

The Gift of the Atonement (Easter)

Purpose

To help the children understand that through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, each of us may receive the gifts of immortality and eternal life.

Preparation

1. Prayerfully study:
 - Moses 1:39—God’s plan is to make immortality and eternal life possible for each of us.
 - Isaiah 53:5–7—The Messiah will atone for our sins.
 - Matthew 26:36–46—Jesus Christ suffers in Gethsemane.
 - Luke 22:44 (or D&C 19:18)—Jesus Christ sweat great drops of blood.
 - Psalm 22:16, 18—The wicked will pierce the hands and feet of the Savior. They will cast lots for his clothing.
 - Luke 23:33–34, 46—Jesus Christ is crucified.
 - Matthew 27:57–66—Jesus Christ is buried in Joseph of Arimathea’s tomb.
 - Isaiah 25:8—The Savior will overcome death.
 - Hosea 13:14—The Savior will redeem all of us from the grave.
 - Matthew 28:1–10—Jesus Christ is resurrected.
2. Study the lesson and decide how you want to teach the children the scripture accounts (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. Make a wordstrip that says:

You may have one piece of candy (or other object).

Prepare a chart similar to the following:

6	3	5	3	0	10	2	10	6	2
<u>+7</u>	<u>+4</u>	<u>+6</u>	<u>+3</u>	<u>+0</u>	<u>+3</u>	<u>+2</u>	<u>-10</u>	<u>+6</u>	<u>+0</u>
13									
Y									
5	3	5	1	0	4	3	4	10	
<u>+5</u>	<u>+1</u>	<u>+3</u>	<u>+1</u>	<u>+2</u>	<u>+2</u>	<u>+4</u>	<u>+4</u>	<u>-8</u>	
Code									
a=0	e=2	h=4	m=6	r=8	t=10	v=12			
d=1	f=3	i=5	o=7	s=9	u=11	y=13			

4. Materials needed:
 - a. A Bible for each child.
 - b. A Pearl of Great Price and a Doctrine and Covenants.
 - c. Pictures 6-27, The Crucifixion (Gospel Art Picture Kit 230; 62505); 6-47, Jesus Praying in Gethsemane (Gospel Art Picture Kit 227; 62175); and 6-48, The Resurrected Jesus Christ (Gospel Art Picture Kit 239; 62187).

Suggested

Lesson

Development

Invite a child to give the opening prayer.

Attention Activity

Jesus Christ has given us the gift of the Atonement, which has two parts. One part requires no effort from us to receive it. But we must work if we are to have the other part. Read Moses 1:39 with the children, and have them find the two parts of the Atonement. You may want to write these two terms on the chalkboard. Explain that in this lesson the children will learn the meaning of *immortality* (the gift of the Resurrection, which Jesus Christ gives to all people) and *eternal life* (the gift to live forever as families in God's presence if we repent) and how each gift was prophesied of by Old Testament prophets.

Scripture Accounts

Using the pictures at appropriate times, teach the account of the Atonement of Jesus Christ from the scriptures listed in the "Preparation" section. (For suggested ways to teach the scripture accounts, see "Teaching from the Scriptures," p. vii.) Explain that specific events about the Atonement were revealed to Old Testament prophets. They prophesied of Jesus Christ suffering for our sins and overcoming death. These prophecies were fulfilled during the Savior's final days on earth. (See enrichment activity 1.)

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.

Jesus Christ Gave Us the Gift of Immortality

- What is foretold in Psalm 22:16 about the Savior's hands and feet?
- How was Jesus killed? (Luke 23:33; *crucify* means to kill by nailing or tying a person's hands and feet to a cross and leaving him to die.)
- When Jesus died on the cross, what happened to his spirit? (Luke 23:46.) Help the children understand that when Christ died, his spirit left his body and went to the spirit world (see D&C 138). Where was Jesus' body laid? (Matthew 27:57–60.) Why were soldiers assigned to guard Jesus' tomb? (Matthew 27:62–66.)
- How was the tomb opened on the third day after Jesus' death? (Matthew 28:2.) What did the angel tell Mary and the other women at the tomb? (Matthew 28:5–6.) Explain that Jesus' spirit, which had left his body when he died, came back again into his body when he was resurrected. This was the first time that anyone on earth had been resurrected.
- What did Isaiah mean when he said the Messiah would "swallow up death in victory"? (Isaiah 25:8.) What did Hosea mean when he said Christ will "ransom all of us from the grave"? (Hosea 13:14.) Explain that these revelations describe the Resurrection. (See "Resurrection" in the LDS Bible Dictionary [p. 761].)

- What does Jesus Christ's Resurrection mean for each of us? Help the children understand that because of Jesus' Resurrection all people who have lived or who ever will live on earth will be resurrected. Jesus gave each of us this gift, the gift of immortality, to live forever with our bodies and spirits reunited.

Jesus Christ Made It Possible to Gain Eternal Life

- What did Isaiah's prophecy teach us about Christ's suffering? (Isaiah 53:5.)
- What did Jesus do after he entered the Garden of Gethsemane? (Matthew 26:36.) How did Jesus express his willingness to do Heavenly Father's will? (Matthew 26:39, 42, 44.)
- How terrible was Jesus' suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane? (Luke 22:44; D&C 19:18.) Explain that Jesus took all our sins upon him, which caused him greater agony than we can understand. Because of Christ's suffering, we have the opportunity to repent of our sins and be forgiven. If we do this, we will not have to suffer as Christ did. Explain that this is what Isaiah meant when he said, "With his stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5).

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. Make wordstrips with key words or phrases from Old Testament prophecies, such as:

Isaiah 53:5—"wounded for our transgressions"

Isaiah 53:5—"with his stripes we are healed"

Psalms 22:16—"pierced my hands and my feet"

Isaiah 25:8—"swallow up death in victory"

Hosea 13:14—"redeem them from death"

Display the wordstrips at the front of the class as you teach the scripture account of the Savior's Atonement. Have the children listen for these words, phrases, or general ideas to see the fulfillment of these prophecies. Help the children understand the difficult phrases.

2. To use this activity, before class write the following questions on separate pieces of paper. During class give the questions to six different children.
 - What is death?
 - What is resurrection?
 - Who was the first person on earth to be resurrected?
 - What are the two greatest gifts Jesus Christ gave to us?
 - What gift is given to us from Jesus Christ without any effort on our part?
 - What gift from Jesus Christ do we have to work for?

Tell the children you are going to give an answer to a question. The child who has the right question is to read it aloud. Here are some possible answers to the questions you handed out:

- When the spirit leaves the body. (What is death?)
 - When the body and spirit come together again, never to be separated. (What is resurrection?)
 - Jesus Christ. (Who was the first person on earth to be resurrected?)
 - Immortality and eternal life. (What are two gifts Jesus Christ gave to us?)
 - The gift of resurrection or immortality. (What gift is given to us without any effort on our part?)
 - The gift of eternal life. (What gift do we have to work for?)
3. Show a picture of someone you love who has died. Tell how you feel knowing that because of the Atonement of Jesus Christ, if you live worthily you will see this loved one again. Let the children tell about someone who has died in their family whom they would like to see again. Explain that we do not need to fear death. Prophets have revealed that we will see our loved ones again, and we will feel great comfort and joy in the spirit world after death. Joseph Smith said: “I have a father, brothers, children, and friends who have gone to a world of spirits. They are only absent for a moment. They are in the spirit, and we shall soon meet again” (*History of the Church*, 6:316).

Brigham Young said: “We shall turn round and look upon it [the valley of death] and think, . . . I thirst no more, I want to sleep no more, I tire no more, . . . [I feel] nothing like pain or weariness, I am full of life, full of vigor, and I enjoy the presence of my Heavenly Father” (in *Journal of Discourses*, 17:142).

4. If you are teaching older children, prepare a matching game with the headings “Prophecies” and “Fulfillment of Prophecies.” Have the children read an assigned reference from the lettered list of fulfillment of prophecies and match it with the appropriate prophecy from the numbered list. Some examples you might use are:

Prophecies	Fulfillment of Prophecies
1. Isaiah 53:7—He opened not his mouth	a. Matthew 21:5
2. Psalm 34:20—No broken bones	b. Luke 23:9
3. Zechariah 9:9—Came riding on an ass	c. Matthew 27:9
4. Psalm 22:1—Why hast thou forsaken me?	d. Matthew 27:35
5. Psalm 22:18—Cast lots for his garments	e. John 19:36
6. Zechariah 11:13—Thirty pieces of silver	f. Matthew 27:46
Answers: 1-b, 2-e, 3-a, 4-f, 5-d, 6-c	

5. Discuss the third article of faith and help the children memorize it.
6. Gather together the following small objects and attach to each a piece of paper with the corresponding scripture references. Place the objects in a basket or sack, and let each child choose an object and read the scripture. Have the class decide how the object relates to the story of the Atonement.

Coins—Matthew 26:14–16

Soap—Matthew 27:24–26

Red cloth—Matthew 27:28–30

Toothpick cross or nail—Matthew 27:31–32

Crushed rock or soil—Matthew 27:50–51

White cloth—Matthew 27:58–59

Rock—Matthew 27:60–65

7. Sing or read the words to “Did Jesus Really Live Again?” (*Children’s Songbook*, p. 64), “Jesus Has Risen” (*Children’s Songbook*, p. 70), “There Is a Green Hill Far Away” (*Hymns*, no. 194), or “He Is Risen!” (*Hymns*, no. 199).

Conclusion

Testimony	Express your gratitude for the great gifts that Jesus Christ has given us, that we might be resurrected and live forever with Heavenly Father and with our families if we repent.
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 Matthew 28:1–10 at home as a review of this lesson. Invite a child to give the closing prayer.