





LIKENING THE SCRIPTURES TO OUR PERSONAL LIVES

The scriptures are alive. Though they were written long ago, they have application today. That makes them powerful.

Likening the scriptures to our personal lives helps us discover gospel principles and receive revelation. Nephi testified, “I did liken all scriptures unto us, that it might be for our profit and learning” (1 Nephi 19:23). Even though the scriptures were written long ago, they provide inspiration for our modern-day dilemmas when we learn to liken them to ourselves.

Moroni, the righteous military commander in the Book of Mormon, likened to his personal life words spoken some 1,700 years earlier by the Old Testament patriarch Jacob (see Alma 46:24–25). Moroni’s application of Jacob’s words inspired him to make the “title of liberty” and rallied the Nephites to enter into a covenant to stand firm against wickedness. By likening Jacob’s words to their own situation, Moroni and the Nephites re-established peace in their war-torn community (see Alma 46:30–38).

An institute teacher who helped his class liken the scriptures to themselves related the following: “I wanted my students to see that even though the scriptures were written long ago, they can provide inspiration for our modern-day dilemmas. I asked them to think about a current challenge

they were facing. I then assigned them to read silently a chapter in Moroni, looking for something that could help them with their challenge. After they had studied quietly for 10 minutes, I asked them to raise their hand if they found a verse that helped them. I was pleased, and I think they were amazed, to see that almost everyone had. Likening the scriptures to our personal lives leads to inspiration about the questions or concerns we encounter today.”

Compare Scriptural Events to Our Own Lives

One way to liken the scriptures to ourselves is to compare events in the scriptures to events in our lives. One member who learned how to liken the scriptures to himself told of his experience with Ether chapter 6. “The first few times I read the chapter, I saw only an account of the Jaredites’ journey across the ocean. However, as I read it again one day, it occurred to me to liken their journey across the ocean to my journey in mortality. As I did so, I discovered insights that strengthened my faith in Jesus Christ. The stones that gave light so the Jaredites would not have to cross the ocean in darkness reminded me of prophets, scriptures, and the Holy Ghost that give me light so I won’t have to go through mortality in darkness or confusion (see Ether 6:3). I likened the wind from the Lord that moved the Jaredite vessels “towards the promised land” to the experiences the



Lord provides that help me progress toward heaven (see Ether 6:5). It seemed to me that their being under the water was like my trials or times of stress (see Ether 6:6). But just as prayer persuaded the Lord to bring them ‘upon the top of the waters’ (Ether 6:7) for fresh air and sunshine, so I could pray for relief from my trials and stress.

Find the Principle Being Taught

Another way to liken the scriptures to our personal lives is to look past the story and find the principle being taught. For example, Nephi was commanded to build a boat. Though he had never done such a thing, he went about his task with great personal effort and received divine help. We may not be asked to build a boat, but we may be asked to do things that seem beyond our abilities. Like Nephi, we can exert our personal effort to “go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded” and exercise faith that the Lord will “prepare a way for [us] that [we] may accomplish the thing which he commandeth” (1 Nephi 3:7). One principle

HELPS TO LIKEN THE SCRIPTURES TO OUR PERSONAL LIVES

Ask one or more of the following questions to help you liken the scriptures to your life. Check the cross-references and the Topical Guide for further insight on a topic of interest.

- What situations in my life are like the situations in these verses?
- What are the principles in this chapter that will help me in my own circumstances?
- What events or circumstances in my day are like the events or circumstances in these verses?
- Is there something in this chapter that helps me with a current personal problem, question, challenge, or concern?
- Is there something taught that is similar to what the living prophet and apostles are teaching today?
- Is there something taught that could help with an issue the world is struggling with today?

taught in this story is to be diligent in obeying the Lord’s commands. We can liken Nephi’s example to ourselves by diligently obeying the things the Lord asks us to do.

Insert Your Name

Another way to liken scriptures to our personal lives is to substitute our names for names in the scriptures. For example, in Doctrine and Covenants 42:22 a husband wrote his wife’s name above the words “thy wife.” Now, every time he reads that verse it is personalized: “Thou shalt love Debra with all thy heart, and shalt cleave unto her and none else.”

The scriptures are described as “quick and powerful” (Helaman 3:29; see also Hebrews 4:12). The word *quick* in these verses means “living.” In other words, the scrip-

tures are alive. Though they were written long ago, they have application today. That makes them powerful. We can profit and learn from them. Likening scriptures to our personal lives will invite inspired thoughts to help us with our modern-day personal experiences. ■