

The Atonement of Jesus Christ

Lesson 22

Purpose To help the children realize that people can repent because Jesus Christ atoned for our sins.

Preparation

1. Prayerfully study Luke 22:39–46 and Mosiah 27, and be prepared to tell the account of Alma’s repentance.
2. Bring the wordstrips used in lesson 10 (“Feel sorry,” “Ask forgiveness,” “Right the wrong,” “Don’t repeat the wrong”).
3. Remember that children younger than eight years old are not yet accountable and do not need to repent of sin. Encourage them to always do what is right.
4. Materials needed:
 - a. A Book of Mormon and a Doctrine and Covenants.
 - b. A large rock or other heavy object and a bag in which to place it so a child can carry it over his shoulder. Label the rock or object with a tag marked “stealing.”
 - c. Cutouts: Alma the Younger (cutout 3-3), the four sons of Mosiah (cutout 3-4), and an angel (cutout 3-5).
 - d. Picture 3-46, Jesus Praying in Gethsemane (62175; Gospel Art Picture Kit 227).
5. 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.

People Can Repent of Wrong Choices

Attention activity

Tell the class the following story:

While Josh and his mother were shopping, Josh had taken something from the store without paying for it. Josh knew he had done the wrong thing. He had just been baptized and knew that he should have chosen the right.

Show the children the large rock (or other heavy object) in a bag.

Ask the class how Josh felt about what he had stolen. Have a child pretend to be Josh. Have the child carry the bag over his shoulder. Explain that Josh did not feel good about stealing. It was like a heavy weight inside that kept him from being completely happy.

- How could Josh become happier? (By repenting.)

- What can Josh do to correct his wrong choice? (Repent.)

Display on the chalkboard the four wordstrips. Remind the children that they learned about repentance in an earlier lesson.

- What can Josh do to repent? (Answers might include the following: take back what he had stolen, pay for what he had stolen, apologize to the storekeeper, and offer to do something for the storekeeper to make up for the wrong.)

After the children explain how Josh can repent, remove the heavy stone from the child's bag. Explain that when we repent, we free ourselves from heavy, sad feelings, and we are happier.

Tell the class that the opportunity to repent and be forgiven is a wonderful blessing.

Picture

Display picture 3-46, Jesus Praying in Gethsemane. Tell the children that the Savior made it possible for people to be forgiven.

Jesus Christ Atoned for Our Sins

Teacher presentation

Explain that shortly before Jesus Christ died on the cross, he and his Apostles went to a garden called Gethsemane. Three of the Apostles—Peter, James, and John—went into the garden with him. They waited a short distance away while Jesus went farther into the garden and prayed to Heavenly Father. Jesus knew that he would have to suffer for us so that we could repent and be forgiven of our sins. In the Garden of Gethsemane and on the cross, Jesus suffered great pain for us. He suffered for our sins, or the wrong things we do.

Write the word *Atonement* on the chalkboard. Explain that the Atonement means that Jesus Christ paid the price for our sins so that we could repent and be forgiven. He did this because he loves us and because he wanted to make it possible for us to repent and be clean. We say that he atoned for our sins and wrong choices. Have the class say the word *Atonement*.

Heavenly Father loves us, too, and wants each one of us to repent and live with him again. Because of the atonement of Jesus Christ, we can be forgiven for sins and wrong choices we make after the age of eight.

Alma the Younger Repented

Scripture story with cutouts

In your own words, tell the class of Alma's repentance and conversion. Show the cutouts when speaking of each character.

Tell the children that a Book of Mormon prophet named Alma had a son who was very rebellious and did many things that were wrong. This prophet Alma is the same man we learned about in the story of Abinadi. He listened to the Holy Ghost and became a great teacher and leader in the Church. His son was also named Alma. We often call the son Alma the Younger so we don't confuse him with his father.

Bring out the following points from the scripture story found in Mosiah 27:8–14:

1. Alma the Younger did not obey his father. He and four of his friends went about trying to destroy the Church by teaching the people to do wrong.
2. Many people believed Alma the Younger and stopped keeping the commandments.

Discussion	<p>3. Alma the Younger's father was worried about his son and the members of the Church.</p> <p>4. The father prayed that his son would learn the truth.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did Heavenly Father answer the prayer of Alma the Younger's father? (He sent an angel to tell Alma and his friends to repent.) • Does anyone know what happened after that? <p>Let the children continue to tell as much of the story as they can. Bring out the following points:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Alma and his friends were so afraid when they saw the angel that they fell to the earth. 2. Alma lost his ability to speak or to move. 3. His friends carried him to his father's house and told his father all that had happened. 4. For two days Alma's father and the priests of the Church fasted and prayed that Alma might regain his strength and speak to them. 5. Their prayers were answered, and Alma the Younger stood up and said something that made his father very happy and grateful.
Review activity	<p>To find out what Alma the Younger said, read or have an older child read the following from Mosiah 27:24: "For, said he, I have repented of my sins."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did Alma say he had done? <p>Tell the children that you want them to answer some questions and to discuss how we know that Alma the Younger really repented. Refer to the posted wordstrips as you review.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did Alma the Younger feel sorry for what he had done? • Whom did Alma the Younger need to ask to forgive him? (Heavenly Father; his father, Alma; and the Church.) <p>Explain that to right the wrong, Alma went from city to city telling everyone about the true Church. He became a missionary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you think that Alma truly repented? (Emphasize how completely Alma's life changed after he repented.) • Why was Alma able to be forgiven when he repented? (Because of the atonement of Jesus Christ, who would later suffer for Alma the Younger's sins.)
Summary	<p>Tell the children that because of Jesus Christ's love and atonement, people can repent when they do something wrong, and Heavenly Father and Jesus will forgive them. Explain that it is much better not to do wrong things so we do not need to repent. But when we do sin, we can repent and become clean and pure. Jesus promises us that he will not even remember the wrong things we do if we truly repent (see D&C 58:42).</p>
Teacher testimony	<p>Bear your testimony about the atonement of Jesus Christ and the importance of repentance.</p> <p>Invite a child to give the closing prayer.</p>

**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. Help the older children memorize the third article of faith. Review this article of faith with the younger children. Explain any words or concepts to the children that they do not understand.
2. Write Doctrine and Covenants 19:16 on the chalkboard, and have older members of the class read it together. Explain that “God” in this verse means Jesus Christ. Ask the children to explain the verse in their own words.

Explain that Heavenly Father loves us and wants us to live with him again. But before we can live with him, we have to repent of all our sins and be forgiven.

- Why was Jesus Christ willing to suffer pain for each one of us? (Because he loves us.)
- How did Jesus Christ’s suffering help us? (Because he suffered pain for our sins, we can repent and be forgiven.)

Distribute a copy of the handout below and a pencil to each child who can read and write. Read the message with them. Ask who can discover what letters go in the blanks. The first six blanks are for the letters of the word *repent*, and the second nine blanks are for *Atonement*. Have the children fill in the blanks. Challenge the children to take the message home, read it to their parents, and explain what they learned in Primary. Conclude the activity by reading the message aloud as a class.

3. Sing or say the words to “Dare to Do Right” (*Children’s Songbook*, p. 158); the words are included at the back of this manual.

A Special Message

I can be forgiven when I _____ because of
the _____ of Jesus.