or write under the influence of the Holy Ghost, their words become scripture (see D&C 68:4). From the beginning, the Lord has commanded His prophets to keep a record of His revelations and His dealings with His children. He said: "I command all men, both in the east and in the west, and in the north, and in the south, and in the islands of the sea, that they shall write the words which I speak unto them; for out of the books which shall be written I will judge the world, every man according to their works, according to that which is written" (2 Nephi 29:11).

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints accepts four books as scripture: the Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price. These books are called the standard works of the Church. The inspired words of our living prophets are also accepted as scripture.

The Bible

The Bible is a collection of sacred writings containing God's revelations to man. These writings cover many centuries, from the time of Adam through the time when the Apostles of Jesus Christ lived. They were written by many prophets who lived at various times in the history of the world.

For teachers: To encourage discussion about the four standard works, you could assign each class member or family member a number between 1 and 4. Ask those with number 1 to read what this chapter teaches about the Bible, those with number 2 to read what this chapter teaches about the Book of Mormon, those with number 3 to read what this chapter teaches about the Doctrine and Covenants, and those with number 4 to read what this chapter teaches about the Pearl of Great Price. Then ask them to share what they have learned.

The Bible is divided into two sections: the Old Testament and the New Testament. Many prophecies in the Old Testament foretell the coming of a Savior and Redeemer. The New Testament tells of the life of that Savior and Redeemer, who is Jesus Christ. It also tells of the establishing of His Church in that day. “We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly” (Articles of Faith 1:8).

Through the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Lord has expanded our understanding of some passages in the Bible. The Lord inspired the Prophet Joseph to restore truths to the Bible text that had been lost or changed since the original words were written. These inspired corrections are called the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible. In the Latter-day Saint edition of the King James Version of the Bible, selected passages from the Joseph Smith Translation are found on pages 797–813 and in many footnotes.

The Book of Mormon

The Book of Mormon is a sacred record of some of the people who lived on the American continents between about 2000 B.C. and A.D. 400. It contains the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ (see D&C 20:9; 42:12; 135:3). The Book of Mormon tells of the visit Jesus Christ made to the people in the Americas soon after His Resurrection.

Joseph Smith translated the Book of Mormon into English through the gift and power of God. He said that it is “the most correct of any book on earth, and the keystone of our religion, and a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than by any other book” (introduction to the Book of Mormon).

President Ezra Taft Benson helped us understand how the Book of Mormon is the keystone of our religion. He said:

“There are three ways in which the Book of Mormon is the keystone of our religion. It is the keystone in our witness of Christ. It is the keystone of our doctrine. It is the keystone of testimony.

“The Book of Mormon is the keystone in our witness of Jesus Christ, who is Himself the cornerstone of everything we do. It bears witness of His reality with power and clarity. . . .

“[It] broadens our understandings of the doctrines of salvation. . . . The Book of Mormon . . . was written for our day. . . . In [it] we find a pattern for preparing for the Second Coming. . . .

“ . . . The Book of Mormon teaches us truth [and] bears testimony of Christ. . . . But there is something more. There is a power in the book which will begin to flow into your lives the moment you begin a serious study of the book. You will find greater power to resist temptation. You will find the power to avoid deception. You will find the power to stay on the strait and narrow path. The scriptures are called ‘the words of life,’ and nowhere is that more true than it is of the Book of Mormon. . . . ‘Every Latter-day Saint should make the study of this book a lifetime pursuit’ ” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1986, 4–7; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 5–7; quoting Marion G. Romney, in Conference Report, Apr. 1980, 90; or *Ensign*, May 1980, 67).

The Doctrine and Covenants

The Doctrine and Covenants is a collection of modern revelations. In section 1 of the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord reveals that the book is published to the inhabitants of the earth to prepare them for His coming:

“Wherefore the voice of the Lord is unto the ends of the earth, that all that will hear may hear:

“Prepare ye, prepare ye for that which is to come, for the Lord is nigh” (D&C 1:11–12).

This book contains the revelations regarding the Church of Jesus Christ as it has been restored in these last days. Several sections of the book explain the organization of the Church and define the offices of the priesthood and their functions. Other sections, such as sections 76 and 88, contain glorious truths that were lost to the world for hundreds of years. Still others, such as sections 29 and 93, shed light on teachings in the Bible. In addition, some sections, such as section 133, contain prophecies of events to come. God has commanded us to study His revelations in this book: “Search these commandments, for they are true and faithful, and the prophecies and promises which are in them shall all be fulfilled” (D&C 1:37).

The Pearl of Great Price

The Pearl of Great Price contains the book of Moses, the book of Abraham, and some inspired writings of Joseph Smith. The book of Moses contains an account of some of the visions and writings of Moses, revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith. It clarifies doctrines and teachings that were lost from the Bible and gives added information concerning the Creation of the earth.

The book of Abraham was translated by the Prophet Joseph Smith from a papyrus scroll taken from the Egyptian catacombs. This book contains valuable information about the Creation, the gospel, the nature of God, and the priesthood.

The writings of Joseph Smith include part of Joseph Smith's inspired translation of the Bible, selections from his *History of the Church*, and the Articles of Faith.

- What are some stories from the scriptures that have inspired you? What are some teachings from these books of scripture that have helped you?

Words of Our Living Prophets

In addition to these four books of scripture, the inspired words of our living prophets become scripture to us. Their words come to us through conferences, the *Liahona* or *Ensign* magazine, and instructions to local priesthood leaders. "We believe all that God has revealed, all that He does now reveal, and we believe that He will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the Kingdom of God" (Articles of Faith 1:9).

- Where can we find the words of our living prophets?

Studying the Scriptures

- What blessings can we receive when we study the scriptures?

We should each study the scriptures every day. We should share these truths with our children. We should read the standard works with our children so they will learn to love them and use them for the truths they contain.

If we desire to avoid the evils of this world, we must feed our minds with the truth and righteousness found in the scriptures. We will grow closer to God and to each other as we read and ponder the scriptures together.

As we read, ponder, and pray about the scriptures and ask God for understanding, the Holy Ghost will bear witness to us of the truth of these things. We will each know for ourselves that these things are true. We will not be deceived (see Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:37). We can receive the same feelings Nephi expressed when he said, “My soul delighteth in the things of the Lord; and my heart pondereth continually upon the things which I have seen and heard” (2 Nephi 4:16).

- How can we keep the commitment to study the scriptures each day? Consider planning a time and a place to study the scriptures each day.

Additional Scriptures

- 1 Nephi 14:20–26 (prophets commanded to write)
- 1 Nephi 19:1–3, 6–7; Alma 37:1–8 (great worth of scriptures)
- 2 Nephi 33:10 (scriptures testify of Christ)
- Alma 29:8 (Lord speaks to all nations through scriptures)
- Alma 31:5; Helaman 3:29–30 (the word of God is powerful)
- Helaman 15:7–8 (scriptures lead us to be firm and steadfast in the faith)
- 2 Timothy 3:16–17; 1 Nephi 19:21–24 (why and how scriptures are given)
- 2 Peter 1:20; Alma 13:20; D&C 10:62 (scriptures bring to light true points of doctrine)
- D&C 128:18; Articles of Faith 1:9; 1 Nephi 14:25–26 (scriptures yet to come)
- 2 Nephi 29:3–10 (scriptures to Jews and to Gentiles)