

The Baptismal Covenant

Lesson 13

Purpose To help the children understand that when they are baptized, they make a covenant with Heavenly Father.

Preparation *Note:* Because this lesson may need a great deal of adaptation for four-, five-, and six-year olds, you might want to wait to teach it until the children are almost ready for baptism.

1. Prayerfully study Mosiah 18:8–10 and Alma 7:15–16.
2. Prepare the following wordstrips:

Obey the commandments

Forgive me

Gift of the Holy Ghost

Live with him forever

3. Make two paper signs by folding paper lengthwise, and label them as shown:

I promise

Heavenly Father promises

4. Prepare to help the children sing or say the words to “Baptism” (*Children’s Songbook*, p. 100).
5. Materials needed:
 - a. A Book of Mormon.
 - b. A paper badge for each child with the words on it, “I can keep my promises.”
 - c. Cutout figures of a boy and a girl (cutouts 3-1 and 3-2).
 - d. A paper bag large enough to hold wordstrips.
 - e. Chalk, chalkboard, and eraser.
 - f. CTR shield and ring.
 - g. Picture 3-13, Boy Being Baptized (62018); picture 3-10, The First Vision (62470; Gospel Art Picture Kit 403); picture 3-23, Child Reading the Scriptures; picture 3-24, Child Praying; picture 3-25, Going to Church; picture 3-26, Child Paying Tithing; picture 3-27, Sharing the Tricycle (62317); picture 3-28, Choosing Right.
6. Make the necessary preparations for any enrichment activities that you will be using.

**Suggested
Lesson
Development**

Invite a child to give the opening prayer.

Follow up with the children if you encouraged them to do something during the week.

Promises and Covenants

Attention activity

Invite one of the children to help you. Tell him that if he will do as you ask, you will give him something special. Ask him to do a simple task, such as turn around two times and shake your hand. Ask him to promise to do his best in doing it. Then let him do it. After he does the task, tell him that you will keep your part of the promise. Pin or tape on his shirt a badge with the words, "I can keep my promises." Tell the children that both you and the child who helped you kept your promises. Then allow the rest of the children to earn a badge by doing the same thing.

- What did we each promise to do?
- What happened when you kept your promise?

Story

Tell the following story in your own words:

Stephen was about to go out to play one morning when his mother handed him a bag of apples.

"This bag of apples is for Sister Jones down the street. Could you deliver them for me?" she asked.

"Sure," said Stephen as he took the bag.

"Be sure you deliver the apples before you play, and be careful not to drop any on the ground," cautioned his mother. "Take them right to Sister Jones."

"I will. I promise!" said Stephen.

When Stephen came out of his house with the bag of apples, two of his friends were waiting for him. They were starting up a game and wanted him to play.

"I've got to deliver these apples first," Stephen replied.

One of the boys said, "Oh, you can do that later. We can only play for an hour, so we need to get started."

"No, I'll do this first. I promised my mother."

As he walked, Stephen began to swing the bag of apples in the air. Then he remembered his promise. If he swung the bag high in the air an apple might fall out and get bruised. He held the bag carefully as he walked the rest of the way to Sister Jones's house.

As he handed the bag to Sister Jones, Stephen smiled.

Story discussion

- What did Stephen promise his mother?
- How do you think Stephen felt knowing he had kept his promise?

Chalkboard discussion

Print *promise* on the chalkboard, and ask the children what they think it means. Point out that when you agree to do something or say you will do it, you are making a promise.

Situation discussion

Tell the children that there is another kind of promise, a two-way promise. Have them listen carefully to the following situation so they can tell what Jean and her father promised each other:

Jean excitedly told her father that the circus was in town and asked if they could go. Father reminded Jean that yesterday the wind had blown lots of loose trash into the yard, and it needed to be cleaned up. Jean frowned. Father told her that if she cleaned the yard in the morning, he would take her to the circus that afternoon. Both Jean and her father made a promise to each other.

- What was Jean's part of the promise?
- What was her father's part of the promise?
- If Jean broke her part of the promise, would her father still need to keep his part of the promise? (No.)

Chalkboard discussion

Print *covenant* on the chalkboard. Have the children say it with you.

- What is a covenant?

Explain that a covenant is a two-way promise. When you make a covenant with someone, you agree to do certain things and that person agrees to do certain things.

We Make a Covenant at Baptism

Scripture discussion

Tell the children that when they are eight years old, they can make a very important covenant. Tell them to listen to the following scripture so they can tell with whom the covenant is made and how it is made. Read and explain Alma 7:15, starting at "come and go forth."

- According to this scripture, with whom do you make a covenant? (Heavenly Father.)
- What must you do to show that you make the covenant with Heavenly Father? (Be baptized.)

Picture and discussion

Display picture 3-13, Boy Being Baptized. Explain that the covenant we are talking about is called the baptismal covenant. When we are baptized, we show Heavenly Father that we are making a covenant with him. We promise to do something, and Heavenly Father promises to do something.

Song

With the children, sing or say the words to "Baptism":

Jesus came to John the Baptist,
In Judea long ago,
And was baptized by immersion
In the River Jordan's flow.

Wordstrips and discussion

Explain the following information, and ask the questions. Allow the children to explain as much as they can. Help them as needed. During the discussion, show the appropriate wordstrips. Then fold them and put them in the paper bag.

When we are baptized, we promise Heavenly Father that we will obey his commandments. (Show the wordstrip.)

- What are some of Heavenly Father's commandments?
- What do we promise Heavenly Father when we are baptized? (To obey the commandments.)

This is our part of the covenant. If we keep our promise, Heavenly Father promises to forgive us when we repent (show the wordstrip) and to give us the gift of the Holy Ghost (show the wordstrip). He promises that we will live with him forever (show the wordstrip).

- What is Heavenly Father’s part of the covenant? (He will forgive us when we repent. He will give us the gift of the Holy Ghost. He will let us live with him forever.)

Activity

Display picture 3-10, The First Vision, and the two cutout figures. Have a child point out Heavenly Father in the picture. Read the two signs and have a child place “I promise” by the cutout figures; then have a child place “Heavenly Father promises” by the picture of the First Vision. Have each child take a wordstrip out of the bag, read it (or have you read it), and place it in front of the correct sign. Repeat the activity until everyone has had at least one turn. Review the two lists. Explain that the commandments we promise to obey include the teachings of Jesus Christ we have learned in Primary and at home.

Summary

Pictures

Display the six pictures illustrating the commandments (pictures 3-23 through 3-28), the CTR shield, and a CTR ring. Have each child name a commandment illustrated by the pictures and the shield. (The pictures illustrate reading the scriptures, praying, going to Church, paying tithing, loving others, and choosing the right. Help the children understand that these are not the only commandments we promise to obey. You might want to have them suggest others.)

Encourage the children to look at their CTR rings and think about keeping their promise to Heavenly Father whenever they look at their rings. They should remember that being baptized includes promising to keep his commandments.

Teacher testimony

Emphasize the importance of keeping promises, especially those we make with our Heavenly Father. Bear testimony that Heavenly Father loves all of the children and wants to keep his part of the baptismal covenant. Encourage the children to prepare to make and keep the baptismal covenant by keeping the promises they make.

Invite a child to give the closing prayer.

Enrichment Activities

Choose from the following activities those that will work best for your children. You can use them in the lesson itself or as a review or summary. For additional guidance, see “Class Time” in “Helps for the Teacher.”

1. Show to the children *Baptism—A Promise to Follow Jesus* (9 minutes) on *Primary Video Collection* (53179), and discuss the following questions:
 - What did Luis promise his parents?
 - What did Luis promise Heavenly Father when he was baptized?
2. Prepare a copy of “My Baptismal Covenant,” located at the end of the lesson, for each child. Read it with the children. Help or have each child write his or her name on the line provided. Encourage them to keep the handout in a special place so they will see it and think about it often.



MY BAPTISMAL COVENANT

I, _____, promise
to obey Heavenly Father's commandments.

If I keep my part of this covenant,
Heavenly Father promises to—

1. Forgive me when I repent.
2. Give me the gift of the Holy Ghost.
3. Let me live with him forever.