

## LESSON 26

# After the Trial of Faith

### Introduction

In this lesson, students will learn from the Book of Mormon that having faith in Jesus Christ makes it possible for God to

work miracles in our behalf. Exercising faith can also prepare us to receive spiritual witnesses of truth.

### Background Reading

- Robert D. Hales, “Seeking to Know God, Our Heavenly Father, and His Son, Jesus Christ,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2009, 29–32.
- David A. Bednar, “Ask in Faith,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2008, 94–97.
- Neil L. Andersen, “You Know Enough,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2008, 13–14.

### Suggestions for Teaching

**2 Nephi 27:23; 3 Nephi 17:5–9, 20–24; Mormon 9:9, 18–20**

#### *Faith precedes miracles*

Ask students to name a few scriptural examples of God working miracles in behalf of His children according to their faith in Him. (Examples may include Jesus healing the sick and raising the dead, Moses parting the Red Sea, and Christ touching the stones to light the Jaredite barges.)

- What might you say to a person who does not believe that God continues to work miracles today?

Invite one student to read 2 Nephi 27:23 aloud and another student to read Mormon 9:9, 18–20 aloud. Ask the class to look for why miracles still occur today.

- According to these verses, why can we be confident that miracles happen in today’s world? (Students should identify the following doctrine: **Because God is the same yesterday, today, and forever, He continues to work miracles according to the faith of His children.**)
- Why do you think the Lord requires us to have faith before He works miracles?

To illustrate the scriptural connection between faith and miracles, invite a few students to take turns reading from 3 Nephi 17:5–9 aloud. Ask the class to look for what the resurrected Christ identified as being sufficient before He performed miracles for the people.

- According to verse 8, what was it that allowed the Savior to heal the sick and afflicted?

Invite a student to read 3 Nephi 17:20–24 aloud.

- What other sacred events did the people experience because of their faith?
- How can Christ’s willingness to provide these miracles increase our faith that He can exercise power to help us with our needs?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Sister Sydney S. Reynolds, former counselor in the Primary general presidency:



"Just as important as ... 'mighty miracles' are the smaller 'private miracles' that teach each of us to have faith in the Lord. These come as we recognize and heed the promptings of the Spirit in our lives. ...

"I believe that all of us can bear witness to these small miracles. We know children who pray for help to find a lost item and find it. We know of young people who gather the courage to stand as a witness of God and feel His sustaining hand. We know friends who pay their tithing with the last of their money and then, through a miracle, find themselves able to pay their tuition or their rent or somehow obtain food for their family. We can share experiences of prayers answered and priesthood blessings that gave courage, brought comfort, or restored health. These daily miracles acquaint us with the hand of the Lord in our lives" ("A God of Miracles," *Ensign*, May 2001, 12).

Ask students to consider times when they or someone they know experienced God's miracles in their lives. If not too sacred or personal, invite students to share experiences they have had that have confirmed to them that God is still a God of miracles.

### **Ether 3:6–13, 17–20; 4:13–15; 12:6–7, 12, 19, 31**

#### *Faith prepares us to receive spiritual witnesses*

Invite students to think of a gospel truth about which they would like to receive a spiritual witness or a stronger testimony. Explain that some people choose not to believe or live according to a gospel principle until they see evidence that it is true.

Invite students to read Ether 12:6 silently, looking for what this verse teaches about the process of receiving a spiritual witness.

- What principle can we learn from Ether 12:6 about receiving a spiritual witness? (Students should identify the following principle: **Before we can receive a spiritual witness, we must first exercise faith in Jesus Christ.**)
- What do you think the phrase "trial of your faith" means?

Explain that having a trial of faith does not always mean experiencing hardship. Display and ask a student to read aloud the following statements about Moroni's counsel in Ether 12:6 by Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and Sister Bonnie L. Oscarson, Young Women general president:



"You can learn to use faith more effectively by applying this principle taught by Moroni: '... ye receive no witness until after the *trial of your faith*' [Ether 12:6; emphasis added]. Thus, every time you *try your faith*, that is, act in worthiness on an impression, you will receive the confirming evidence of the Spirit" (Richard G. Scott, "The Sustaining Power of Faith in Times of Uncertainty and Testing," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2003, 76).



“In our world where instant gratification is the expectation, we are often guilty of expecting the reward without having to work for it. I believe Moroni is telling us that we must do the work first and exercise faith by living the gospel, and then we will receive the witness that it is true. True conversion occurs as you continue to act upon the doctrines you know are true and keep the commandments, day after day, month after month” (Bonnie L. Oscarson, “Be Ye Converted,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2013, 77).

- How is the approach to receiving a witness of truth described by Elder Scott and Sister Oscarson different from the approach of those who want evidence before they will believe or act?
- When and how have you found this principle to be true?

Invite a few students to take turns reading from Ether 12:7, 12, 19, and 31 aloud. Encourage the class to note the phrases “after they had faith” and “until after their faith” in these verses (you may also want to suggest that students mark these phrases in their scriptures).

- According to these verses, what blessings did the Lord provide to these people after they exercised faith? What types of spiritual witnesses of truth have you received as a result of your faith?

Testify that much like miracles, spiritual witnesses do not come until after we exercise faith. To emphasize this point, consider sharing the following statement by President Boyd K. Packer (1924–2015) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“Somewhere in your quest for spiritual knowledge, there is that ‘leap of faith,’ as the philosophers call it. It is the moment when you have gone to the edge of the light and stepped into the darkness to discover that the way is lighted ahead for just a footstep or two” (“The Quest for Spiritual Knowledge,” *New Era*, Jan. 2007, 6).

Invite a student to describe the challenges that the brother of Jared faced as he built the barges that were to carry his family to the promised land and summarize what he did to solve the challenges (see Ether 2:16–25; 3:1–5).

- How did the brother of Jared exercise faith in Jesus Christ?

Ask several students to take turns reading from Ether 3:6–13, 17–20 aloud.

- How did the Lord bless the brother of Jared for his faith?

Ask a student to read the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles aloud. Invite the class to look for characteristics of the brother of Jared’s faith:



“Exactng faith, mountain-moving faith, faith like that of the brother of Jared, *precedes* the miracle and the knowledge. He had to believe *before* God spoke. He had to act *before* the ability to complete that action was apparent. He had to commit to the complete experience in advance of even the first segment of its realization. Faith is to agree unconditionally—and in advance—to whatever conditions God may require in both the near and distant future” (*Christ and the New Covenant: The Messianic Message of the Book of Mormon* [1997], 18–19).

- How would you summarize Elder Holland’s description of the brother of Jared’s faith?
- What are some examples of actions we can take to demonstrate our faith in the Lord?

Give students a moment to study Ether 4:13–15 and identify what Moroni said we should do to receive knowledge and manifestations from the Spirit.

- What do you think it means to “rend [the] veil of unbelief”? How is doing this related to the process of exercising faith? (It may be helpful to explain that *rend* means to tear or divide and *veil* refers to something that covers or conceals.)
- What did Moroni counsel us to do in order to “rend that veil of unbelief”?

Display the following statement by the Prophet Joseph Smith (1805–44), and ask a student to read it aloud:



“God hath not revealed anything to Joseph, but what He will make known unto the Twelve, and even the least Saint may know all things as fast as he is able to bear them, for the day must come when no man need say to his neighbor, Know ye the Lord; for all shall know Him ... from the least to the greatest [see Jeremiah 31:34]” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 268).

- How does this statement by the Prophet Joseph Smith help you to understand your potential to receive revelation?

Challenge students to ponder what trials of faith they are currently facing, and invite them to consider what they can do to strengthen and exercise their faith. Share your testimony that God provides His faithful followers with continuing witnesses of the truth as they exercise faith.

## Student Readings

- 2 Nephi 27:23; 3 Nephi 17:5–9, 20–24; Mormon 9:9, 18–20; Ether 3:6–13, 17–20; 4:13–15; 12:6–7, 12, 19, 31.
- David A. Bednar, “Ask in Faith,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2008, 94–97.