

# Heavenly Father's Plan for Us

Lesson

# 1

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**Purpose** To help the children understand that they are spirit children of Heavenly Father and that he has a plan that will help them become like him and return to live with him again.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study:
  - Romans 8:16—We are the children of God.
  - Abraham 3:22–26—The plan of salvation was presented to us before we were born on earth.
  - Doctrine and Covenants 138:55–56; Job 38:4, 7—Many were prepared in premortal life to be prophets and leaders on earth.
  - *Gospel Principles*, chapter 2, “Our Heavenly Family.”
2. 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). Select the discussion questions and enrichment activities that will best help the children achieve the purpose of the lesson.
3. Materials needed:
  - a. A Bible and a Pearl of Great Price for each child.
  - b. Ten cutout figures of the plan of salvation: 6-A through 6-J (located in the back of the manual).
  - c. The following wordstrips:

Where?

Who?

What?

Note: The second part of the story of the Council in Heaven, our choosing to follow Jesus Christ and Heavenly Father rather than Lucifer, will be covered in lesson 2.

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**Suggested  
Lesson  
Development**

Invite a child to give the opening prayer.

**Attention Activity**

Display the wordstrips you have prepared or write the following words on the chalkboard: *Where? Who? What?*

Ask the children to listen as you sing or read the words to the first verse of “I Lived in Heaven” (*Children’s Songbook*, p. 4) so they will know the answers to some important questions that you will ask them.

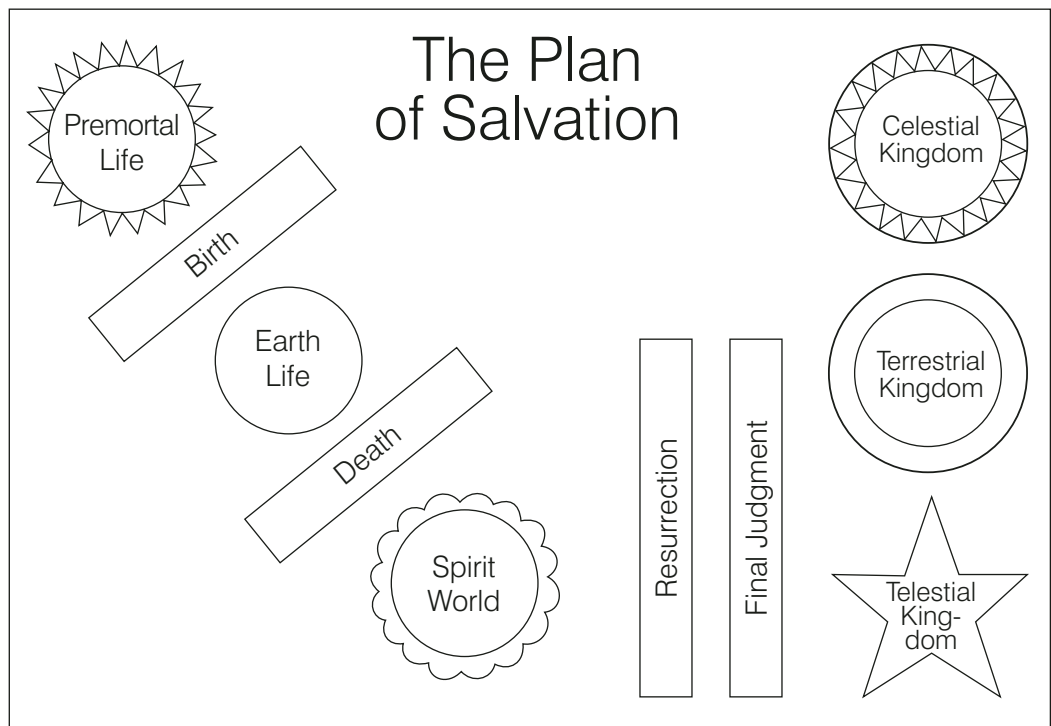
“I lived in heaven a long time ago, it is true;  
Lived there and loved there with people I know. So did you.  
Then Heav’nly Father presented a beautiful plan,  
All about earth and eternal salvation for man.”

- Where did we live a long time ago? (In heaven; see D&C 93:29, first sentence; Abraham 3:22–23.) “Long before this world was created, all of the spirits of the men and women who were assigned to this earth lived in a spiritual existence” (Spencer W. Kimball, *The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball [1982], p. 30).
- Who lived there with us?
- What was Heavenly Father’s plan for us? Explain that Heavenly Father wanted us to be able to receive a physical body, to learn to choose between right and wrong (note: lesson 2 deals with agency), and have the opportunity to become like him.

Scripture Account

Teach the children the account of our premortal life as revealed in Abraham 3:22–26 and Doctrine and Covenants 138:55–56 and explained in *Gospel Principles*, chapter 2. (For suggested ways to teach the scripture account, see “Teaching from the Scriptures,” p. vii.) Note: *the first estate* refers to our premortal life, and *the second estate* is our life on earth. Explain that *intelligences* as used in these scriptures refers to the spirit children of Heavenly Father and that *premortals* means our life before we were born on the earth. Teach Heavenly Father’s plan using the cutout figures of the plan of salvation.

Emphasize that the main purpose of Heavenly Father’s plan is to give us the opportunity to become like him.



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 and discussing the scriptures with the children in class will help them gain personal insights.

- Who is the Father of our spirits? (Romans 8:16.) How are we as mortals like our heavenly parents? (Genesis 1:27.)

- What did we do in the spirit world? (D&C 138:56.)
- What did we do when Heavenly Father presented his plan to us? (We shouted for joy; see Job 38:4, 7.)
- Why don't we remember our premortal life? Explain to the children that when each of us was born on the earth, we forgot our life with Heavenly Father. This allowed us to develop faith in him and in Jesus Christ. We can do this through believing the prophets, studying the scriptures, praying, and following the guidance of the Holy Ghost.
- How is earth life different from our premortal life? (See enrichment activity 6.)
- What are we supposed to do while we live on earth? (Abraham 3:25; Alma 34:32–33.) What will happen if we keep the commandments while we are on earth? (Abraham 3:26.)
- What happens to our physical bodies when we die? Where do our spirits go? (Ecclesiastes 12:7; Alma 40:11–14. Help the children understand that at death our spirits do not actually go into God's presence but go to the spirit world, where we receive a partial judgment.)
- What does it mean to be resurrected? (2 Nephi 9:12.) Who will be resurrected? (1 Corinthians 15:22.)
- What will happen after we are resurrected? (2 Corinthians 5:10.) Who will be worthy to live in the celestial kingdom? (D&C 76:51–53. Help the children understand that to be able to enter the celestial kingdom, they must have faith in Jesus Christ, repent, be baptized, and receive the Holy Ghost. Then they must live worthy and prove their faithfulness. See enrichment activity 3.) Who will live in the terrestrial kingdom? (D&C 76:71–79.) Who will live in the telestial kingdom? (D&C 76:81, 101–3.)
- What will it be like to live in the celestial kingdom? (D&C 76:92–94.) What are we promised if we are worthy of living in the celestial kingdom? (We will be like God; see D&C 76:95.)

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## 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. Tell the children that this year they will be studying the gospel mostly from the Old Testament and Pearl of Great Price. Show the children a copy of each of these books, or if they have their own set of scriptures, have them locate each of these books. Explain that the Old Testament is the history of God's dealings with his people from the creation of the earth until about four hundred years before Jesus Christ was born. The Pearl of Great Price contains sacred writings by several prophets, including two Old Testament prophets, Moses and Abraham. They tell about our premortal life, the early history of the world, Heavenly Father's plan for us, and the restoration of the gospel.

You may wish to compare some verses in the Old Testament with those in the Pearl of Great Price, such as Genesis 1:5 with Moses 2:5. Encourage the children to bring their own scriptures each week if possible.

2. Read and discuss Abraham 3:23 with the children.
  - What kinds of things might we have been chosen to do on earth? Explain that we are free to choose what we will do in this life, but each of us has been foreordained to do an important work on the earth.
3. Put the cutout figures of the plan of salvation around the room and have the children physically move from place to place as you briefly review each one (emphasize in the review that we all lived with Heavenly Father in the premortal life and that we can live with him again). Or have the children put the cutouts in the proper order on a table. Encourage the children to decide to make right choices so they will someday be worthy to return and live forever in the celestial kingdom. (You may also wish to have each child make a set of cutouts to take home and share with his or her family.)
4. Explain that our life on earth is like a school. We are here to learn and be tested. If we make right choices, we will pass the tests and be able to return to Heavenly Father. Read and discuss the following quotation: “My brothers and sisters, we’re away from home. We’re off to school. Our lessons will not be easy. The way we react to them, the way we conquer and accomplish and live will determine our rewards, and they will be permanent and eternal” (Spencer W. Kimball, *The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, p. 28).
5. Help the children understand and memorize Abraham 3:25.
6. Discuss with the children how earth life is similar to and different from our premortal life. You may wish to prepare slips of paper with items from the following list written on them. Have the children take turns picking a slip of paper, reading it to the class, and placing it under the cutout figure, Earth Life or Premortal Life, to which it belongs. (Some of these belong under both. You could make an additional wordstrip or put these between the two cutout figures.)
  - Live with Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ (premortal)
  - Be with our family (both)
  - Have the Bible and Book of Mormon to guide us (earth)
  - Have only a spirit body (premortal)
  - Have a physical body (earth)
  - Be taught Heavenly Father’s plan (both)
  - Experience hard work, sorrow, and death (earth)
  - Be able to have children (earth)
7. Talk with the children about the importance of living righteously in order to be able to return to Heavenly Father and live in the celestial kingdom. Have the children role-play situations such as the following, showing the decision that will help them return to live with Heavenly Father:
  - a. Your friend asks you to go to a movie with him on Sunday.
  - b. You forgot to do your homework and you are tempted to tell your teacher that you could not do it because you were sick.
  - c. Your mother asks you to stay home to tend your younger brother instead of going somewhere with your friends.
8. Sing or read the words to “I Am a Child of God” (*Children’s Songbook*, p. 2), “I Will Follow God’s Plan” (*Children’s Songbook*, p. 164), “I Lived in Heaven” (*Children’s Songbook*, p. 4), or “The Books in the Old Testament” (*Children’s Songbook*, p. 114).

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**Conclusion**

Testimony	You may want to bear testimony that we are all children of a loving Heavenly Father. Express gratitude for the plan of salvation, which will help us return with our loved ones to live with Heavenly Father someday.
Suggested Family Sharing	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.”
Suggested Home Reading	Suggest that the children study Job 38:4, 7 and Abraham 3:22–26 at home as a review of this lesson.  Invite a child to give the closing prayer.