

Introduction

- ? What is the most talked about theme or subject in the scriptures? (Last Days, Second Coming)
- ? What is the most prophesied event in the scriptures? (Final gathering of Israel)
- ? Why does the Lord tell us so much about the last days and second coming?
 - To give us hope that a day of rest, a better life is coming. (But most don't want this!)
 - To help us survive the last days. Your life (spiritual & temporal) depends upon your preparation (spiritual & temporal).
 - To help us prepare to see our Savior. God is preparing a world for the millennium, and a people who can live with Christ. Only a Zion people can dwell in his presence. Most of us won't prepare without tribulations.
- People who fear [love and respect] Savior know and watch for signs of his coming.

And it shall come to pass that he that feareth me shall be looking forth for the great day of the Lord to come, even for the signs of the coming of the Son of Man. (D&C 45:39)

- ? What are some of the signs of the second coming of the Savior? (Count them.)
- ? Referring back to the scripture, if we don't even know what the signs are, how can we watch for them? What does that tell us about how much we fear the Lord?

Why Is Understanding Last Days So Difficult?

- Last Days prophecy is hidden behind symbolism.
- Prophecy is scattered throughout the Bible and other scriptures.
- Interpretations are also scattered throughout the scriptures
 - Example: Parable of Ten Virgins (Mathew 25:1-13, D&C 45:56-59. Wise virgins receive the Truth, take Holy Spirit for guide, are not deceived.)
- Scriptures are scattered and hidden to protect them from the Great and Abominable Church.

... the book ... contained the fulness of the gospel of the Lord, ... according to the truth which is in God. And after they go forth by the hand of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, from the Jews unto the Gentiles, thou seest the formation of that great and abominable church, which is most abominable above all other churches; for behold, they have taken away from the gospel of the Lamb many parts which are plain and most precious; and also many covenants of the Lord have they taken away. ... And after these plain and precious things were taken away it goeth forth unto all the nations of the Gentiles; and after it goeth forth unto all the nations of the Gentiles, ...—because of the many plain and precious things which have been taken out of the book,...an exceedingly great many do stumble, yea, insomuch that Satan hath great power over them. (1 Nephi 13:24–29)

- Life is a school and a test: Exaltation is only for those truly interested in God's work. (DC 121:34-35)
- Blessing vs. Cursing: Temporal & spiritual salvation reserved for those who seek and ask. (DC 130:20-21)

Use of Symbolism

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- ? Why does God use so much symbolism?
- It's part of being a God. God uses symbolism. He expects us to learn symbolism.
 - Numbers, words, colors, plants, animals, etc.
- Symbolism conceals and reveals
 - Hides information from those who are not seeking or are uninitiated.
 - Reveals far more than a literal story could.
- Duality is ascribing more than one meaning or interpretation to scriptures and symbols.
 - Same Level - Water can be used to show peace or turmoil.

O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments—then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea. (1 Nephi 20:18)

or

But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. (Isaiah 57:20)

- Different Levels - Parable of Good Samaritan can teach us about loving our neighbor, or it can teach us about the mission of Christ.
- Parallelism – Prophets use different descriptions for the same thing. Use 2 eyes for 3D.
 - Example: Great and abominable church in 1 Nephi 13 is the same as the great whore in Revelation 17.
 - Isaiah uses parallelism a lot in the same verse (Form of Hebrew poetry – rhyme ideas, not words.)
- All things teach about Christ or his mission – at some level.

“... all things have their likeness, and all things are created and made to bear record of me, both things which are temporal, and things which are spiritual; things which are in the heavens above, and things which are on the earth, and things which are in the earth, and things which are under the earth, both above and beneath: all things bear record of me.” (Moses 6:63)

- Look at the context to learn the deeper meanings.
- Be very careful about thinking you understand everything – because you probably don't; there are other facets and deeper levels.

Knowledge of History

- The scriptures contain a history of God's dealings with his children. Many times the scriptures admonish us to remember this thing or that thing.
- ? Why is knowledge of history so important for learning about future prophecy?
 - History repeats itself. Again and again. To know the past is to know the future. This is the second lesson of history.
- ? What is the first lesson of history? (People don't learn from history!)
 - That's why they have to learn the hard way. Even in the premortal world (Lucifer, etc.)
- ? Is it just scripture history we need to know, or do we need to learn world history? Why?

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- You'll never fully understand Revelation without Daniel. And you'll never understand Daniel or many of the other prophecies without a knowledge of world history.

Search the Scriptures for the Signs of the Lord's Coming

- Most people in this room can tell me about a dream or vision that someone had about the things that are coming. Faith promoting rumors seem to be more exciting than the scriptures.
- Many of our Christian brothers and sisters have built an entire last days scenario around a couple of scriptures. They call it the Rapture. It began to appear around the time of Joseph Smith, along with a lot of other false doctrines, like organic evolution and uniformitarianism.
- Mormons aren't much better. Many have built an entire last days scenario around the idea of the Callout.
 - People often ask me about the callout, and how I'm preparing for the callout. Yes, the scriptures tell of groups leaving. We are called out of Babylon. People will be called to build New Jerusalem. I have asked in prayer many times – so far, all I've been told is "prepare to stay".
 - I also see many houses left desolate, waiting for the tribes of Israel to come and inherit the gentiles.
 - I haven't seen any counsel from the Brethren to go off to the mountains to hide out.
 - However, individual families may be led by the spirit to prepare to move. We should all be prophets and be wise virgins.
- President Harold B. Lee warned the Church in general conference of possible dangers in giving other sources priority over the scriptures:

"There are among us many loose writings predicting the calamities which are about to overtake us. Some of these have been publicized as though they were necessary to wake up the world to the horrors about to overtake us. Many of these are from sources upon which there cannot be unquestioned reliance.

"... We need no such publications to be forewarned, if we were only conversant with what the scriptures have already spoken to us in plainness."

President Lee further counseled the Saints, giving "the sure word of prophecy on which you should rely for your guide. ...

"Read the 24th chapter of Matthew—particularly that inspired version as contained in the Pearl of Great Price. [Joseph Smith-Matthew.]

"Then read the 45th section of the Doctrine and Covenants where the Lord, not man, has documented the signs of the times.

"Now turn to section 101 and section 133 of the Doctrine and Covenants and hear the step-by-step recounting of the events leading up to the coming of the Savior.

"Finally, turn to the promises the Lord makes to those who keep the commandments when these judgments descend upon the wicked, as set forth in the Doctrine and Covenants, section 38.

"... These are some of the writings with which you should concern yourselves, rather than commentaries that may come from those whose information may not be the most reliable and whose motives may be subject to question." (**In Conference Report, Oct. 1972, p. 128; or Ensign, Jan. 1973, p. 106.**)

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- Scriptures to study for Last Days and Second Coming. (Note: These are major sources and the list is not comprehensive. There are many other references scattered throughout the scriptures. There are also many type and shadows contained in other scriptures. Many of the events in the Book of Mormon were included because they would repeat in our day.)
 - **Pearl of Great Price:** Moses 7, Joseph Smith – Matthew.
 - **Doctrine and Covenants:** 1, 2, 29, 34, 38, 43, 45, 49, 63, 77, 87, 88, 101, 110, 112, 116, 130, 133.
 - **Book of Mormon:** 1Nephi 12-15, 19-22, 24-25, 29-30; 2Nephi 3, 6, 9-10, 12-16, 20-30; Jacob 5-6; 3 Nephi 16,20-22, 24-25; Ether 8, 13.
 - **New Testament:** Matthew 24, Revelation.
 - **Old Testament:** Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Joel, Micah, Zechariah, Malachi, etc.

Signs Mentioned in Lesson Manual

- Signs The Savior will return to the earth in power and great glory.
 - D&C 29:9–11; 45:44. (Christ will come to earth in power and glory. The proud and the wicked will be burned, and there will not be wickedness on earth.)
 - D&C 34:7, 12; 43:17; 110:16. (The Second Coming is near.)
 - D&C 34:8, 11; 63:34. (All nations will tremble when the Savior comes. If we are faithful, His power and influence will be with us until He comes.)
 - D&C 45:45–54; 88:96–99. (The Saints who have died will be resurrected and come forth to meet the Savior. The Saints who are alive on the earth will be gathered to meet Him. He will come to the Mount of Olives, and it will divide. The Jews will recognize their Savior and weep because they persecuted Him. Then those who received the gospel in spirit prison will be resurrected.)
 - D&C 49:6. (The Savior will put all enemies under His feet.)
 - D&C 49:7. (No one, not even the angels, knows the hour or the day when the Savior will come.)
 - D&C 133:46–53. (The Savior will come in red apparel. His coming will be a time of vengeance upon the wicked and redemption for the righteous.)
- Millennium will be a time of joy and peace.
 - D&C 101:23. (Everyone will be able to see the Savior.)
 - D&C 101:24. (All the wicked will be destroyed.)
 - D&C 101:25. (The earth will become new.)
 - D&C 101:26. (People and animals will live in peace.)
 - D&C 101:27. (People will be granted what they righteously desire.)
 - D&C 101:28; see also D&C 45:55; 88:110. (Satan will be bound and will not have power to tempt anyone.)
 - D&C 101:29. (There will be no sorrow or death.)
 - D&C 101:30–31. (A person will grow old, then be changed suddenly from mortal to immortal life.)
 - D&C 101:32–34. (The Lord will reveal all things about the earth and heaven, including how the earth was created and what will become of it.)

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- D&C 45:58. (Children will grow up without sin.)
- D&C 45:59; 133:25. (The Lord will be the king and lawgiver for the whole earth.)
- Positive Signs of Last Days
 - D&C 45:9; 133:57–58. (The fulness of the gospel will be restored.)
 - D&C 45:66–71. (The New Jerusalem will be built. It will be a place of peace and safety for the righteous in the last days.)
 - D&C 65:2–6. (God’s kingdom will be established on the earth.)
 - D&C 110:11–16. (Priesthood keys will be restored.)
 - D&C 133:8–9, 36–39. (The gospel will be preached throughout the world.)
- Negative signs of Last Days
 - D&C 29:15; 88:91. (There will be great weeping, despair, and fear. Men’s hearts will fail them.)
 - D&C 29:16; 45:31; 112:24. (There will be famines, scourges, sickness, and desolation.)
 - D&C 34:9; 45:40–42; 88:87. (There will be signs and wonders in the heavens and in the earth.)
 - D&C 45:26; 63:33. (There will be wars and rumors of wars, and the whole earth will be in commotion.)
 - D&C 45:27. (The love of men will become cold, and iniquity will abound.)
 - D&C 45:33; 88:89–90. (There will be earthquakes, tempests, and great waves of the sea. Men will harden their hearts against God and fight each other.)

Need for a framework

- There are hundreds of signs of the coming of Christ, but knowing them won’t do us any good unless we can put them into some kind of framework – a timeline or order of occurrence.
- Show Larkin drawing of Book of Revelation – an example timeline.
- Tell story of Indiana Jones finding the length of the stick he would use in the map room to find the resting place of the Ark of the Covenant. The Germans had the measurement from one side of the medallion (from the scar on the bad guy’s hand.) But the other side of the medallion also had information needed for the correct length. The bad guys were digging in the wrong place.
- All the scholars and ministers of mainstream Christianity have the Bible, but they refuse the revelations given through Joseph Smith. They don’t accept D&C 77. They don’t know the seals of the book mentioned in Revelation 5 and 6 represent the successive thousand year periods of earth’s history from the Fall of Adam to the end of the Millennium. They think the horsemen and other things seen the seals are all part of the last days. They’re digging in the wrong place.
- By using restoration scriptures in combination with the Bible we can create a frameworks or timelines for the last days. These timelines allow us to group signs that go together and put them on order so we know where we are in the earth’s history. They don’t give us the date of the second coming, but they show us the preparations and how close we are getting.
- Show and discuss the Last Days Timeline. (Remind them that it is unfinished and needs considerable work.)
- Show and discuss 3 Nephi 21 Timeline (The future of North America.)