

Lesson
23

Alma Counsels His Sons Helaman and Shiblon

Purpose To teach the children that the scriptures were given to us as a source of joy in this life and as a guide for us to return to Heavenly Father and gain eternal life.

Preparation

1. Prayerfully study Alma 37–38. Then study the lesson and decide how you want to teach the children the scripture account. (See “Preparing Your Lessons,” p. vi, and “Teaching from the Scriptures,” p. vii.)
2. Select the discussion questions and enrichment activities that will involve the children and best help them achieve the purpose of the lesson.
3. Prepare a copy of the handout “The Scriptures” (at the end of the lesson) for each child. (Optional)
4. Prepare the wordstrip “Eternal Life.”
5. Materials needed:
 - a. A Book of Mormon for each child.
 - b. A small picture of Jesus Christ or the wordstrip “Jesus Christ.”
 - c. Pictures 4-9, Jesus the Christ (Gospel Art Picture Kit 240; 62572), and 4-15, The Liahona (Gospel Art Picture Kit 302; 62041).

**Suggested
Lesson
Development**

Invite a child to give the opening prayer.

Attention Activity

Before class starts hide a small picture of Jesus Christ or the wordstrip “Jesus Christ” somewhere in the classroom. Display the wordstrip “Eternal Life.” Explain that as members of the Church we want to find joy in this life, return to our Heavenly Father, and obtain eternal life, which is to live forever as families in God’s presence. Help the children understand that eternal life is God’s greatest gift to his children. Heavenly Father wants all of us to be worthy to live with him forever. Tell the children that hidden some place in the room is a small picture (or wordstrip) of someone who wants to help them gain eternal life. Give the children about thirty seconds to search for the picture (or wordstrip). Remind them that Heavenly Father has given us a guide to lead us to eternal life. Give hints if necessary.

After the children find the hidden picture of Jesus (or wordstrip), show them the large picture of Christ and your scriptures. Explain that we have been given the scriptures as a guide to help us learn about Jesus Christ and become like him so we may return to our Father in Heaven.

Scripture Account

Using the suggested pictures, teach Alma’s counsel to his sons Helaman and Shiblon found in Alma 37–38. Emphasize Alma’s teachings about the scriptures and how they can be a guide in our lives. (For suggested ways to teach the scripture account, see “Teaching from the Scriptures,” p. vii.)

Discussion and Application Questions

Study the following questions and the scripture references as you prepare your lesson. Use the questions you feel will best help the children understand the scriptures and apply the principles in their lives. Reading the references with the children in class will help them gain insights into the scriptures.

- Why was it important for the Book of Mormon prophets to keep and preserve the brass plates? (Alma 37:4, 8; see lesson 3.)
- Why was the Liahona given to Lehi? How did it work? (1 Nephi 16:10, 28.)
- How are the scriptures like the Liahona? (Alma 37:44–45.) How can the scriptures help us return to live with Heavenly Father?
- What did the scriptures teach the Lamanites that caused them to repent? (Alma 37:9.)
- What did Alma ask his son Helaman to teach the people? (Alma 37:32–34.) How can we overcome temptation?
- What did Alma mean when he counseled Helaman to “learn wisdom in thy youth”? (Alma 37:35.) Why is living the gospel in our youth so important?
- What did Alma teach Helaman about prayer? (Alma 37:36–37.) How and when should you pray? What does it mean to “be lifted up at the last day”? Help the children understand that this refers to the final judgment when all who have obeyed the commandments will enter into Heavenly Father’s presence and live with him forever.
- How had Alma’s son Shiblon brought him great joy? (Alma 38:2–4.) How has your obedience to the commandments brought joy to your parents?
- What is pride? (Alma 38:11. Not being humble or teachable. Proud people think they are more important than others. Proud people follow their own will rather than Heavenly Father’s will.) How does learning to admit and correct our mistakes bring us closer to Heavenly Father? What does it mean to boast?
- How did Alma know the things he taught his son? (Alma 38:6–8.) What must we do so the Holy Ghost can teach and help us as he did Alma? How has the Holy Ghost taught or helped you do what is right?
- What did Alma testify to Shiblon about Jesus Christ? (Alma 38:9.) How can we use the scriptures to help us gain a similar testimony? (Read and ponder them daily, seek the help of the Spirit to understand them, and liken them to our own experiences and situations.)

Enrichment Activities

You may use one or more of the following activities any time during the lesson or as a review, summary, or challenge.

1. Explain that one of the reasons we have been given the scriptures is to help us overcome and solve our problems. Give each class member a copy of the four written situations. Ask each child to work with a partner to decide how the scriptures that are listed would help in each situation. The four situations given below are only examples. You may use others that relate better to the children in your class. (More than one scripture may apply to each situation.)

When Jim was baptized, his family was angry with him. When the bishop asked Jim to accept a call to serve a full-time mission, Jim did not have enough money.

Shelly has an important decision to make, but even after talking to many people she can't decide what to do.

Heather's friends often try to get her to shoplift with them. When she refuses, they make fun of her.

Doug has been given a school assignment that is difficult to complete in the assigned time.

Alma 26:12; 1 Nephi 3:7; Alma 37:37; 1 Nephi 17:3

2. Copy the following words from Alma 37 on two separate sheets of paper.

"Learn wisdom in thy youth; yea, learn in thy youth to keep the commandments of God" (Alma 37:35).

"Counsel with the Lord in all thy doings, and he will direct thee for good" (Alma 37:37).

Cut each scripture into individual words. Put the first scripture in one container and the second in another, and place them in front of the class. Divide the class into two groups. Give each group a piece of paper and a pencil. Have one person at a time from each group come up to the container, pick a word, and bring it back to the group. The next person does the same, and so on. Each group assembles the words in proper order. If the children need help, give them the scripture reference. When the groups have figured out their scriptures, they may write them out and memorize them. At the conclusion, each group could recite its scripture in unison.

3. Read 1 Nephi 16:28 with the class: "And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld the pointers which were in the ball, that they did work according to the faith and diligence and heed which we did give unto them." Discuss how the Liahona worked for Lehi and his family. Divide the class members into three groups, and give each group one of the three words (*faith, diligence, or heed*) with its definition.

Faith: a belief in that which is unseen and is true.

Diligence: devoted effort to accomplish something.

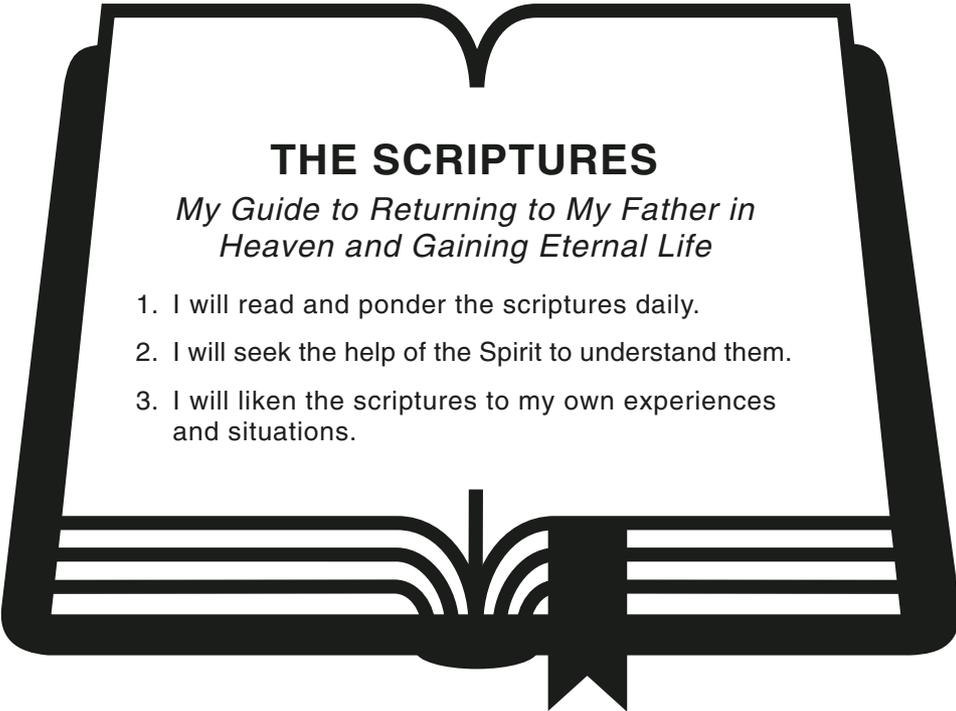
Heed: attention; notice.

Have each group discuss the meaning of their word and how the principle can help them use the scriptures as a guide back to Heavenly Father. Have them try to think of an example to illustrate. After two or three minutes have each group choose someone to explain to the class how that principle can help them use the scriptures as a Liahona.

4. Invite a ward member to come to your class and share experiences when the scriptures have given him or her guidance and answers to prayers.
5. Read and discuss the eighth article of faith. Emphasize how the scriptures help us return to our Father in Heaven. You may want to use the Eighth Article of Faith chart (65008).
6. Sing or read the words to "Search, Ponder, and Pray" (*Children's Songbook*, p. 109), "Seek the Lord Early" (*Children's Songbook*, p. 108), or "As I Search the Holy Scriptures" (*Hymns*, no. 277).

Conclusion

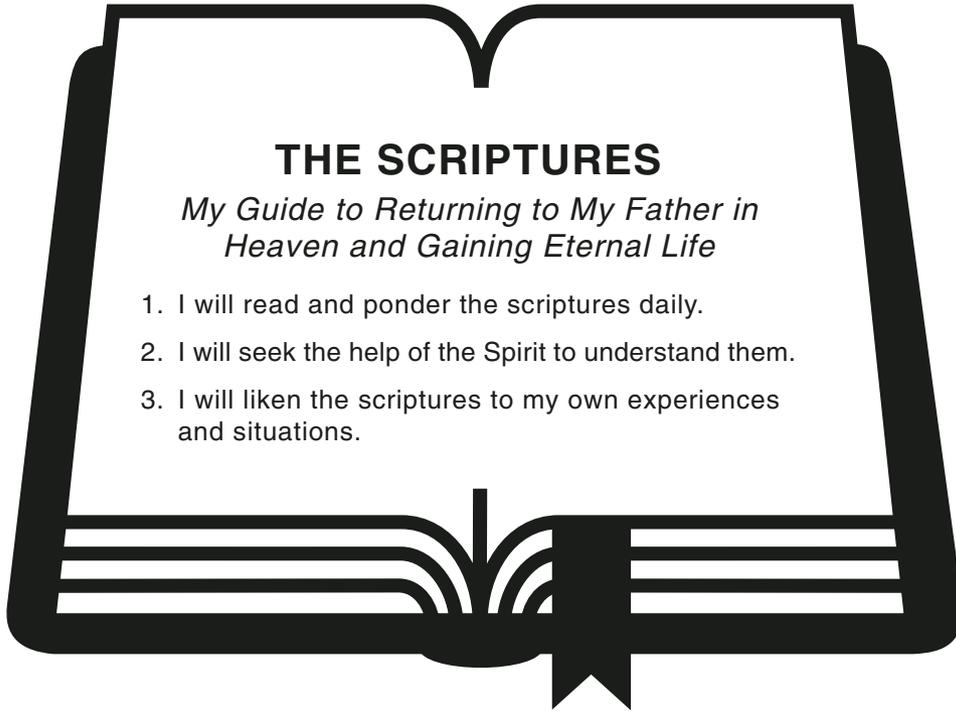
Testimony	<p>Bear testimony that studying the scriptures daily can help us solve our problems, overcome temptation, and stay on the strait and narrow path to return to our Father in Heaven and gain eternal life.</p> <p>Give the children each a copy of the handout. Suggest that they put it inside their scriptures as a bookmark.</p>
Suggested Family Sharing	<p>Encourage the children to share with their families a specific part of the lesson, such as a story, question, or activity, or to read with their families the “Suggested Home Reading.”</p>
Suggested Home Reading	<p>Suggest that the children study Alma 37:33–47 and 38:1–12 at home as a review of this lesson.</p> <p>Invite a child to give the closing prayer.</p>



THE SCRIPTURES

*My Guide to Returning to My Father in
Heaven and Gaining Eternal Life*

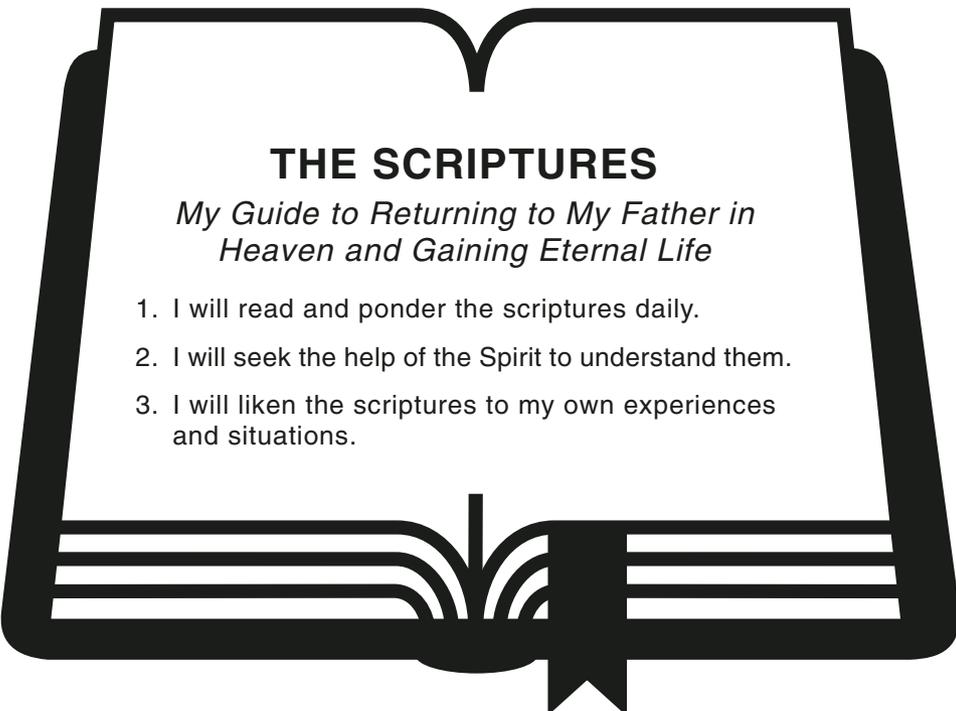
1. I will read and ponder the scriptures daily.
2. I will seek the help of the Spirit to understand them.
3. I will liken the scriptures to my own experiences and situations.



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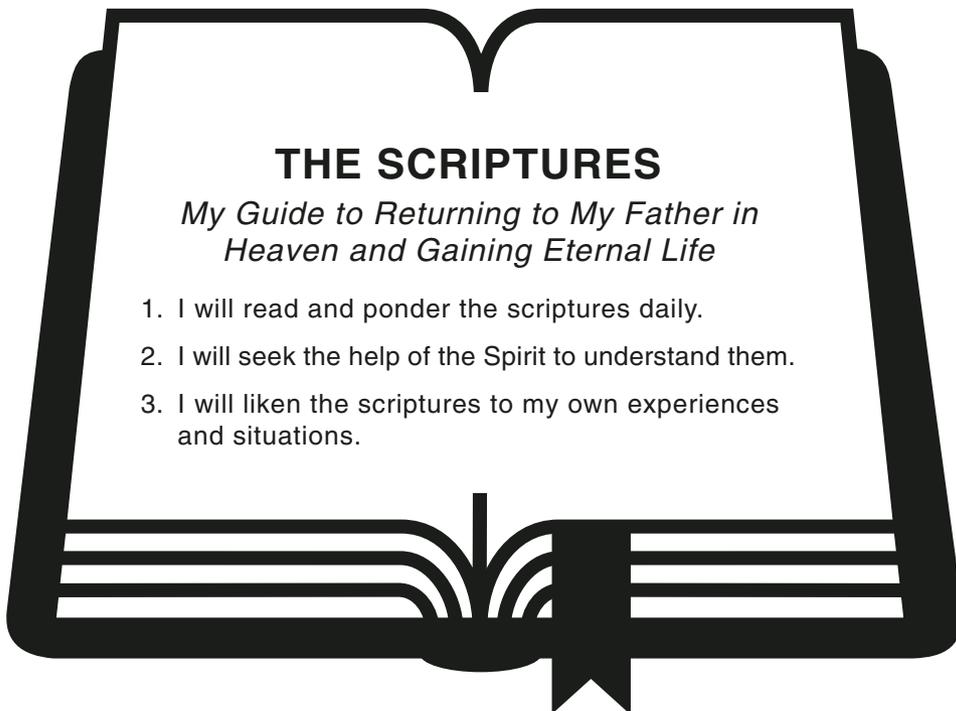
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