



LESSON 4: ATONEMENT

“I urge you to devote time each week—for the rest of your life—to increase your understanding of the Atonement of Jesus Christ” (Russell M. Nelson, “The Lord Jesus Christ Will Come Again,” Oct. 2024).

NEW OXFORD AMERICAN DICTIONARY:

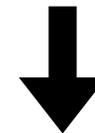
Old English *gōdspel*, from *gōd* ‘good’ + *spel* ‘news, a story’ (see *spell*²), translating ecclesiastical Latin *bona annuntiatio* or *bonus nuntius*, used to gloss ecclesiastical Latin *evangelium*, from Greek *euangelion* ‘good news’

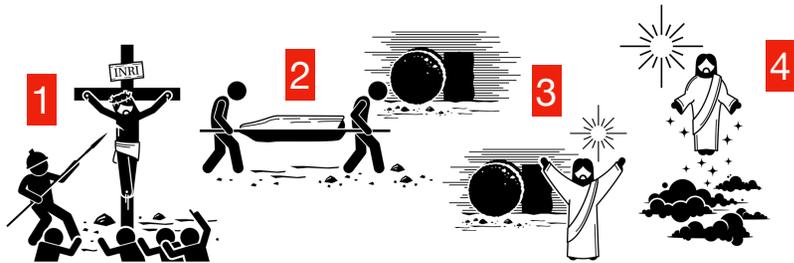
GOSPEL TRUTH:



The Atonement is the most important part of the gospel because it is the gospel.

The Gospel is the Good News



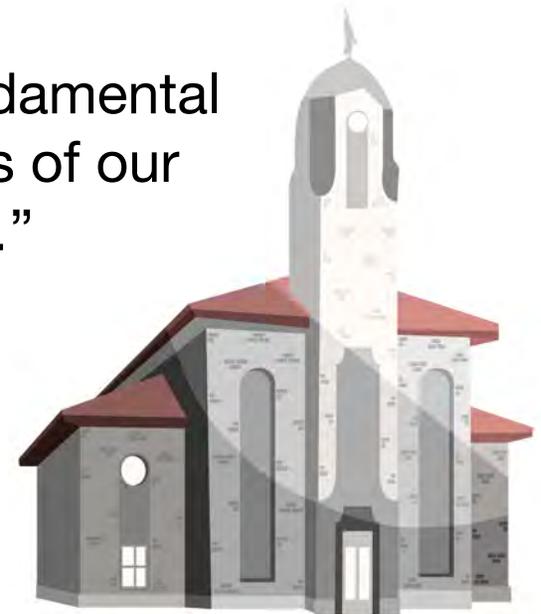


Joseph Smith declared, “The **fundamental principles** of our religion are the testimony of the Apostles and Prophets, concerning Jesus Christ, that He died, was buried, and rose again the third day, and ascended into heaven; **and all other things which pertain to our religion are only appendages to it**”
(Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, 121).



“Joseph Smith declared,”

“The fundamental principles of our religion...”





“...are the testimony of the Apostles and Prophets...”



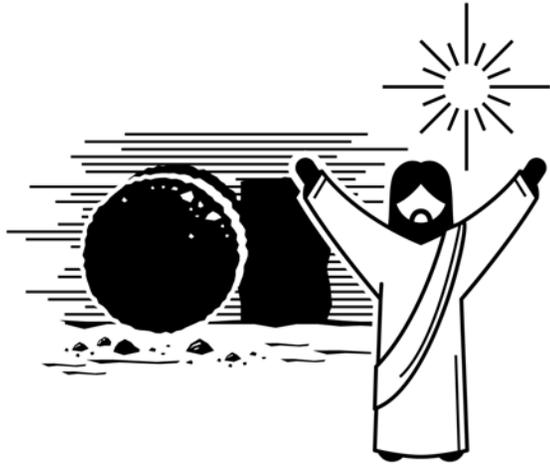
“...concerning Jesus Christ...”



“...that He died...”



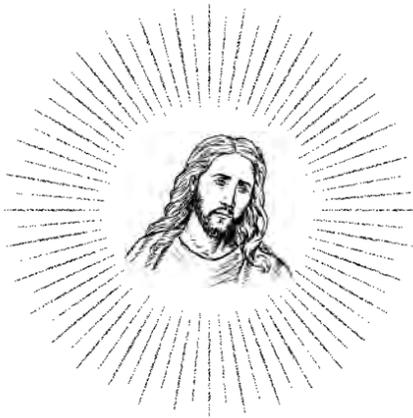
“...was buried...”



“...rose again on the third day...”

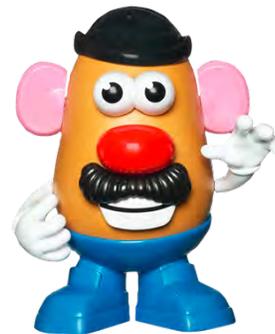


“...and ascended into heaven...”

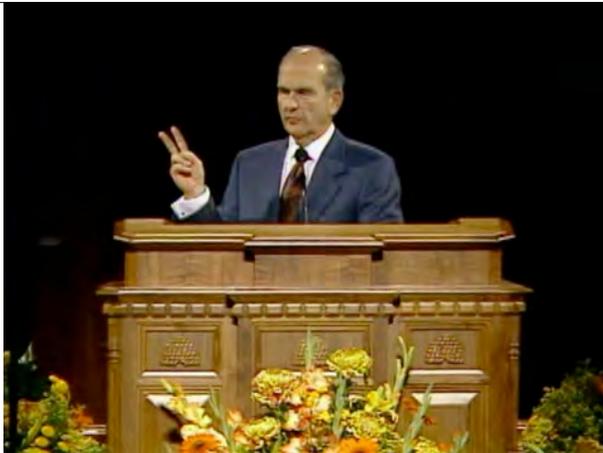
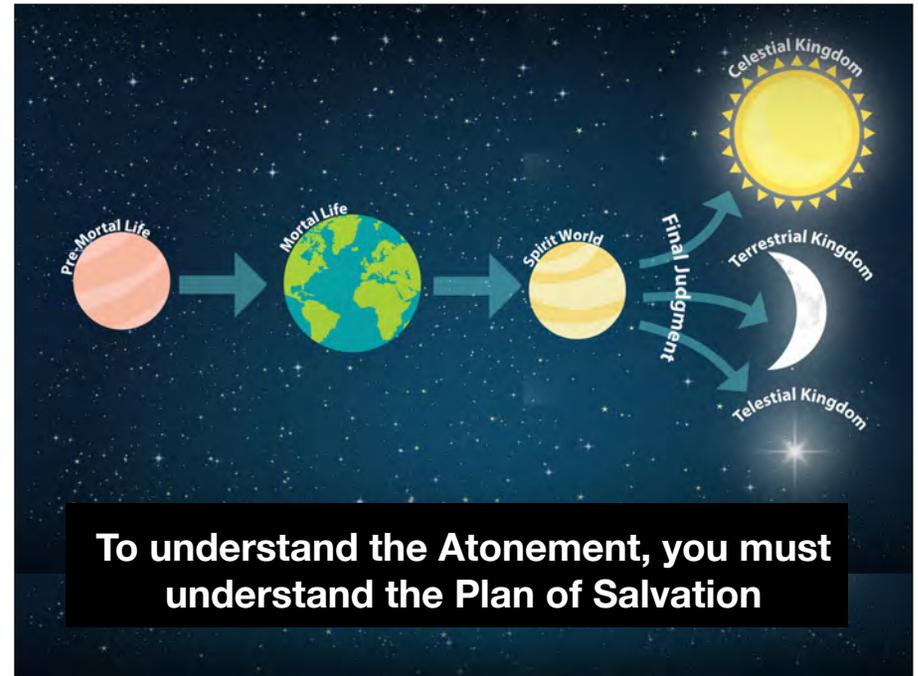
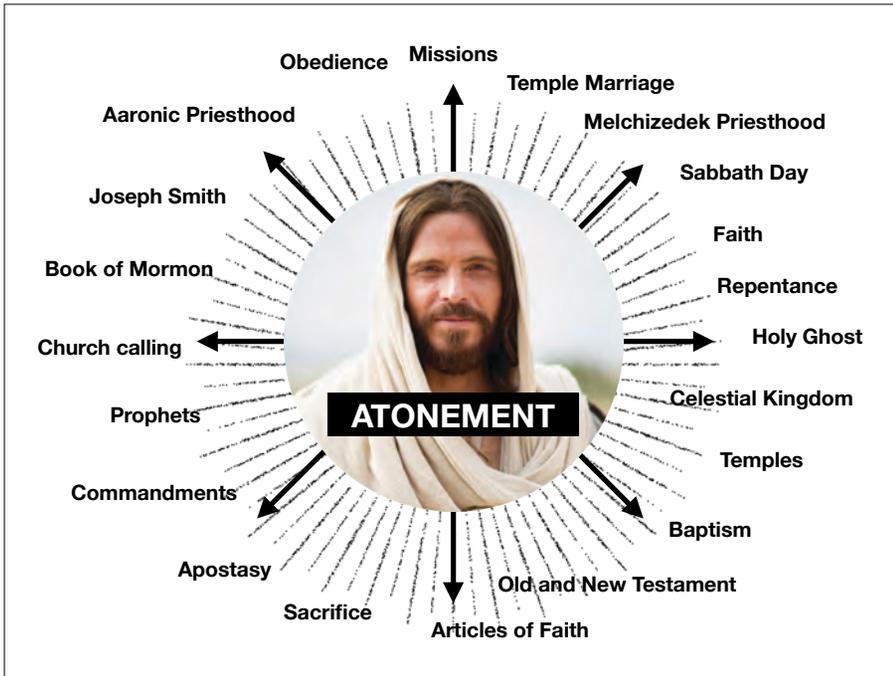


“...and all other things which pertain to our religion are only appendages to it.”

APPENDAGE



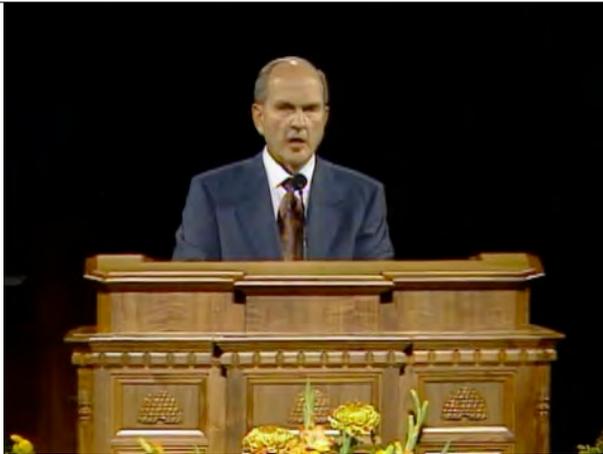
An appendage is a thing that is added or attached to something larger or more important.



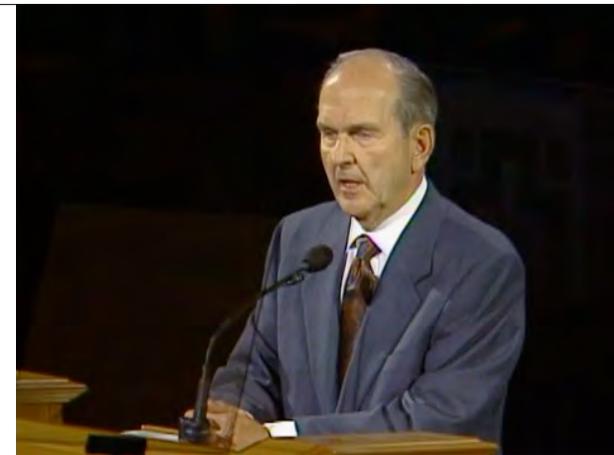
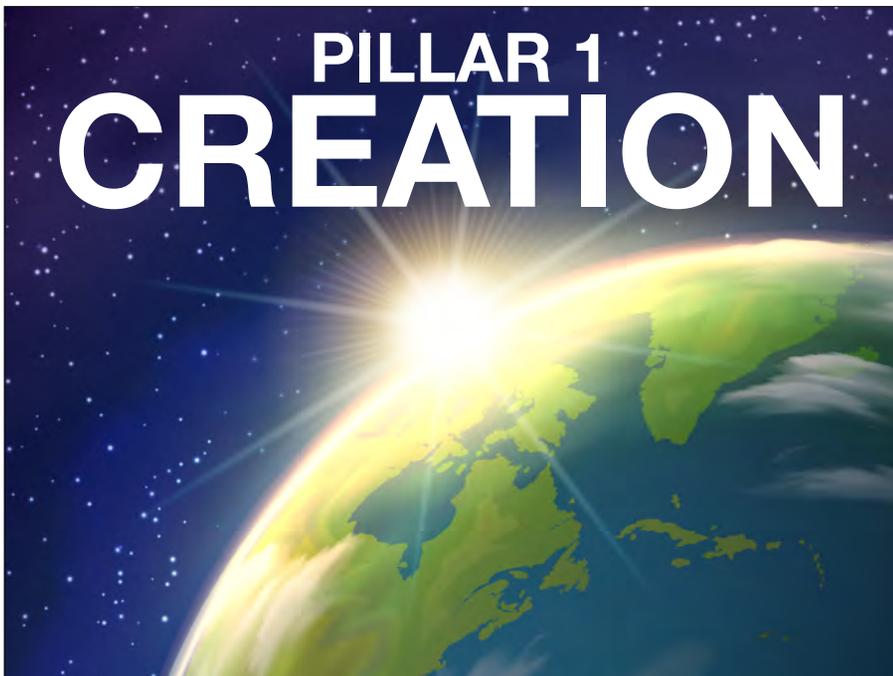
A great council in heaven was once convened, in which it seems that all of us participated. **There our Heavenly Father announced His plan.** Scriptures refer to this plan of God by many names. Perhaps out of deference to the sacred name of Deity, or to depict its broad scope, it is also called the plan of happiness, the plan of salvation, the plan of redemption, the plan of restoration, the plan of mercy, the plan of deliverance, and the everlasting gospel. (Russell M. Nelson “Constancy amid Change,” Oct. 1993)

SAME

- Plan of happiness
- Plan of salvation
- Plan of redemption
- Plan of restoration
- Plan of mercy
- Plan of deliverance
- EVERLASTING GOSPEL



Prophets have used these terms interchangeably. **Regardless of designation, the enabling essence of the plan is the atonement of Jesus Christ.** As it is central to the plan, we should try to comprehend the meaning of the Atonement. But before we can comprehend it, though, we must understand the fall of Adam. And before we can fully appreciate the Fall, we must first comprehend the Creation. These three events—the Creation, the Fall, and the Atonement—are **three preeminent pillars** of God’s plan, and they are doctrinally interrelated. (Russell M. Nelson “Constancy amid Change,” Oct. 1993)



The creation of the earth was a preparatory part of our Father’s plan. Then “the Gods went down to organize man in their own image, ... male and female to form they them. And the Gods said: We will bless them” (Abr. 4:27–28). And bless us they did, with a plan that would give us physical bodies of our very own. (Russell M. Nelson “Constancy amid Change,” Oct. 1993)



**In pre-mortal life, God presented his plan;
Satan objected; Christ was chosen as Savior.**



**The earth was created to bring about the
immortality and eternal life of men and women.**



**Adam and Eve were put in the Garden; God
gave them contradicting instructions.**



**Adam and Eve were taught the consequences
of eating or not eating the forbidden fruit.**



Adam and Eve were given their agency, the power to choose. They chose to eat.



LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

How do you feel about the creation?





COMMAND

Eat or do not eat the tree of knowledge of good and evil

KEY POINT OF DECISION—

AGENCY: "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it, nevertheless, thou mayest choose for thyself, for it is given unto thee; but, remember that I forbid it, for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Moses 3:17).

STAY

GO

IMMORTALITY

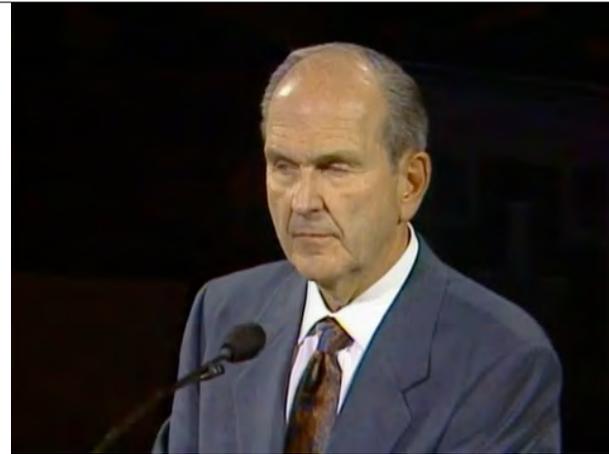
Results: No spiritual death and no physical death...and all the blessings and cursings of staying in the Garden of Eden forever

MORTALITY

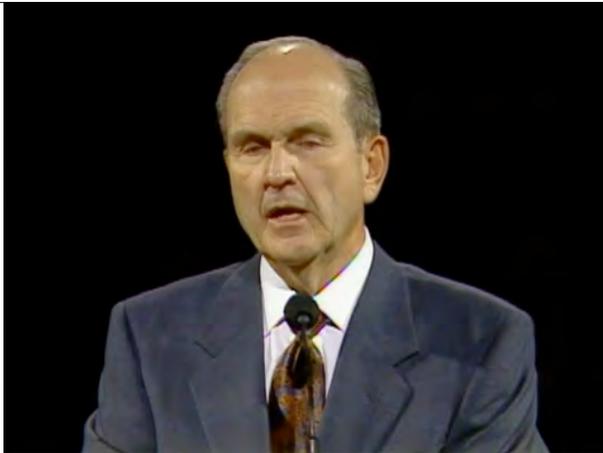
Death

Results: Spiritual death and physical death...and all the blessings and cursings of coming to earth.

"And because that they are redeemed from the fall they have become free forever, knowing good from evil; to act for themselves and not to be acted upon, save it be by the punishment of the law at the great and last day, according to the commandments which God hath given" (2 Nephi 2:26).



That leads us to the fall of Adam. To bring the plan of happiness to fruition, God issued to Adam and Eve the first commandment ever given to mankind. It was a commandment to beget children. A law was explained to them. Should they eat from "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil" (Gen. 2:17), their bodies would change; mortality and eventual death would come upon them. **But partaking of that fruit was prerequisite** to their parenthood. (Russell M. Nelson "Constancy amid Change," Oct. 1993)



We and all mankind are forever blessed because of Eve's great courage and wisdom. By partaking of the fruit first, she did what needed to be done. Adam was wise enough to do likewise. Accordingly, we could speak of the fall of Adam in terms of a mortal creation, because "Adam fell that men might be" (2 Ne. 2:25). (Russell M. Nelson "Constancy amid Change," Oct. 1993)

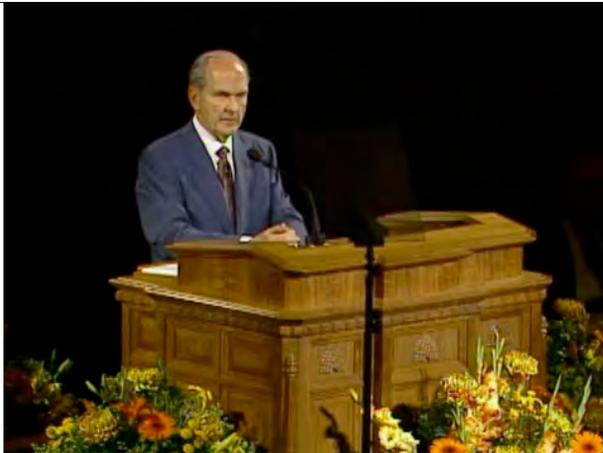




LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

What do you feel about the Fall of Adam and Eve?

PILLAR 3 ATONEMENT



Now we come to the third pillar of God's plan—the Atonement. Just as Adam and Eve were not to live forever in the Garden of Eden, so our final destination was not to be planet earth. We were to return to our heavenly home. (Russell M. Nelson "Constancy amid Change," Oct. 1993)



Given that reality, still another change was necessary. An infinite atonement was required to redeem Adam, Eve, and all of their posterity. That atonement must enable our physical bodies to be resurrected and changed to a bloodless form, no longer liable to disease, deterioration, or death. (Russell M. Nelson "Constancy amid Change," Oct. 1993)

GOSPEL TRUTH:



The Atonement overcomes physical death, spiritual death, life's challenges and the effects of sin.



Because of the Fall, your mortal body will die.
**The Atonement overcomes this
PHYSICAL DEATH**

“Now, there is a death which is called a temporal death; and the death of Christ shall loose the bands of this temporal death, that all shall be raised from this temporal death” (Alma 11:42).



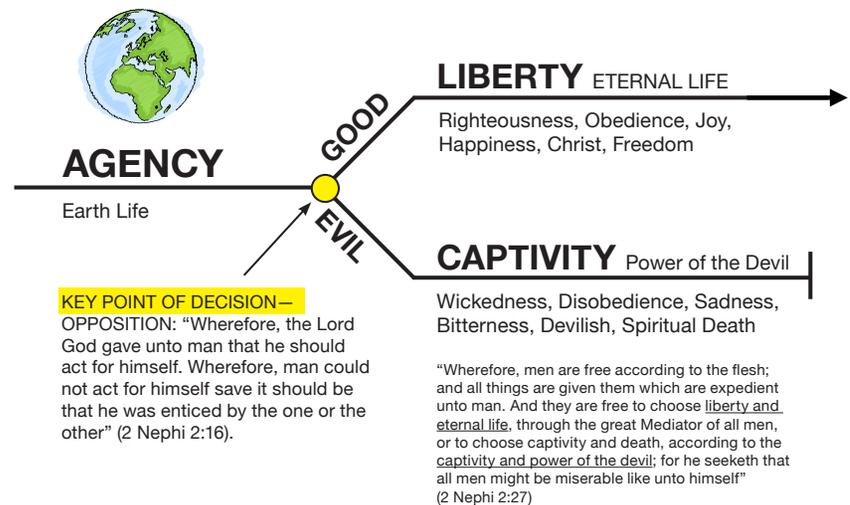
Because of the Fall, you are cut off from God.
**The Atonement overcomes this
SPIRITUAL DEATH**

“Yea, behold, this death bringeth to pass the resurrection, and **redeemeth all mankind from the first death—that spiritual death**; for all mankind, by the fall of Adam being cut off from the presence of the Lord, are considered as dead, both as to things temporal and to things spiritual” (Hel. 14:16).



Because of the Fall, you will have trials on earth.
The Atonement helps you overcome LIFE’S CHALLENGES

“And he shall go forth, suffering pains and afflictions and temptations of every kind; and this that the word might be fulfilled which saith **he will take upon him the pains and the sicknesses of his people**” (Alma 7:11).



Agency leads to accountability



Because of the Fall, laws were broken and someone must pay.

The Atonement of Jesus Christ PAYS FOR YOUR SINS

“And now, the plan of mercy could not be brought about except an atonement should be made; therefore God himself atoneth for the sins of the world, to bring about the plan of mercy, to appease the demands of justice, that God might be a perfect, just God, and a merciful God also”
(Alma 42:15).



LET'S TALK ABOUT IT
What does the Atonement mean to you personally?

GOSPEL TRUTH:



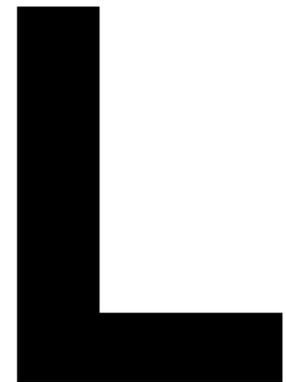
It is your duty to understand the Atonement—the most important gospel principle.



I urge you to devote time each week—for the rest of your life—to **increase your understanding of the Atonement of Jesus Christ**. My heart aches for those who are mired in sin and that don't know how to get out. I weep for those who struggle spiritually or who carry heavy burdens alone because they do not understand what Jesus Christ did for them. (Russell M. Nelson, "The Lord Jesus Christ Will Come Again," Oct. 2024)



As President Nelson asked, how do you come up with a plan to “devote time each week—for the rest of your life—to increase your understanding of the Atonement of Jesus Christ”?

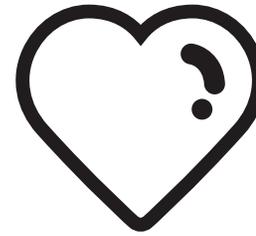


Learn



A

Apply



B

Believe



L

Learn



**How do you learn about
the Atonement?**

GOSPEL TRUTH:



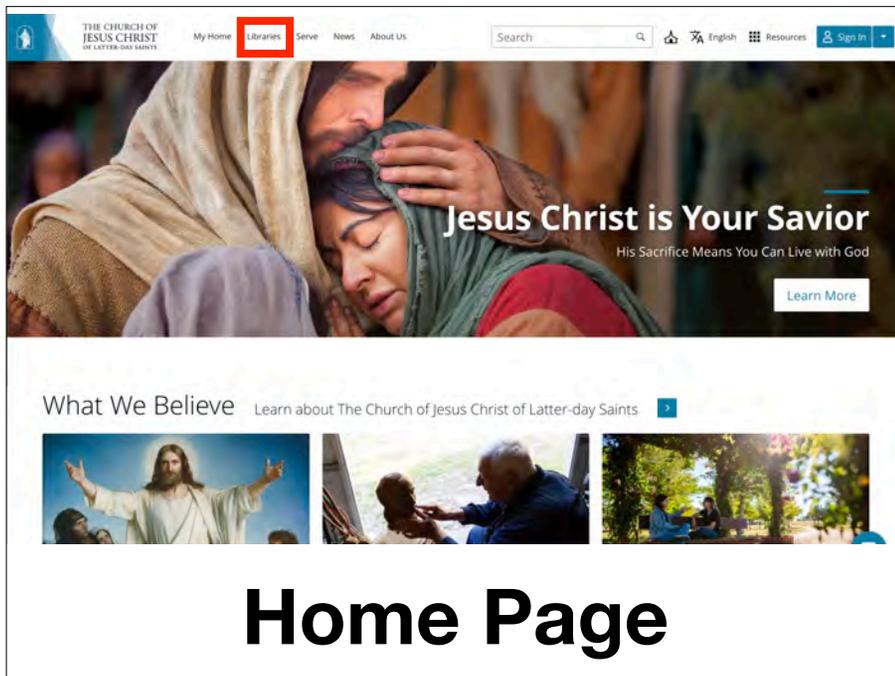
You should “devote time each week—for the rest of your life—to increase your understanding of the Atonement of Jesus Christ.”

(Russell M. Nelson, “The Lord Jesus Christ Will Come Again,” Oct. 2024)



Learning about the Atonement

Do a deep dive into the scriptures on subjects related to the Atonement

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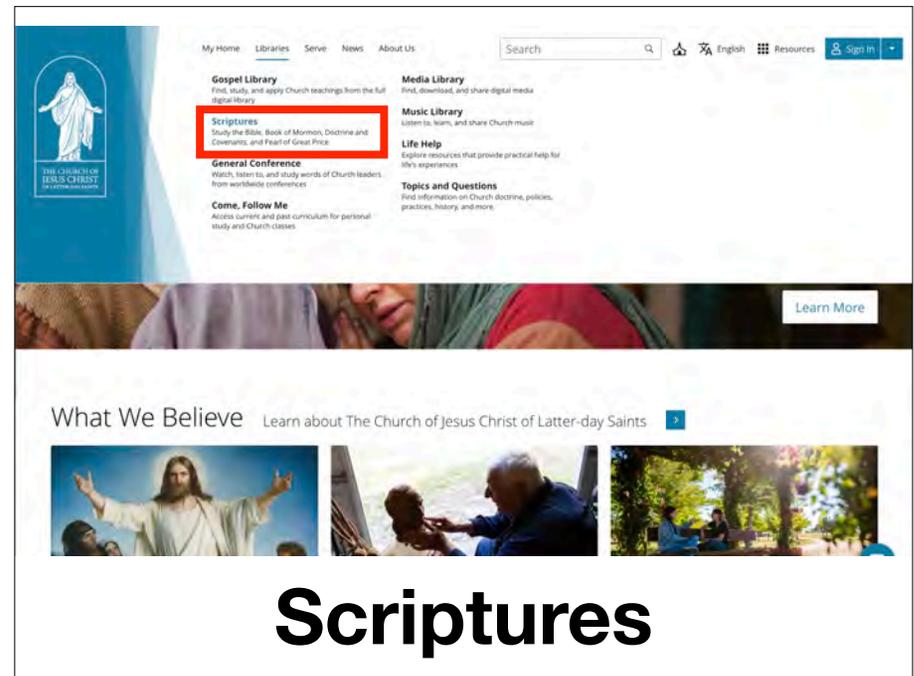
Jesus Christ is Your Savior
His Sacrifice Means You Can Live with God

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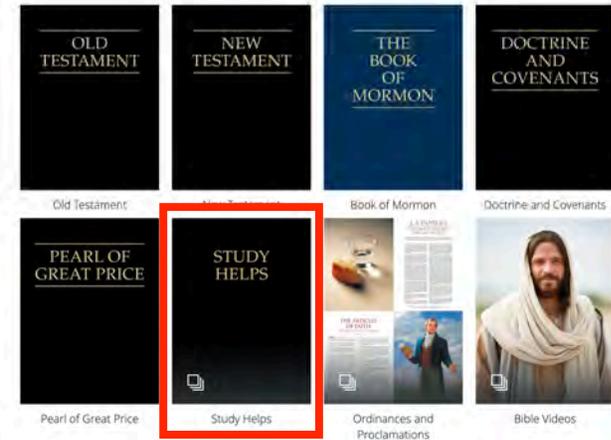
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Scriptures

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Utilize valuable resources like the Bible Dictionary, Topical Guide, Reference Guides, Bible Chronology, Harmony of the Gospels, Maps, Photographs, List of Abbreviations, and more as you regularly study the scriptures.



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Guide to the Scriptures



Guide: Atonement

Atonement

See also Blood; Children of Christ; Cross; Crucifixion; Fall of Adam and Eve; Forgive; Gethsemane; Grace; Immortal, Immortality; Jesus Christ; Justification, Justify; Merciful, Mercy; Plan of Redemption; Redeem, Redeemed, Redemption; Remission of Sins; Repent, Repentance; Resurrection; Sacrament; Sacrifice; Salvation; Sanctification; Sons and Daughters of God

To reconcile man to God.

As used in the scriptures, to atone is to suffer the penalty for an act of sin, thereby removing the effects of sin from the repentant sinner and allowing him to be reconciled to God.

Guide: Atonement

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Utilize valuable resources like the Bible Dictionary, Topical Guide, Reference Guides, Bible Chronology, Harmony of the Gospels, Maps, Photographs, List of Abbreviations, and more as you regularly study the scriptures.

Topical Guide

Bible Dictionary

Index to the Triple

Topical Guide

Atonement

See Blood; Fall of Man; Forgive; Jesus Christ, Atonement through; Jesus Christ, Mission of; Jesus Christ, Redeemer; Jesus Christ, Savior; Reconciliation; Redemption; Sacrifice

Topical: Atonement

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Guide to the Scriptures Topical Guide **Bible Dictionary** Index to the Triple

Bible Dictionary

Atonement

The word describes the setting “at one” of those who have been estranged and denotes the reconciliation of man to God. Sin is the cause of the estrangement, and therefore the purpose of atonement is to correct or overcome the consequences of sin. From the time of Adam to the death of Jesus Christ, true believers were instructed to offer animal sacrifices to the Lord. These sacrifices were symbolic of the forthcoming death of Jesus Christ and were done by faith in Him (Moses 5:5–8).

Jesus Christ, as the Only Begotten Son of God and the only sinless person to live on this earth, was the only one capable of making an atonement for mankind. By His selection and foreordination in the Grand Council before the world was formed, His divine Sonship, His sinless life, the

Bible Dictionary

Scriptures

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Guide to the Scriptures Topical Guide Bible Dictionary **Index to the Triple Combination**

Index to the Triple

Reference

< Previous Next >

Atonc, Atonement

See Jesus Christ, Atonement through

Jesus Christ, Atonement through
index to the triple combination

Jesus Christ, Atonement through

See also Fall of Man; Firstborn; Forgive; Grace; Jesus Christ—Advocate; Jesus Christ, Death of; Jesus Christ, First Coming of; Jesus Christ—Lamb of God; Jesus Christ—Mediator; Jesus Christ—Messiah; Jesus Christ—Only Begotten Son; Jesus Christ—Redeemer; Jesus

Index to Triple

Jesus Christ, Atonement through

See also Fall of Man; Firstborn; Forgive; Grace; Jesus Christ—Advocate; Jesus Christ, Death of; Jesus Christ, First Coming of; Jesus Christ—Lamb of God; Jesus Christ—Mediator; Jesus Christ—Messiah; Jesus Christ—Only Begotten Son; Jesus Christ—Redeemer; Jesus Christ, Resurrection of; Jesus Christ—Savior; Jesus Christ, Types of; Mercy; Merit; Offering; Plan; Reconcile; Remission; Sacrifice; Salvation; Sanctification; Transgression; TG Jesus Christ, Atonement through; Jesus Christ, Firstborn; BD Atonement

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Learning about the Atonement

Do an extensive study of **General Authority** talks on subjects related to the **Atonement**



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General Conference

General Conference Collection

Collection of general conference talks from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints from 1971 to present. View talks organized by topic, by speaker, or through a keyword search. You can also review the talks by year and session.

Conferences



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Topics

Find by topic

adversity

Atonement

baptism

diversity

faith

family

General Conference

Here are talks related to the Atonement from October 2025 General Conference.

2025



Oct 2025 | David A. Bednar
They Are Their Own Judges



Oct 2025 | Henry B. Eyring
Proved and Strengthened in Christ



Oct 2025 | Neil L. Andersen
The Atoning Love of Jesus Christ



Oct 2025 | Jeremy R. Jaggi
Humble Souls at Altars Kneel



Oct 2025 | Kelly R. Johnson
Be Reconciled to God



Apr 2025 | Scott D. Whiting
Beware the Second Temptation

General Conference

1975



Apr 1975 | Gordon B. Hinckley
The Symbol of Christ



Apr 1975 | Marion G. Romney
Easter Thoughts

1974



Oct 1974 | Marion G. Romney
How Men Are Saved

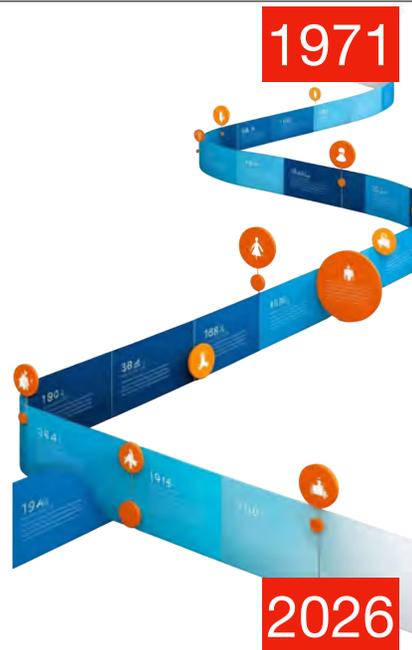
1971



Apr 1971 | Joseph Fielding Smith
Out of the Darkness

General Conference

You can access all talks from 1971 to the present day!



55
YEARS OF TALKS
200+ TALKS



Learning about the Atonement

Let AI summarize the talks of the General Authorities



SAMPLE AI SUMMARY

This is a doctrinal talk centered on why Jesus Christ personally matters to every individual, not just to history or society.

Here's the heart of it in plain terms:

Main Message

Every person has a **spiritual debt** caused by sin.

Justice demands payment.

We cannot pay it ourselves.

Jesus Christ is the Mediator who pays it for us, allowing mercy without violating justice.

Key Ideas

1. Spiritual Debt Is Real

The speaker compares sin to **financial debt**:

- One day, everyone faces a **"settling of accounts"** before God.
- Justice is absolute and impartial — like a **↓** as that cannot bend.
- On justice alone, **no one could be saved.**

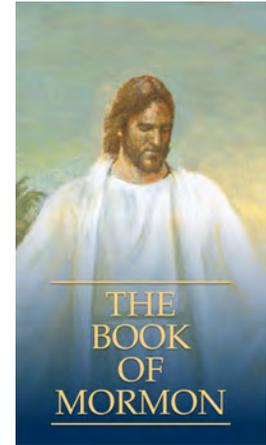


**Warning: Artificial Intelligence
will never replace Deity!**



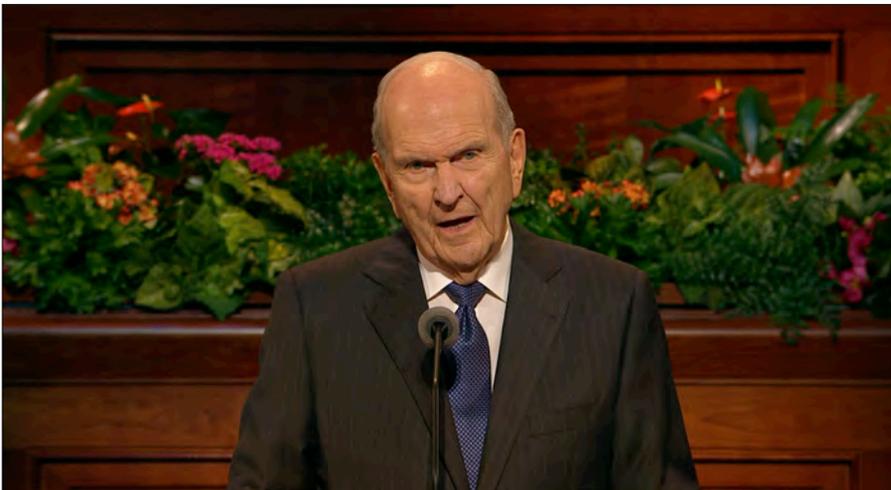
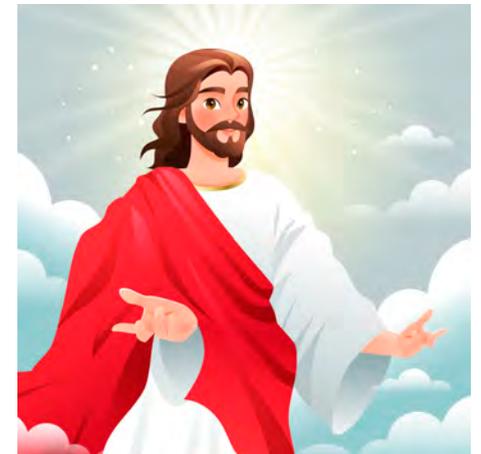
Learning about the Atonement

**Study the Book of
Mormon asking
this question:
What does this
teach me about
Jesus Christ?**



Learning about the Atonement

**Study all the
different
names of
Jesus Christ**



"As you read, I would encourage you to mark each verse that speaks of or refers to the Savior." (Russell M. Nelson, "Sisters' Participation in the Gathering of Israel," Oct. 2018).



Learning about the Atonement

**Memorize
scriptures
related to the
Atonement**



LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

What other ways have you learned about the Atonement?



A

Apply



**How do you apply the
Atonement in your life?**

GOSPEL TRUTH:



You must apply the Atonement in your life and not just learn about or believe in the Atonement.



Applying the Atonement

Repent.



Applying the Atonement

Forgive.



Applying the Atonement

As you participate in Sacrament, pay attention to phrases that focus on the Savior.





Applying the Atonement

As you participate in other meetings, pay attention to phrases that focus on the Savior.



Applying the Atonement

Fast.



Applying the Atonement

Fast with this purpose: how can I make the Atonement more personal for me?



Applying the Atonement

Serve.

Whose burden can you lift? Who is lonely? Who can you serve quietly? Who needs you?





Applying the Atonement

Minister.

How can you be a better minister to your assigned families and unassigned opportunities?



LET'S TALK ABOUT IT
How else can you apply the Atonement?



B

Believe



How do you believe the Atonement is for you?

GOSPEL TRUTH:



You are not only expected to learn about and apply the Atonement. God want you to believe it was for you he died.



Believing the Atonement

Go to the temple.

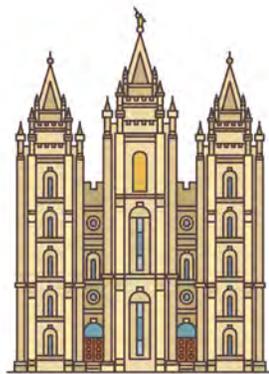
What did you feel about Christ in the temple?



Believing the Atonement

Do an endowment.

How do feel about the Atonement after hearing the five covenants?



Believing the Atonement

Feel the testimonies of others.

How do others feel about the Atonement?





Believing the Atonement

Follow good examples.

Do you let others help you feel better about the Atonement?



Believing the Atonement

Grow during challenges.

How has the Atonement helped you during the hard times in your life?



Believing the Atonement

Keep a journal.

Answers this: how did the Savior help me today?



Believing the Atonement

Share your feelings.

Let your family know how you feel about the Atonement.





Believing the Atonement

Yoke with Jesus.

Identify burdens. Put them on the Savior.



Believing the Atonement

Bear your testimony.

Discover your feelings as you bare your soul.



Believing the Atonement

Be nice to yourself.

What would Christ say to you about your self-loathing?



Believing the Atonement

Count your blessings.

What did Jesus Christ do for you this week?





LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

What do you do to know the Atonement is for you personally?



TO DO

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS

WEEK 4 CHALLENGE

ATONEMENT

Will you “devote time each week—for the rest of your life—to increase your understanding of the Atonement of Jesus Christ”? Will you LEARN about the Atonement, APPLY the Atonement in your life, and BELIEVE that the Atonement was for you personally?

ONLINE CLASS

Watch this lesson online or download a PDF of today's slides.



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Write your answers in your study journal
Study Guide: The Atonement

WHAT HAPPENED INSIDE THE GARDEN OF EDEN?

- 1) What did the Lord command Adam and Eve to do? Moses 2:28
- 2) What did the Lord forbid Adam and Eve from doing in the Garden of Eden? What did the Lord give them? Moses 3:16-17
- 3) What would have happened if Adam and Eve did not partake of the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden? 2 Nephi 2:22-23
- 4) Why did Adam and Eve choose to partake of the forbidden fruit? 2 Nephi 2:25

WHAT HAPPENED WHEN THEY LEFT THE GARDEN OF EDEN?

- 5) What did Adam become subject to after partaking? D&C 29:40
- 6) What was the result of partaking of the fruit? D&C 29:41
- 7) Who did the Lord send and why? D&C 29:42
- 8) What happened when they accepted the gospel? D&C 29:43
- 9) How did Adam feel after partaking of the fruit? Moses 5:10
- 10) How did Eve feel after partaking of the fruit? Moses 5:11

WHAT WERE THE EFFECTS OF THE FALL?

- 11) What was the results of partaking of the fruit? Romans 3:23
- 12) When Adam and Eve partook of the fruit and were cast out, what was this called? Alma 12:22
- 13) Why was it good that Adam and Eve were cast out of the garden? 2 Nephi 2:11
- 14) Why was it good that Adam and Eve were cast out of the garden? D&C 29:39



What does the Atonement mean to you?
What do you feel about the Atonement? What experiences have you had with the Atonement? Why do you want to bring others to Jesus Christ? Why do you want to go on a mission? Write your feelings in your journal.

- 27) Why must Christ die? Helaman 14:16-18
- 28) What did the Atonement appease (satisfy or fulfill)? Alma 42:15
- 29) Who is the only one who can save us? Mosiah 16:13
- 30) What would happen without an Atonement? Jacob 7:12

HOW DO YOU APPLY THE ATONEMENT?

- 31) How are you spiritually healed from sin? 3 Nephi 9:13
- 32) What do you need to be healed spiritually? 3 Nephi 18:32
- 33) How do you receive the blessings of the Atonement? 2 Nephi 2:7
- 34) How do you receive the blessings of the Atonement? John 3:16-17
- 35) How do you receive the blessings of the Atonement? D&C 20:37
- 36) If you believe in Jesus Christ, what will you do? Helaman 14:13
- 37) What must you do to receive the Atonement blessings? Mosiah 3:19

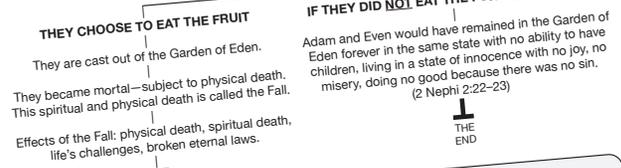
WHAT ARE THE BLESSINGS OF THE ATONEMENT?

- 38) What are some of the blessings of the Atonement? Mosiah 4:3
- 39) What are some of the blessings of the Atonement? Mosiah 24:14-15
- 40) What are some of the blessings of the Atonement? Alma 5:12-13
- 41) What are some of the blessings of the Atonement? Alma 7:11

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Write your spiritual impressions in your study journal
WHY MUST WE HAVE THE ATONEMENT?

In pre-mortal life, God presents his plan; Satan objects; Christ is chosen as Savior.
The earth is created to bring about the immortality and eternal life of men and women.
Adam and Eve are put in the Garden; God gives them contradicting instructions.
Adam and Eve are taught the consequences of eating or not eating the forbidden fruit.
Adam and Eve are given their agency, the power to choose. They choose to eat, thank goodness!



The Atonement overcomes the effects of the Fall.

- Results of the Fall: **PHYSICAL DEATH**
- Results of the Fall: **SPIRITUAL DEATH** You are cut off from God.
- Results of the Fall: **LIFE'S CHALLENGES** You have problems on earth.
- Results of the Fall: **LAWS WERE BROKEN** Somebody has to pay.
- Blessings of Atonement: **MERCY**

READING LIST



Russell M. Nelson, “Constancy amid Change,” October 1993

Russell M. Nelson, “The Creation,” April 2000



NEXT CLASS

▶ February 5
Book of Mormon

“I testify that Joseph Smith was and is the prophet of this last dispensation. It was he who, through the gift and power of God, translated this holy book. This is the book that will help to prepare the world for the Second Coming of the Lord” (Russell M. Nelson, October 2017).



Without the Atonement, Father in Heaven's plan of happiness could not have been placed fully into effect. The Atonement gives all the opportunity to overcome the consequences of mistakes made in life. When we obey a law, we receive a blessing. When we break a law, there is nothing left over from prior obedience to satisfy the demands of justice for that broken law. The Savior's Atonement permits us to repent of any disobedience and thereby avoid the penalties that justice would have imposed. (Richard G. Scott, April 2010)



My reverence and gratitude for the Atonement of the Holy One of Israel, the Prince of Peace and our Redeemer, continually expand as I strive to understand more about it. I realize that no mortal mind can adequately conceive, nor can human tongue appropriately express, the full significance of all that Jesus Christ has done for our Heavenly Father's children through His Atonement. (Richard G. Scott, April 2010)



Yet it is vital that we each learn what we can about it. The Atonement is that essential ingredient of our Father in Heaven's plan of happiness without which that plan could not have been activated. Your understanding of the Atonement and the insight it provides for your life will greatly enhance the productive use of all of the knowledge, experience, and skills you acquire in mortal life. (Richard G. Scott, April 2010)

