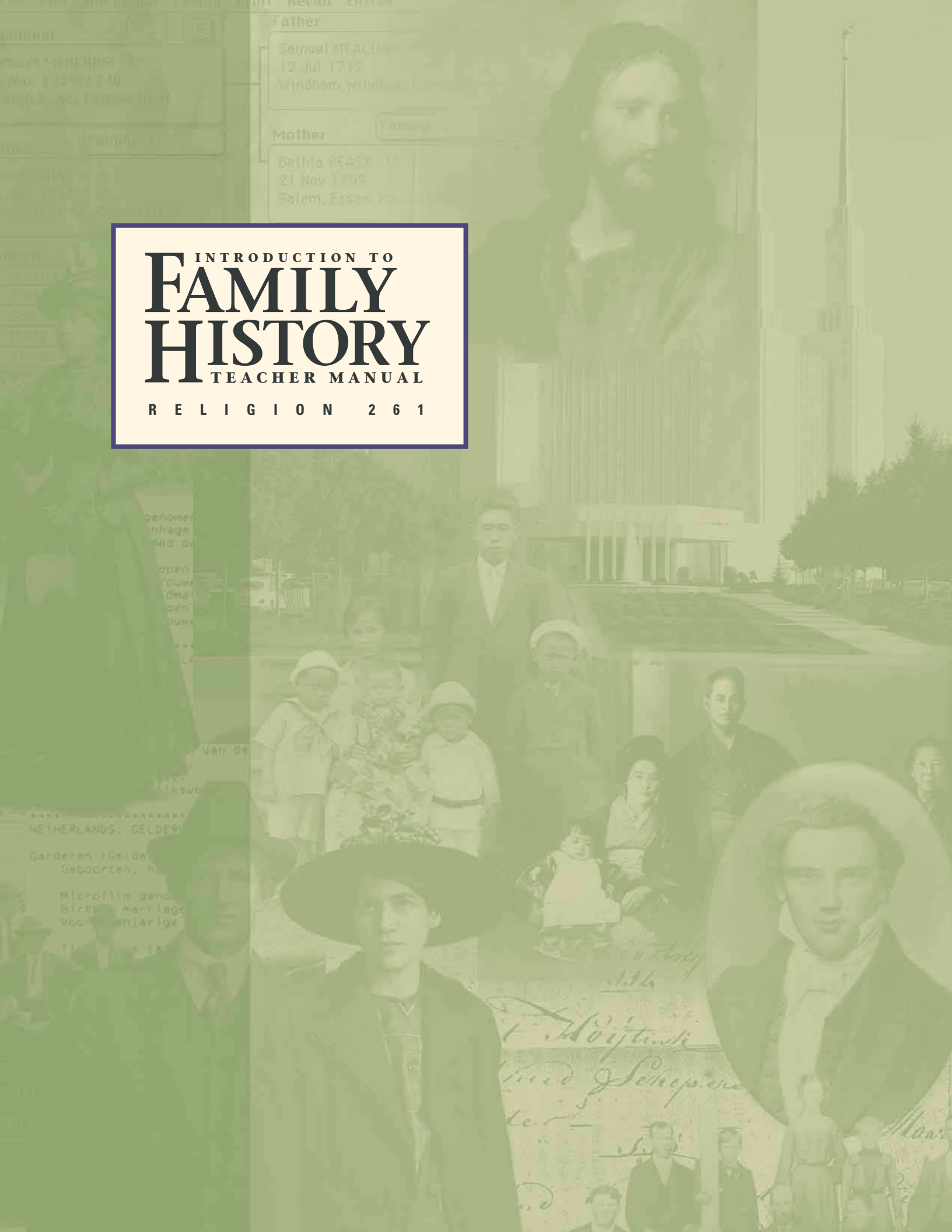


INTRODUCTION TO
**FAMILY
HISTORY**
TEACHER MANUAL

R E L I G I O N 2 6 1



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Prepared by the
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INTRODUCTION

Introduction to Family History (Religion 261) is a one-semester or one-quarter institute of religion course. In it you will teach the doctrines essential to family history work and ways we can help redeem the dead. Students will learn the process for finding names of ancestors and submitting them for temple ordinances.

This manual emphasizes doctrines and basic research methods. No student manual is provided—family history research has been changing more rapidly than we can accommodate in a printed manual. If desired, you can use the lessons and teaching outlines on Brigham Young University's Religion 261 Web site (<http://261.byu.edu>). In addition, this manual includes student handouts for several of the lessons. Plan in advance so you have these ready for distribution on the appropriate day.

To teach this course, you do not need in-depth experience in family history research, but you should make yourself familiar with the techniques you will encourage your students to use. Note that chapters 8, 9, and 15 refer to Church family history databases and to procedures for submitting names for temple work. These have undergone significant change in recent years. Take the time to learn the current Church-approved methods for recording and submitting family history information (see the BYU Religion 261 site as well as the Church's family history Web site, <http://www.familysearch.org>).

Divide the lessons in this manual according to the number and length of class meetings and the emphasis you plan to give in each lesson. You may need to adapt this manual to fit local resources and needs. At the beginning of the course, you may find it useful to give a brief course overview of what students can expect to learn and accomplish. Keep in mind that a major objective is to help students expand their vision of the redemption of the dead.



SALVATION FOR THE LIVING AND THE DEAD

LESSON PURPOSE

To help students understand that by doing family history, we help the Lord's work of extending the plan of salvation to the dead.

LESSON THEMES

- ◆ Heavenly Father provided the plan of salvation so that all His children have the opportunity to receive immortality and eternal life (see Moses 1:39).
- ◆ Because of the Savior's suffering and death, "all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel" (Articles of Faith 1:3).
- ◆ Family history and temple work are essential to the mission of the Church. Through these we help provide saving ordinances for those who died without the gospel.
- ◆ We should seek the Spirit as we do family history.

LESSON IDEAS

Member Participation in Family History

■ Ask students what challenges they think they may face as they do family history. Read the following excerpts, taken from letters sent to the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah, that humorously illustrate some of the challenges others have had:

"I have had a hard time finding myself in London. If I was from there, I was very small, and cannot be found."

"Enclosed please find my grandmother. I have worked on her for fifty years without success. Now see what you can do."

"Please baptize this sheet."

"For running down the Wheelers, I will send three dollars more."

"My grandfather died at the age of three."

"Source of information: Family Bible in possession of Aunt Maime, until the tornado hit Topeka, Kansas. Now only the good Lord knows where it is."

"I would like to find out if I have any living relatives or dead relatives or ancestors in my family."

Tell students that we do not have to be professional genealogists to do family history. Simplified requirements for submitting names for temple work and technological advances (especially in computers) provide more help than ever before. Everyone can participate in family history work.

The Plan of Salvation and the Atonement of Jesus Christ

- Discuss and diagram the plan of salvation, or invite students to come up with a diagram. Include the premortal life; the Creation; Fall; Atonement; earth life; death; spirit world; Judgment; Resurrection; the celestial, terrestrial, and telestial kingdoms; and outer darkness.
- Help students understand that the Atonement of Jesus Christ is the central doctrine of the plan of salvation. Review and discuss some of the following scriptures: 1 Corinthians 15:12–26, 40–42; 2 Nephi 31:11–21; 3 Nephi 11:31–39; 27:13–22; D&C 29:36–44; 76:40–42; and Abraham 3:21–28.
- Ask students what we can learn from the scriptures, especially those listed above, about ordinances and covenants. Invite students to find other scriptures that teach the necessity of baptism and other gospel ordinances, such as confirmation; ordination to the Melchizedek Priesthood; the endowment; and sealings of husbands, wives, and children.
- Invite students to tell what they know about Heavenly Father’s plan for providing ordinances for those who die without receiving the gospel. Read and discuss the following statement by President Spencer W. Kimball: “Missionary work is not limited to proclaiming the gospel to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people now living on the earth. Missionary work is also continuing beyond the veil among the millions and even billions of the children of our Heavenly Father who have died either without hearing the gospel or without accepting it while they lived on the earth. Our great part in this aspect of missionary work is to perform on this earth the ordinances required for those who accept the gospel over there. The spirit world is full of spirits who are anxiously awaiting the performance of these earthly ordinances for them. I hope to see us dissolve the artificial boundary line we so often place between missionary work and temple and genealogical work, because it is the same great redemptive work!” (“The Things of Eternity—Stand We in Jeopardy?” *Ensign*, Jan. 1977, 3).

Family History and the Mission of the Church

- Ask students to read Doctrine and Covenants 20:59 and Moroni 10:32 and tell what the mission of the Church is. Share the following statement: “The Lord declared that it is His work and glory ‘to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man’ (Moses 1:39). He has established His Church to help with this great work. Accordingly, the Church’s mission is to ‘invite all to come unto Christ’ (D&C 20:59) ‘and be perfected in him’ (Moroni 10:32). This mission has three dimensions . . . :
 - “1. Proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.
 - “2. Perfect the Saints by preparing them to receive the ordinances of the gospel and by caring for the poor and needy.
 - “3. Redeem the dead by performing vicarious ordinances of the gospel for them” (*Melchizedek Priesthood Leadership Handbook* [1990], 3).

Read and discuss the following statement by President James E. Faust, a counselor in the First Presidency:

“Searching for our kindred dead isn’t just a hobby. It is a fundamental responsibility for all members of the Church. We believe that life continues after death and that all will be resurrected. We believe that families may continue in the next life if they have kept the special covenants made in one of the sacred temples under the authority of God. We believe that our deceased ancestors can also be eternally united with their families when we make covenants in their behalf in the temples. Our deceased forebears may accept these covenants, if they choose to do so, in the spirit world” (in Conference Report, Oct. 2003, 58; or *Ensign*, Nov. 2003, 54).



Kirtland Temple

■ Have students read Doctrine and Covenants 110:11–16. Discuss who appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in the Kirtland Temple, what keys they restored, and how those keys might relate to proclaiming the gospel, perfecting the Saints, and redeeming the dead.

Spiritual Gifts in Family History Work

■ Tell students that many in the spirit world are anxiously waiting for their temple work to be done. The following story is an example:

Frederick William Hurst and his brother Charles Clement Hurst were New Zealanders who were baptized into the Church in Australia in 1854 and later emigrated to Utah. Through letters they tried to share the restored gospel with the rest of their family in New Zealand, but their efforts were rejected. Fred wrote, “My heart was so sore I could not forbear shedding tears.” In 1875 Fred and Charles were called to return to New Zealand as missionaries, but no other family members joined the Church.

In 1892–93, Fred helped to engrave and paint the interior of the Salt Lake Temple. Even though he was ill and “sick with vomiting,” he believed the completion of the temple was of such importance that he never missed a day’s work until the project was finished. One of his last journal entries reads:

“Along about the 1st of March, 1893, I found myself alone in the dining room, all had gone to bed. I was sitting at the table when to my great [surprise] my elder brother Alfred walked in and sat down opposite me at the table and smiled. I said to him (he looked so natural): ‘When did you arrive in Utah?’

“He said: ‘I have just come from the Spirit World, this is not my body that you see, it is lying in the tomb. I want to tell you that when you were on your mission you told me many things about the Gospel, and the hereafter, and about the Spirit World being as real and tangible as the earth. I could not believe you, but when I died and went there and saw for myself I realized that you had told the truth. I attended the Mormon meetings.’ He raised his hand and said with much warmth: ‘I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ with all my heart. I believe in faith, and repentance and baptism for the remission of sins, but that is as far as I can go. I look to you to do the work for me in the temple. . . . We are all looking to you as our head in this great work.’”

Fred later arranged for the work to be done. (In John Devitry-Smith, “The Saint and the Grave Robber,” *BYU Studies* 33, no. 1 [1993]: 17, 40, 42.)

The following story is an example of how the Spirit helped someone doing family history work:

“In 1933, [Collin L. Morse] was courting his wife-to-be, Olivia Hatch, in Salt Lake City. The grip of the depression was solid, and jobs were few. To earn a little money to meet the necessities of life and work toward their future, Collin traveled to Clinton, [Montana,] to top sugar beets.

“He located a small flat where he could stay in the town, shared by several other workers. Every few days, he would walk to a small store several blocks away to purchase . . . supplies. . . . The path took him past a very small family cemetery in an open alfalfa field. Each time he walked by the cemetery he felt impressed to stop. On his last trip to the store he stopped and recorded the names and dates from each headstone. There were only five or six. They appeared to be from one family with the surname of Mitchell. He folded the paper and put it in his wallet.

“He returned to Utah and on [December] 14, 1934, married his sweetheart in the Salt Lake Temple. He and Olivia were blessed with four children. Over the next 22 years Collin worked hard to support his family.

“On many occasions he cleaned out his wallet or replaced it. He always felt compelled to return the paper to his wallet.

“In 1954 Collin and Olivia moved their family to Independence, [Oregon]. There, Collin was called to serve as the president of the Dallas Branch in Dallas, [Oregon]. One Sunday, Collin was talking with a branch member who said he was eager to continue genealogical research but had encountered a roadblock. Collin listened intently to the member. He recognized the surname sought to be the one he copied from the gravestones years earlier.

“Collin pulled his wallet from his pocket and removed the folded list of names. He handed it to the branch member and asked if the information would help him. The man stared at the names in amazement and then responded that the names were precisely those he had been looking for.

“Collin’s heart was filled with joy. He had listened to the still, small voice” (Keith Morse, “Still, Small Voice,” in *Church News*, Oct. 16, 1993, 16).

Conclusion

■ Read Doctrine and Covenants 18:10–16 with students and ask how these verses can apply to family history work. Bear your testimony of the importance of family history work and of other principles you have discussed.

ASSIGNMENTS

■ Give students copies of “Ordinances for the Living and Dead,” found at the end of this lesson, and assign them to read it prior to your next class.

ADDITIONAL LESSON RESOURCES

■ Elder Boyd K. Packer, who was then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, said: “One day while pondering prayerfully on [the enormity of the task of redeeming the dead,] I came to a realization that there is something that any one of us can do for all who have died.

“I came to see that any one of us, by himself, can care about them, all of them, and love them. That came as a great inspiration, for then I knew there was a starting point.

“Whatever the number, we can love them, and desire to redeem them. Any one of us has within us the power to expand our concern to include them all. If a billion more are added, we can care for them also.

“If the numbers seem staggering, we will move ahead. If the process is tedious, we will move ahead anyway. If the records have been lost, if the obstacles and opposition are overwhelming, we will move ahead anyway” (with Howard W. Hunter, *That They May Be Redeemed* [address delivered at regional representatives’ seminar, Apr. 1, 1977], 3–4).

ORDINANCES FOR THE LIVING AND DEAD

Elder Boyd K. Packer taught:

“Life is a homeward journey for all of us, back to the presence of God in his celestial kingdom.

“Ordinances and covenants become our credentials for admission into His presence. To worthily receive them is the quest of a lifetime; to keep them thereafter is the challenge of mortality.

“Once we have received them for ourselves and for our families, we are obligated to provide these ordinances vicariously for our kindred dead, indeed for the whole human family” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1987, 27; or *Ensign*, May 1987, 24).



When you obey covenants made in the endowment, your understanding of God’s eternal purposes increases and your life is filled with a greater abundance of the Spirit. You have a greater capacity to love others and meet the challenges of daily life.

Church members usually receive the endowment when they are preparing to serve full-time missions or be married or sealed in the temple. Generally unmarried members are not endowed until they are called as missionaries or until they become established in their vocations or professions and need to be strengthened further in righteous living.

Sealings

The sealing ordinances unite families for eternity. President Spencer W. Kimball described the eternal joy and blessing of these ordinances:



Ordinances for the Living

Baptism and confirmation, the first ordinances of the gospel, are the gate by which we enter the narrow path that leads to eternal life (see 2 Nephi 31:17–18). To continue on this path after baptism, we must also receive the sacred ordinances of the temple—the endowment and the sealing ordinances. We must remain faithful to the covenants we make. These ordinances are essential to our exaltation.

The Endowment

The endowment explains the purpose of life and Heavenly Father’s plan for the exaltation of His children. President Brigham Young taught:

“Your endowment is, to receive all those ordinances in the house of the Lord, which are necessary for you, after you have departed this life, to enable you to walk back to the presence of the Father, . . . and gain your eternal exaltation” (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, sel. John A. Widtsoe [1941], 416).

“The greatest joys of true married life can be continued. The most beautiful relationships of parents and children can be made permanent. The holy association of families can be never-ending if husband and wife have been sealed in the holy bond of eternal matrimony” (*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball [1982], 297).

The sealing ordinances include sealing of husband and wife (temple marriage) and sealing of children to parents.

The sealing of husband and wife in the temple is essential to becoming an eternal family. Important covenants are associated with this ordinance. Faithfulness to these covenants will bless your family now and in eternity. You will have greater love, patience, and happiness in your home. You will have greater strength to endure the trials of life. And you and your family will receive comfort from knowing that you can be together forever.

Children born to parents who have been sealed in the temple are born in the covenant of their parents’ sealing. These children automatically become part of an eternal family. Children who are not born in the covenant can also become part of an eternal family by being sealed to parents. Your bishop can answer questions about this sealing ordinance.

An eternal family should be the goal of every Latter-day Saint. Couples who have not yet been sealed to each other should discuss with their bishop what they can do to prepare themselves for this great blessing. Those who have been sealed should remain true to their covenants and worthy of the great blessings promised to them.

Ordinances for the Dead

What of those people who died without hearing the gospel of Jesus Christ or receiving the saving ordinances? As part of His plan of salvation, our Heavenly Father has prepared a way for the dead to enjoy the blessings of the gospel.



While Jesus’s body lay in the tomb after His Crucifixion, His spirit went to the spirit world. There He preached the gospel to the spirits of the just (see 1 Peter 3:18–20; 4:6; D&C 138:11–19). He organized missionaries to preach the gospel to those in spirit prison: “From among the righteous, he . . . appointed messengers, clothed with power and authority, and commissioned them to go forth and carry the light of the gospel to them that were in darkness, even to all the spirits of men; and thus was the gospel preached to the dead” (D&C 138:30). This great missionary work in the spirit world continues today (see D&C 138:57).

The people in the spirit world can exercise faith and accept the gospel message, but they cannot receive the ordinances of the gospel, such as baptism, the endowment, and sealings, for themselves. The Lord has directed us to perform these ordinances for them. President Spencer W. Kimball declared:

“Missionary work is also continuing beyond the veil among the millions and even billions of the children of our Heavenly Father who have died either without hearing the gospel or without accepting it while they lived on the earth. Our great part in this aspect of missionary work is to perform on this earth the ordinances required for those who accept the gospel over there” (“The Things of Eternity—Stand We in Jeopardy?” *Ensign*, Jan. 1977, 3).



Each of us can play a vital role in providing ordinances for the dead. We can identify those who have died and see that temple ordinances are performed in their behalf. As we serve those who wait in the spirit world, we can come to know the blessing of assisting the Savior in the great work of salvation.

WAYS TO SERVE IN FAMILY HISTORY

LESSON PURPOSE

To help students understand the importance of their role in family history and that they can participate in family history in a variety of ways throughout their lives.

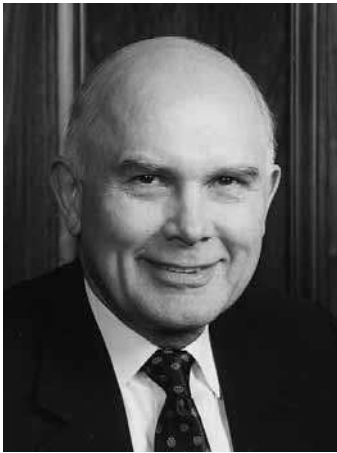
LESSON THEMES

- ◆ There are many ways to contribute to family history and temple work.
- ◆ We can become “saviors on mount Zion” as we help provide the ordinances of salvation for all mankind.
- ◆ The Spirit can help us choose ways to serve in family history work at different times of our lives and can guide us as we do the work.

LESSON IDEAS

A Lifetime Commitment to Family History

- Discuss the tasks and skills that were required to construct the Salt Lake Temple (or any other temple), such as excavation, stone cutting, masonry, plumbing, and painting. You may want to use pictures of temples or excerpts from videos such as *The Mountain of the Lord* (53300 VHS, 53400 090 DVD). Explain that many who worked on the Salt Lake Temple saw their tasks not as small jobs but as important contributions to the building of a house of the Lord. Similarly, there are many tasks, both great and small, that the Church and individuals can do to help redeem the dead. Help students list some of these tasks (for example, creating computer programs, researching ancestors, serving as proxies in temple ordinances, teaching children about temple work). Discuss how each of these tasks is important.
- Review “Ordinances for the Living and Dead,” the handout at the end of lesson 1. Discuss various ways to serve in family history. (These might include receiving our own endowments, being sealed, doing family history research, submitting names for temple work, attending the temple regularly, teaching family members about temple and family history work, serving in a record extraction calling, contributing to the Church’s family history databases, serving as a temple or family history center missionary, visiting a cemetery or other family history site, participating in family organizations, keeping a journal, and preparing personal and family histories.) Help students understand that each of these ways is important, that we may serve in different ways at different times of our lives, and that we can know what to do and when to do it by listening to the Spirit. Encourage them to pray about how they can best serve now and to decide what they would like to accomplish during this course.



Elder Dallin H. Oaks

■ Read and discuss the following statement by Elder Dallin H. Oaks, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve:

“Our efforts to promote temple and family history work should be such as to accomplish the work of the Lord, not to impose guilt on his children. . . .

“ . . . We should understand that in the work of redeeming the dead there are many tasks to be performed, and that all members should participate by prayerfully selecting those ways that fit their personal circumstances at a particular time. This should be done under the influence of the Spirit of the Lord and with the guidance of priesthood leaders. . . . Our effort is not to compel everyone to do everything, but to encourage everyone to do something” (“Family History: ‘In Wisdom and Order,’” *Ensign*, June 1989, 6).

Ask students to discuss some of the tasks they can do to help redeem the dead. You could invite students to make their own lists of what they can do.

■ Ask students how family history work can help fulfill each part of the threefold mission of the Church (perfecting the Saints, proclaiming the gospel, and redeeming the dead).

■ Tell students that the Church provides computer software that can simplify and help our efforts to research our ancestors and submit their names to temples for temple ordinances.

Saviors on Mount Zion

■ Ask students to suggest different meanings of the word *savior*. Who are some examples of saviors? Whom do they save, and how?

■ Read Obadiah 1:17, 21. Tell students that the prophet Obadiah saw a vision of the latter days and of those who would come to the temple to perform a saving work. When we do family history and temple work, we participate in the fulfillment of Obadiah’s prophecy.

Read Doctrine and Covenants 103:5–9. Discuss how this scripture and each of the following statements can help us as we serve in family history and temple work:

1. The Prophet Joseph Smith said: “And now as the great purposes of God are hastening to their accomplishment, and the things spoken of in the Prophets are fulfilling, as the kingdom of God is established on the earth, and the ancient order of things restored, the Lord has manifested to us this day and privilege, and we are commanded to be baptized for our dead, thus fulfilling the words of Obadiah, when speaking of the glory of the latter-day: ‘And saviors shall come upon Mount Zion’” (*History of the Church*, 4:599).
2. The Prophet Joseph Smith also taught: “The Bible says, ‘I will send you Elijah the Prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord; and he shall turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to the fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.’

“Now, the word *turn* here should be translated *bind*, or seal. But what is the object of this important mission? or how is it to be fulfilled? The keys are to be delivered, the spirit of Elijah is to come, the Gospel to be established, the Saints of God gathered, Zion built up, and the Saints to come up as saviors on Mount Zion.

“But how are they to become saviors on Mount Zion? By building their temples, erecting their baptismal fonts, and going forth and receiving all the ordinances, baptisms, confirmations, washings, anointings, ordinations and sealing powers upon their heads, in behalf of all their progenitors who are dead, and redeem them that they may come forth in the first resurrection and be exalted to thrones of glory with them; and herein is the chain that binds the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers, which fulfills the mission of Elijah” (*History of the Church*, 6:183–84).



Temple attendance



President Gordon B. Hinckley

3. President Gordon B. Hinckley, then a counselor in the First Presidency, said: “This work, unselfishly given in behalf of those on the other side, comes nearer to the unparalleled vicarious work of the Savior than any other of which I know. The great and important work of teaching the gospel of Christ to the people of the world is incomplete, at best, if it does not also provide for that teaching to those in another sphere and making available to them those gospel ordinances required of all if they are to move forward on the way of eternal life” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1985, 74; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1985, 60).
4. As President of the Church, President Hinckley said: “When all is said and done, if the world is going to be saved, we have to do it. There is no escaping from that. No other people in the history of the world have received the kind of mandate that we have received. We are responsible for all who have lived upon the earth. That involves our family history and temple work. We are responsible for all who now live upon the earth, and that involves our missionary work. And we are going to be responsible for all who will yet live upon the earth” (Mission presidents’ seminar, June 25, 1999; quoted in “Church Is Really Doing Well,” *Church News*, July 3, 1999, 3).

■ Discuss with students that:

1. *Vicarious* means “proxy” or “performed in place of another.”
2. The Atonement was a vicarious act that we could not do for ourselves.
3. Those in the spirit world cannot personally be baptized and receive the ordinances of the temple. These ordinances must be performed by someone in mortality.
4. Those who provide proxy ordinances on earth become saviors in this sense.

■ Encourage students to find out if ordinances are missing for ancestors whose names are readily available. Students may have relatives who have already researched these lines and done the temple work, but individual ancestors may have been overlooked or set aside.

Following the Spirit As We Serve

■ The Holy Ghost can assist us as we do family history. Read with students 1 Nephi 4:6 and Doctrine and Covenants 6:15; 8:2–3 and discuss how these verses can apply to family history work.

■ Read Doctrine and Covenants 128:1 and discuss the Lord’s inspiration to the Prophet Joseph Smith, which came to his mind and feelings. How can we follow his example of receiving inspiration as we do family history?

■ Share the following story, as related by Brother Edwin Greenlaw Sapp:

“At one point I found myself searching for my mother’s family, the Greenlaws—a family who left Scotland and settled in Maine. My research ultimately brought me to the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) Hall in Washington, D.C., which is not far from my home in Maryland. . . .

“The night before my trip to the DAR Hall, I was waked from a sound sleep by a man’s voice saying gently but insistently, ‘Find Iby.’ He pronounced the name ‘Eye-bee.’ I awoke thinking someone was actually in the room, but since the voice had a calm tone and delivered a nonthreatening message, I wasn’t afraid. I looked, saw no one, and concluded that I had just had a very realistic dream. Twice more that night, however, I awoke with the same voice urging me to ‘find Iby.’

“In the morning, I discussed the unusual experience with my wife, Jeannie. There were no Greenlaws with that name, but after some thought, she recalled that the earliest recorded members of the Johnson family—her father’s line—were Benjamin and Isabell, who was called ‘Iby.’

“I drove to Washington with the Greenlaws on my mind. . . .

“. . . I spent three and one-half of the allotted four hours in total frustration. . . . There were many complete Greenlaw families, but none was in my direct line.

“Finally, the memory of that gentle voice came once more: ‘Find Iby.’ . . . I went to the North Carolina section and pulled at random a blue-covered typewritten manuscript from the shelf. . . .

“. . . I flipped open the book and stared at the page displayed. . . .

“On that page, before my eyes, the typewritten title of a misfiled document declared that what followed was the will of Samuel Gillmore.

“Samuel left property to his daughter Isabell, also known as Iby, and to her husband, Benjamin Johnston (not Johnson) of Gulf.

“Two little things—a misfiled will and a name change.

“I had found Iby. I had found her because someone wanted her found, . . . because I could help [her, and] because the work of vicariously performing baptisms and other ordinances for the dead truly is a part of the plan of a loving Heavenly Father who wants us all to return to him” (“Find Iby,” *Ensign*, July 1991, 42–43).

ASSIGNMENTS

- Ask students to prayerfully consider what roles they can play in family history and temple work in their own families.
- Give each student a blank pedigree chart (see the end of lesson 3). Have them begin filling in the chart by checking family records at home, talking with other family members, and so on.

ADDITIONAL LESSON RESOURCES

- Dallin H. Oaks, “Family History: ‘In Wisdom and Order,’” *Ensign*, June 1989, 6–8.
- Henry B. Eyring, in Conference Report, Apr. 2005, 79–83; or *Ensign*, May 2005, 77–80.
- Elder John A. Widtsoe, who was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, promised: “If those who wish to secure genealogies will work in the temples for those whose names they can obtain, the Lord will open the way to obtain more names. . . . I testify to you that the way will be opened and we shall find ways of accomplishing the work we desire to accomplish, and that the things that make our days dark and dreary will be lifted from us if we go to the House of the Lord to perform holy work therein” (“Fundamentals of Temple Doctrine,” *The Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine*, July 1922, 135).
- Elder Widtsoe also stated: “In our preexistent state, in the day of the great council, we made a certain agreement with the Almighty. . . . We agreed, right then and there, to be not only saviors for ourselves but measurably, saviors for the whole human family. We went into a partnership with the Lord. The working out of the plan became then not merely the Father’s work, and the Savior’s work, but also our work” (“The Worth of Souls,” *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine*, Oct. 1934, 189).
- President Gordon B. Hinckley, then a counselor in the First Presidency, taught: “In a spirit of love and consecration, we must extend ourselves in the work of redemption of the dead through service in the temples of the Lord. This service more nearly approaches the divine work of the Son of God, who gave his life for others, than does any other work of which I know” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1983, 8; or *Ensign*, May 1983, 8).



GATHERING INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR ANCESTORS

LESSON PURPOSE

To help students begin the process of providing ordinances for their ancestors by collecting and organizing family records.

LESSON THEMES

- ◆ The Lord asks us to compile accurate records of our ancestors and of the work done in temples.
- ◆ We should use appropriate forms and methods for organizing, recording, and storing information.
- ◆ The first step in gathering information about our ancestors is to survey any records of the first few generations that we or our family already have and to enter the information on a pedigree chart and family group records.

LESSON IDEAS

Make a Record of Truth

- Share the following events from Church history:

On August 10, 1840, while preaching at the funeral of Seymour Brunson, the Prophet Joseph Smith surprised the congregation by introducing the doctrine of baptism for the dead. After that, the Brethren spoke frequently of this new doctrine, and the Saints began performing baptisms in behalf of their deceased loved ones in the nearby Mississippi River. During this early period, however, no records of these ordinances were kept (see Joseph Fielding Smith, *Essentials in Church History*, 27th ed. [1974], 252–53; James R. Clark, comp., *Messages of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. [1965–75], 3:253–54).

At the October 1841 general conference of the Church in Nauvoo, Illinois, the Prophet declared that the Lord wanted the Saints to cease performing baptisms for the dead until they could be performed in His house (the Nauvoo Temple). On November 8, President Brigham Young, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, dedicated the font in the basement of the unfinished temple, and Church members began performing baptisms for the dead there on Sunday, November 21, 1841 (see *History of the Church*, 4:426, 454).

In 1842 Joseph Smith went into hiding to escape those seeking his life. While staying at the home of James Taylor, the father of Elder John Taylor, Joseph wrote two inspired letters to the Saints, in which he discussed, among other things, baptism for the dead. Portions of these epistles became Doctrine and Covenants 127 and 128.

- Assign different students to read one or more verses from Doctrine and Covenants 127:1–9 and 128:2–5, 8–9, 17, 22, 24. Ask them to tell about what Joseph Smith took time to teach the Saints, in spite of the perils he faced. What words and phrases did



Photo by Scott G. Winteron, Deseret News

Nauvoo Illinois Temple

the Prophet use in these verses to describe the importance of temple work and record-keeping? (For example, in Doctrine and Covenants 128:3 he used such words as *accurate, particular, precise, giving the date, and names.*) How can many of these same words and phrases apply to family history and temple work today? (See also 3 Nephi 23:6–13; D&C 69:7–8.)

Appropriate Records and Forms

■ Students should become familiar with the pedigree chart and the family group record. A copy of each form is found at the end of this lesson. Also, genealogy computer programs typically have electronic versions of these forms. Use the following examples to introduce students to a simple format for entering information on these forms:

- *Name:* James Lee /Robertson/ (include all names, and place slashes on both sides of the surname)
- *Date:* 6 Jun 1885 (day, three-letter month abbreviation, year)
- *Place:* Gaylord, Otsego, Michigan, USA (town or city, county, state or province, country)

If your students have access to computers, tell them that software is available to help them organize and store the family history information they gather.

Give students copies of “Recording Family History Information,” found at the end of this lesson, and review it briefly with them.

Where Do I Start?

■ Read the following statement by President James E. Faust: “It is a joy to become acquainted with our forebears who died long ago. Each of us has a fascinating family history. Finding your ancestors can be one of the most interesting puzzles you . . . can work on” (in Conference Report, Oct. 2003, 57; or *Ensign*, Nov. 2003, 53).

Tell students that to begin working on family history, they need to survey what has already been done. This survey should include the following steps:

1. *Identify what you already know.* Give each student a blank pedigree chart and eight blank family group record forms (a copy of each is found at the end of this lesson). Have students complete as much information about their families as they can. Have them write their own name as number 1 on the pedigree chart and then continue with their parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents. The eight family group records are for (1) themselves, with spouse and children if any, (2) their father and mother and their children, (3–4) their grandparents and their children, and (5–8) their great-grandparents and their children. If students do not know exact dates or places, they can estimate or leave blank spaces for unknown information.
2. *Find out what records you have at home.* Have students collect records such as birth, marriage, and death certificates and announcements, family Bibles, scrapbooks, diaries, church certificates, letters, photographs, obituaries and funeral programs, wills, deeds, military records, newspaper clippings, passports, citizenship documents, and school records.

If your students’ records are not well organized, you could suggest they place a box somewhere in their homes where they will see it often. As they locate records, they can put them in the box and then organize them when they have them all together.

3. *Find out what others in your family know.* Some students may have relatives, whether members of the Church or not, who have done family history. To avoid duplicating effort, students should obtain copies of the records their relatives have gathered. Another way to gain information is to interview family members, especially older ones. Have them take notes or, if feasible, record the interview on audio- or

THE SURVEY

videotape. If students cannot interview their relatives in person, they could write letters or make phone calls, although personal visits are often more effective.

You may want to share the following story: Jean-Marc Barr, a Church member in Salt Lake City, Utah, filled out as much information as he could on his four-generation pedigree chart. He was born in France and had a grandmother still living, but he did not know anything about her ancestors. Although she lived nearby, she was not a member of the Church and had never spoken much about her family. He prayed for guidance and felt impressed to visit her. They spent a wonderful afternoon together as she talked about her husband and other family members. He asked for her permission to write the information down, and she was able to recall names, dates, and places going back six generations.

Give your students ideas for conducting interviews. Encourage them to prepare questions before their visits. Have them ask questions that provoke memories. Questions that begin with *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, *why*, and *how* are often the best. Invite students to list questions that might be helpful, and have them share their lists with each other. Invite some class members to demonstrate an interview. They could role-play, or if they have access to a video camera or tape recorder, they could record an interview with a relative and play the recording for the class.

Note: Although you should not discourage students from gathering all the family history they can, some may be overwhelmed by the size of the task. Assure them that to begin, they only need to fill out what they can on the pedigree chart and the eight family group records.

4. *Share what you find.* As students begin collecting information about their families, they should consider sharing it with relatives. Often they can help other family members with their research, and often those family members will reciprocate by sending them needed information. Tell students that they may also want to contribute their information to the family history databases maintained by the Church.

Sweet Is the Work

■ Tell students that family history is not an unpleasant chore but a marvelous work. Elder Boyd K. Packer explained: “Genealogical work has the power to do something *for* the dead. It has an equal power to do something *to* the living. Genealogical work of Church members has a refining, spiritualizing, tempering influence on those who are engaged in it. They understand that they are tying their family together, their living family here with those who have gone before” (*The Holy Temple* [1980], 239).

■ Remind students that following the Spirit is an important part of family history. The following experience demonstrates how listening to the whisperings of the Spirit can lead to more information:



Elder John A. Widtsoe

Elder John A. Widtsoe was president of the European mission from 1927 to 1933. His work kept him busy, but he always tried to make time for what he called the “sacred work” of genealogy and temple ordinances. Often during his travels he searched out books that Church members in Utah could use for genealogical research. Once while in Stockholm, Sweden, he visited one of the city’s two large bookstores and bought some volumes. While making his way across the city to another bookstore, he felt prompted to cross the street and go down a narrow side street. Elder Widtsoe thought, “This is all nonsense, I have little time to spend here. I am not going down that street, I have to do my work.” And he walked on. But the prompting came again, and he asked himself, “What is your business in this city? Are you not on the Lord’s errand?” He obeyed the prompting and found a little bookstore he had not known about. When he asked for books on genealogy, a saleswoman told him the store had none and that all such books they received were sent to another bookstore, naming the one he had been on his way to visit. But as he was leaving, she said, “Stop a minute. A leading book collector, a genealogist, died about a month ago, and we bought his library. Many

of his genealogical books are in the back room ready to be sent to the bookstore, but if you want to buy them you may have them.” Elder Widtsoe bought the books, and they became the foundation for the Church’s collection of Swedish records (see “Genealogical Activity in Europe,” *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine*, July 1931, 101).

ASSIGNMENTS

- Encourage students to complete their four-generation pedigree charts and the corresponding family group records.

ADDITIONAL LESSON RESOURCES

- Malachi 3:16; Moses 6:5–6; Abraham 1:31.
 - President Gordon B. Hinckley, then a counselor in the First Presidency, stated: “I do not like to speak of them as ‘the dead.’ I believe that under the great plan of our Eternal Father and through the atonement of Christ, they are living. Though they have died as to their mortal bodies, they have retained their identity as individuals. They are personalities as much so as are we, and as entitled to the blessings that pertain to eternal life” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1985, 73; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1985, 59).
 - Elder Henry B. Eyring counseled: “You begin by doing simple things. Write down what you already know about your family. You will need to write down the names of parents and their parents with the dates of birth or death or marriage. When you can, you will want to record the places. Some of that you will know from memory. But you can also ask relatives. They may even have some certificates of births, marriages, or deaths. Make copies and organize them. If you learn stories about their lives, write them down and keep them. You are not just gathering names. Those you never met in life will become friends you love. Your heart will be bound to theirs forever.
- “You can start searching in the first few generations going back in time. From that you will identify many of your ancestors who need your help. Someone in your own ward or branch of the Church has been called to help you prepare those names for the temple. There they can be offered the covenants which will free them from their spirit prisons and bind them in families—your family—forever” (in Conference Report, Apr. 2005, 82; or *Ensign*, May 2005, 79).

RECORDING FAMILY HISTORY INFORMATION

Pedigree Charts and Family Group Records

Pedigree charts and family group records are standard forms you can use to record your information and organize your family records.



Pedigree charts are used to list your direct ancestors for several generations. Some pedigree charts include boxes you can mark to show which temple ordinances have been performed.

Family group records are used to list all members of an ancestor's family along with information such as dates and places of births, marriages, and ordinances. You should complete a family group record for each couple listed on your pedigree chart.

You can get copies of pedigree charts and family group records through a Church distribution or family history center or on the Church's family history Web site (www.familysearch.org). Your ward family history consultant may also have copies of the forms.

Organize your records so they are easy to find and use. You might want to ask others about how they have organized their records. Store your records in a safe place. You may want to send copies to relatives. In this way, others can benefit from your research, and your family information will be preserved even if your own copies are lost or destroyed.

Genealogy Programs

The information on pedigree charts and family group records can be stored in computer programs. Various genealogy programs are available, some commercial and some free. The Church's family history department publishes one such program, Personal Ancestral File (PAF). This program is available for a small fee from distribution centers or free through the Church's family history Web site (www.familysearch.org).

Genealogy programs can help you organize and store large amounts of family history information. They can display the information in various ways and generate reports to help you see what work has been completed and what remains to be done. These programs store your information in electronic files. Be sure to make backup copies.

As with paper records, you should consider sharing your electronic files with relatives, both to preserve the information and to coordinate your research efforts. Most genealogy programs, including PAF, recognize the GEDCOM file format. This format allows you to import, export, and share family history information with others, regardless of the genealogy program they use.

You can download information on ancestors from the Church's family history databases in GEDCOM format, and you can also use this format to contribute your own information to these databases. Contributing your information to the Church's family history databases is one of the best ways to preserve it and to share it with others.

Information Needed for Ordinances

When you have gathered and recorded information about an ancestor, you need to determine whether you have enough for ordinances to be performed.

This chart lists the minimum information needed to perform ordinances. Some of this information may be estimated (see explanations below). The information should be as accurate as reasonably possible.

Baptism and Endowment

- Name
- Sex
- Event date (for example, a birth date)
- Event place (for example, a birthplace)

Sealing to Parents

- Same information as for baptism and endowment
- First or last name of the father

Sealing to Spouse

- Name of the husband
- Marriage date
- Marriage place

Although temple ordinances can be performed when only the minimum information is available, try to provide as much information about an ancestor as possible. More complete information reduces the chance that your ancestor will be confused with another person. With less information, ordinances may be done more than once for the same person, or someone may conclude work has been done for an ancestor when it has not.



The following explains how to record names, dates, and places so that ordinances can be performed.

Names

Provide a name that is as complete as possible, for example:

Given name(s):	Claus Cornelius
Surname:	Vanderhofen
Given name(s):	Jose Juan ante Portam Latinam
Surname:	Gonzalez Espinoza y de Nunez y Sainz y Rodriguez

If you don't know the complete name, provide what you do know. For ordinances to be performed, you need at least the given name or surname for the person.

Also, remember the following when recording names:

- If a person was known by a nickname or by more than one name, write *or* between the names, for example, *Elizabeth or Betty*.
- When both the wife's given and maiden names are not known, write *Mrs.* plus the husband's name, for example, *Mrs. Miguel Eduardo Sanchez*.
- When you don't know a child's given name, record the child's sex and the father's surname.
- Do not include descriptions or titles such as *boy, girl, child, stillborn, Miss, Mr., Jr., Dr., or farmer* as part of the person's name. (*Mrs.* is the only exception, as explained above.) Also, avoid using explanations such as *unknown*. The software used to clear names

for temple work may interpret titles or explanations as given names or surnames.

Event Dates

For ordinances to be performed for a person, you need the date and place of an event that identifies the person. Or you need a record that identifies the person and contains a date and place. Events or records you can use, in order of preference, are:

- Birth, christening, or adult christening.
- Marriage.
- Census, will, or probate record.
- Death, burial, or other event.

Provide a complete birth or christening date if possible. If you don't have a complete date, provide what you know. Write dates as day, month, and year, using the first three letters for the month. If you have more than one date for the same event, separate the dates with a slash (/) or the word *or*. For example:

Event	Date
Born:	23 Mar 1742
Christened:	Dec 1852
Born:	1799
Christened:	14/16 Jul 1822
Born:	2 Feb 1839/40
Born:	1878 or 1888

If you don't know a date, calculate one if possible (see below). You must have at least the approximate year of an event for ordinances to be performed.

Note: If you are certain that a person born within the last 110 years is now dead but you don't know the death date, write *D* or *dead*.

Event Places

Remember the following when providing the places where events happened:

- Provide a place name that is as complete as possible. List place name from the smallest to the largest geographical divisions, separating the divisions by commas.

St. Dunstan, Canterbury, Kent, England
Chicago, Cook, Illinois, USA
Azusa-mura, Minami Azumi-gun, Nagano-ken, Japan

Generally you should avoid using brief postal abbreviations for states and provinces (such as *IL* for *Illinois*). These abbreviations are often misinterpreted. Whenever possible, use the complete name of the state or province.



- Use an extra comma to indicate that part of the place name is missing, such as an unknown county.

Henderson, , North Carolina, USA

- Boundaries on maps may not correspond to those accepted by nomadic or tribal peoples. For such people, use the following four categories of places: (1) clan, band, or totem; (2) tribe or nation; (3) province or state; (4) country.

If you don't know the exact place where an event happened, provide an assumed location if possible. For ordinances to be performed, you need at least a country of residence (see below).

Calculating and Estimating Information

You may calculate or estimate dates and places if exact information is not available.



Calculate dates. You may calculate a date, such as a birth date, when you know the date of an event and the person's age at the time of the event. For example, if an 1860 census lists a person as two years old, you may calculate the birth year to be 1858.

Approximate dates. You may estimate dates based on other information. Write *abt* (for *about*) before approximate dates. You need at least the approximate year of an event for ordinances to be performed. Following are some examples of how you may estimate a date:

- You may use family knowledge or tradition. For example, if family tradition says that an ancestor was 16 when she was married in 1876, you can estimate that she was born *abt 1860*.
- You may use standard genealogical approximations. From a marriage date, you can estimate birth dates. You can estimate that a man was married at age 25 and a woman at age 21. You can also estimate that the first child was born one year after the parents' marriage and that subsequent children were born every two years after that.

For example, if a couple were married in 1825, you could estimate that the husband was born *abt 1800*, the wife was born *abt 1804*, their first child was born *abt 1826*, their second child was born *abt 1828*, and so on.

Remember, for ordinances to be performed, you need to list at least an approximate year.

Assumed places. You may assume places of residence based on a place where one member of a family was born or died or lived at some time or where the husband and wife were married. This place can be used as a probable place of residence for the other members of the family.

For example, if the birthplace of a child was San Lorenzo, Chihuahua, Mexico, you can list this town as the probable place of birth, marriage, and other events for other family members. To show that a place may not be the actual location, precede it with the word *of*, for example, *of San Lorenzo, Chihuahua, Mexico*. For ordinances to be performed, you need at least a country of residence, for example, *of New Zealand*.

Pedigree Chart

Chart no. _____

No. 1 on this chart is the same as No. _____ on chart no. _____.

See the instructions on the back.

<p>2</p> <p>(Father) <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> SP <input type="checkbox"/> SS <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> C</p> <p>When born _____</p> <p>Where _____</p> <p>When married _____</p> <p>Where _____</p> <p>When died _____</p> <p>Where _____</p>	<p>4</p> <p>(Father of no. 2) <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> SP <input type="checkbox"/> SS <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> C</p> <p>When born _____</p> <p>Where _____</p> <p>When married _____</p> <p>Where _____</p> <p>When died _____</p> <p>Where _____</p>	<p>8</p> <p>(Father of no. 4) <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> SP <input type="checkbox"/> SS <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> C</p> <p>Cont. on chart no. _____</p> <p>When born _____</p> <p>Where _____</p> <p>When married _____</p> <p>When died _____</p> <p>Where _____</p>
<p>1</p> <p>(Name) <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> SP <input type="checkbox"/> SS <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> C</p> <p>When born _____</p> <p>Where _____</p> <p>When married _____</p> <p>Where _____</p> <p>When died _____</p> <p>Where _____</p> <p>_____ (Spouse) <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> SP <input type="checkbox"/> SS</p>	<p>5</p> <p>(Mother of no. 2) <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> SP <input type="checkbox"/> SS</p> <p>When born _____</p> <p>Where _____</p> <p>When died _____</p> <p>Where _____</p>	<p>9</p> <p>(Mother of no. 4) <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> SP <input type="checkbox"/> SS</p> <p>Cont. on chart no. _____</p> <p>When born _____</p> <p>Where _____</p> <p>When died _____</p> <p>Where _____</p>
<p>3</p> <p>(Mother) <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> SP <input type="checkbox"/> SS</p> <p>When born _____</p> <p>Where _____</p> <p>When died _____</p> <p>Where _____</p>	<p>6</p> <p>(Father of no. 3) <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> SP <input type="checkbox"/> SS <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> C</p> <p>When born _____</p> <p>Where _____</p> <p>When married _____</p> <p>Where _____</p> <p>When died _____</p> <p>Where _____</p>	<p>10</p> <p>(Father of no. 5) <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> SP <input type="checkbox"/> SS <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> C</p> <p>Cont. on chart no. _____</p> <p>When born _____</p> <p>Where _____</p> <p>When married _____</p> <p>When died _____</p> <p>Where _____</p>
<p>Your name and address</p> <p>_____ _____ _____</p> <p>Telephone number _____</p> <p>Date prepared _____</p>	<p>7</p> <p>(Mother of no. 3) <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> SP <input type="checkbox"/> SS</p> <p>When born _____</p> <p>Where _____</p> <p>When died _____</p> <p>Where _____</p>	<p>11</p> <p>(Mother of no. 5) <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> SP <input type="checkbox"/> SS</p> <p>Cont. on chart no. _____</p> <p>When born _____</p> <p>Where _____</p> <p>When died _____</p> <p>Where _____</p>
	<p>12</p> <p>(Father of no. 6) <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> SP <input type="checkbox"/> SS <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> C</p> <p>Cont. on chart no. _____</p> <p>When born _____</p> <p>Where _____</p> <p>When married _____</p> <p>When died _____</p> <p>Where _____</p>	<p>13</p> <p>(Mother of no. 6) <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> SP <input type="checkbox"/> SS</p> <p>Cont. on chart no. _____</p> <p>When born _____</p> <p>Where _____</p> <p>When died _____</p> <p>Where _____</p>
	<p>14</p> <p>(Father of no. 7) <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> SP <input type="checkbox"/> SS <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> C</p> <p>Cont. on chart no. _____</p> <p>When born _____</p> <p>Where _____</p> <p>When married _____</p> <p>When died _____</p> <p>Where _____</p>	<p>15</p> <p>(Mother of no. 7) <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> SP <input type="checkbox"/> SS</p> <p>Cont. on chart no. _____</p> <p>When born _____</p> <p>Where _____</p> <p>When died _____</p> <p>Where _____</p>

Family Group Record

If typing, set spacing at 1 1/2. Page _____ of _____

Write date as: 4 Oct. 1896

Write place as: Tryon, Polk, North Carolina, USA or
St. Martins, Birmingham, Warwick, Eng.

Husband Given name(s)		Last name		<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"	
Born (day month year)	Place	LDS ordinance dates		Temple	
Christened	Place	Baptized			
Died	Place	Endowed			
Buried	Place	Sealed to parents			
Married	Place	Sealed to spouse			
Husband's father Given name(s)		Last name		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased	
Husband's mother Given name(s)		Maiden name		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased	
Wife Given name(s)		Maiden name		<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"	
Born (day month year)	Place	LDS ordinance dates		Temple	
Christened	Place	Baptized			
Died	Place	Endowed			
Buried	Place	Sealed to parents			
Wife's father Given name(s)		Last name		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased	
Wife's mother Given name(s)		Maiden name		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased	
Children List each child (whether living or dead) in order of birth.				LDS ordinance dates	
				Temple	
1 Sex	Given name(s)		Last name		<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"
	Born (day month year)	Place	Baptized		
	Christened	Place	Endowed		
	Died	Place	Sealed to parents		
	Spouse Given name(s)		Last name		
	Married	Place	Sealed to spouse		
2 Sex	Given name(s)		Last name		<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"
	Born (day month year)	Place	Baptized		
	Christened	Place	Endowed		
	Died	Place	Sealed to parents		
	Spouse Given name(s)		Last name		
	Married	Place	Sealed to spouse		
3 Sex	Given name(s)		Last name		<input type="checkbox"/> See "Other marriages"
	Born (day month year)	Place	Baptized		
	Christened	Place	Endowed		
	Died	Place	Sealed to parents		
	Spouse Given name(s)		Last name		
	Married	Place	Sealed to spouse		
Select only one of the following options. The option you select applies to all names on this form.			Your name		
<input type="checkbox"/> Option 1—Family File Send all names to my family file at the _____ Temple.			Address		
<input type="checkbox"/> Option 2—Temple File Send all names to any temple, and assign proxies for all approved ordinances.					
<input type="checkbox"/> Option 3—Ancestral File™ Send all names to the computerized Ancestral File for research purposes only, not for ordinances. I am including the required pedigree chart.			Phone ()		
			Date prepared		



RECORDING INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR ANCESTORS

LESSON PURPOSE

To introduce students to how computers can be used in family history research.

LESSON THEMES

- ◆ Modern inventions are the result of inspiration from the Lord.
- ◆ Computers and other technological advances help in family history work.

LESSON IDEAS

Follow-up to Lesson 3

■ Invite students to tell what family history work they have done since the last lesson (surveying and organizing family history records; writing, phoning, or visiting relatives; completing information on pedigree charts and family group records; and so on). Encourage them to continue working on family history. You could begin each lesson with one or two students reporting on their family history efforts. As students share their enthusiasm and their successes, others will feel motivated.

Modern Inventions Parallel Church Growth

■ Ask students to give examples of technology we use in the Church today that was not available in the days of the Prophet Joseph Smith. Invite them to tell how each invention has helped speed the work of the Lord. Elder Russell M. Nelson, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, said:

“We are blessed to be living in such an exciting gospel dispensation. God is inspiring the minds of great people to create inventions that further the work of the Lord in ways this world has never known. I recall the statement by Joseph Fielding Smith:

“I maintain that had there been no restoration of the gospel, and no organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, there would have been no radio; there would have been no airplane, and there would not have been the wonderful discoveries in medicine, chemistry, electricity, and the many other things wherein the world has been benefited. . . . The inspiration of the Lord has gone out and takes hold of the minds of men, though they know it not, and they are directed by the Lord. In this manner he brings them into his service that his purposes and his righteousness, in due time, may be supreme on the earth’ [in Conference Report, Oct. 1926, 117]” (with Boyd K. Packer, “Computerized Scriptures Now Available,” *Ensign*, Apr. 1988, 73).



President Joseph Fielding Smith



Elder Boyd K. Packer

■ Share the following statements.

1. Elder Boyd K. Packer stated: “We must redeem the dead, all of them, for we are commanded to do it. . . .

“When the servants of the Lord determine to do as He commands, we move ahead. As we proceed, we are joined at the crossroads by those who have been prepared to help us.

“They come with skills and abilities precisely suited to our needs. . . .

“For instance, inventions in the fields of travel and communication have come along just as we were ready for them. . . .

“The airplane did not come as an accidental discovery to wicked men who were groveling to conquer one another.

“*Revelation* was involved. It came precisely when we could use it to move across the world to restore the Gospel. It was given to us!

“When we are ready, there will be revealed whatever we need—we will find it waiting at the crossroads” (*That They May Be Redeemed*, 3).

2. President Gordon B. Hinckley added: “Going hand in hand with . . . increased temple activity is an increase in our family history work. The computer in its various ramifications is accelerating the work, and people are taking advantage of the new techniques being offered to them. How can one escape the conclusion that the Lord is in all of this? As computer facilities improve, the number of temples grows to accommodate the accelerated family history work” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1999, 3; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 4–5).

■ Discuss ways family history and temple work have been advanced by modern technology and world events. Susa Young Gates once asked her father, President Brigham Young, “how it would ever be possible to accomplish the great amount of temple work that must be done, if all are given a full opportunity for exaltation. He told her there would be many inventions of labor-saving devices, so that our daily duties could be performed in a short time” (Archibald F. Bennett, “Put on Thy Strength, O Zion!” *Improvement Era*, Oct. 1952, 720).

Family History and Computers

■ Tell students that while family history can be done without computers, where available computers can do much to simplify research. Computer programs are available that allow users to record, organize, print, and share genealogical information. The Church’s family history department is constantly developing technology to help in researching and submitting names to temples. If you have classroom access, demonstrate family history software developed by the Church or show students some of the resources on the Church’s family history Web site (www.familysearch.org).

ASSIGNMENTS

■ If students have access to computers and genealogy software, assign them to enter into the program the information from their four-generation pedigree chart and family group sheets, complete with any new information they have discovered. Have them use the computer to print a new pedigree chart and family group sheets.

■ If students do not have access to computers, have them make a new pedigree chart and family group sheets, including any new information they have discovered.

Note: Students will have until lesson 7 to complete their new pedigree charts and family group sheets.

ADDITIONAL LESSON RESOURCES

■ Elder John A. Widtsoe said: "I have the feeling . . . that those who give themselves with all their might and main to this work receive help from the other side, and not merely in gathering genealogies. Whoever seeks to help those on the other side receives help in return in all the affairs of life. . . . Help comes to us from the other side as we give help to those who have passed beyond the veil" (*Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine*, July 1931, 104).



THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT AND THE PROMISES TO THE FATHERS

LESSON PURPOSE

To help students understand the Abrahamic covenant and our role in helping fulfill that covenant.

LESSON THEMES

- ◆ The Abrahamic covenant includes promises made to Abraham by the Lord.
- ◆ The Lord has extended the Abrahamic covenant to Church members today.
- ◆ Church members have the responsibility to help gather the house of Israel by proclaiming the gospel on earth and in the spirit world.

LESSON IDEAS

The Abrahamic Covenant

■ Ask students to listen carefully to what Elder Russell M. Nelson said about them: “You are one of God’s noble and great spirits, held in reserve to come to earth at this time. . . . In your premortal life you were appointed to help prepare the world for the great gathering of souls that will precede the Lord’s second coming. You are one of a covenant people. You are an heir to the promise that all the earth will be blessed by the seed of Abraham and that God’s covenant with Abraham will be fulfilled through his lineage in these latter days” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1990, 94; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1990, 73).

Invite students to share their thoughts and feelings about Elder Nelson’s statement.

■ Define the word *covenant*. Refer to *covenant* in the Bible Dictionary and use the following statement by Elder Carlos E. Asay, who was then a member of the Presidency of the Seventy:

“A gospel covenant is a holy contract. . . .

“The two parties to the priesthood covenant are man and God. Man covenants to do certain things or meet certain conditions; God cites promises that he will give in return” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1985, 56; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1985, 43).

At baptism we covenant to take Christ’s name upon ourselves, keep His commandments, and always remember Him. In return, the Lord forgives our sins and promises us that, if we remain faithful, we can enter His kingdom. Discuss with students other gospel covenants we make and the blessings we receive as we keep them. Be sure students understand that to obtain the highest blessings of God’s kingdom, we must receive the ordinances of the temple.

**“Go ye, therefore,
and do
the works
of Abraham”
(D&C 132:32).**

The Seed of Abraham and the Promises to the Fathers

■ Review with students Genesis 12:1–3; 13:14–16; 15:1–6; 17:1–9; 22:15–18, looking for the promises the Lord made to Abraham and his descendants. Use Abraham 1:1–5, 15–19; 2:6–12 to make a list of what Abraham desired and a second list of what the Lord promised Abraham. Elder Joseph Fielding Smith, when he was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, said: “The covenant the Lord made with Abraham was of three-fold nature as a blessing to mankind to the latest generations. . . . [1] The Priesthood and its powers were to descend through Abraham’s posterity. [2] It was through him that Christ was to come, and thus prove a blessing to all nations. Moreover, the promise was made that [3] in addition to Abraham’s direct descendants, all who should receive the Gospel from that time forth, should also become of Abraham’s seed by adoption, and his blood should be mixed among the nations to leaven them with the privileges of the Gospel” (*The Way to Perfection*, 1970 reprint ed. [1931], 87–88).

■ Discuss the phrase “promises made to the fathers” (D&C 2:2). These include the promise of eternal life given to Abraham and others, the promises that their descendants would hear the gospel and receive the saving ordinances, and the promise to our ancestors that we would help provide gospel ordinances for them through family history and temple work. All Church members are part of the covenant family through whom these promises are fulfilled. Elder Bruce R. McConkie, who was then a member of the Seventy, wrote: “To carry forward his own purposes among men and nations, the Lord *foreordained* chosen spirit children in pre-existence and assigned them to come to earth at particular times and places so that they might aid in furthering the divine will. These pre-existence appointments, made ‘according to the foreknowledge of God the Father’ (1 Pet. 1:2), simply designated certain individuals to perform missions which the Lord in his wisdom knew they had the talents and capacities to do” (*Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. [1966], 290).

Responsibilities of the House of Israel

■ Have students compare Malachi 4:5–6 to Doctrine and Covenants 2. Remind students that Elijah’s mission was so important that the Savior instructed the Nephites to add Malachi’s prophecy to their scriptures (see 3 Nephi 25; 26:2).

Read Doctrine and Covenants 110:13–16; 138:29–33, 38, 46–48, and summarize the mission of the prophet Elijah. Elder David B. Haight, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, said: “Elijah’s mission was to ‘turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers’ (Malachi 4:6). The turning of the hearts of the fathers in the spirit world to the children on earth provides for the gathering of ancestral data of their deceased fathers in order that ordinances might be performed in the temples of the Lord. Thus, the living having their hearts turned to their fathers is in accordance with the premortal agreement we made before the earth was formed” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1990, 74; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1990, 60).

■ Ask students how doing family history can help fulfill the promises made to the fathers. You could use the following scriptures: Isaiah 42:5–7; Matthew 16:19; John 5:25; 1 Nephi 15:18; Doctrine and Covenants 132:29–32. Elder Bruce R. McConkie, who was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, wrote: “The promises are the provisions of the Abrahamic covenant whereby the seed of the ancient patriarchs are entitled to receive the priesthood, the gospel, and eternal life (including celestial marriage). We are the children, and after we receive these blessings for ourselves, our attention turns almost by instinct to the well-being of our ancestors who died without a knowledge of the gospel. We are Abraham’s seed, and they were Abraham’s seed—through Isaac, through Jacob, and through the house of Israel. It thus becomes our privilege, on the basis of salvation for the dead, to search out our ancestors—to whom the same blessings have been promised as have come to us—and to make these blessings available to them through the vicarious ordinances of the house of the Lord” (*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* [1985], 508–9).



Turning hearts to the fathers

The Gathering of Israel

■ Ask students what they think it means to be gathered today. Have them read Jeremiah 16:16 and relate the scripture first to missionary work on the earth and then to family history work. Emphasize the importance of the role each of us plays. Share the following statement by Elder Joseph Fielding Smith: “In the past the descendants of Abraham, through Israel, have suffered greatly for their transgressions, and the blessings which were theirs by inheritance, based upon their faithfulness, have been withheld. They have been ‘scattered and peeled’ as Isaiah said of them, and hated by all nations. Nevertheless the Lord has not forgotten them nor the covenant he made with their fathers. . . . Israel is now being gathered and the Lord is renewing his covenants with them. . . . Much of the ordinance work now being done in the temples is in fulfillment of the covenant the Lord made with Abraham and his children” (*Way to Perfection*, 90).

ASSIGNMENTS

■ Remind students to complete their pedigree charts and family group records.

ADDITIONAL LESSON RESOURCES

■ 1 Nephi 15:18; Doctrine and Covenants 128:22–24; 132:29–37.

■ Elder Bruce R. McConkie said: “Israel is thus gathered when they worship the God of their fathers and receive for themselves the same covenant that an unchanging Lord always makes with those who love and serve him, which is the Abrahamic covenant. As it happens, we now live in the latter days, and that covenant has once again been given to men so that all who will may come and enter therein and be saved with the same eternal fulness that blessed the lives of the ancients” (*New Witness for the Articles of Faith*, 525).

■ President James E. Faust related: “The heart of an 11-year-old boy was turned to his fathers during a family home evening when the children assembled personal books of remembrance. Young Jeff wanted to accompany his mother to the National Archives. She was afraid that he might disturb the other researchers there. But he persisted, and she relented and took him with her. Four hours into their research, he exclaimed, ‘Mama, I’ve found Grandpa!’ Indeed, he had found his great-great-great-grandfather [see R. Scott Lloyd, “Hearts of the Children,” *Church News*, Sept. 14, 1986, 16]” (in Conference Report, Oct. 2003, 58; or *Ensign*, Nov. 2003, 55).

ORDINANCES AND COVENANTS FOR THE LIVING

LESSON PURPOSE

To help students understand temple ordinances.

LESSON THEMES

- ◆ In the temple we receive sacred ordinances that are essential for our exaltation.
- ◆ The endowment is a gift that can lead to great spiritual power. It consists of instruction, ordinances, and covenants.
- ◆ Temple sealings provide the opportunity for us to be united with our parents, children, and spouses for eternity.
- ◆ Great blessings come to those who enter the temple worthily, keep their covenants, and regularly attend the temple.

Note: As you discuss the temple and temple ordinances, do not go beyond what is contained in the statements in this lesson.

LESSON IDEAS

The Purposes of Temples

■ Display pictures of several ancient and modern temples. Ask students why they think the Lord commanded His people in ancient and modern times to build temples. The Prophet Joseph Smith asked: “What was the object of gathering . . . the people of God in any age of the world? . . .

“The main object was to build unto the Lord a house whereby He could reveal unto His people the ordinances of His house . . . ; for there are certain ordinances and principles that, when they are taught and practiced, must be done in a place or house built for that purpose” (*History of the Church*, 5:423).

■ Make a list of the ordinances performed in temples today, including:

For the Living

The endowment
(including initiatory ordinances)

Sealing to parents

Sealing to spouse

For the Dead

Baptism

Confirmation

Priesthood ordination (for males)

The endowment
(including initiatory ordinances)

Sealing to parents

Sealing to spouse



Model of the ancient temple in Jerusalem



Hong Kong China Temple

■ Share the following statement by Elder John A. Widtsoe. As you read, list the main points on the board.

“The temple is a house or home of the Lord. Should the Lord visit the earth, he would come to his temple. . . .

“The temple is a place of instruction. Here the principles of the gospel are reviewed and profound truths of the kingdom of God are unfolded. If we enter the temple in the right spirit and are attentive, we go out enriched in gospel knowledge and wisdom.

“The temple is a place of peace. Here we may lay aside the cares and worries of the outside, turbulent world. Here our minds should be centered upon spiritual realities, since here we are concerned only with things of the spirit.

“The temple is a place of covenants. . . . The simple ceremonies help us to go out from the temple with the high resolve to lead lives worthy of the gifts of the gospel.

“The temple is a place of blessing. Promises are made to us, conditioned only upon our faithfulness, that extend from time to eternity. . . .

“The temple is a place where ceremonies pertaining to Godliness are presented. The great mysteries of life, with man’s unanswered questions, are here made clear: (1) Where did I come from? (2) Why am I here? (3) Where do I go when life is over? . . .

*“The temple is a place of revelation. The Lord may here give revelation, and every person may receive revelation to assist him in life” (“Looking toward the Temple,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1972, 56–57).*

■ Discuss with students some of the things the Lord has said about the blessings of the temple. Assign several students to read and report on the following scriptures: Doctrine and Covenants 84:19–24; 95:8; 97:10–18; 109:5, 12–26; 131:1–2; 138:58.

The Endowment

■ Ask students what they think the words *endow* and *endowment* mean. Share the following statement: “To endow is to enrich, to give to [someone] something long-lasting and of much worth. To a Latter-day Saint, the blessings of the endowment are as a pearl of great price in his or her life, giving endless support and strength, unlimited inspiration and motivation” (“Endowed with Covenants and Blessings,” *Temples of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* [1988], 14). Read Doctrine and Covenants 43:15–16; 95:8; 105:9–12, and discuss power as it relates to the temple and its ordinances.

■ Use the following statement by Elder James E. Talmage, who was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, as a guide in explaining the temple endowment. You might discuss each part of the statement briefly. (You should not discuss more than what Elder Talmage said.)

“The Temple Endowment . . . includes a recital of the most prominent events of the creative period, the condition of our first parents [Adam and Eve] in the Garden of Eden, their disobedience and consequent expulsion from that blissful abode, their condition in the lone and dreary world when doomed to live by labor and sweat, the plan of redemption by which the great transgression may be atoned, the period of the great apostasy, the restoration of the Gospel with all its ancient powers and privileges, the absolute and indispensable condition of personal purity and devotion to the right in present life, and a strict compliance with Gospel requirements. . . .

“The ordinances of the endowment embody certain obligations on the part of the individual, such as covenant and promise to observe the law of strict virtue and chastity, to be charitable, benevolent, tolerant and pure; to devote both talent and material means to the spread of truth and the uplifting of the [human] race; to maintain devotion to the cause of truth; and to seek in every way to contribute to the great preparation that the earth may be made ready to receive her King,—the Lord Jesus Christ. With the taking of each covenant and the assuming of each



Celestial room, Salt Lake Temple



Garden room mural, Los Angeles California Temple

obligation a promised blessing is pronounced, contingent upon the faithful observance of the conditions" (*The House of the Lord* [1968], 83–84).

Tell students that the temple endowment is generally received after one has been called as a full-time missionary or prior to being married in the temple.

Temple Sealings

- Review "Sealings" in "Ordinances for the Living and Dead," the handout at the end of lesson 1. Discuss the sealing of husbands and wives, as well as the sealing of children to parents.
- Have each student choose two or three scriptures listed under "marriage, celestial" in the Topical Guide. Invite them to read and discuss the scriptures they chose.
- Testify of the blessings of temple marriage, or invite students to testify. Sister Barbara B. Smith, who was then Relief Society general president, taught: "When a man and woman make marriage covenants in the holy temple, they begin a new, eternal family unit with all of the blessings promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Such a union is dedicated to the sacred purposes of the Lord—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man." (Moses 1:39.)" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1981, 117; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1981, 83).

Worthiness to Enter the Temple

- Show the class a picture of a bride and groom (see Gospel Art Picture Kit, no. 609). Remind students that the scriptures compare the members of the Church to a bride preparing herself for marriage. Jesus Christ is compared to the bridegroom. (See Isaiah 61:10; Matthew 25:1–7; D&C 45:56–57; 109:72–76). Ask students to think about ways a bride prepares for her wedding day. Discuss how we should prepare to enter the temple.
- Ask students how Doctrine and Covenants 94:8–9 can apply to us as we enter the temple. Share the following statement by Elder James E. Talmage: "The blessings of the House of the Lord are restricted to no privileged class; every member of the Church may have admission to the temple with the right to participate in the ordinances thereof, if he comes duly accredited as of worthy life and conduct" (*House of the Lord*, 84).



Temple preparation

Obedience to Covenants and Temple Attendance

- If any of your students have been endowed in the temple, invite them to tell how their endowment has been a blessing in their life. You might ask how the Lord's promise of power has been fulfilled for them. Elder Joseph Fielding Smith, who was then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, taught that in the temple "we raise our hands and covenant that we will serve the Lord and observe his commandments and keep ourselves unspotted from the world. If we realize what we are doing then the endowment will be a protection to us all our lives—a protection which a man who does not go to the temple does not have.

"I have heard my father [President Joseph F. Smith] say that in the hour of trial, in the hour of temptation, he would think of the promises, the covenants that he made in the House of the Lord, and they were a protection to him. . . . This protection is what these ceremonies are for, in part. They save us now and they exalt us hereafter, if we will honor them. I know that this protection is given for I, too, have realized it, as have thousands of others who have remembered their obligations" ("The Pearl of Great Price," *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine*, July 1930, 103).

- Read and discuss the following statements by President Ezra Taft Benson:

1. "When you attend the temple and perform the ordinances that pertain to the house of the Lord, certain blessings will come to you:
 - You will receive the spirit of Elijah, which will turn your hearts to your spouse, to your children, and to your forebears.

- You will love your family with a deeper love than you have loved before.
- Your hearts will be turned to your fathers and theirs to you.
- You will be endowed with power from on high as the Lord has promised.
- You will receive the key of the knowledge of God. (See D&C 84:19.) You will learn how you can be like Him. Even the power of godliness will be manifest to you. (See D&C 84:20.)
- You will be doing a great service to those who have passed to the other side of the veil in order that they might be ‘judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.’ (D&C 138:34.)

“Such are the blessings of the temple and the blessings of frequently attending the temple” (“What I Hope You Will Teach Your Children about the Temple,” *Ensign*, Aug. 1985, 10).

2. “The temple is the house of the Lord. Our attendance there blesses the dead and also blesses us, for it is a house of revelation” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1986, 100; or *Ensign*, May 1986, 78).
3. “I promise you that, with increased attendance in the temples of our God, you shall receive increased personal revelation to bless your life as you bless those who have died” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1987, 108; or *Ensign*, May 1987, 85).

ASSIGNMENTS

- Remind students to bring their completed pedigree charts and family group sheets to the next class.

ADDITIONAL LESSON RESOURCES

- Elder Boyd K. Packer taught: “The Lord will bless us as we attend to the sacred ordinance work of the temples. Blessings there will not be limited to our temple service. We will be blessed in all of our affairs. We will be eligible to have the Lord take an interest in our affairs both spiritual and temporal. . . .

“Our labors in the temple cover us with a shield and a protection, both individually and as a people” (*Holy Temple*, 182, 265).

- Elder Russell M. Nelson explained: “The temple is the house of the Lord. The basis for every temple ordinance and covenant—the heart of the plan of salvation—is the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Every activity, every lesson, all we do in the Church points to the Lord and His holy house. Our efforts to proclaim the gospel, perfect the Saints, and redeem the dead all lead to the temple. Each holy temple stands as a symbol of our membership in the Church, as a sign of our faith in life after death, and as a sacred step toward eternal glory for us and our families [see Howard W. Hunter, “The Great Symbol of Our Membership,” *Ensign*, Oct. 1994, 2]. . . .

“Ordinances of the temple relate to *personal* progress and to the redemption of departed *ancestors* as well. ‘For their salvation is necessary and essential to our salvation, . . . they without us cannot be made perfect—neither can we without our dead be made perfect’ [D&C 128:15]. Service in their behalf provides repeated opportunities for temple worship. And that service deserves commitment to a planned schedule. By doing for others what they cannot do for themselves, we emulate the pattern of the Savior, who wrought the Atonement to bless the lives of other people” (in Conference Report, Mar.–Apr. 2001, 40, 42; or *Ensign*, May 2001, 32, 34).

INTRODUCTION TO CHURCH FAMILY HISTORY DATABASES

LESSON PURPOSE

To introduce students to the family history databases maintained by the Church.

LESSON THEMES

- ◆ The Holy Ghost has influenced modern developments that greatly enhance our ability to do family history work.
- ◆ The Church's family history department develops and maintains computer resources for family history researchers.
- ◆ Lists of names and dates of deceased individuals for whom temple work has been performed are available in the Church's family history databases.

LESSON IDEAS



Introduction

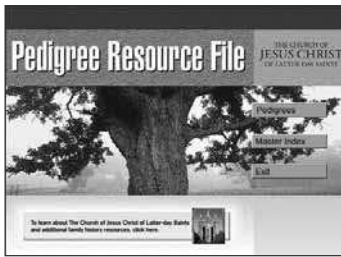
■ Invite students to imagine that their assignment for the next week is to search through several hundred books of genealogical data to find information about their ancestors. Ask them how long they think their research would take. Hold up a compact disc and tell students that the same task can be accomplished in minutes by computer.

Modern Developments in Family History

■ Tell students that the Church has created software programs to aid in family history. Some of these programs may be purchased in Church distribution centers or used free of charge in family history centers around the world—tell students about the center nearest you. Explain that most or all of these programs can also be used free of charge through the Church's family history Web site (www.familysearch.org).

■ Read Malachi 4:5–6 and ask students how computers can help in the fulfillment of Malachi's prophecy. Remind students of your discussion in lesson 4 about the Lord's hand in modern inventions, and explain that one of the major benefits of these inventions is the ability to do family history work faster and easier. Share the following statement by Elder Eldred G. Smith, who was then Patriarch to the Church:

"One year after Elijah's coming, in 1837, laws were passed in Great Britain compelling the preservation of duplicate records of the dead. In the 400 years preceding the coming of Elijah, there were catalogued by Mr. T. B. Thompson 192 British family histories. In just one hundred years after the coming of Elijah in 1836, there were 1,879 British family histories published. . . .



“In 1844, just eight years after the coming of Elijah, . . . the first organization for the purpose of the gathering together records of the dead, and compiling genealogical records, was formed in the city of Boston, Massachusetts—The New England Historical and Genealogical Society.

“. . . Since then literally hundreds of genealogical organizations have been organized” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1959, 99).

■ Share the following statement by Elder David B. Haight: “A nonmember in Wisconsin, with other family members, has been stymied by lack of information on her great-grandfather. She decided to try [one of the Church’s family history databases] and, after some searching, discovered her great-grandfather, the very one she had been looking for for many years. Shortly she had transferred to her disk several thousand additional names and over 1,300 marriages on this previously ‘dead-end’ line. She too is entering thousands of additional names on other lines to contribute to [the Church’s database]” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1991, 102; or *Ensign*, May 1991, 77).

■ Consider using the following object lesson. Bury a pretty rock or a piece of jewelry in a container of sand. Invite a student to feel through the sand and pull out the hidden object. Relate the container of sand to the Church’s family history databases and the hidden object to the name of an ancestor who needs temple ordinances. Explain that the databases can be used to determine whether an ancestor has received the ordinances of the temple.

ASSIGNMENTS

■ If available, have your students check a Church family history database for names on their pedigree charts. (These databases are available in family history centers and on the Internet at www.familysearch.org.) If your students are keeping their family history data on paper, have them write or print any new information they find. If they are keeping their data on computer, have them save the new information as GEDCOM files.

ADDITIONAL LESSON RESOURCES

■ Richard G. Scott, in Conference Report, Oct. 1990, 3–7; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1990, 5–7.

USING INFORMATION FROM CHURCH FAMILY HISTORY DATABASES

LESSON PURPOSE

To teach students how to use computers to add, share, and submit family history information.

LESSON THEMES

- ◆ The Savior, as Lord of both the living and the dead, has opened the door to salvation for all mankind.
- ◆ GEDCOM (Genealogical Data Communications) files can be used to transfer family history information between computers.

LESSON IDEAS

Follow-up to Lesson 7

- Invite students to report the results of their searches in the Church's family history databases. Ask them what they learned about their ancestors. Explain that the next step is to add this information to their existing pedigree charts and family group sheets.

Jesus Christ Is the Savior of All

- Invite students to read Romans 14:9. Ask them what this verse teaches about the Savior and how it relates to family history work. The Prophet Joseph Smith said, "The great Jehovah . . . knows the situation of both the living and the dead, and has made ample provision for their redemption" (*History of the Church*, 4:597).

- Tell students that though computers can greatly help our family history research, the most important help still comes from the Spirit. Elder Melvin J. Ballard, who was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, testified:

"There are thousands of [your ancestors], hundreds of thousands and millions of them in the spirit world who long to receive this gospel and have been waiting hundreds of years for their deliverance. . . . They know where their records are, and I testify to you that the spirit and influence of your dead will guide those who are interested in finding those records. . . . If we have done our best and have searched and have discovered all that is available, then the day will come when God will open and part the veil, and the records of the faithful men and women of our line, who have received this gospel and have not had the privilege and opportunity of having this work done for them, will be revealed, and their work will be done" (in Bryant S. Hinckley, *Sermons and Missionary Services of Melvin Joseph Ballard* [1949], 230).



Elder Melvin J. Ballard

ASSIGNMENTS

- If students have access to computers and genealogy software, have them import the GEDCOM files they created in the last lesson into their family history data. Have them use their software's match-merge feature to merge any duplicate individuals.
- If students do not have access to computers, have them copy the information they gathered onto their pedigree charts and family group sheets.

ADDITIONAL LESSON RESOURCES

- Elder Richard G. Scott said: "Recently a friend of the Church, tenderly holding a five-inch-high stack of information, said with obvious gratitude, 'The Church placed my life's work in a computer where it will be permanently recorded and available for others to use.' That spirit is spreading throughout the world, where friends who wish to show their gratitude for using Church resources are now generously donating their laboriously compiled family history information to share with others" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1990, 5; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1990, 6).

DEATH AND THE SPIRIT WORLD

LESSON PURPOSE

To help students understand death as part of Heavenly Father's plan for the happiness of His children.

LESSON THEMES

- ◆ At death, our spirits enter the spirit world and continue preparing for the Resurrection and Final Judgment.
- ◆ Death comes to all mankind because of the fall of Adam. All will live again through the Atonement and Resurrection of Christ.
- ◆ The gospel can bring comfort when a loved one dies or when we think about our own death.

LESSON IDEAS

Death Is a Temporary Separation of Body and Spirit

■ Hold up a glove and ask for a volunteer to use the glove to teach the class about physical bodies, spirit bodies, birth, and death. You may want to read James 2:26 and the following statement by Elder Boyd K. Packer as he spoke in general conference to the children:

“When you were born into this life you were not created then. Only your physical body was created.

“. . . At some time, I don't know just when, your spirit entered into your body and you became a living person. . . .

“Pretend . . . that my hand represents your spirit. It is alive. It can move by itself. Suppose that this glove represents your mortal body. It cannot move. When the spirit enters into your mortal body, then it can move and act and live. Now you are a person—a spirit with a body, living on the earth. . . .

“. . . While you are alive the spirit inside the body can cause it to work and to act and to live.

“When I separate them, the glove, which represents your body, is taken away from your spirit; it cannot move anymore. It just falls down and is dead. But your spirit is still alive” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1973, 78–79; or *Ensign*, July 1973, 51).

Death Is Important to Man's Progress

■ Tell students that the Book of Mormon contains many important truths relating to death and the Resurrection. Review with students what the following scriptures teach about death and resurrection: 2 Nephi 9:6–15; Alma 11:40–45; 12:24–27; 40:5–14, 21; Helaman 14:12–18; and Mormon 9:12–14.

The Spirit World

■ Discuss the following questions and answers about the spirit world. You may want to use the scriptures and statements that follow in your discussion.

1. *What is the spirit world?*

Elder Bruce R. McConkie, who was then a member of the Seventy, explained: “By *spirit world* is meant the abiding place of disembodied spirits . . . [where they] await the day of their resurrection, final redemption, and judgment. This world is divided into two parts: *paradise* which is the abode of the righteous, and *hell* which is the abode of the wicked” (*Mormon Doctrine*, 761–62).

2. *Where is the spirit world?*

President Brigham Young taught: “Is the spirit world here? It is not beyond the sun, but is on this earth that was organized for the people that have lived and that do and will live upon it” (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, 376).

3. *What do those in the spirit world look like?*

Elder Mark E. Petersen, who was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, said: “The spirit is the real person. Our spirit resembles our body, or rather our body was ‘tailored’ to fit our spirit. The spirit bears the image and likeness of God, and the body, if normal, is in the image and likeness of the spirit” (*The Way of the Master* [1974], 124).

President Joseph Fielding Smith, then President of the Quorum of the Twelve, taught that when a baby dies, “the spirit assumes its natural form as an adult, for we were all adults before we were born.

“When a child is raised in the resurrection, the spirit will enter the body and the body will be the same size as it was when the child died. It will then grow after the resurrection to full maturity to conform to the size of the spirit” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie [1954–56], 2:56).

4. *Will all people repent when they go to the spirit world and realize there is a life after death?*

Elder Bruce R. McConkie wrote: “Life and work and activity all continue in the spirit world. Men have the same talents and intelligence there which they had in this life. They possess the same attitudes, inclinations, and feelings there which they had in this life. They believe the same things, as far as eternal truths are concerned” (*Mormon Doctrine*, 762).

Elder Melvin J. Ballard stated: “Do not let any of us imagine that we can go down to the grave not having overcome the corruptions of the flesh and then lose in the grave all our sins and evil tendencies. They will be with us. They will be with the spirit when separated from the body.

“. . . It is much easier to overcome and serve the Lord when both flesh and spirit are combined as one. This is the time when men are more pliable and susceptible” (*Three Degrees of Glory* [1926], 14).

See Alma 34:32–34; 41:3–5, 10.

5. *Do those in the spirit world know what mortals on earth are doing?*

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught, “The spirits of the just . . . are not far from us, and know and understand our thoughts, feelings, and motions” (*History of the Church*, 6:52).

6. *Will the righteous and the wicked be together in the spirit world?*

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught, “The righteous and the wicked all go to the same world of spirits until the resurrection” (*History of the Church*, 5:425).

President Joseph Fielding Smith said: “The righteous—meaning those who have been baptized and who have been faithful—are gathered in one part and all the others in another part of the spirit world. . . .

“I understand that the righteous may *now* go among the other spirits, and there the gospel is being taught, but the spirits barred from the association of the righteous cannot go where the righteous are” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:230).

See Alma 40:12–14; Doctrine and Covenants 138:29–31.

7. What is “paradise” like?



President Brigham Young

President Brigham Young explained: “Here [as mortals], we are continually troubled with ills and ailments of various kinds. In the spirit world we are free from all this and enjoy life, glory, and intelligence; and we have the Father to speak to us, Jesus to speak to us, and angels to speak to us, and we shall enjoy the society of the just and the pure who are in the spirit world until the resurrection” (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, 380–81).

President Young also said: “When the faithful Elders, holding this Priesthood, go into the spirit world they carry with them the same power and Priesthood that they had while in the mortal tabernacle” (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, 132).

The Prophet Joseph Smith said: “When men are prepared, they are better off to go hence. . . . The spirits of the just are exalted to a greater and more glorious work; hence they are blessed in their departure to the world of spirits. Enveloped in flaming fire, they are not far from us” (*History of the Church*, 6:52).

See Alma 40:12.

8. What is “spirit prison” like?

Elder Bruce R. McConkie stated: “The *spirit prison* is hell, that portion of the spirit world where the wicked dwell. (Moses 7:37–39.) . . .

“Now that the righteous spirits in paradise have been commissioned to carry the message of salvation to the wicked spirits in hell, there is a certain amount of mingling together of the good and bad spirits. Repentance opens the prison doors to the spirits in hell; it enables those bound with the chains of hell to free themselves from darkness, unbelief, ignorance, and sin. As rapidly as they can overcome these obstacles—gain light, believe truth, acquire intelligence, cast off sin, and break the chains of hell—they can leave the hell that imprisons them and dwell with the righteous in the peace of paradise” (*Mormon Doctrine*, 755).

See Alma 40:13–14; Doctrine and Covenants 76:103–6; 138:57–59.

All Will Die and All Will Be Resurrected

■ Ask students why they think funerals in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are often different from other funerals. Elder Russell M. Nelson said:

“Scriptures teach that death is *essential* to happiness. . . .

“Our limited perspective would be enlarged if we could witness the reunion on the other side of the veil, when doors of death open to those returning home” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1992, 102; or *Ensign*, May 1992, 72).

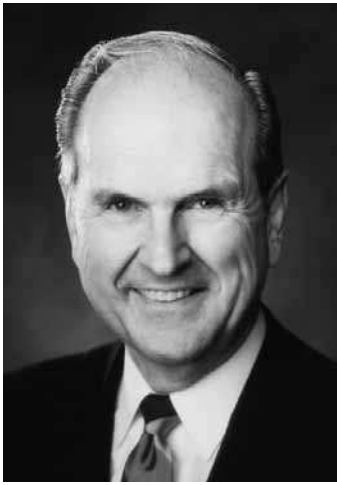
■ Use 1 Corinthians 15:12–22 and 2 Nephi 9:6 to discuss how death has been affected by Adam and Jesus Christ. Review *resurrection* in the Bible Dictionary.

The Gospel Brings Comfort

■ Ask if any students have had feelings of peace or comfort come to them after the death of a loved one. You may want to read the following statements.

1. Elder Boyd K. Packer taught: “We are close, very close, to the spirit world at the time of death. There are tender feelings, spiritual communications. . . .

“At times of sorrow and parting one may experience that ‘peace . . . which passeth all understanding’ which the scriptures promise (Philippians 4:7). That is a very private experience. Many have come to marvel in their hearts that such a feeling of peace, even exaltation, can come at the time of such grief and uncertainty” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1988, 25; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1988, 20).



Elder Russell M. Nelson

2. Elder Russell M. Nelson said: “I remember vividly an experience I had as a passenger in a small two-propeller airplane. One of its engines suddenly burst open and caught on fire. The propeller of the flaming engine was starkly stilled. As we plummeted in a steep spiral dive toward the earth, I expected to die. Some of the passengers screamed in hysterical panic. Miraculously, the precipitous dive extinguished the flames. Then, by starting up the other engine, the pilot was able to stabilize the plane and bring us down safely.

“Throughout that ordeal, though I ‘knew’ death was coming, my paramount feeling was that I was not afraid to die. I remember a sense of returning home to meet ancestors for whom I had done temple work. I remember my deep sense of gratitude that my sweetheart and I had been sealed eternally to each other and to our children, born and reared in the covenant. I realized that our marriage in the temple was my most important accomplishment. Honors bestowed upon me by men could not approach the inner peace provided by sealings performed in the house of the Lord” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1992, 104; or *Ensign*, May 1992, 74).

- Invite several students to tell who they look forward to meeting when they enter the spirit world, and why. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught: “I have a father, brothers, children, and friends who have gone to a world of spirits. They are only absent for a moment. They are in the spirit, and we shall soon meet again. . . . When we depart, we shall hail our mothers, fathers, friends, and all whom we love, who have fallen asleep in Jesus” (*History of the Church*, 6:316).
- Bear your testimony of the truth that those who die continue to live in the spirit world and that we do a great work when we help our ancestors who died without receiving the ordinances of the gospel.

ADDITIONAL LESSON RESOURCES

- John 14:19; 2 Timothy 1:10; Doctrine and Covenants 18:11–12; 42:43–47.
- Elder Russell M. Nelson taught: “Life does not begin with birth, nor does it end with death. Prior to our birth, we dwelled as spirit children with our Father in Heaven. There we eagerly anticipated the possibility of coming to earth and obtaining a physical body. Knowingly we wanted the risks of mortality, which would allow the exercise of agency and accountability. ‘This life [was to become] a probationary state; a time to prepare to meet God’ (Alma 12:24). But we regarded the returning home as the best part of that long-awaited trip, just as we do now. Before embarking on any journey, we like to have some assurance of a round-trip ticket. Returning from earth to life in our heavenly home requires passage through—and not around—the doors of death. We were born to die, and we die to live (see 2 Corinthians 6:9). As seedlings of God, we barely blossom on earth; we fully flower in heaven” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1992, 102; or *Ensign*, May 1992, 72).

THE REDEMPTION OF THE DEAD

LESSON PURPOSE

To help students understand the Savior's mission to take the gospel to the spirit world and to teach them how they can assist the Savior in His redeeming work.

LESSON THEMES

- ◆ All Heavenly Father's children will at some time have the opportunity to accept the gospel.
- ◆ President Joseph F. Smith saw a vision of Jesus Christ's visit to the spirit world. There the Savior organized the work of preaching the gospel to the dead.
- ◆ We can help in the Lord's work of redeeming the dead by performing gospel ordinances in their behalf.

LESSON IDEAS

The Plan of Salvation Offers the Gospel to All

■ Read Doctrine and Covenants 1:2, 4 and 90:11. Tell students that today you will discuss Heavenly Father's plan for all His children to hear the gospel. You may want to share the following story told by Andrew C. Nelson, grandfather of Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve:

"On the night of April 6th, 1891, I had a strange dream or vision in which I saw and conversed with my father who died January 27th, 1891. . . .

"When father came to the bed, he first said: 'Well, my son, being you were not there . . . when I died, so that I did not get to see you, and as I had a few spare minutes, I received permission to come and see you. . . .' 'I am very glad to see you father. How do you do?' 'I am feeling well my son, and have had very much to do since I died.'

"'What have you been doing since you died father? Have you seen (here I mentioned the names of some of our dead friends)?'

"This question he did not answer but looked at me and smiled. 'My son, I have been travelling together with Apostle Erastus Snow ever since I died; that is, since three days after I died; then I received my commission to preach the Gospel. You can not imagine, my son, how many spirits there are in the Spirit world that have not yet received the Gospel; but many are receiving it, and a great work is being accomplished. Many are anxiously looking forth to their friends, who are still living, to administer for them in the Temples. I have been very busy preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ.'" (in Russell Marion Nelson, *From Heart to Heart: An Autobiography* [1979], 16).

The Savior's Mission to the Spirit World

■ Use the following historical background to introduce students to Doctrine and Covenants 138: On January 23, 1918, Elder Hyrum Mack Smith, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve and a son of Church President Joseph F. Smith, died of a ruptured appendix at the age of 45. Hyrum was a faithful son and served well in the Church. He had departed for his mission to England only one day after his marriage to Ida Bowman. In 1901, at age 29, he was called to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. In 1913 he was assigned to preside over the European Mission. During this time, he and Brother Janne M. Sjodahl wrote *Doctrine and Covenants Commentary*, a book still in use throughout the Church. When World War I began, Elder Smith directed the evacuation of the missionaries from Europe. President Smith, who was 80 years old at the time of Hyrum's death, grieved at the loss of his son and became ill himself.

President Smith was quite ill during most of 1918 and spent much of his time confined to his room. Another of his sons, Elder Joseph Fielding Smith, who was also a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, spent many days with him. Though he was ill, President Smith was sensitive to the Spirit. At the October 1918 general conference, six weeks before his death, President Smith said:

“As most of you, I suppose, are aware, I have been undergoing a siege of very serious illness for the last five months. It would be impossible for me, on this occasion, to occupy sufficient time to express the desires of my heart and my feelings, as I would desire to express them to you, but I felt that it was my duty, if possible, to be present. . . .

“ . . . Although somewhat weakened in body, my mind is clear. . . .

“ . . . I have not lived alone these five months. I have dwelt in the spirit of prayer, of supplication, of faith and of determination; and I have had my communication with the Spirit of the Lord continuously” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1918, 2).

Two weeks after the general conference, President Smith asked his son Joseph to write down a vision he had received of the Savior's ministry in the spirit world. After the vision was endorsed by the counselors in the First Presidency and by the Quorum of the Twelve, it was published in the *Improvement Era* in December 1918 (see “Vision of the Redemption of the Dead,” 166–70).

In the April 1976 general conference, the vision was accepted as scripture and included in the Pearl of Great Price. In June 1979, the First Presidency announced that the vision would become section 138 in the Doctrine and Covenants.

■ Use the following teaching ideas to study President Joseph F. Smith's vision of the redemption of the dead:

Doctrine and Covenants 138:7–10, 16–22, 30–37, 51. Have students share what they think the following verses mean: 1 Peter 3:18–20; 4:6 (or D&C 138:7–10). Remind them of your discussion in lesson 9 about what happens to people after they die. What new insights does Doctrine and Covenants 138:16–17, 21–22 add? Have students read verses 18–19, 30–37, 51 and talk about where Jesus's spirit went while His body was in the tomb. Discuss what the Savior did and did not do during that time.

Doctrine and Covenants 138:11–24, 29–37, 49–52, 58–60. Discuss the meaning of the word *redeem* (to rescue or free from bondage; to recover or get back through payment). Assign groups of students to find what Christ has done to redeem—

1. The righteous (see D&C 138:11–19, 22–24, 49–52; see also Mosiah 15:10–12).
2. The wicked who reject the truth on earth (see D&C 138:20–22, 29–37, 58–59; see also D&C 76:71–74).
3. Those who die without a knowledge of the gospel (see D&C 138:30–37, 58–59; see also D&C 137:7–9).

Doctrine and Covenants 138:18–21, 30–32, 37, 57. Use verses 18–21, 30–32, 37, and 57 to compare how the gospel is preached in the spirit world with how it is preached on earth (see also Luke 9:1–2; Alma 12:28–34; D&C 42:5–8; 61:33–36). Invite students to read and mark Doctrine and Covenants 138:57, and discuss how this verse applies to them. Ask students what they think verse 57 may have meant to President Smith, and to all Church members, in view of the death of President Smith’s son Hyrum.

■ Invite students to tell how they think the Atonement relates to the truths taught in Doctrine and Covenants 138. Elder John A. Widtsoe said: “The basic reason for the importance of the work for the dead, is that the Lord would save all his children. The plan of salvation is absolutely universal. The work of the Lord will not be completed until all who come on earth have had a full and fair chance to accept or reject the gospel” (“Evidences and Recollections,” *Improvement Era*, Sept. 1944, 557).

Our Part in Redeeming the Dead

■ Read Doctrine and Covenants 138:47–48 and invite students to share their feelings about redeeming the dead. Remind students that there are many different ways to help redeem the dead. Bear testimony of the importance of family history and temple work.

ADDITIONAL LESSON RESOURCES

■ Elder Henry B. Eyring explained: “Many of your deceased ancestors will have received a testimony that the message of the missionaries is true. When you received that testimony, you could ask the missionaries for baptism. But those who are in the spirit world cannot. The ordinances you so cherish are offered only in this world. Someone in this world must go to a holy temple and accept the covenants on behalf of the person in the spirit world. That is why we are under obligation to find the names of our ancestors and ensure that they are offered by us what they cannot receive there without our help.

“For me, knowing that turns my heart not only to my ancestors who wait but to the missionaries who teach them. I will see those missionaries in the spirit world, and so will you. Think of a faithful missionary standing there with those he has loved and taught who are your ancestors. Picture as I do the smile on the face of that missionary as you walk up to him and your ancestors whom he converted but could not baptize or have sealed to family until you came to the rescue. I do not know what the protocol will be in such a place, but I imagine arms thrown around your neck and tears of gratitude” (in Conference Report, Apr. 2005, 81; or *Ensign*, May 2005, 78).

■ Elder Wilford Woodruff, who was then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, shared the following experience: “I will here say that two weeks before I left St. George, the spirits of the dead gathered around me, wanting to know why we did not redeem them. Said they, ‘You have had the use of the Endowment House for a number of years, and yet nothing has ever been done for us. We laid the foundation of the government you now enjoy, and we never apostatized from it, but we remained true to it and were faithful to God.’

“These were the signers of the Declaration of Independence, and they waited on me for two days and two nights. . . .

“I straightway went into the baptismal font and called upon Brother McAllister to baptize me for the signers of the Declaration of Independence, and fifty other eminent men, making one hundred in all, including John Wesley, Columbus, and others. I then baptized him for every President of the United States, except three; and when their cause is just, somebody will do the work for them” (*The Discourses of Wilford Woodruff*, sel. G. Homer Durham [1946], 160–61). The three whose baptisms were not done at that time were Presidents Martin Van Buren, James Buchanan, and Ulysses S. Grant (who was still living in 1877 when this speech was given). Their work has since been done.

THE MISSION OF THE PROPHET ELIJAH

LESSON PURPOSE

To help students understand the mission of the prophet Elijah and its importance for us as we provide ordinances for the living and the dead.

LESSON THEMES

- ◆ Many people long for family relationships to continue beyond death.
- ◆ The prophet Elijah returned to earth to restore sealing keys. These keys make it possible for temple sealings to be binding in heaven.
- ◆ The keys restored by Elijah give us the power to perform all the ordinances of the kingdom of God.

LESSON IDEAS

Together Forever

■ Ask students which doctrines pertaining to family history and temple work give them the most comfort, and why. Explain that eternal family relationships are possible because of the Savior's Atonement and because of the sealing power the Lord restored to the Church through Elijah.

■ Invite students to tell about deceased family members they are anxious to be with in the eternities, and ask them to tell why. Explain that to create an eternal family, we must begin with a husband and wife who are sealed by temple marriage. Share the following statement by Elder Marion D. Hanks, who was then a member of the Seventy:

"Marriage is the closest and most intimate relationship one makes in this life, and the most serious and sacred decision. If you haven't been to the Lord's house, get ready, be clean, prepare to come to establish the foundation for a special, happy, eternal marriage.

"And the inspiration for all of this is the sweet assurance—deeply rooted in the heart of every decent man who is living as he should with his sweetheart wife, or who has so lived, or who is planning and preparing such a union—that heaven will be heaven for us because we know we will be there with the one we love the best. Parley P. Pratt said after he met the Prophet [Joseph Smith] in Philadelphia that 'it was from him that I learned that the wife of my bosom might be secured to me for time and all eternity; and that the refined sympathies and affections which endeared us to each other emanated from the [fountain] of divine eternal love. It was from [him] that I learned that we might cultivate these affections, and grow and increase in the same to all eternity' (*Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt* [1938], pp. 297–98).

"We sat in a room the other night with our five children and their eternal partners, and with their sixteen children. Twenty-eight of us joined in a circle of affection and appreciation. That circle, established with the two of us in a holy house of the Lord only a few short years ago, has expanded miraculously. . . . All of us together will find a loving place ultimately and a continuing relationship under the holy influence of

Him whose spirit children we are and of Him whose holy sacrifice brought us the blessings of eternal life” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1984, 49; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1984, 38).

The Return of Elijah

■ Ask if any students remember what is contained in the last two verses of the Old Testament. Read Malachi 4:5–6. Tell students that this prophecy is so important that it is found in all four books of scripture. Assign different students to study 3 Nephi 24:1; 25:5–6; 26:1–2; Doctrine and Covenants 110:13–16; 128:16–18; and Joseph Smith—History 1:33, 36–39. Have them report the following about each of the references: Who is speaking? To whom is he speaking? When was he speaking? What additional insight did he give that is not contained in Malachi 4:5–6? Ask students why they think this promise is repeated so many times.

■ Tell students that many Christians and Jews have looked forward to the return of Elijah. Ask if anyone can tell what many Jews do at Passover in preparation for Elijah’s coming. Review Doctrine and Covenants 110:13–16 and share the following statement by Elder A. Theodore Tuttle, who was a member of the Seventy:

“On the third of April, 1836, one week after the dedication of the Kirtland Temple, the monumental event occurred! The Savior appeared and accepted the temple. Moses and Elias also came. Then, Malachi’s prophecy was fulfilled—for Elijah the prophet stood before them. . . .

“That event occurred 146 years ago yesterday, on the day that the Jews were celebrating their traditional [Passover] ritual. For more than two millennia the Jews have looked for the coming of Elijah. Even today, in connection with the feast of the Passover, they will reenact the scene as they have done for centuries: they will set a place at their table, reserve an empty chair, open the door, raise their cups, and rise as if to greet Elijah.

“Elijah has returned! Thanks be to God! He bestowed his keys! Work could now commence in the temples to weld eternal links between husbands and wives, between parents and children, through the sealing power of God. . . .

“Without the authority and use of that power, in all ages of the world, none of our Heavenly Father’s children can enter His presence or ever become like Him! And if this were not so, the whole purpose of existence would be useless. That is why the Lord said ‘the whole earth would be utterly wasted at his coming.’ (D&C 2:3.)” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1982, 92–93; or *Ensign*, May 1982, 65–66).

■ Review with students *Elijah* in the Bible Dictionary.

The Sealing Power

■ Ask students to tell who restored the Aaronic Priesthood and the Melchizedek Priesthood to the Prophet Joseph Smith. Ask when these events occurred. (The Aaronic Priesthood was restored on May 15, 1829; see D&C 13 heading; Joseph Smith—History 1:68–72. Historical records and the testimony of Joseph Smith’s associates show that the Melchizedek Priesthood was restored probably between May 16–28, 1829; see D&C 27:12; Larry C. Porter, “The Restoration of the Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthoods,” *Ensign*, Dec. 1996, 30–47.) Explain that even though Joseph Smith had received the priesthood, there were still priesthood keys he had not yet received. Joseph Smith taught: “The spirit, power, and calling of Elijah is, that ye have power to hold the key of the revelation, ordinances, oracles, powers and endowments of the fullness of the Melchizedek Priesthood and of the kingdom of God on the earth; and to receive, obtain, and perform all the ordinances belonging to the kingdom of God, even unto the turning of the hearts of the fathers unto the children, and the hearts of the children unto the fathers” (*History of the Church*, 6:251).

Share this statement by Elder Boyd K. Packer: “In the Church we hold sufficient authority to perform all of the ordinances necessary to redeem and to exalt the whole human family. And, because we have the keys to the sealing power, what we bind in proper order here will be bound in heaven. Those keys—the keys to seal and bind on earth, and have it bound in heaven—represent the consummate gift from our God. With that authority we can baptize and bless, we can endow and seal, and

the Lord will honor our commitments” (“The Holy Temple,” *Temples of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 10–11).

■ Use the following statements to promote a discussion about the effect of Elijah’s mission in our lives:

1. Elder Russell M. Nelson said: “Elijah came not only to stimulate research for ancestors. He also enabled families to be eternally linked beyond the bounds of mortality. Indeed, the opportunity for families to be sealed forever is the real reason for our research. The Lord declared through the Prophet Joseph Smith: ‘These are principles in relation to the dead and the living that cannot be lightly passed over, as pertaining to our salvation. For their salvation is necessary and essential to our salvation, . . . they without us cannot be made perfect—neither can we without our dead be made perfect’ [D&C 128:15]” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1998, 43; or *Ensign*, May 1998, 34).
2. Elder James E. Faust, who was then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, said: “Perhaps we regard the power bestowed by Elijah as something associated only with formal ordinances performed in sacred places. But these ordinances become dynamic and productive of good only as they reveal themselves in our daily lives. . . . This sealing power thus reveals itself in family relationships, in attributes and virtues developed in a nurturing environment, and in loving service. These are the cords that bind families together” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1993, 47; or *Ensign*, May 1993, 37).
3. Elder Harold B. Lee, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, taught: “It is time for us to think of turning the hearts of parents to children now while living, that there might be a bond between parents and children that will last beyond death. It is a very real principle, and we should consider it” (in Boyd K. Packer, “The Family and Eternity,” *Ensign*, Feb. 1971, 11).

ADDITIONAL LESSON RESOURCES

■ President Joseph Fielding Smith, who was then President of the Quorum of the Twelve, explained that when Moses and Elijah appeared on the Mount of Transfiguration (see Matthew 16:18–19; 17:1–9), they gave priesthood keys to Peter, James, and John:

“From that we understand why Elijah and Moses were preserved from death: because *they had a mission to perform*, and it had to be performed *before* the crucifixion of the Son of God, and *it could not be done in the spirit*.

“*They had to have tangible bodies*. . . . For that reason Moses *disappeared* from among the people and was taken up into the mountain, and the people *thought* he was buried by the Lord. The Lord preserved him, so that he could come at the proper time and *restore his keys*, on the heads of Peter, James, and John, who stood at the head of the dispensation of the meridian of time [see Deuteronomy 34:5–6; Alma 45:18–19]. He reserved Elijah from death that he might also come and bestow his keys upon the heads of Peter, James, and John and prepare them for their ministry. . . .

“After the resurrection of Christ, of course, [Moses and Elijah] passed through death and the resurrection, and then as *resurrected beings* came to fulfill a mission of like import in the dispensation of the fulness of time [see D&C 110:11–16; 133:54–55]” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:110–11).

■ In 1841 Elder Orson Hyde, who was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, visited Jerusalem to dedicate the land of Israel for the return of the Jews. In 1979 the Church commemorated this event by dedicating the Orson Hyde Memorial Gardens on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. At a luncheon held after the dedication, Jerusalem mayor Teddy Kollek saw Elder LeGrand Richards of the Quorum of the Twelve standing and holding a plate of food. Mayor Kollek ordered a little table to be set up so that Elder Richards could sit down. Elder Richards thanked him and said, “Mayor, I want to tell you something.”



Elder Orson Hyde

“‘What’s that?’ asked the mayor.

“Looking Mayor Kollek directly in the eye, the apostle said, ‘Ten years ago I was here in Jerusalem, and one day I went into three synagogues, and hanging up on the wall in one of them was a large armchair. I asked the rabbi what it was there for. . . . He said that it was so that if Elijah comes, “we can lower the chair and let him sit in it.” Now, Mayor, I want to tell you something, and what I tell you is the truth. Elijah has already been. On the third day of April 1836 he appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in the Kirtland Temple.’

“The mayor said, ‘I guess I’d better tell them to take that chair down.’” (in Lucile C. Tate, *LeGrand Richards: Beloved Apostle* [1982], 301).

THE MISSION OF ELIJAH TODAY

LESSON PURPOSE

To help students understand Elijah's mission to turn the hearts of the children to the fathers and the hearts of the fathers to the children.

LESSON THEMES

- ◆ We can bless our ancestors by doing temple work for them.
- ◆ The Holy Ghost motivates us to do family history and temple work.
- ◆ Many inhabitants of the spirit world rejoice when ordinances are performed in their behalf.
- ◆ Being born in the covenant or being sealed to our parents is a blessing with special promises.

LESSON IDEAS

Blessing Our Ancestors

■ Tell students there was once a popular comedy team in which one brother always drew laughs by complaining to the other, "Mom always liked you best!" Ask students if they think it is possible to become a "favored" child of Heavenly Father, and, if so, how. Consider this phrase from 1 Nephi 17:35: "The Lord esteemeth all flesh in one; he that is righteous is favored of God." Ask students what they think it means to be "favored of God" (see also 1 Samuel 2:30; Psalm 145:18–20; Alma 13:4). Read Doctrine and Covenants 128:15, and ask how we can become favored descendants of our ancestors.

■ Read Doctrine and Covenants 2:2 and ask the following questions: Who are the children? Who are the fathers? What are the promises? What does it mean for Elijah to plant the promises in the children's hearts? What does it mean for the children to turn their hearts to their fathers? (For answers, refer to lesson 5 under "The Seed of Abraham and the Promises to the Fathers" and "Responsibilities of the House of Israel," p. 25.)

Turning Our Hearts

■ Discuss the word *spirit* as it relates to "school spirit," "team spirit," or "company spirit." Review 2 Kings 2:1–15, and ask students what they think it means that the spirit of Elijah rested on Elisha. How can this be applied to our family history work? Bear testimony that people often feel the Holy Ghost motivating and helping them as they do family history.

■ To illustrate how someone's heart can be turned, share the following story told by Sister June Flammer of Logan, Utah: "I grew up very close to three of my cousins. Marlo, the only boy among us, was very protective of us girls. In 1944 Marlo was drafted into the U.S. Army and was sent overseas to fight in World War II. He had

not yet had the opportunity to attend the temple. During one of our visits before his departure, we had an important discussion about the gospel. The next year Marlo was killed in action at Iwo Jima. Two years later I began having a dream about Marlo, which was repeated over and over. In this dream Marlo stood at the foot of my bed in white clothing. After a while I told my roommate about it. She had been to the temple (I had not), and told me that the clothing I described was temple clothing. The next time the dream came I noticed an urgent look on Marlo's face. I wrote a letter to Marlo's father, Uncle Bill, asking if Marlo's temple work had been done. He answered that it had not but that he would arrange it. The dream persisted, however, until one weekend I traveled to Idaho to see Uncle Bill. He admitted that he still hadn't had the work done, but we had it completed soon after. After that the dream never recurred. I gained a strong testimony of temple work for the dead."

Ask students how this story relates to the following statement by the Prophet Joseph Smith: "This is the spirit of Elijah, that we redeem our dead . . . and seal up our dead to come forth in the first resurrection. . . . This is the power of Elijah and the keys of the kingdom of Jehovah" (*History of the Church*, 6:252).

The Spirits May Rejoice

■ Invite students to ponder the following questions: What might those who accept the gospel in the spirit world desire most? What influence might they have to see that gospel ordinances are performed in their behalf? Share this statement by Elder Theodore M. Burton, who was then an Assistant to the Twelve:

"We are not only to be messengers of salvation to the living, but saviors for our ancestors who went before us and who, though now dead, have paved the way whereby we might receive our present blessings. . . . The promise was made that, even if they were born at a time and place where they could not hear the gospel preached in life, God would provide saviors for them from among their descendants. We are those saviors God promised through whom they can have every priesthood blessing" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1975, 105; or *Ensign*, May 1975, 71).

■ Encourage students to have faith that many of our efforts in behalf of the dead will be accepted by them. Share this story taken from the journal of Charles R. Woodbury. Brother Woodbury had just witnessed 300 baptisms in the Manti Utah Temple:

"As a name was called out for baptism, a voice said to me, 'This person has had the Gospel taught them and is converted and is ready for baptism.' Another name would be called out, 'This person's never heard the Gospel yet.' Another name would be called, 'This person's heard the Gospel and is not converted.' I sat there in that condition and witnessed 300 baptisms. I knew [every one] of them that had accepted it and those that didn't . . . 25 out of the 300 weren't ready for it. They weren't converted and ready for the work. The rest of them, the other 275 were prepared and rejoiced that their work was being done.

"This is the testimony that I have to show people that the departed spirits know and appreciate when their work is done in the Temple, so they can enjoy the blessings of the Gospel" (*Faith Promoting Experiences of Patriarch Charles R. Woodbury* [1968?], 19).

To Be Sealed in the Covenant

■ Tell students that another aspect of turning the hearts of fathers and children is for parents to have their children sealed to them. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught:

"I would advise all the Saints to go to with their might and gather together all their living relatives to [the temple], that they may be sealed and saved" (*History of the Church*, 6:184).

"The doctrine or sealing power of Elijah is as follows: . . . The first thing you do, go and seal on earth your sons and daughters unto yourself" (*History of the Church*, 6:253).



Manti Utah Temple

- Ask if any students have been to the temple to be sealed to their parents. Invite them to tell about their experiences.
- Ask how being sealed to their children can help parents in their responsibilities. President Harold B. Lee taught: “Now keep in mind this; that when the full measure of Elijah’s mission is understood, that the hearts of the children will be turned to the fathers, and the fathers to the children. It applies just as much on this side of the veil as it does to the other side of the veil. . . . Heaven would not be heaven until we have done everything we can to save those whom the Lord has sent through our lineage. So, the hearts of you fathers and mothers must be turned to your children right now, if you have the true spirit of Elijah” (address delivered at the Eighth Annual Priesthood Genealogical Research Seminar, August 3, 1973, in *Syllabus for the Ninth Annual Priesthood Genealogy Seminar*, comp. Roger C. Flick and James B. Packer [1974], 529–30).

ADDITIONAL LESSON RESOURCES

- 1 Nephi 15:18; Doctrine and Covenants 2:1–3; 132:29–32; Abraham 1:1–4; 2:9–11.



Washington D.C. Temple

- Elder Henry B. Eyring gave this insight: “When you were baptized, your ancestors looked down on you with hope. Perhaps after centuries, they rejoiced to see one of their descendants make a covenant to find them and to offer them freedom. In your reunion, you will see in their eyes either gratitude or terrible disappointment. Their hearts are bound to you. Their hope is in your hands. You will have more than your own strength as you choose to labor on to find them” (in Conference Report, Apr. 2005, 82; or *Ensign*, May 2005, 80).
- Elder Wilford Woodruff, who was then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, stated: “I wish many times that the veil were lifted off the face of the Latter-day Saints. I wish we could see and know the things of God as they do who are laboring for the salvation of the human family who are in the spirit world; for if this were so, this whole people, with very few, if any, exceptions, would lose all interest in the riches of the world, and instead thereof their whole desires and labors would be directed to redeem their dead” (*Discourses of Wilford Woodruff*, 152).
- President Gordon B. Hinckley, then a counselor in the First Presidency, said: “Each temple built by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints stands as an expression of the testimony of this people that God our Eternal Father lives, that He has a plan for the blessing of His sons and daughters of all generations, that His Beloved Son, Jesus the Christ . . . is the Savior and Redeemer of the world. . . . Every temple, be it large or small, old or new, is an expression of our testimony that life beyond the grave is as real and certain as is mortality. There would be no need for temples if the human spirit and soul were not eternal. Every ordinance performed in these sacred houses is everlasting in its consequences” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1993, 91–92; or *Ensign*, May 1993, 74).

THE RESEARCH PROCESS

LESSON PURPOSE

To introduce students to family history research so they can find more information about their ancestors.

LESSON THEMES

- ◆ The next step after identifying ancestors who are easy to find is to look for those who are more difficult to find.
- ◆ Each person or family should organize and store their family history materials.
- ◆ We can follow a logical sequence of steps to identify our ancestors.

LESSON IDEAS

Continuing the Search

■ Read the following statement by John A. Widtsoe, who was later a member of the Quorum of the Twelve: “If through the priesthood possessed by us, all the nations living and dead shall find salvation, . . . then it becomes clear that we need thousands and tens of thousands and hundreds of thousands of men and women engaged in the work of assembling genealogies [and] preparing them for the temples. . . . The work is large, the workers are few; we are a handful, the saving handful, among the nations; therefore every member must contribute to this work” (“The Meaning and Importance of Records,” *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine*, July 1920, 100).

Tell students that one way to help the work is to look for our ancestors beyond the first few generations and those who are easiest to find.

■ Ask students if, when they have a large and important task, they usually finish the task all at once or do a little at a time. Remind them that family history work includes identifying our ancestors, teaching our children, attending the temple, and performing other kinds of service. Consider the following suggestion by John A. Widtsoe: “Every person should be engaged daily in a little work in behalf of this great cause. It is the best kind of service to the Church. . . .

“ . . . The abounding love of the living for the dead comes to a person when he gives himself a little every day to thoughts of the dead and labor for the dead” (*Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine*, July 1920, 101–2).

■ Discuss how Mosiah 4:27 and Doctrine and Covenants 88:119 apply to family history research. Elder John A. Widtsoe, when a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, taught that each member should become involved in family history and temple work “so far as his circumstances will permit and the Spirit may prompt. Certainly, neither in temple work nor in any other Church activity should a person be a fanatic. We should do all our duties, and divide our time among them” (“Fundamentals of Temple Doctrine,” *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine*, July 1922, 134–35).

A Place for Everything

■ Hold up a stack of papers and tell students, “Imagine that this is my carefully organized family history work for the past two years.” Drop the stack so that it hits the corner of a table or desk and scatters on the floor. Ask students what lesson they can learn from this demonstration. President Brigham Young said: “If I had nothing but a piece of an old newspaper folded for a holder I would have it where I could put my hand on it in a moment, in the dark if I wanted it. And so with the dishcloth, the broom, the chairs, tables, sofas, and everything about the house, so that if you had to get up in the night you could lay your hand on whatever you wanted instantly. Have a place for everything and everything in its place” (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, 213).

■ Tell students that there are many ways to organize research and store materials and that they must find a system that works best for them. Some people like to gather information into groups for each individual or family, while others prefer to keep their research in separate files or notebooks for each family line. The notebook that students use in class is a good place to begin a family history collection. They can use divider tabs and collect family group sheets, pedigree charts, histories, photographs, and so on. Computer programs can also help organize information.

The Research Process

■ Tell students that most people who do family history research find it fun and exciting. Research can sometimes seem overwhelming, but working in an organized manner can help us avoid frustration. The research process described below can help students better plan and organize their efforts.

You may want to review with students the information under “Where Do I Start?” in lesson 3 (pp. 13–14).

■ Give students copies of the handout at the end of this lesson. Tell them that the “Research Process” and “Research Log” charts can help them organize their family history research. Go through the charts, using the explanations that follow. (You could use a transparency of the charts and fill them out with sample data as you go.)

1. *Set a goal.* Use your pedigree chart and family group sheets to choose an individual or family about whom you would like to know more. Work from the known to the unknown. Note what information on your charts is missing, conflicting, or unverified. Try to find the parents of the earliest ancestor on a line, or look for an individual’s spouse and children.

Try to be accurate and thorough. You may not need to fill in every blank on a family group sheet, but each piece of information helps confirm that you have identified the right person and helps you learn more about that person and others on that line. At a minimum, try to gather the information required for submitting a name to the temple (see items 1–3 under “Types of Helps” in lesson 14, p. 54).

2. *Decide which record.* Select a record that you think might give you the information you need. Records are generally of two types:

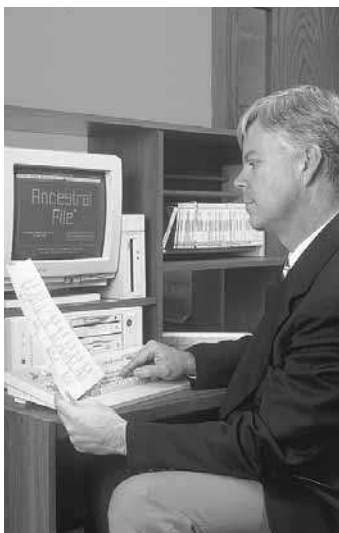
- *Original records.* These are records of life events kept by affected parties at or near the time the events took place. Original records can provide information about birth, death, place of residence, property, occupation, immigration, civil action, religious ceremonies, and personal achievements. Some original records, such as censuses, parish records, birth certificates, wills, deeds, and ship passenger lists, are kept by governments, churches, societies, or other institutions. Others, such as diaries and family Bibles, are kept by individuals or families.

- *Compiled records.* These are collections of information gathered from other sources, often many years after the fact. Examples include family histories, biographies, place histories, society publications, periodicals, genealogies, and computerized indexes. Compiled records may be drawn from original records, other compiled records, or both. For example, a published family history may be compiled from civil registration records, census records, family papers, and local histories.



Research process

3. *Locate the record.* Records are often kept in archives, repositories, government offices, public libraries, and family history centers. Catalogs may be available at any of these locations or on the Internet. Some records, especially family and personal ones, may be privately held. You may need to contact family members by phone or mail. Lesson 14 gives more information on the different kinds of records and how to find them.
4. *Search the record.* Go through the record to see if it contains the needed information. Keep a log of the records you search and what you find in them, even if you find nothing useful. (See the “Research Log” form on the handout.) This will help you avoid missing records or searching them twice and can also help you stay focused on one research goal at a time. Update your log as you discover more information.
5. *Copy the information.* Record what you learn as you search records, including all sources, page numbers, and so on. You may want to make printouts or photocopies. Double-check your notes and copies for accuracy. Fill in any new information on your pedigree chart and family group sheets, and store your notes and copies in the appropriate notebook or folder.
6. *Evaluate the information.* Ask yourself whether you found what you wanted. What does your new information tell you? What are you still lacking? Is the source reliable? (Written records are sometimes more accurate than the memories of living individuals. Records made close to the event are often more accurate than those created later.) Does the information agree with other records? (For example, a marriage date that is only 10 years after a person’s birth date probably indicates an error.)
7. *Use the results.* Use what you learned to decide what to do next. Does the new information give you enough to submit a name for temple work? Does it suggest another record to check? How does it contribute to your research on other names? Is it time to begin researching another ancestor?



Record what you learn.

After completing this step, set another goal and begin the process again.

ASSIGNMENTS

- Invite students to decide on one research goal and to write it down on their Research Process charts.

ADDITIONAL LESSON RESOURCES

- Elder Henry B. Eyring gave the following counsel: “After you find the first few generations, the road will become more difficult. The price will become greater. As you go back in time, the records become less complete. As others of your family search out ancestors, you will discover that the ancestor you find has already been offered the full blessings of the temple. Then you will have a difficult and important choice to make. You will be tempted to stop and leave the hard work of finding to others who are more expert or to another time in your life. But you will also feel a tug on your heart to go on in the work, hard as it will be.

“As you decide, remember that the names which will be so difficult to find are of real people to whom you owe your existence in this world and whom you will meet again in the spirit world” (in Conference Report, Apr. 2005, 82; or *Ensign*, May 2005, 79–80).

- In 1907 the First Presidency issued an “Address to the World,” in which they stated: “Our motives are not selfish; our purposes not petty and earth-bound; we contemplate the human race—past, present, and yet to come—as immortal beings, for whose salvation it is our mission to labor; and to this work, broad as eternity and deep as the love of God, we devote ourselves, now, and forever” (in *Messages of the First Presidency*, 4:155).

RESEARCH PROCESS

Name of Individual	1. Set a goal	2. Decide which record	3. Locate the record	4. Search the record	5. Copy the information	6. Evaluate the information	7. Use the results

RESEARCH LOG

Ancestor's name: _____ Researcher's name: _____

Location of Search	Description of Source	Date of Search	Results

RESEARCH SOURCES

LESSON PURPOSE

To teach students more about the records available for family history research.

LESSON THEMES

- ◆ The Lord has inspired individuals and groups to keep records that allow us to find information about our ancestors.
- ◆ The Church has compiled and indexed numerous types of records in its family history databases.
- ◆ Among the types of records useful in family history research are census, civil registration, immigration, naturalization, probate, land, military, and church records.

LESSON IDEAS

Help from the Lord

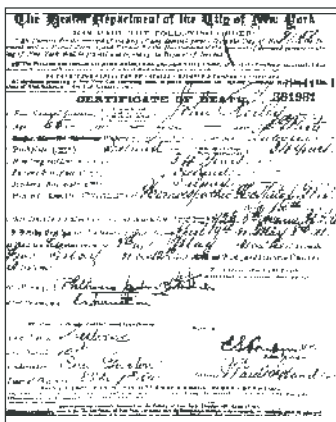
■ Read together 1 Corinthians 12:27–28, and ask students what they think the word *helps* means. Besides the helps that Paul mentioned (apostles, prophets, teachers, miracles), what other helps has the Lord provided for the Church in our day? Through the years the Lord has inspired individuals and groups to keep records, which serve as *helps* for us as we pursue our family history. Tell students that today they will learn more about the types of records available.

■ Show the picture of the granite vaults found at the end of this lesson. Explain that these vaults are located in the mountains southeast of Salt Lake City, Utah, and that the Church stores microfilmed genealogical materials here. Share the following statement by Elder David B. Haight:

“Just a few minutes’ drive to the southeast of [downtown Salt Lake City], in one of the many beautiful canyons that grace these Wasatch Mountains, stands a huge granite mountain. From the road deep in the canyon floor, most automobile passengers do not see the large, arched portals cut high in the side of the mountain. Few would realize that behind these portals are six large storage rooms cut deep into the solid granite and that in them lie the world’s largest collection of genealogical records. . . . They are the product of over fifty years of tireless effort the world over by Church representatives, by microfilm camera operators, and by those who care for these records housed row upon row in microfilm cabinets deep in the mountain. . . .

“We gather these records to identify our ancestors. We identify our ancestors so that we may perform for them the saving ordinances of the gospel in holy temples dedicated to that purpose” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1991, 100; or *Ensign*, May 1991, 75).

■ Tell students that today’s lesson is not meant to overwhelm them with technical details. Rather, this lesson provides an overview of the types of records available.



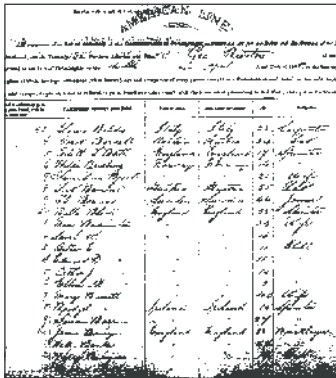
Death certificate

Students should consider the different types of records and seek the guidance of the Spirit as they pursue their family history research.

■ Point out to students that research usually becomes more difficult when you move beyond the first few generations. Reassure them that even beginners can understand and use basic sources of information, and that family history centers can provide help. Elder Boyd K. Packer wrote: “You can fulfill your obligation to your kindred dead and to the Lord without forsaking your other Church callings. You can do it without abandoning your family responsibilities. You can do this work. You can do it without becoming a so-called ‘expert’ in it” (“Someone Up There Loves You,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1977, 8–9).

Types of Helps

- Ask how many students have a copy of their birth certificates. Ask if any of them have ever sent for a copy of a birth, marriage, or death certificate, and what procedure they followed. You may want to show copies of birth, marriage, or death certificates (or any other record described below) and note the information written on them.
- Use the board to help students understand the following record categories and formats:



Immigration record

<u>Record Categories</u>	<u>Record Formats</u>
Church records	Microfilm
Census records	Microfiche
Civil registration records	Book
Immigration records	Computer
Probate records	Manuscript
Land records	

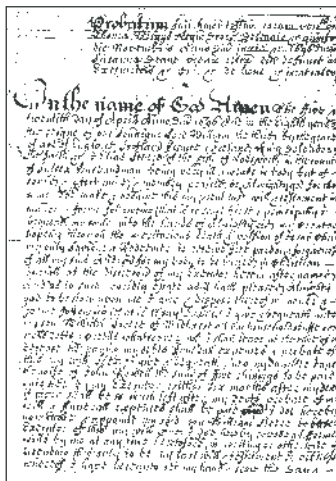
Each record category contains several types of records. For example, civil registration records include birth, marriage, and death records. Some record categories are available in more than one format. For example, civil registration records may be on microfilm, in a book, or on computer. If available, tell students that they can use the Family History Library catalog to find and use these records. (Lesson 19 contains more detailed information about the catalog.)

Be sure students understand the following guidelines about the minimum information needed to perform ordinances.

1. *For baptism and endowment:* The ancestor's name, sex, an event date (for example, a birth date), and an event place (for example, a birthplace).
2. *For sealing to parents:* The information listed for baptism and endowment plus the first or last name of the ancestor's father.
3. *For sealing to spouse:* The name of the husband, the marriage date, and the marriage place.

Some of this information may be estimated, but it should be as accurate as reasonably possible. Providing more complete information reduces the chance someone else will duplicate your efforts. (See “Recording Family History Information,” the handout at the end of lesson 3, pp. 16–18.)

- Give students a copy of the “Record Types” handout from the end of this lesson. Review the different types briefly in class.



Probate record

ASSIGNMENTS

- Have students take out the Research Process chart they made in lesson 13 and look at the goals they wrote in the first column. Have them decide which type of record would be most helpful to search. They should write the name of the record in the second column.
- Have students take their Research Process charts, Research Logs, and the Record Types handouts to a family history center, library, or other research site. Have them complete the remaining steps on the first line of their Research Process charts and begin a new line.

ADDITIONAL LESSON RESOURCES

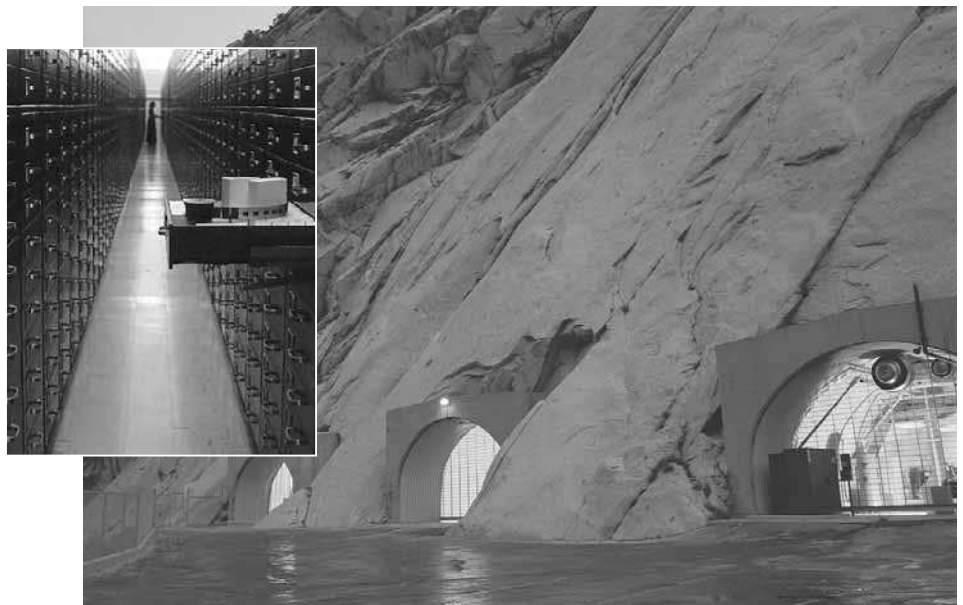
- Elder Henry B. Eyring explained: “Your opportunities and the obligations they create are remarkable in the whole history of the world. There are more temples across the earth than there have ever been. More people in all the world have felt the Spirit of Elijah move them to record the identities of their ancestors and facts of their ancestors’ lives. There are more resources to search out your ancestors than there have ever been in the history of the world. The Lord has poured out knowledge about how to make that information available worldwide through technology that a few years ago would have seemed a miracle.

“With those opportunities there comes greater obligation to keep our trust with the Lord. Where much is given, much is required [see Luke 12:48]. . . .

“. . . Remember that the names which will be so difficult to find are of real people” (in Conference Report, Apr. 2005, 82; or *Ensign*, May 2005, 79–80).

- Elder John A. Widtsoe taught: “Towards the end of [Joseph Smith’s] life, a series of instructions were given the Prophet relative to the necessity of keeping records. It is on the basis of this revelation that the careful system of records is being followed in the temples. Every person is accounted for, huge volumes are stored, for the Latter-day Saints believe literally that out of the books men shall be judged. The Lord may have other means of knowing, but it is the right and orderly way for us” (*The Message of the Doctrine and Covenants*, ed. G. Homer Durham [1969], 161).

- See the research outlines for various countries (available at family history centers, the Church’s family history Web site at www.familysearch.org, and Church distribution centers) for additional information on research sources.



Granite Mountain vaults

RECORD TYPES

Computer Records

Transcripts, indexes, and other records are often available in searchable form on computer disc or the Internet. The Internet also hosts e-mail lists, message boards, Web pages, and other sources for researchers. The Church has produced a number of computer tools to aid in family history research. These are available in family history centers, the Church's family history Web site at www.familysearch.org, and in some cases at Church distribution centers for home use.

International Genealogical Index

The International Genealogical Index (IGI) includes information on individuals submitted for temple work by Church members as well as data from civil and church records from around the world. Because many county and parish records have been systematically extracted, the IGI can also serve as an index to the records for those counties and parishes. The IGI includes information on births, christenings, marriages, deaths, and burials, as well as temple ordinances if any have been performed. Before you submit names of ancestors for temple work, you should check the IGI to make sure the work has not already been done.

The IGI is available in family history centers and on the Church's family history Web site (www.familysearch.org). To see temple ordinance information you must be a member of the Church and must log on. Because some of the birth, marriage, and death information is taken from member submissions, not all of it is accurate. The IGI is an official source for temple ordinance information, and in most cases you can rely on the information there. Note that some ordinance dates, such as baptisms, are those reported by the member at the time of a later temple ordinance and may be in error.

Ancestral File

Ancestral File contains linked genealogical information for millions of individuals. This information was submitted beginning in 1978 by users from around the world. Ancestral File includes the information found on family group sheets and pedigree charts, as well as submitter information. The Church did not verify the accuracy of the information in Ancestral File but allowed users to correct it. The Church also made some efforts to merge duplicate individuals. The Internet version of Ancestral File includes no Latter-day Saint ordinance dates. The CD version of Ancestral File available in family history centers includes ordinance information as submitted by members. The Church did not verify this information, which may be incomplete or in error.

Pedigree Resource File

Pedigree Resource File is a more recent collection of linked genealogical information submitted by users,

together with submitter information. Like Ancestral File, it includes the information found on family group sheets and pedigree charts. Again, the Church makes no effort to verify the accuracy of this information. Unlike Ancestral File, users are not allowed to change the information, and the Church does no merging. Genealogies remain in the form in which they are submitted. As a result, you may need to check numerous submissions for the same individuals or family lines. The Church's family history Web site (www.familysearch.org) includes an index to the Pedigree Resource File. To view the data, you must go to a family history center or purchase discs from a distribution center. As with Ancestral File, the Pedigree Resource File gives Latter-day Saint ordinance information as submitted by members. This information may be incomplete or in error.

Because Ancestral File and Pedigree Resource File include linked family and submitter information, they are often among the most useful sources for beginners. They can help researchers survey what has been done and find who else has been working on a line.

Family History Library Catalog

The Family History Library catalog lists the holdings of the Church's Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah. This library has an extensive collection of family history books and microfilmed church and civil records. You can search the catalog by surname or by locality (where your ancestor lived). If you find a microfilm record you would like to see, for a small fee you can have a copy sent to your local family history center. Books cannot be sent, except books on microfilm. If a book has not been filmed, you can request that the library film it or photocopy pages for you. The catalog is available at family history centers as well as the Church's family history Web site (www.familysearch.org).

Other Resources

The Church's Web site also includes the U.S. Social Security Death Index, a U.S. Military index (with names of U.S. servicemen and women who died in the Korean and Vietnam Wars), and indexes of civil registration, church, and immigration records from various countries. The Web site also includes research guides for numerous localities around the world. (See www.familysearch.org.)

Civil Records

Civil records are records kept by federal, regional, and local governments. These are located in government offices, archives, and libraries. Catalogs and indexes are often available on the Internet or at the locations where the records are held. The Church has an extensive collection of microfilmed civil records. You can order and view

these at family history centers (see “Family History Library Catalog” above).

Census Records

Governments have compiled census records for the past 200 years or so. Early census records frequently name only the head of the household. Later census records may include names, gender, birthplaces, approximate ages, and other information for all those in the household.

Be careful in using census records, since they provide only a glimpse of the family. Generally family members are not included in a census if they were not home when the census was taken. Censuses do not include deceased family members. The wife in the census may not be the mother of the children. Relatives and boarders are sometimes listed as children. Information may have been supplied by neighbors or approximated by census takers. Names might appear under a variety of spellings. Frequently, ages are rounded, and birthplaces are approximate.

Civil Registration Records

Birth Certificates. Birth certificates usually give a name, date and place of birth, parents’ names (sometimes including the mother’s maiden name), and residence.

Marriage Certificates. Marriage certificates usually show date and place of marriage, names and ages of the bride and groom, places of residence, witnesses’ names, and sometimes parents’ names.

Death Certificates. Death certificates give the name and may show a date and place of death, age, residence, cause of death, parents’ names, occupation, date and place of burial, and sometimes date and place of birth.

The Family History Library has microfilms of records and record indexes. If you find an ancestor in an index and the Family History Library does not have a film of the actual record, you may need to write to the government office where the record was filed. *Note:* In the Family History Library catalog, civil registration records for the United States are found under “Vital Records.”

Immigration Records

Shipping companies have long kept records of passengers traveling from one country to another, and beginning in the 1800s, countries began to keep arrival lists (lists of immigrants arriving on their shores). Many such records have been compiled in book and electronic form. Immigration records may include an individual’s name, age, occupation, place of origin, port of embarkation (departure), and other information.

Naturalization Records

Naturalization records include declarations of intention (in which an immigrant renounces allegiance to another country), petitions for citizenship, and depositions (testimonies given in courts of law as part of the

application for citizenship). The information includes the petitioner’s age, name changes, birthplace, port of debarkation, marital status, and mailing address. At different periods, naturalization may have been handled locally or nationally. For example, in the United States, naturalization records were originally processed by a variety of federal, state, and county courts. In 1906 the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service began maintaining an index of naturalizations, with copies of important documents for each case.

Probate Records

Probate records are court records of how deceased individuals’ estates (property) were divided among their heirs. Wills frequently list gifts of property to spouses, children, and other relatives. Administration papers name the individuals (often the surviving spouse or eldest son) who are to execute the will. Remember that probate records often do not list all the children. Children who had already died or received their inheritance are usually not named. Also, the surviving spouse may not be the parent of all or any of the children named.

Land Records

Land records, such as deeds and mortgages, can be used to verify an individual’s movements. Sometimes land records state relationships, as when a husband and wife own a piece of land in common or when an individual sells land to a family member. Other times these relationships are not stated but can be inferred. Land records can also provide clues as to financial circumstances, neighbors, business associates, and full names.

Military Records

The most valuable military records for research are pension applications written by servicemen or their surviving spouses. Information on military records includes the person’s birth date, marriage date, age at enlistment, regiment, physical description (hair color, eye color, height, distinguishing marks), military campaigns and battles, disabilities incurred through military service, testimonies of contemporaries, places of residence, and sometimes names and birth dates of heirs.

Church Records

Church records predate civil registration in many parts of the world by hundreds of years. Parish registers of most denominations record dates and places of christenings, marriages, and burials. Church records might also contain birth and death dates and places, names and residence of parents, occupations, and names of witnesses and godparents, who were often relatives. Some church records are still in local churches, but many have been gathered into central archives. The Family History Library has microfilm for many thousands of parishes around the world.

SUBMITTING NAMES FOR TEMPLE ORDINANCES

LESSON PURPOSE

To teach students how to submit names for temple ordinances.

LESSON THEMES

- ◆ The Savior's Atonement makes it possible for those in spirit prison to be set free and continue in their progression.
- ◆ Preparing, clearing, and submitting names for temple work has been facilitated by modern technology.

LESSON IDEAS

Helping the Captive Spirits



■ Draw on the board a simple picture of a jail, and write the following scripture references around it: Isaiah 42:6–7; Isaiah 61:1; Doctrine and Covenants 128:22. Read these scriptures with the class and discuss the Savior's mission to free the spirits in prison. Remind students that many of those waiting in the spirit world for their ordinances to be performed were good people who never had the opportunity to hear the gospel in mortality.

■ Tell students that once their family history research has led them to ancestors who need temple work, the next step is to submit the names to a temple for the ordinances. In some parts of the world, this is done by sending or taking family group sheets to a temple for processing. In others, members use a computer program developed by the Church's Family History Department.

Clearing names for temple work was previously done by the Church and could take six to twelve months. Using modern technology, members can clear names for temple work in a few minutes. Members can specify whether they want to provide the proxies for the temple ordinances or whether they want the temple to provide them. If members want to provide their own proxies, the temple issues them cards for keeping track of the ordinances they have performed.

Which Ancestors Need Temple Ordinances?

■ Today there are hundreds of millions of persons for whom temple work has been done. Not only do computers store this vast amount of data, but computer programs allow members to process names for temple ordinance work locally instead of submitting them to a central bureau.

■ Review with students how to determine whether the ancestors on their family group sheets and pedigree charts need temple ordinances. If software is available, show them how to print a list of incomplete ordinances. Review with them how to use the Church databases to verify whether the ordinances have been done.

■ Have students quiz each other on the following steps to prepare a name for temple ordinances. Have them explain details of how to achieve each step.

1. Find out which ordinances need to be performed.
2. Prepare and submit the names for temple ordinances.
3. Make certain the ordinances are performed.
4. Record the ordinance information.

If possible, demonstrate on a computer how to prepare a name to submit to the temple.

Ready for Temple Work

■ Suggest to students that when we speak of *preparing* names for temple work, we should keep in mind the preparation of those involved in work for the dead on both sides of the veil. We must prepare names for temple ordinances and must prepare to enter the temple ourselves. And many people in the spirit world have waited and prepared to have their ordinances performed. Bear testimony of the truth and importance of the Savior's mission to redeem all Heavenly Father's children. Help students understand that it is a privilege for us to participate in that mission.

ASSIGNMENTS

■ Assign students to go through the steps of preparing names for temple submission.

ADDITIONAL LESSON RESOURCES

■ The following story is taken from the journal of Brother S. Brent Farley of Logan, Utah:

“Following an inspiring session in the Salt Lake Temple this evening, my wife Janene and I were asked by a temple worker to assist in the sealing of a deceased family. We accepted the invitation and entered the sealing room. Before beginning, the officiator related the thought that these sacred rooms could often be graced by the unseen presence of the spirits for whom sealings were being performed. He then proceeded. I knelt at the altar in proxy for the father, and an elderly lady knelt down for the mother. Another gentleman represented the four sons [in turn] and my wife the four daughters.

“After being sealed in behalf of the father and mother, work was begun for the children. During the sealing of the first son, I felt the warm feeling of the Holy Ghost along with the distinct impression that the son was present in the room, as if he had just approached the altar. The feeling was so strong that I repeated his name in my mind, as if recognizing a friend who had just entered. When I did so, I felt that he was aware of my greeting, and I received the impression, ‘Thank you.’ As the sealings progressed, I received the same impression with each child, and spoke the names of the persons in my mind as the blessings were being pronounced. With each one came the warm confirmation of their presence and their recognition of our service in their behalf” (Nov. 8, 1974).

■ In some cases temple work may need to be postponed. “If the person [for whom you are planning to do temple work] was born within the last ninety-five years, obtain permission for the ordinances from the person's closest living relative. This relative often wishes to receive the ordinances in behalf of the deceased or designate someone to receive them. In some instances, the relative may wish to postpone the performance of the ordinances. Also, be aware that acting in conflict with the wishes of the closest living relative can result in bad feelings toward you and the Church. . . .

“You may wish to delay having ordinances performed for a person when research is still in progress, when you have not received permission from the immediate family members, or when another family member is going to submit the person’s name for ordinances. If you do not want some ordinances to be performed for a person at this time, you may submit the person’s name at a later time or submit the name now and request that only certain ordinances be performed” (*A Member’s Guide to Temple and Family History Work* [1993], 14).

PERSONAL INSPIRATION AND FAMILY HISTORY

LESSON PURPOSE

To teach the importance of divine help in family history work.

LESSON THEMES

- ◆ We can seek the gifts of the Spirit as we do family history.
- ◆ The Holy Ghost can guide us in many family history activities, including researching our ancestors.
- ◆ People in the spirit world often help those doing family history.

LESSON IDEAS



Salt Lake Temple

Seeking the Gifts of the Spirit

■ Tell students that when President Wilford Woodruff dedicated the Salt Lake Temple in 1893, he prayed for the Lord to help us as we do family history work. Read the following excerpt from his dedicatory prayer:

“We praise thee that our fathers, from last to first, from now back to the beginning, can be united with us in indissoluble links, welded by the holy Priesthood. . . . Wilt thou also permit holy messengers to visit us . . . and make known unto us with regard to the work we should perform in behalf of our dead. And . . . furthermore, we ask thee to open before [us] new avenues of information, and place in [our] hands the records of the past, that [our] work may not only be correct but complete also” (in James H. Anderson, “The Salt Lake Temple,” *Contributor*, Apr. 1893, 296).

■ Read and discuss the Lord’s teachings about the gifts of the Spirit in Doctrine and Covenants 46:8–12. Assign different students to look in the following scriptures for principles that can apply to family history and temple work, and invite them to share their thoughts with the class: Matthew 7:7–8; 1 Corinthians 2:10; 2 Nephi 32:3–5; Alma 12:9–10; Moroni 10:5; Doctrine and Covenants 8:2; 9:7–9; 18:18; 84:88; 112:19; 121:46. Invite students to share other scriptures that may also apply.

Recognizing the Spirit

■ Give students copies of the following articles and talks. (You could give each student an article or just a page.) Have them review the articles briefly, looking for ways to recognize and follow the Spirit. Have them share what they find.

- Carlos E. Asay, “The Companionship of the Holy Ghost,” *Ensign*, Apr. 1988, 15–17.
- Jay E. Jensen, “Have I Received an Answer from the Spirit?” *Ensign*, Apr. 1989, 20–25.
- Bruce R. McConkie, “How to Get Personal Revelation,” *New Era*, June 1980, 46–50.
- Dallin H. Oaks, “I Have a Question,” *Ensign*, June 1983, 27.

- Boyd K. Packer, in Conference Report, Oct. 1979, 27–31; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1979, 19–21.
- ———, “The Candle of the Lord,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1983, 51–56.
- ———, in Conference Report, Oct. 1989, 16–19; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1989, 14–16.
- Richard G. Scott, in Conference Report, Oct. 1993, 117–21; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, 86–88.

Following the Spirit

■ Invite students to share experiences in following the Spirit, especially in family history work. You could use the following story, related by Brother L. Ferrin Lindsey, to illustrate the importance of listening to the Spirit:

“One cold February morning, just after two big snowstorms, the snow was piled higher than the cars on both sides of the streets. I had to go to my office. . . . As I pulled up to a stoplight on the way to work, a voice said, ‘Turn right, and go down to the Genealogical Library.’ (I normally turn left at that particular light.) Without even thinking I turned right and drove toward the library. I thought: ‘What am I doing? I’ve got to be at the office right away. I have no reason in the world to be going to the Genealogical Library!’

“But a tremendous desire came upon me to continue toward the library. When I arrived, the only parking was in the middle of the street because of the piles of snow in the parking areas. I said to myself, ‘This is crazy. I can’t even park. I’ll just go on to the office.’ But again this voice within me told me to go to the Library *now*. Finally I parked the car on a side street and entered the library.

“This was the first time I had ever been to the Genealogical Library, so I had no idea what to do. I went to a desk and asked for assistance. When the worker there asked where my ancestors had lived, I remembered a location on one of the family group sheets we had been working on the previous Wednesday evening—Owen County, Indiana. He directed me to a card file. . . .

“After going through twenty or thirty of these cards we came to one that made my heart leap within me. I took the film number down and asked where I could get the film and a film reader. . . . I had a great desire to get it and find out what it contained.

“I located the film and someone helped me put it on. I had no idea what I was looking for, so I just kept turning until I came to a place with several hundred marriage entries. In the center of all those names, two almost leaped out at me. I was so surprised that I was shaking with excitement. These two names were the marriage entry for my third great-grandfather and great-grandmother.

“When my wife and I went to the temple to do the marriage sealing for this couple, a very beautiful feeling came over us and tears of joy streamed down our faces.

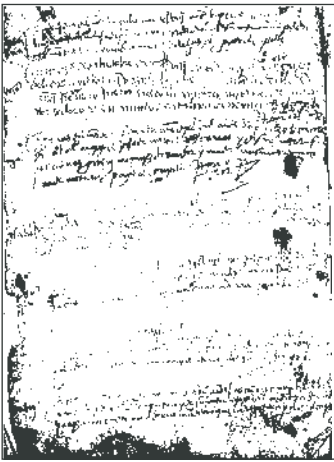
“I have since been back to that film and copied the names of many other ancestors and had their temple work done. . . . That original experience is just one of the many I have received in doing this work” (“Something, However Small,” in *Links of Forever*, comp. Connie Rector and Diane Deputy [1977], 6–8).

Help from the Other Side of the Veil

■ Tell students that help from the spirit world usually comes by spiritual impressions or by unexpected or unexplained research results. To begin your discussion about receiving help from those in the spirit world, share the following statement by John A. Widtsoe, who was later a member of the Quorum of the Twelve:

“Temple work brings power to us, because the unseen world about us has greater power than we possibly can possess” (*Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine*, July 1920, 103).

Elder Widtsoe, when he was a member of the Twelve, said: “The seen and the unseen worlds are closely connected. One assists the other. Those who fail to partake of the privileges and blessings of temple work deprive themselves of some of the choicest gifts . . . of the Church” (“The Urgency of Temple Service,” *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine*, Jan. 1937, 5).



Christening record from Spain

■ Invite different students to read the following stories to the class:

1. “The page was faded and yellowed, and jagged, uneven holes punctuated the spidery script. It was the record of a christening that had taken place in Spain on the nineteenth of February 511 years ago.

“The date had been fairly easy to decipher. A concerted effort, seasoned with years of experience and a fervent prayer, had eventually given the worker the name of the father, then the mother. But the child’s name simply was not there. Years, mildew, and hungry mice and insects had gnawed away at the page, leaving it illegible.

“The extractor had come across the entry on the microfilm the day before, and after a diligent effort had gone home, resolving to return to it after a day of prayer and fasting. But today the record was still impossible to read. The worker had gone on, but was compelled to return to it often throughout the afternoon. Finally, she determined to give it one last try before forcing the unsettling entry out of her mind.

“As she turned the microfilm knob, the name almost leapt off the page. She stared unbelieving at the clearly formed letters.

“‘Elena Gallegos, the name is Elena Gallegos,’ she excitedly called aloud. A handful of workers, aware of her struggle, quickly clustered around, marveling at the name plainly displayed on the terminal.

“As she hurriedly copied the name, a warm closeness encircled her. ‘I felt as though I was being hugged,’ she explained afterward. Later when she returned to the entry to double-check her work, the words were once again illegible” (Derin Head Rodriguez, “More than Names,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1987, 12).

2. Elder Melvin J. Ballard told of an incident from his boyhood in the late 1800s:

“I recall an incident in my own father’s experience. How we looked forward to the completion of the Logan Temple [in 1884]. It was about to be dedicated. My father had labored on that house from its very beginning and my earliest recollection was carrying his dinner each day as he brought the rock down from the quarry. How we looked forward to that great event! I remember how in the meantime father made every effort to obtain all the data and information he could concerning his relatives. It was the theme of his prayer night and morning that the Lord would open the way whereby he could get information concerning his dead.

“The day before the dedication while [he was] writing recommends to the members of his ward who were to be present at the first service, two elderly gentlemen walked down the streets of Logan, approached my two younger sisters, and, coming to the older one of the two placed in her hands a newspaper and said:

“‘Take this to your father. Give it to no one else. Go quickly with it. Don’t lose it.’

“The child responded and when she met her mother, her mother wanted the paper. The child said, ‘No, I must give it to father and no one else.’

“She was admitted into the room and told her story. We looked in vain for these travelers. They were not to be seen. No one else saw them. Then we turned to the paper. The newspaper, *The Newbury Weekly News*, was printed in my father’s old English home, Thursday, May 15th, 1884, and reached our hands May 18th, 1884, three days after its publication. We were astonished, for by no earthly means could it have reached us, so that our curiosity increased as we examined it. Then we discovered one page devoted to the writings of a reporter of the paper, who had gone on his vacation, and among other places had visited an old cemetery. The curious inscriptions led him to write what he found on the tombstones, including the verses. He also added the names, date of birth, death, etc., filling nearly an entire page.

“It was the old cemetery where the Ballard family had been buried for generations and very many of my father’s immediate relatives and other intimate friends were mentioned.



Logan Utah Temple

“When the matter was presented to President Merrill of the Logan Temple he said, ‘You are authorized to do the work for those because you received it through messengers of the Lord.’

“There is no doubt but that the dead who had received the Gospel in the spirit world had put it into the heart of that reporter to write these things, and thus the way was prepared for my father to obtain the information he sought” (*Three Degrees of Glory*, 30–32).

3. Sister Terry Lynn Fisher wrote: “When my husband and I had been married for less than a month, he had to go through basic training and other training for the military. I was not allowed to accompany him, so for the six months he was gone I stayed in Provo, Utah, and worked. This was not my idea of married life—my husband over a thousand miles away and unable to come home for even a visit. I was a very unhappy bride.

“One night during this time, I was awakened from a deep sleep by a voice which came into my mind. As I listened to what was being said, I realized that my great-great-grandfather [George Wilkie] was speaking to me. I lay there for a moment, listening and thinking. My great-great-grandfather was telling me to have his family sealed to him. He had lived in the United States in the mid-1800s. Due to the Civil War and the economic conditions prior to the war, my great-great-grandfather . . . had been away from his beloved wife and four sons a great deal. Eventually he died while serving his country in the Civil War.

“I had read copies of letters George Wilkie had written home to his family and letters his family had sent to him during his many absences. I had also read his journals. These letters and journals reflected the love family members had one for another, as well as their desires to be reunited.

“My ancestors were not LDS and did not have the blessings of the gospel. Now, in the middle of the night, here was my great-great-grandfather Wilkie saying to me, ‘Terry Lynn, please have my family sealed to me. I want to be with them through eternity. *Please* have our temple work done! You are now away from your husband—imagine that for eternity. It is awful! I want to be sealed to my wife.’ Then, as suddenly as it had come, the voice was gone.

“At first, I thought I must be imagining things, and I lay there and thought about my great-great-grandparents. I decided I should do their genealogy and would get to it when I had the time. Then I began to doze. I was startled when the voice returned and said much the same thing, only this time urging me to have the work done *soon*. I decided to do something about it the next day. Apparently, however, my grandfather knew I would probably be distracted the next day, because he spoke to me yet a third time, and told me to do something NOW!

“I could not quite believe what was happening, but in the middle of the night I got up and began working on genealogy. I sorted through miscellaneous papers and records and found the information I needed to begin. I then wrote letters requesting birth, marriage, and death certificates. When I had done all that I could do at that time, I finally went back to bed.

“I worked on genealogy a lot during the six months my husband was gone. Eventually, I was able to go to the temple with my cousin and have my great-great-grandparents sealed. I can testify that I felt their presence there in the temple and knew that, at last, they could be truly happy and together eternally” (“Please Do My Work,” *Ensign*, Aug. 1983, 54–55).

Many in the Spirit World Accept the Work We Do

- Remind students that many people in the spirit world have a great desire to have gospel ordinances performed for them. Share the following story about Elder Melvin J. Ballard:



A temple baptismal font

“Elder Ballard sat at our baptismal font [in the Logan Utah Temple] one Saturday while nearly a thousand baptisms were performed for the dead. As he sat there, he contemplated on how great the temple ceremonies were, and how we are bringing special blessings to the living and the dead. His thoughts turned to the spirit world, and he wondered if the people there would accept the work we were doing for them.

“Brother Ballard said: ‘All at once a vision opened to me, and I beheld a great congregation of people gathered in the east end of the font room. One by one, as each name was baptized for, one of these people climbed a stairway over the font to the west end of the room. Not one soul was missing, but there was a person for every one of the thousand names done that day.’

“Brother Ballard said that he had never seen such happy people in all his life, and the whole congregation rejoiced at what was [being] done for them.

“For the rest of his life, Apostle Ballard preached to the Church in all his travels, that the work we do in the temples is accepted, and that the people themselves are permitted to attend and receive the blessings personally” (Nolan Porter Olsen, *Logan Temple: The First 100 Years* [1978], 170).

■ Give each student a copy of the following statement by President David O. McKay:

“Spirituality is the consciousness of victory over self, and of communion with the Infinite. Spirituality impels one to conquer difficulties and acquire more and more strength. To feel one’s faculties unfolding and truth expanding the soul is one of life’s sublimest experiences” (*Gospel Ideals* [1953], 390).

ASSIGNMENTS

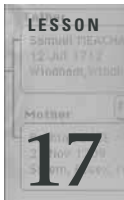
■ Invite students to take time during the next week to prepare for their personal prayers and to communicate meaningfully with their Heavenly Father. They may want to record their thoughts and feelings in a journal.

ADDITIONAL LESSON RESOURCES

■ Elder John A. Widtsoe taught: “These are trying days, in which Satan rages, at home and abroad, hard days, evil and ugly days. We stand helpless as it seems before them. We need help. We need strength. We need guidance. Perhaps if we would do our work in behalf of those of the unseen world who hunger and pray for the work we can do for them, the unseen world would in return give us help in this day of our urgent need. There are more in the other world than there are here. There is more power and strength there than we have here upon this earth. We have but a trifle, and that trifle is taken from the immeasurable power of God. We shall make no mistake in becoming collaborators in the Lord’s mighty work for human redemption” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1943, 39).

■ Elder Melvin J. Ballard explained: “Why is it that sometimes only one of a city or household receives the Gospel? It was made known to me that it is because of the righteous dead who had received the Gospel in the spirit world exercising themselves, and in answer to their prayers elders of the Church were sent to the homes of their posterity that the Gospel might be taught to them and through their righteousness they might be privileged to have a descendant in the flesh do the work for their dead kindred” (*Three Degrees of Glory*, 29–30).

■ Elder Melvin J. Ballard said: “The spirit and influence of your dead will guide those who are interested in finding those records. If there is *anywhere* on earth *anything* concerning them, you will find it” (in *Sermons and Missionary Services*, 230; italics added).



FAMILY RECORD EXTRACTION

LESSON PURPOSE

To teach students about the Church's family record extraction program.

LESSON THEMES

- ◆ Family record extraction is an efficient method for compiling family history information and preparing names for temple ordinances.
- ◆ Family record extraction helps build the Church's family history databases.
- ◆ Family record extraction offers a variety of opportunities for service.

LESSON IDEAS

An Efficient Method

■ Tell students: Imagine you had to find one of your ancestors in a book containing thousands of names in no particular order. After finding the name, you pass the book to the other members of the class, who each must use it to find one of their ancestors. Many other students in other classes will have to do the same later. Now imagine that before passing the book on, two or three of you decided to write all the names and page numbers in the book on index cards and place them in alphabetical order. Or, if you have a computer, you type the names and page numbers into a database that can easily be sorted and searched. Tell students that this is similar to the Church's family record extraction program.

■ Tell students that in the family record extraction program, members type information from censuses, immigration, church, civil registration, and other records into computer files. The Church publishes these as part of its family history databases, so that individuals doing family history can quickly find references to their ancestors in the extracted records. In some cases, names from these files are also sent to temples to supplement the names members provide for ordinance work.

Many More Names

■ Invite any students who have participated in family record extraction to tell the class about their experiences. (Or you could invite someone who works in the extraction program to tell the class about the record extraction process.) Relate the following account of a stake in Arizona that had been assigned to extract Church records from Spain.

"The first year *was* tough. Despite the efforts of dedicated people, the fledgling program seemed doomed to fail. Lauritz Petersen was depressed and ready to quit. Sincere prayer, fasting, and soul-searching for days that stretched into weeks, then months, had brought no clear answers.

Birth/Christening Records		<input type="checkbox"/> not extracted	<input type="checkbox"/> record extracted
Card number: <input type="text"/>	Reference ID: <input type="text"/>		
Principal information			
Principal's name: <input type="text"/>			
Sex or color: <input type="text"/>	Birth date: <input type="text"/>	Birthplace: <input type="text"/>	
Christening date: <input type="text"/>	Christening place: <input type="text"/>		
Christening age: <input type="text"/>	Death date: <input type="text"/>	Death age: <input type="text"/>	
Parents information			
Father's name: <input type="text"/>			
Birthplace: <input type="text"/>			
Principal's paternal grandfather: <input type="text"/>			
Principal's paternal grandmother: <input type="text"/>			
Mother's name: <input type="text"/>			
Birthplace: <input type="text"/>			
Principal's maternal grandfather: <input type="text"/>			
Principal's maternal grandmother: <input type="text"/>			
Other information			
Additional relatives: <input type="text"/>	Out of sequence: <input type="text"/>	Evaluation: <input type="text"/>	
*An asterisk indicates fields in which "F" entries can be written.			

“Finally one evening, after a particularly anguished prayer, Brother Petersen settled into bed, telling his wife, ‘That’s it, I’m quitting. This just can’t be worth what it is costing the members of this stake.’ He finally drifted into an uneasy sleep.

“‘Lauritz, Lauritz.’

“He was awakened hours later by a voice calling his name. He turned to check his still-sleeping wife.

“‘Lauritz, Lauritz Petersen.’

“Puzzled, he glanced toward the foot of the bed, but the bedroom wall had disappeared, and hundreds of people filled the room. A dark-complexioned man of medium height detached himself from the crowd and came toward him, repeating his name insistently.

“‘Lauritz, what do you see over here?’ the man asked, gesturing to where the dresser should have been.

“‘Many people, singing and dancing in a circle.’

“‘That’s right,’ the man affirmed. ‘They are those whose names your stake has extracted. Because of your work, they have been able to have their temple work done. What do you see on this side?’ he continued, gesturing to the left.

“‘People praying.’

“‘Can you hear what they are saying?’ he prompted.

“As he strained to hear the voices, suddenly the sounds became distinguishable. ‘Father, please bless Lauritz Petersen,’ they pleaded. ‘Bless him to carry on with this work and not quit.’

“‘These are the people whose names are on the records in your possession, but have not yet been extracted,’ the man explained.

“‘Who are all of these people?’ Brother Petersen questioned, pointing to the multitudes straight ahead, whose eyes stared into his own.

“‘Their names are on the records that will be sent to you if you carry on with the program,’ the spokesman continued. ‘Lauritz, this is an important work. Please don’t quit.’

“‘I won’t,’ Brother Petersen promised. Then the room was once more empty and he found himself gazing at the bedroom wall.

“‘I knew the Lord wanted the extraction program in this stake,’ he says. ‘It didn’t matter who ran it or what problems we had; it would be successful.’ Brother Petersen lay awake for the rest of the night, making plans to revamp the program” (“More than Names,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1987, 14–15).

Opportunities for Service

■ Tell students that thousands of people in hundreds of stakes throughout the Church serve in the extraction program. Some whose illnesses or disabilities prevent them from participating in other types of Church service are able to serve in this way. Members can work in their own homes, at their own pace, extracting names or entering data into computers. Although extraction is often a tedious process, the spirit of the work is unmistakable. Many volunteers ask to continue serving beyond the time of their original assignment.

Inmates at the Utah State Prison have participated in a successful extraction program. They have extracted many thousands of names, and the spirit of the work has affected their lives. Many have developed a greater desire to live righteously and serve the Lord.



Extraction work

Relate the following experience, as told by Brother Jonn D. Claybaugh:

“In 1993, when I was serving as bishop of a singles ward in California, I felt prompted to get our ward involved in family history record extraction. We received an assignment to prepare the names of two hundred children from a Swedish parish record from the 1700s, and to do their temple work. I asked my first counselor, Brother Robb Jones, to supervise the effort. He became busy with other things and delayed for a time, but he said he felt a strong influence from these deceased individuals, pleading to him for their temple work to be done. So he got to work and learned the process.

“Soon after, I described the project to ward members in a sacrament meeting. As the bishopric considered who should be project leader, we felt impressed to call a recently returned sister missionary, and the next week we issued the call. This sister told me that when I had described the project in sacrament meeting, she began to feel a desire to be involved, and that during the week the feeling had only grown stronger. As our ward prepared the names, she and other members testified that they felt the Spirit every step of the way, and that in the temple they felt strongly that their work was accepted with gratitude.”

■ Share the following testimonies about family record extraction.

1. Sister Monreve Hardy said: “Sometimes I have a real problem reading the names. I go home and fast and pray and when I come back, they are as clear as can be. . . . That happens often. There are a lot of people on the other side that I look forward to meeting, and I think they’re anxious to greet me, too” (in *Ensign*, Jan. 1987, 16).
2. Sister Dorcie Ball stated: “My patriarchal blessing tells me I will be a ‘Savior on Mount Zion.’ . . . I feel that refers to this work. Sometimes I feel as though this room is filled with the spirits whose names we’re working on. . . . We do more missionary work here in a single day than many others can do in a lifetime” (in *Ensign*, Jan. 1987, 16).

Student Exercise

- Give students a copy of the original record and copies of the name extraction card found at the end of this lesson. Have them “extract” the information from the record and write it on the cards. Make sure they include all the information requested. Tell them that the next step would be to type the information into the computer, after which it would be checked and added to the Church’s family history databases.
- Your class could assist with an extraction project. Contact the director of family record extraction in a local stake to see if there is extraction work to be done. You could divide the work among class members.

ASSIGNMENTS

- Tell students that in lesson 19 you will invite them to share stories about a parent, grandparent, or other ancestor. Assign them to find interesting or inspiring stories from their lives and bring them for that lesson. (Students should be certain that the stories are accurate and true.)

ADDITIONAL LESSON RESOURCES

- “Temple and Family History Work,” section 9 of the *Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 2: Priesthood and Auxiliary Leaders* [1998], 267–68.

No.	Surname, and Name (if given). Name, when given or altered in Registry, or otherwise, after Registration of Birth.	When and Where Born, with Hour of Birth.	Sex.	Name, Surname, and Rank or Profession of Father.	Name, and Maiden Surname of Mother.	Signature, Qualification, and Residence of Informant, if out of the House in which the Birth occurred.	When and Where Registered, and Signature of Registrar.
346	Tait Jane	1856 December Seventeenth 1A 30m. PM	M	John Tait Labourer at boatwork.	Jane Tait Maiden Name Wilson	Johanna Tait Mrs & Mark Tait present Duncan Campbell Registrar Kilmiff	1856 December 25 St. Abbeysgreen Lismahagow Duncan Campbell Registrar
	Barlan John	1856 December Thirteenth at 30m AM	M	Francis Barlan Ironstone Miner	Catherine Barlan Maiden Name Murray	Francis Barlan Mrs T. Father Mark present Duncan Campbell Registrar Kilmiff	1856 December 25 St. Abbeysgreen Lismahagow Duncan Campbell Registrar
	Mitchell Ellen Christina	1856 December Tenth 1st PM	F	William Mitchell Car-maker	Mary Mitchell Maiden Name Smith	William Mitchell Father not present	1856 December 25 St. Abbeysgreen Lismahagow Duncan Campbell Registrar

Birth/Christening Records

First extraction Second extraction

Entry number	Packet	Reference ID - book, page, certificate number, etc.		
Principal's Information				
*Principal's name - given name(s) / surname(s)				*Sex <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> U
Race or color - Oriental, White, etc.	*Birth date - day, month, year	*Birthplace - address, town, county, state or province, country		
*Christening date - day, month, year	*Christening place - town, county, state or province, country			
*Christening age - years, months, weeks, days	*Death date - day, month, year	*Death age - years, months, weeks, days		
Parent's Information				
*Father's name - given name(s) / surname(s)			Age - years, months, weeks, days	
Birthplace - town, county, state or province, country				
*Principal's paternal grandfather - given name(s) / surname(s)		*Principal's paternal grandmother - given name(s) / surname(s)		
*Mother's name - given name(s) / surname(s)			Age - years, months, weeks, days	
Birthplace - town, county, state or province, country				
*Principal's maternal grandfather - given name(s) / surname(s)		*Principal's maternal grandmother - given name(s) / surname(s)		
Other Information				
Additional relatives - X if yes		Out of sequence - X if yes		Evaluation - X if yes

*An asterisk indicates fields in which "F9 Notes" can be written.
 For example *Principal's name: William/Smith (F9) Sir

THE INSPIRATION OF A PERSONAL HISTORY

LESSON PURPOSE

To teach students the importance of personal histories and to encourage them to make a record of their lives.

LESSON THEMES

- ◆ We can be inspired by others' personal histories.
- ◆ We have been counseled to keep personal histories because they can be a blessing to us, our descendants, and others.
- ◆ There are many ways to make a record of our lives. Beginning a personal history does not need to be complicated or overwhelming.

LESSON IDEAS

Inspired by Those Who Have Gone Before

- Share the following story with students:

In 1871 Joseph Millett was living with his family in Spring Valley, Nevada. Many of the families in the area were suffering from hunger and typhoid, and the Milletts' oldest daughter had died from typhoid. One day Brother Millett wrote in his journal:

"One of my children came in, said that Brother Newton Hall's folks were out of bread. Had none that day. I put . . . our flour in sack to send up to Brother Hall's. Just then Brother Hall came in. Says I, 'Brother Hall, how are you out for flour.' 'Brother Millett, we have none.' 'Well, Brother Hall, there is some in that sack. I have divided and was going to send it to you. Your children told mine that you were out.' Brother Hall began to cry. Said he had tried others. Could not get any. Went to the cedars and prayed to the Lord and the Lord told him to go to Joseph Millett. 'Well, Brother Hall, you needn't bring this back if the Lord sent you for it. You don't owe me for it.' You can't tell how good it made me feel to know that the Lord knew that there was such a person as Joseph Millett" (in Eugene England, "Without Purse or Scrip: A 19-Year-Old Missionary in 1853," *New Era*, July 1975, 28).

Ask students what they think Joseph Millett's descendants or others might gain from this story.

Blessing Your Descendants

- Invite students to imagine that they are going to travel back in time to visit one of their ancestors. Make a list of questions that students would like to ask their ancestor. Suggest that our own descendants may have the same kinds of questions for us, and the way to preserve the answers is to record them now. Stress that those who have no children should understand the importance of their histories for the descendants of their brothers, sisters, cousins, and others.
- Read the following statement by Elder Dennis B. Neuenschwander of the Seventy: "A life that is not documented is a life that within a generation or two will largely

be lost to memory. What a tragedy this can be in the history of a family” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1999, 109; or *Ensign*, May 1999, 84).

Ask students to think about what their great-great-grandchildren (or others) may want to know about them. What records will they be able to see and read? Will these records answer their questions? What do you most want to leave behind for them? President Spencer W. Kimball said:



President Spencer W. Kimball

“Your journal is your autobiography, so it should be kept carefully. You are unique, and there may be incidents in your experience that are more noble and praiseworthy in their way than those recorded in any other life. There may be a flash of illumination here and a story of faithfulness there. . . .

“Your story should be written now while it is fresh and while the true details are available. . . .

“What could you do better for your children and your children’s children than to record the story of your life, your triumphs over adversity, your recovery after a fall, your progress when all seemed black, your rejoicing when you had finally achieved? . . .

“Get a notebook, . . . a journal that will last through all time, and maybe the angels may quote from it for eternity. Begin today and write in it your goings and comings, your deepest thoughts, your achievements and your failures, your associations and your triumphs, your impressions and your testimonies” (“The Angels May Quote from It,” *New Era*, Oct. 1975, 5).

President Kimball also taught:

“People often use the excuse that their lives are uneventful and nobody would be interested in what they have done. But I promise you that if you will keep your journals and records, they will indeed be a source of great inspiration to your families, to your children, your grandchildren, and others, on through the generations.

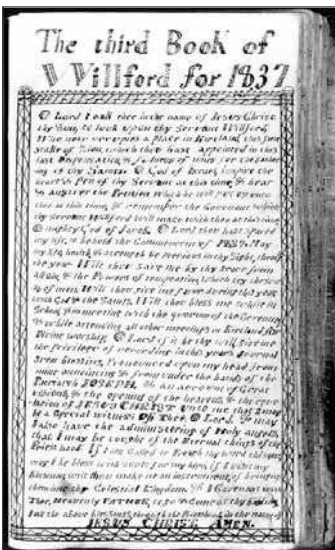
“Each of us is important to those who are near and dear to us—and as our posterity read of our life’s experiences, they, too, will come to know and love us. And in that glorious day when our families are together in the eternities, we will already be acquainted” (“President Kimball Speaks Out on Personal Journals,” *Ensign*, Dec. 1980, 60–61).

■ Have students take out their pedigree charts. To help them see how quickly family history can be lost, ask questions about the individuals on their charts, such as: Where did they live? Did they join the Church? Did they serve a mission? If so, where? What did they do for a living? If you had to sum up their life in a sentence, what would you say? Tell students that their personal histories will help their descendants know and love them. Tell them that through our personal histories, we can influence our descendants to live righteously long after we are gone.

Additional Counsel from Church Leaders

■ Using the above statements by President Kimball and the statements below, list the reasons for keeping a personal history and blessings promised. You may want to display copies of some of the statements in the classroom. Ask students which of the blessings are for us and which are for others.

Elder Wilford Woodruff, who was then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, taught: “There is one subject I wish to speak upon and that is the keeping of a journal with respect to the dealings of God with us. . . . When the Prophet Joseph organized the Quorum of the Twelve, he counseled them to keep a history of their lives, and gave his reasons why they should do so. I have had this spirit and calling upon me since I first entered this Church. I made a record from the first sermon I heard, and from that day until now I have kept a daily journal. Whenever I heard Joseph Smith preach, teach, or prophesy, I always felt it my duty to write it; I felt uneasy and could not eat, drink, or sleep until I did write” (in Matthias F. Cowley, *Wilford Woodruff: History of His Life and Labors* [1964], 476–77).



Wilford Woodruff Journal

John A. Widtsoe, who was later a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, stated: “As I view it, in every family a record should be kept. . . . That record should be the first stone, if you choose, in the family altar. It should be a book known and used in the

family circle; and when the child reaches maturity and goes out to make another household, one of the first things that the young couple should take along should be the records of their families, to be extended by them as life goes on. . . . *Each one of us carries, individually, the responsibility of record keeping, and we should assume it*" (*Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine*, July 1920, 100).

President Spencer W. Kimball said: "I urge all of the people of this church to give serious attention to their family histories, to encourage their parents and grandparents to write their journals, and let no family go into eternity without having left their memoirs for their children, their grandchildren, and their posterity. This is a duty and a responsibility" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1978, 4; or *Ensign*, May 1978, 4).

President Kimball also taught: "Those who keep a book of remembrance are more likely to keep the Lord in remembrance in their daily lives. Journals are a way of counting our blessings and of leaving an inventory of these blessings for our posterity" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1978, 117; or *Ensign*, May 1978, 77).

Make a Record of Your Life

■ Tell students that life stories can take many forms. If one kind strikes them as difficult or beyond their ability, they could consider keeping another kind. Personal histories include:

Collections: Photographs, scrapbooks, drawings, arts, crafts, evidences of hobbies and pastimes, documents, awards, and certificates.

Oral histories: Stories, interviews, or histories recorded on audio- or videotape or transcribed.

Brief records: Day planners, time lines, notes, outlines, letters, brief accounts of thoughts and activities, biographical sketches (1–5 pages).

Longer written records: Journals; diaries; travelogues; personal essays on thoughts, feelings, or events; brief personal histories (5–20 pages); complete personal histories (20–100 pages); book-length biographies and autobiographies.

■ Give students copies of the handout "Recording Your Personal History" from the end of this lesson. Give them a few minutes to write one or two paragraphs about one of the areas listed. They can then use the handout as they continue to work on personal histories. Students who have already written a personal history could use the list to begin a history of one of their parents or other ancestors.

■ Another way to begin a history is to keep a time line: a list of dates or time periods with one or two sentences describing what happened on each. Have students write the date of their birth and give a few details. Then have them list other dates to fill out later. Ask the class to suggest some of the events they want to include. Encourage them to keep their list with them and add to it during the next week. Have them type or write their time lines and place them in their notebooks. They could use the time lines as outlines for longer personal histories. Suggest that they write about one of the events on their time line each Sunday or another set time during the week. At the end of a year, they will have a written history of 52 important events of their lives.

ASSIGNMENTS

■ Remind students of the invitation to bring stories about a parent or other ancestor to the next lesson.

ADDITIONAL LESSON RESOURCES

■ Bishop Henry B. Eyring, then a counselor in the Presiding Bishopric, taught: "As you start to write, you could ask yourself, How did God bless me today? If you do that long enough and with faith, you will find yourself remembering blessings. And sometimes, you will have gifts brought to your mind which you failed to notice during the day, but which you will then know were a touch of God's hand in your life" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1989, 15; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1989, 13).

RECORDING YOUR PERSONAL HISTORY

(Adapt to your needs, circumstances, and desires)

Birth and Early Years

Parents, physical descriptions of them and of you, personalities, important dates and places, conditions surrounding your birth, interesting stories, brothers and sisters, friends, relatives

Childhood

Schools, the first day of school, special teachers, classes, activities, accomplishments, humorous events, pets, things you liked to do, games, places you liked to go, hobbies, recreation, toys, friends, talents, private lessons, sports, church, spiritual development, favorite songs, talks, personal prayers, scriptures, clothes, responsibilities at home, opportunities, likes and dislikes, family life, homes, travel, vacations, finances, neighborhoods, spiritual associations and experiences, projects, entertainment, difficulties, trials, accidents, visits to the doctor, operations, grandparents, cousins, other relatives, influential people, lessons you learned, birthdays, holidays, goals, dreams

Youth

Schools attended, school activities, classes, teachers, subjects, extracurricular activities, friends, honors, achievements, transportation to school, family or personal automobiles, dances, dates, talents, music, sports, movies, church, Young Men or Young Women, ordinations, advancements, activities, talks, youth groups and classes, seminary, goals, dreams, church callings, influential teachers, spiritual experiences, lessons learned, scripture reading, homes, hobbies, interests, what you liked to do after school or on weekends, jobs, work experiences, what you did with money earned, vacations and travel, characteristics of society, fashions, singing groups, movie stars, teachings of the General Authorities, events in local, national, and world news

Mission

Desire to serve, interviews, the call, description of mission, companions, leaders, areas of service, people taught, spiritual experiences, difficulties, successes, joys, transportation, living arrangements and conditions, food, coming home, testimony

Courtship and Marriage

How you first met, circumstances, first impressions, first date, growing in love, special dating experiences, how and when you knew this was the person you wanted to marry, proposal, meeting the parents, engagement period, plans, activities, goals and dreams, challenges,

spiritual experiences, wedding, wedding guests, special feelings, the reception, wedding colors, cake, bridesmaids, best man, music, gifts, flowers, honeymoon

Military

When entered, why, areas of training and service, church activity, events and attainments, lessons learned, influential people, attitude about the service, feelings about patriotism

College or Job Training

Further education, colleges or trade schools, special areas of study or training, degrees, first job, how obtained, where, starting salary and benefits, feelings, personal growth, responsibilities, promotions, other jobs, transfers, new fields, church during these years

Married Life and Children

Settling in, the first home, financial conditions, planning for children, special activities together, goals and dreams, births of children, challenges, successes, church callings and activities, spiritual experiences, anniversaries and other special days, trips together, relatives, work, raising children, family nights, vacations

Middle Age

The growing years, interesting events, places, achievements, trials, spiritual experiences, church service and experiences, civic service, family growth, development of skills, talents, hobbies, new interests, testimony and gospel knowledge, humorous incidents, special occasions, birthdays, vocational and professional growth, accomplishments, changes, adjustments, philosophy, special experiences with spouse and children, unexpected problems and how you overcame them, insights

Retirement

Completion of work life, description of retirement, summary of years and areas of work, how you use extra time, church service and experiences, goals and desires, grandchildren, vacations and travel, advice for others, observations on life and progress, continuing spiritual growth and insight, physical fitness

Your Sacred Record

Testimony, thoughts, feelings, experiences, life summary, philosophy, blessings of the Lord, desires, dreams, goals, hopes, heritage, faith, belief, knowledge, traditions

FINDING AND PRESERVING FAMILY HISTORIES

LESSON PURPOSE

To teach students about finding and keeping family histories.

LESSON THEMES

- ◆ The Family History Library catalog can help us locate and research our ancestors' records.
- ◆ Collecting family histories and other records is an important part of family history work.
- ◆ You can preserve your family history records and share them with others by submitting them to a Church family history database.

LESSON IDEAS

Records of Our Ancestors

- Hold up a journal or diary and tell students to imagine it was written by one of their ancestors. Ask them what such a diary would be worth to them. Share the following statement by Elder J. Richard Clarke, who was then a member of the Presidency of the Seventy: "Through family history we discover the most beautiful tree in the forest of creation—our family tree. Its numerous roots reach back through history, and its branches extend throughout eternity. Family history is the expansive expression of eternal love. It is born of selflessness. It provides opportunity to secure the family unit forever" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1989, 73; or *Ensign*, May 1989, 60).
- Ask if any students have found and read an ancestor's diary, journal, or other record. Ask them how they found it, and invite them to tell what they learned from the account.

The Family History Library Catalog

- Share the following statement by Elder Mark E. Petersen: "We have a great twofold activity in the earth as a result of Elijah's modern mission. One is the worldwide activity in the preparation of family histories and pedigrees, providing the necessary identification for those who have lived on the earth and are now dead. The other is the intense activity of members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in building temples and performing in them the sacred ordinances of the gospel that all who come unto Christ may be saved in his kingdom" (*Malachi and the Great and Dreadful Day* [1983], 62).

Explain that the Church's Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah, has collected large numbers of family histories, pedigrees, and other family records from around the world.



■ Invite a student to describe the process for finding something in a library. Tell students that, like most libraries, the Family History Library in Salt Lake City has a catalog of its holdings. The Family History Library catalog is available at family history centers and on the Church's family history Web site (www.familysearch.org). The catalog lists and describes the records, books, microfilms, and microfiche in the Family History Library. Once you have identified a microfilm or microfiche, you can order it for use in family history centers around the world.

If the catalog is available, demonstrate its use for your students.

■ Tell students that the Family History Library has three kinds of records. List the groups on the board, and ask students what they think each group includes.

1. Original records
2. Compiled records
3. Reference materials

Original records include wills, deeds, censuses, diaries, certificates of birth, marriage, and death, church records, and so on.

Compiled records include published family histories, community histories, collections of family group sheets, and other collections of information about a person, family, or place.

Reference materials include maps, directories, encyclopedias, dictionaries, indexes of histories, genealogies, microfilm collections, and so on. Reference materials often contain important information on how to use original and compiled records.

Family Records Help Us Remember

■ Ask students if they know what President Spencer W. Kimball said may be the most important word in the dictionary. Tell them that the word is *remember* (see "Circles of Exaltation" [address to religious educators, June 28, 1968], 8). Ask why *remember* is such an important word. How does this word apply to family history? Read and discuss 2 Nephi 25:21, 26 and Moses 6:4–8 and compare these verses to Omni 1:17.

■ Point out that the scriptures speak of different kinds of records, including records kept in heaven, records kept by the Church, and records kept by individuals and families.

What Should We Include in Family Records?

■ Ask students if they can think of writings in the scriptures that might have belonged to someone's family records (for example, the blessings in Genesis 49, the genealogy in Matthew 1, and Enos's experience in the book of Enos). What made each of these accounts worth remembering?

■ List with students what they think should be included in a family records collection today. In the past, some families and individuals kept a record called a "book of remembrance," which generally included family group sheets, pedigree charts, biographical sketches, and pictures in an 8½ by 14 inch binder. Students may want to include the same types of materials, though they may prefer a different format, such as a notebook, album, or computer. Stress the importance of recording sacred events and spiritual experiences that can increase the faith and testimonies of those who will read them.

Your Family Records Collection

■ Use the following information to discuss what to include in family history collections. You may want to make copies for students.

Your family records collection should include:

1. *Your genealogy.* Include pedigree charts and family group sheets for your direct lines and records of temple ordinances for each individual. By collecting and passing on this information, you help keep others from having to duplicate this work.
2. *Your personal history and the history of your immediate family.* You might write these histories, or you might compile histories written by others. Remember that you are writing to your children, grandchildren, and other descendants. Include what you think will be of most value to them. Likely the information you include will become harder to obtain as time passes, which increases the value of your record for your posterity.
3. *Biographies, autobiographies, and other records of your ancestors.* You might be able to find these in the Family History Library, published family and local histories, the archives of local historical societies, special collections in university libraries, the Church Historical Department library, or Church Archives in Salt Lake City.

Preserving Your Family History

Tell students that it is important for them to preserve and share their family history records with others. The Church collects and preserves printed histories and genealogies in its Family History Library. Additionally, the Church encourages electronic submissions to its family history databases. These are among the most efficient ways of permanently storing genealogical information and making it available to others around the world. If computers are available, review with students how to submit their family history information to the Church's databases (see www.familysearch.org).

ASSIGNMENTS

- Invite students to share stories about a parent, grandparent, or other ancestor (as assigned in lesson 17).
- If available, encourage students to browse the Family History Library catalog, using their own surname and other surnames they are researching. They might also try some of the other types of searches in the catalog.

ADDITIONAL LESSON RESOURCES

- 2 Nephi 25:23, 26–27; Doctrine and Covenants 128:24; Abraham 1:31.
- Elder Dennis B. Neuenschwander taught: “Family history builds bridges between the generations of our families. Bridges between generations are not built by accident. Each member of this Church has the personal responsibility to be an eternal architect of this bridge for his or her own family. At one of our family gatherings this past Christmas, I watched my father, who is 89 years old, and our oldest grandchild, Ashlin, who is four and a half. They enjoyed being together. This was a bittersweet moment of realization for me. Though Ashlin will retain pleasant but fleeting memories of my father, he will have no memory of my mother, who passed away before his birth. Not one of my children has any recollection of my grandparents. If I want my children and grandchildren to know those who still live in my memory, then I must build the bridge between them. I alone am the link to the generations that stand on either side of me. It is my responsibility to knit their hearts together through love and respect, even though they may never have known each other personally. My grandchildren will have no knowledge of their family's history if I do nothing to preserve it for them. That which I do not in some way record will be lost

at my death, and that which I do not pass on to my posterity, they will never have. The work of gathering and sharing eternal family keepsakes is a personal responsibility. It cannot be passed off or given to another” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1999, 109; or *Ensign*, May 1999, 83–84).

■ President Spencer W. Kimball said: “Any Latter-day Saint family that has searched genealogical and historical records has fervently wished their ancestors had kept better and more complete records. On the other hand, some families possess some spiritual treasures because ancestors have recorded the events surrounding their conversion to the gospel and other happenings of interest, including many miraculous blessings and spiritual experiences. . . . I promise you that if you will keep your journals and records they will indeed be a source of great inspiration to your families, to your children, your grandchildren, and others, on through the generations.

“Family home evenings are a most appropriate time and place to engage in such activities” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1978, 4–5; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1978, 4).

■ President Ezra Taft Benson said: “We call on you to pursue vigorously the gathering and writing of personal and family histories. In so many instances, you alone have within you the history, the memory of loved ones, the dates and events. In some situations you *are* the family history. In few ways will your heritage be better preserved than by your collecting and writing your histories” (in Conference Report, Sept.–Oct. 1989, 4; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1989, 4–5).

■ Elder J. Richard Clarke said: “Our family research and temple ordinances make it possible for us to be forever families. The process of compiling family history records need not be expensive or complicated. We may not be able to do everything; but we can do something” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1989, 75; or *Ensign*, May 1989, 61).

THE ROLES OF THE CHURCH AND THE INDIVIDUAL IN FAMILY HISTORY

LESSON PURPOSE

To review how and why the Church does temple and family history work and our role in this work.

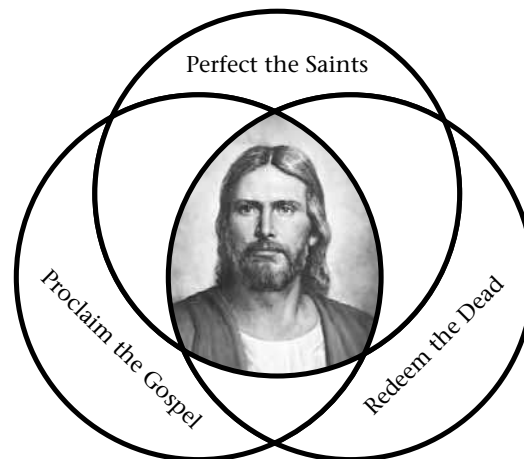
LESSON THEMES

- ◆ Members are invited to help in the Lord's work of perfecting the Saints, proclaiming the gospel, and redeeming the dead.
- ◆ The Church is building temples at a quickened pace, helping to provide gospel ordinances for the living and dead.
- ◆ Family history consultants help members do family history and temple work.
- ◆ Throughout our lives we should prayerfully choose ways to serve in family history and temple work.

LESSON IDEAS

The Lord's Work and Glory

■ Review the three parts of the Church's mission (to perfect the Saints, to proclaim the gospel, and to redeem the dead). Draw three overlapping circles on the board, as shown below, and ask students to explain how perfecting the Saints, missionary work, and temple and family history work overlap. Use questions such as, "How can missionary work help perfect the Saints?" "How can missionary work help redeem the dead?" "How does family history work help perfect the Saints?" "How does family history work help missionary work?"



"Come unto Christ, and be perfected in him" (Moroni 10:32).

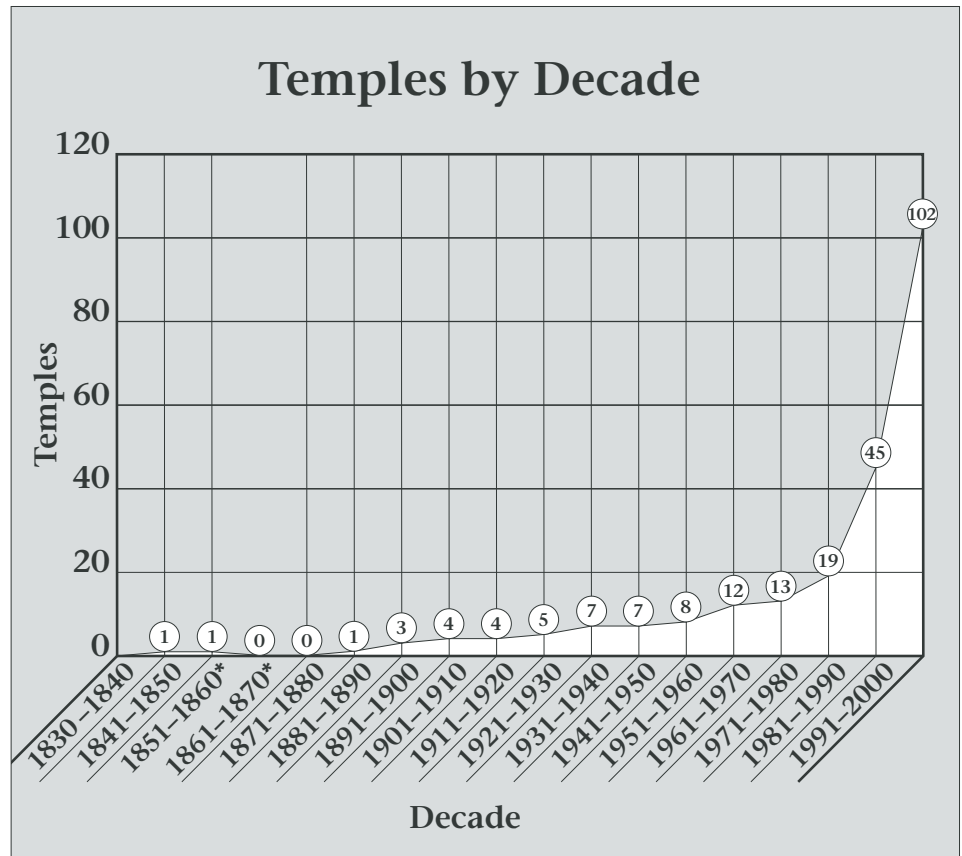
■ Share the following statements:

1. Elder Dallin H. Oaks wrote: “The three dimensions of the mission of the Church overlap and are inseparable. A person who invites another to come along to the temple helps perfect the Saints as well as redeem the dead” (“Family History: ‘In Wisdom and Order,’” *Ensign*, June 1989, 7).
2. Elder Boyd K. Packer said: “The ultimate purpose of every teaching, every activity in the Church is that parents and their children are happy at home, sealed in an eternal marriage, and linked to their generations” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1994, 24; or *Ensign*, May 1994, 19).

Temples to Hasten the Work

■ If any of your students have contributed to the building of a temple or attended a temple groundbreaking, open house, or dedication, invite them to tell about their experiences. Tell them that the Saints began building the Salt Lake Temple in 1853. In 1856 President Brigham Young prophesied: “To accomplish this work there will have to be not only one temple but thousands of them, and thousands and tens of thousands of men and women will go into those temples and officiate for people who have lived as far back as the Lord shall reveal” (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, 394).

■ Show students the following chart to help them appreciate the increasing rate of temple building in the Church today:



*Temple ordinances were performed in the Endowment House during these years.



President Howard W. Hunter

- Share the following statement by President Howard W. Hunter:

“I . . . invite the members of the Church to establish the temple of the Lord as the great symbol of their membership and the supernal setting for their most sacred covenants. It would be the deepest desire of my heart to have every member of the Church temple worthy. I would hope that every adult member would be worthy of—and carry—a current temple recommend, even if proximity to a temple does not allow immediate or frequent use of it.

“Let us be a temple-attending and a temple-loving people. Let us hasten to the temple as frequently as time and means and personal circumstances allow. Let us go not only for our kindred dead, but let us also go for the personal blessing of temple worship, for the sanctity and safety which is provided within those hallowed and consecrated walls. The temple is a place of beauty, it is a place of revelation, it is a place of peace. It is the house of the Lord. It is holy unto the Lord. It should be holy unto us” (“I Pledge My Life and . . . Full Measure of My Soul,” *Church News*, June 11, 1994, 14; see also Conference Report, Oct. 1994, 8; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 8).

Family History Consultants

- Invite a ward, branch, or stake family history consultant to tell about the responsibilities and opportunities that go with that position. (If any of your students have served as a family history consultant, ask them instead.) Help students understand that family history consultants help members identify ancestors for whom information is readily available and provide temple ordinances for them.

Teaching the doctrines of family history and temple work is the responsibility of parents and priesthood leaders. Family history consultants, working closely with the Melchizedek Priesthood leader who directs them, teach members the basic steps of family history and temple work.

- Tell students that their work in this class will help prepare them if they are called as a ward, branch, or stake family history consultant. They will be able to help others learn what they have learned. It may be appropriate for students to contact their bishops or branch presidents to inform them of their readiness to serve. (Wards and branches can have one or more family history consultants.)

In Wisdom and Order

- Review with students some of the ways to serve in family history and temple work (see “A Lifetime Commitment to Family History” in lesson 2, pp. 8–9). Discuss the importance of praying for guidance and following the promptings of the Spirit to know which family history activities are most appropriate at different times of our lives. You may want to give students copies of the following statement by Elder Dallin H. Oaks:

“Our current efforts to accomplish the mission of the Church have been organized to include three dimensions: proclaim the gospel, perfect the Saints, and redeem the dead. As we know, these three dimensions are interlocking and inseparable. . . .

“. . . In this Church we are not hobbyists in genealogy work. We do family history work in order to provide the ordinances of salvation for the living and the dead. . . .

“. . . Members of this church have many individual circumstances—age, health, education, place of residence, family responsibilities, financial circumstances, accessibility to sources for individual or library research, and many others. . . .

“. . . In the work of redeeming the dead there are many tasks to be performed, and . . . all members should participate by prayerfully selecting those ways that fit their personal circumstances at a particular time. This should be done under the influence of the Spirit of the Lord and with the guidance of priesthood leaders who issue calls and direct the Church-administered portions of this work. . . .

“There are many different things our members can do to help in the redeeming of the dead, in temple and family history work. Some involve callings. Others are personal. All are expressions of devotion and discipleship. All present opportunities for sacrifice and service. . . .

“In mapping out our personal efforts in temple and family history work, we need to take a view that is not only broad in scope but at least lifetime in duration” (*Ensign*, June 1989, 6–8; see also Mosiah 4:27).

■ Read together Doctrine and Covenants 128:17, 22–23. Bear testimony that family history work and temple work are two of the “most glorious of all subjects belonging to the everlasting gospel.” Family history and temple work help set the restored Church of Jesus Christ apart from all other organizations. Bear your testimony, or invite students to bear testimony, of family history and temple work in the true Church of Jesus Christ.

ASSIGNMENTS

■ Ask students to find out the name of any family history consultant in their ward or branch as well as the names of other people in their branch, ward, or stake who are serving in family history positions. Have them also find out the location of the nearest family history center, as well as the name of the director.

ADDITIONAL LESSON RESOURCES

■ “Temple and Family History Work,” section 9 of the *Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 2: Priesthood and Auxiliary Leaders* [1998], 265–66.

■ Elder David B. Haight said: “President [Gordon B.] Hinckley, in a comment a short time ago, talked about the links of his family, his family chain, and hoping that he would be a strong link in that chain and that *his* link would remain strong. He told the account of attempting to pull the stump of a tree out of the ground on their property and how the chain had broken. He went to the store to try to get another link to fix the chain so they could pull the tree stump out, which they were finally able to do. He said he thought of his own responsibility to his posterity, to remain a strong link in that chain (see “Keep the Chain Unbroken,” *Brigham Young Magazine*, spring 2000, 6).

“I would hope and pray that in our own families, all of us, that we would have a desire to be a strong link in our own family chain, in our posterity, so that the eternal blessings that are part of the gospel, the blessings of the temple and the eternities, will be taught to our families in such a way that they will go on and on forever to affect many, many people. Be sure that those links are strong in your chain and that you pass the testimony that you have, the devotion that you have, to future generations” (in Conference Report, Apr. 2000, 43–44; or *Ensign*, May 2000, 35).

■ Elder Dennis B. Neuenschwander taught: “Family history builds bridges to the temple. Family history work leads us to the temple. Family history and temple work are one work. The words *family history* should probably never be said without attaching the word *temple* to them. Family history research should be the primary source of names for temple ordinances, and temple ordinances are the primary reason for family history research. President Gordon B. Hinckley has said: ‘All of our vast family history endeavor is directed to temple work. There is no other purpose for it’ [in Conference Report, Apr. 1998, 115–16; or *Ensign*, May 1998, 88]” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1999, 111; or *Ensign*, May 1999, 84–85).