

Blessings of the House of Israel

OBJECTIVE Each young woman will understand her blessings and obligations as a member of the house of Israel.

PREPARATION

1. Picture 7, A Family by the Temple, located at the back of the manual.
2. If you have access to a copy of *Mormon Doctrine* by Elder Bruce R. McConkie, it would be helpful for you to read the article titled “Israel” as background information. Another good resource is the article “Of the House of Israel” by Daniel H. Ludlow, *Ensign*, Jan. 1991, pp. 51–55.
3. Assign young women to present any stories, scriptures, or quotations you wish.

**SUGGESTED
LESSON**

DEVELOPMENT

We Can Receive the Blessings the Lord Promised to Abraham

Teacher presentation

- What do you know about the prophet Abraham?

After the young women have discussed this question, explain that Abraham was a great prophet who lived in Old Testament times. He was faithful and obedient to the Lord in all things, and the Lord made wonderful promises to him.

Ask the young women to read Abraham 2:8–11 to learn some of the promises the Lord made to Abraham.

- What are some of the blessings the Lord promised to Abraham?

Explain that the Lord promised Abraham that his posterity would always have three very important blessings available to them. List these blessings on the chalkboard as shown.

Chalkboard

The House of Israel

Abraham and his posterity may always have—

1. The blessings of the *gospel*.
2. The blessings of the *priesthood*.
3. The blessings of *eternal life*.

Teacher presentation

Explain that we receive the blessings promised to Abraham through his posterity. Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac was the father of Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel. Jacob, or Israel, had twelve sons, and his descendants became known as the house of Israel.

We become members of the house of Israel by being born as literal descendants of Israel or by being adopted. A person who is not a literal descendant of Israel is adopted into the house of Israel when he is baptized. Members of the Church learn about their lineage in the house of Israel when they receive their patriarchal blessings.

Quotation

Read the following statement:

“Every person who embraces the gospel becomes of the house of Israel. In other words, they become members of the chosen lineage, or Abraham’s children through Isaac and Jacob unto whom the promises were made. The great majority of those who become members of the Church are literal descendants of Abraham through Ephraim, son of Joseph. Those who are not literal descendants of Abraham and Israel must become such, and when they are baptized and confirmed they are grafted into the tree and are entitled to all the rights and privileges as heirs” (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954–56], 3:246; italics deleted).

Explain that each young woman, as a member of the house of Israel, is entitled to all the blessings promised to Abraham, if she is worthy.

Chalkboard discussion

We Have Blessings and Obligations as Members of the House of Israel

Refer to the chalkboard and emphasize that one of the most important blessings that has come to the young women as members of the house of Israel is being able to learn the gospel and be baptized into the Church while here on earth.

- What promises do we make when we are baptized and when we partake of the sacrament? (We will obey all God’s commandments, we will always remember the Savior, we will love and serve others.)

Point out that being able to make these special promises is part of the blessing we receive as members of the house of Israel.

Explain that each young woman, as a member of the Church and of the house of Israel, has also been given the privilege to enjoy the blessings of the priesthood.

Ask the young women to review the blessings of the priesthood they receive now or may later receive. (These blessings include being baptized a member of the Lord’s true Church, receiving priesthood blessings, taking the sacrament, going to the temple to do ordinance work for ourselves and others, having inspired leaders to help and guide us, being able to go to the temple to be married.)

Personal experiences

Ask if any of the young women have had a personal experience in which their lives were especially touched by the blessings of the priesthood. Invite them to share these experiences with the class. Relate a personal experience if desired. Stress that having the blessings of the priesthood brings great comfort and protection to each young woman.

Scriptures and discussion

Eternal Life Is Our Greatest Blessing as Members of the House of Israel

Have the young women read Doctrine and Covenants 14:7 and mark it in their scriptures.

- What is the greatest of all the gifts of God? (Eternal life.)
- What does the Lord say we must do to gain eternal life?

Write the answers on the chalkboard as illustrated on the next page.

Ask young women to read the following passages to identify other requirements for attaining eternal life. (Read the first and last part of D&C 132:19 as shown.) Add these requirements to the list on the chalkboard.

John 3:36

2 Nephi 9:39

D&C 132:19: “And again, verily I say unto you, if a man marry a wife by my word, which is my law, and by the new and everlasting covenant, and it is sealed unto them by the Holy Spirit of promise, by him who is anointed, unto whom I have appointed this power and keys of this priesthood; . . . they shall pass by the angels, and the gods, which are set there, to their exaltation and glory in all things, as hath been sealed upon their heads, which glory shall be a fulness and a continuation of the seeds forever and ever.”

Chalkboard sample

The House of Israel
Abraham and his posterity may always have—
1. The blessings of the *gospel*.
2. The blessings of the *priesthood*.
3. The blessings of *eternal life*.
To gain eternal life—
Keep my commandments.
Endure to the end.
Believe in Jesus Christ.
Be spiritually minded.
Be married in the temple.

Quotation

Ask the young women to listen carefully to the following quotation to discover the difference between immortality and eternal life, and learn who will be worthy to inherit each.

“Eternal life is the name given to the kind of life that our Eternal Father lives. . . .

*“Eternal life is not a name that has reference only to the unending duration of a future life; immortality is to live forever in the resurrected state, and by the grace of God all men will gain this unending continuance of life. But only those who obey the fulness of the gospel law will inherit eternal life” (Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966], p. 237).*

Chalkboard

Draw a line on the chalkboard followed by a small dot.

Tell the class that the line represents our premortal existence. The decisions we made there influenced the type of life we are living in mortality. Mortality is represented by the dot. Now draw a line after the dot to the opposite side of the chalkboard. Explain that this line actually never ends and represents eternity. The decisions we make during this small span of mortality will determine how we will spend eternity.

Explanation with picture

Refer again to the chalkboard and explain that the most important blessing that can come to the young women as members of the house of Israel is eternal life. Refer to the picture of a family by the temple. Emphasize that temple marriage opens the door for families to be sealed together eternally and gives each young woman the opportunity of being a wife and mother eternally. This is the greatest blessing the Lord can give to any of his daughters.

President Ezra Taft Benson said to the young women of the Church:

“My young sisters, we have such hope for you. We have such great expectations for you. Don’t settle for less than what the Lord wants you to be. . . .

*“Give me a young woman who loves home and family, who reads and ponders the scriptures daily, who has a burning testimony of the Book of Mormon. . . . Give me a young woman who is virtuous and who has maintained her personal purity, who will not settle for less than a temple marriage, and I will give you a young woman who will perform miracles for the Lord now and throughout eternity” (*Ensign*, Nov. 1986, p. 84).*

Conclusion

Review

Conclude the lesson by again referring to the chalkboard. Remind the young women of the three special blessings that may come to members of the house of Israel. Emphasize that obtaining these blessings is the responsibility of each young woman. She must accept and live the gospel, honor the priesthood, and live worthy to receive eternal life.