

And Jesus said unto them, *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.* (Mark 4:9)

Have you heard

- ... about The Plan?
- ... that Moroni came to Joseph Smith?
- ... the Prophet's comment about Moroni visiting Joseph Smith?
- ... about The Promise?
- ... about Elijah?
- ... other Prophet's teachings for members and priesthood leaders?
- ... that Priesthood Leaders are called to lead?

Have you heard ... about **The Plan**?

Titus 1:2. God promised Eternal Life before the world was.

1Cor. 15:22 (paraphrased). For as in Adam all men will sin and fall from God and will die physically and spiritually, but in Christ all will live again. The resurrection is a free gift to all mankind. Those who believe in His Atonement will be redeemed from the spiritual fall too.

Heavenly Father's plan was to provide a Savior for us to pay for our sins and to teach us how to return to Him. He knew that not all of His children would have the opportunity to avail themselves of the Savior's atonement through their life's journey on earth. There are uncounted ones who have walked the earth and who have never had the opportunity to hear and accept the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Heavenly Father formulated a plan - a plan for which all of the full benefits of the Atonement wrought by our beloved Savior might be available to all the sons and daughters of God of all generations of time.

Ensign, Nov. 2002, p. 18. The Prophet Joseph Smith declared that, "God, before the earth rolled into existence .. Contemplated the whole of the events connected with the earth. God knew the depth of iniquity that would be connected with the human family, their weakness and strength, the situation of all nations and their destiny and He has made ample provision for mankind's redemption."

Have you heard ... Moroni came to Joseph Smith?



Joseph Smith - History 1:36, 38-39.

36. After telling me these things, he commenced quoting the prophecies of the Old Testament. He first quoted part of the third chapter of Malachi ; and he quoted also the fourth or last chapter of the same prophecy, though with a little variation from the way it reads in our Bibles.

38. And again, he quoted the fifth verse thus: *Behold, I will reveal unto you the Priesthood, by the hand of Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.*

39. He also quoted the next verse **differently**: *And he shall plant in the hearts of the children the promises made to the fathers, and the hearts of the children shall turn to their fathers. If it were not so, the whole earth would be utterly wasted at his coming.*

Have you heard ... The Prophet's comment about Moroni visiting Joseph Smith?



Gordon B. Hinckley, *Let Your Hearts Rejoice* video, 1995 said, "*To me it is significant that in the opening of this dispensation, the foretelling of this remarkable family history work occurred on the initial visit of Moroni to the boy Joseph Smith on the evening of September 21, 1823... (Moroni) told of the Book of Mormon record, and after speaking in some detail concerning this, he quoted from the Book of Malachi...*

I repeat my brethren and sisters, it is tremendously significant to me that this declaration, this repetition of the wondrous words of Malachi concerning work for the dead, was given to the boy Joseph four years before he was allowed to take the plates from the hill. It was given before he received the priesthood, before he was baptized, and well before the church was organized. It says much concerning the priority of this work in the plan of the Lord.

Can anyone doubt the importance with which it is regarded by the Almighty? Who in his infinite wisdom had a plan under which the full benefits of the Atonement wrought by His beloved Son might be made available to all the sons and daughters of God of all generations of time? And without this work, the Lord indicated that the whole purpose of creating and peopling the earth would be frustrated - would be wasted... .

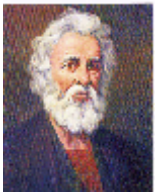
That which goes on in the House of the Lord - and which must be preceded by research - comes nearer to the spirit of the sacrifice of the Lord than any other activity of which I know... Great is our mission and tremendous our responsibility!"

Have you heard ... about The Promise?

Doctrine & Covenants 132:29-50, Abraham 2: 6-11. Abraham first received the gospel by baptism. Then he had conferred upon him the higher priesthood, and he entered into celestial marriage (the covenant of Exaltation), gaining assurance thereby that he would have eternal increase. Finally he received a promise that all of these blessings would be offered to all of his mortal posterity. This *Abrahamic covenant* was renewed with Isaac and Jacob.

Being an heir to the Abrahamic covenant does signify that such are chosen to responsibly carry the gospel to all the people of the earth. Our ancestors agreed to live in a time when there were not only hardships but when the important authority and sealing power of the priesthood was not to be found anywhere on the earth. We agreed and promised our ancestors and those who would come without opportunity to hear of the Gospel that we would provide the saving ordinances for them. We live in a time when the sealing power of the priesthood by which all things bound on earth are bound in heaven is available.

Have you heard ... about Elijah?



The story of Elijah is recorded in the Old Testament (1 Kings 17; 2 Kings 2; 2 Chronicles 21:12-15; Malachi 4:5-6). In the meridian of time, many mistook Jesus for Elijah returned. Today, the promise of Elijah is remembered by the Jewish people every year at Passover where a special place is still reserved for him at the dinner table.



Twenty-two centuries after the prophesy that Elijah would come at Passover, on Passover Sunday April 3, 1836 in the Kirtland Temple Elijah did come and restore the power to hold the key of the revelations, ordinances, oracles, powers and endowments of the fulness 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 children unto the fathers.

“Seek diligently to turn the hearts of the children to their fathers” (Doctrine & Covenants 98:16)

Have you heard ... other Prophet's teachings for members and priesthood leaders?



Boyd K. Packer, *The Holy Temple*, Bookcraft, 1980, pp. 223-30, 239-40 said, *“There somehow seems to be the feeling that genealogical work is an all-or-nothing responsibility. That is not so. Genealogical work is another responsibility for every Latter-day Saint. And we may do it successfully along with all the other responsibilities that rest upon us.*

The bishop can do it without neglecting his flock. A stake missionary can do it without abandoning his mission. A Sunday School teacher can accomplish it without forgetting his lesson. A ward Relief Society president can do it without forsaking the sisters in the ward.

You can fulfill your obligation to your kindred dead and to the Lord without forsaking your other responsibilities. You can do this work. You can do it without becoming a so-called ‘expert’ in it.

Once we started, we found the time. Somehow we were able to carry on all of the other responsibilities. There seemed to be an increased inspiration in our lives because of this work. But the decision, the action, must begin with the individual. The Lord will not tamper with our agency. If we want a testimony of genealogical and temple work, we must do something about that work.

Genealogical work in one sense would justify itself, even if one were not successful in clearing names for temple work. The process of searching, the means of going after those names, would be worth all the effort you could invest. The reason is you cannot find names without knowing that they represent people. You begin to find out things about people. When we research our own lines we become interested in more than just names or the number of names going through the temple. Our interest turns our hearts to our fathers - we seek to find and to know and to serve them. In doing so we store up treasures in heaven.”



The Worth of Souls, Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine, Oct. 1934.

Elder John A. Widtsoe wrote some 70 years ago concerning a partnership,

“in our preexistent state, in the day of the great council, we made an... agreement with the Almighty. The Lord proposed a plan ... We accepted it.

Since the plan is intended for all men, we become parties to the salvation of every person under that plan. We agreed, right then and there, to be not only Saviors for ourselves, but ...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 least of us, the humblest, is in partnership with the Almighty in achieving the purpose of the eternal plan of salvation. That places us in a very responsible attitude towards the human race. By that doctrine, with the Lord at the head, we become Saviors on Mount Zion, all committed to the great plan of offering salvation to the untold numbers of spirits.”

We agreed to take *our turn on earth* when the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the sealing power of the priesthood was restored to the earth. During this time God has provided new technology - a new easier, convenient way to identify our ancestors - and vast resources of worldwide information and tools are available to assist us. At this time it is much easier and convenient to fulfill our promises to our ancestors to take them to the temple and provide the saving ordinances for them.

We went into a partnership with the Lord in achieving the purpose of the Eternal Plan of Salvation. We agreed to not only be saviors for ourselves, but saviors for our ancestors. With the Lord at the head, we become saviors on Mount Zion, all committed to the great plan of offering salvation to untold numbers of spirits.



Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses* 18:213 said, *“We have a work to do just as important in its sphere as the Saviors work was in its sphere. Our fathers cannot be made perfect without us; we cannot be made perfect without them. They have done their work and now sleep. We are now called upon to do ours; which is to be the greatest work man ever performed on the earth. Millions of our fellow creatures who have lived upon the earth and died without a knowledge of the Gospel must be officiated for in order that they may inherit eternal life (that is, all that would have received the Gospel). And we are called upon to enter into this work.”*



In the First Presidency message in the December 2005 *Ensign*, President Hinckley says, *“Peter of old declared: “For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit” (1 Peter 4:6). In the case of the dead there must be vicarious work if they are to be judged according to men in the flesh, and in order to accomplish this, they must be identified; hence the great family history program of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It was established to satisfy the eternal purposes of God.”*

Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley, p. 640 says, *“We are responsible for the blessing, the eternal blessing, of all who have lived upon the earth, the uncounted, unnumbered generations of men and women who have lived upon the earth, and all who will yet live upon the earth. How great is our responsibility. We must stand a little taller and work a little harder to accomplish it.”*

Gordon B. Hinckley, *Ensign*, Nov. 1982, p. 77 says, *“We shall continue the great work that goes on in our temples, an unmatched work of love reaching out even to those who have gone beyond the veil of death. Can there be a greater labor of love than this? It comes more nearly of partaking of the spirit of the Lord himself, who gave his life as a vicarious sacrifice for all of us, than any other work of which I know.”*



Seeking after Our Dead, Genealogical Society of Utah, 1928, pp. 35-36 and *Doctrines of Salvation* Vol. II, pp. 148-149, President Joseph Fielding Smith said, “It matters not what else we have been called to do, or what position we may occupy, or how faithfully in other ways we have labored in the Church, none are exempt from this great obligation. It is required of the apostle as well as the humblest elder.

Place, or distinction, or long service in the Church, in the mission field, the stakes of Zion, or where or how else it may have been, will not entitle one to disregard the salvation of one’s dead.

Some may feel that if they pay their tithing, attend their regular meetings and other duties, give of their substance to the poor, perchance spend one, two, or more years preaching to the world, that they are absolved from further duty. But the greatest and grandest duty of all is to labor for the dead. We may and should do all these other things, for which reward will be given, but if we neglect the weightier privilege and commandment, notwithstanding all other good works, we shall find ourselves under severe condemnation. Why such condemnation? Because the greatest responsibility in this world God has laid upon us, is to seek after our dead.”

Doctrine & Covenants 128:24. “... Let us, therefore, as a church and a people, and as Latter-day Saints, offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness; and let us present in his holy temple, when it is finished, a book containing the records of our dead, which shall be worthy of all acceptance.”

2 Kings 6:16. “Fear not, for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.”



Elder John A. Widtsoe, *Utah Genealogical & Historical Magazine*, July 1931 said, “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.

We need help. We need strength... 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 the day of our urgent need.

There are more in that other world than there are here.

There is more power and strength there than we have here upon this earth...”

Have you heard ... that Priesthood Leaders are called to lead?

As members of the Church, we have challenging decisions about how to balance priorities with raising our families and serving faithfully in the Church. Yet, the Lord has had a hand in creating new family history tools to make it easy for us, and He expects us to use our time wisely so that we can succeed as we turn our hearts to our Fathers.

Set measurable goals in your Church unit that asks the members to sacrifice for eternal things.

The members should strive for the following:

- As a beginning, each family should identify five generations of their ancestors. These records need to be computerized, documented, as complete as possible and members should be prepared to share them with others.
- Each family will prayerfully identify a minimum of two family ancestor's names and provide all temple ordinances for them during the next year.
- Members will compile a personal Book of Remembrance.
“And Adam harkened unto the voice of God... And a book of remembrance was kept.” (Moses 6:1,5)
“And all they who are not found written in the book of remembrance shall find none inheritance in that day, but they shall be cut asunder...” (Doctrine & Covenants 85:9)