

## LESSON 4: LEARNING ABOUT: THE NEW & EVERLASTING COVENANT

**INTRODUCTION:** Webster's Dictionary defines the word "covenant" as follows: "1: a usually formal, solemn, and binding agreement. 2: a written agreement or promise between two or more parties especially for the performance of some action." The scriptures contain many instances of covenants, or binding promises made between God and man.

1. **THOUGHT QUESTION:** No specifics, but in a general sense, what do you think God wants from man? In other words, what is at the heart of keeping a covenant with God? (If you could distill it down to one verb, what would it be?)
2. Every covenant comes with a commandment or commandments attached to it. In D&C 5, the Lord makes a private covenant with Joseph Smith, found in verse 3. What was Joseph to do as his part of the covenant?

### Read D&C 82: 1-24

3.
  - a. Roughly what percentage of the members of the Church at this time had sinned before the Lord? Cite verse.
  - b. What is the process by which a person becomes "a transgressor," or in other words, commits sin? Cite verse.
  - c. What covenant are the brothers named in verse 11, all church leaders of the time, to enter into?
  - d. What is the inner, or heart motivation supposed to be of those leaders? Cite verse.
  - e. Point out two or three verses that speak of the penalty that follows a broken commandment. What are those consequences?
  - f. Which verse makes clear that God will always keep his side of any covenant? \_\_\_\_\_
  - g. Which verses speak of God's forgiveness of sin or transgression? \_\_\_\_\_

### Read D&C 64: 1-10

4.
  - a. From the readings in Section 82 and Section 64, list all the ways you can find for receiving forgiveness of sins. Cite verses.
  - b. Why is having a way of receiving forgiveness for sin an important part of making a covenant with the Lord?
5.
  - a. Read Deuteronomy 7:9; Psalm 89:1-8; Psalm 119: 75, 90. When we make covenants, or binding promises with God, what quality of God allows us to be sure that God will always keep his side of the agreement?
6. Read D&C 62:1-3. What demonstration is there in these three verses of the "good parenting" of the Lord toward us, his children?
  - b. What comfort can you take from these verses for your own life?

7. a. Read D&C 45:9. According to this verse, what are the purposes of God’s Everlasting Covenant coming into the world at this time of the last days?
- b. Who was the “messenger before my face” who “prepared the way” just before Jesus came in his earthly ministry? (Luke 7:27)
- c. What did that person do? He called upon people to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
- d. How does the covenant sent forth by the restoration do the same things that this messenger did?
- e. Who “plays the part” of John the Baptist in the last days, in other words, who calls upon people to repent and be baptized?
8. a. Review Section 1 of the D&C. From verses 15 and 22, what part did “covenants” have in the restoration of the gospel?
- b. Note especially verses 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 11, and 18. How can we be *faithful* to our own covenants to “warn the world?”
- c. PERSONAL: Have you had any missionary experiences in recent years that you can share with the group?
9. a. Covenants with Adam: Read Moses 5:5-6. All covenants made with man give some commandment or set of commandments to be obeyed as the condition of receiving God’s blessing. What two commandments are here given to Adam?
- b. What is notable about Adam’s obedience in this case?

**The Abrahamic Covenant:**

8. The Abrahamic covenant was made with Abraham, who is called the Father of the Faithful. In the many scriptures that tell of his life we can see into his heart and character through the choices he made. God found a man in Abraham that represented the ideal “type” of what a faithful saint should be. He is an excellent role model for our lives. On the left side of the following list are a series of incidents or actions on Abraham’s part. On the right are character traits demonstrated by these actions. Match them. You may match more than one number to an action and use numbers several times.

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| <p>A. Abraham refused to bow to idols even though he was threatened with death for his action.</p> <p>B. God told Abraham to leave his home and go to a new place that God would show him; Abraham did it.</p> <p>C. When Lot’s herdsmen and Abraham’s herdsmen clashed over the good grazing lands, Abraham gave Lot first choice and said he would take what was left over.</p> <p>D. When Abraham heard that his nephew Lot had been captured in local warfare, he armed his servants and went to rescue him.</p> <p>E. When the kings on whose side he fought in this battle offered Abraham the spoils of war, he refused saying he did not wish to be made rich by these kings by taking even a shoelace from them.</p> <p>F. Abraham paid tithes of all that he owned to Melchizedek, a high priest.</p> | <p>1. Obedience to God’s commands.</p> <p>2. Integrity when dealing with the world.</p> <p>3. Bravery in life threatening circumstances.</p> <p>4. Love for his family.</p> <p>5. Faith requiring personal courage.</p> <p>6. Faith requiring action.</p> <p>7. A man of peace.</p> <p>8. Not hungry for power.</p> <p>9. No love for the riches of the world.</p> |
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**Read Genesis 12:1-5, Genesis 17:1-14, Genesis 22:17 and Gen 32:12**

9. a. List as many elements or provisions of the Abrahamic covenant as you can find in these two readings. List both God's promises and man's obligations.
- b. Which of the promises of the Abrahamic covenant has contained within it the implication of exaltation in the Celestial kingdom?
- c. The priesthood is the power to act in God's name. Name four ways priesthood can bless your family.
- d. Which of the promises of the Abrahamic covenant implies the right to the priesthood? (see also Abraham 2:11 for clarity)
10. Read **Genesis 18:17-19** and **Genesis 26:1-5**. What things are said about Abraham in these two readings that God gives as reasons for making the covenant with this particular man that would have such a lasting impact on the whole world?
11. Read **Genesis 21:9-14** and **Genesis 22:1-3**. We don't often realize that Abraham was asked to give up both of his sons, though in different ways. a. Each time God commanded Abraham in these two instances, how long did it take Abraham to respond? Cite verses.
- b. What lesson can you take from this for your own life?

**The Mosaic Covenant: Read Exodus 19:1-16 and Exodus 20:18-22. Read Deuteronomy 5:1-5 and 22-33, (skim Deut. 5:6-21 - the 10 Commandments)**

12. The other Old Testament covenant of great importance to the history of God's dealings with man is the Mosaic Covenant. From the Exodus readings, describe the setting for the making of the covenant between God and the Children of Israel that is known as the Mosaic Covenant?
13. Who heard the voice of the Lord speak the 10 Commandments and why? (Cite verses)
14. How did God deliver all the rest of his statutes and laws to the people of Israel?
15. **Read Deuteronomy 6.** (One of the *great* chapters of the Old Testament by the way! Verses 4 and 5 are the Shema, the most famous and oft repeated prayer in Judaism.) a. What were the Children of Israel told to do with the commandments they had received in order to "keep them in their heart" (v. 6)?
- b. We live under a different covenant: the New Covenant. But are there ways that these instructions to the ancient Israelites could apply to LDS homes today?
16. From **Deut. 6:10** and **Deut. 7:7-12**, why did God choose these people to be his people?

17. CHALLENGE QUESTION: a. How were the people with whom God made the Mosaic covenant related to the men, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, with whom he made the Abrahamic covenant?

b. How were the sets of laws and obligations of the two covenants related?

### The New and Everlasting Covenant

Read **D&C 66:1-2** and **D&C 39:11**

18. What is the Everlasting Covenant?

19. What is the gospel, according to D&C 39:6?

20. What two reasons are given in 66:2 for sending the fullness of the gospel as a covenant unto the children of men in the last days?

21. **Read section 39: 19-24.** How would a person who was in the New and Everlasting Covenant react differently to the various judgments and disasters that are coming prior to Christ's second coming than someone would who was not in the covenant?

Read **Jeremiah 31:31, Hebrews 12:24, and D&C 22:1**

22. Name something "new" about the New and Everlasting covenant. (*New* meaning changed from the Old Covenant)

23. Read **D&C 76:69**. Jesus was able to mediate, or offer us a new covenant through what?

24. The old covenant was available to men who were born into the family of Abraham and who were obedient to the laws and provisions of the covenant. If you were born into a Jewish family and were circumcised (if you were male), you were in the covenant.

a. The *new* covenant is for those who are born into the family of whom? (D&C 39:4, Mosiah 5:7)

c. How can one become born into the family of this person?

25. Circumcision was the sign of the old covenant. This "cutting" was a symbol of covenant life because a baby, a newborn member of God's covenant family, had been given life through flesh that had been cut or broken by circumcision. Under the new covenant, new life, i.e., a new Christian, or "babe in Christ" as Paul terms them, also have their life come through cut or broken flesh. **Read 3 Nephi 9:20, and 3 Nephi 12:19.**

a. What part of the body must be broken in order for there to be a new birth into the new covenant?

b. What cutting was made in the flesh of our "covenant father" so that new life could flow to us? **See John 19:1-2,34<sup>1</sup>**

26. Those who become the children of Christ receive an inheritance from him. What do each of the following scriptures say we inherit?

a. Revelation 21:7

b. D&C 51:19

27. What have you learned from this study about the New & Everlasting Covenant that was new to you or that you feel you would like to put to practical use in your life?

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<sup>1</sup> If you really want to get into this, know that in Old Testament times, making a covenant was sometimes called "cutting a covenant." This can be seen in the rather strange (to us) incident of Genesis 15 in which God commands Abraham to offer up several animals that he cuts in half and separates. Then God sends a smoking lamp that passes between the cut pieces and remakes his covenant with Abraham.