



Faith • Family • Relief

Our Responsibility to Participate in Temple and Family History Work

Study this material and, as appropriate, discuss it with the sisters you visit. Use the questions to help you strengthen your sisters and to make Relief Society an active part of your own life.

Over the centuries many people have died without knowledge of the gospel. Some of those people are your near and distant relatives. They are waiting for you to do the necessary research to link your families together and perform saving ordinances on their behalf.

Most of the temples of the world are not busy enough. The Lord has promised that your hearts would be turned to the fathers so that the earth would not be utterly wasted at His coming (see D&C 2:2–3).

There are personal blessings you receive as a result of participation in temple and family history work. One of these is the joy that you feel as you serve your ancestors. Another is that you are able to qualify for a temple recommend, which signifies your worthiness before the Lord. Those who are not worthy today of the privilege of having a recommend should be working with a bishop or branch president to qualify as soon as possible. Please don't be without this vital qualification. I testify that the Atonement is real and that sins can be forgiven upon proper repentance.

As we participate in temple and family history work, we are certain to have the Spirit to comfort us in our challenges and to guide us in important decisions. Temple and family history work is part of our work of providing relief, or service, to our own ancestors.

Julie B. Beck, Relief Society general president.

From the Scriptures

Malachi 4:5–6; 1 Corinthians 15:29;

1 Peter 3:18–19; D&C 110:13–16; 128:24

For more information, go to www.reliefsociety.lds.org.

What Can I Do?

1. How can I help my sisters search out their ancestors and perform temple ordinances for them? Consider the circumstances of each sister as you ponder how to meet her needs. You might consider that family history work can often strengthen new, returning, and less-active members.
2. When has temple and family history work comforted me in my challenges or guided me in important decisions?

From Our History

“The Prophet Joseph Smith said, ‘The greatest responsibility in this world that God has laid upon us is to seek after our dead’ (*History of the Church*, 6:313). From the beginning, Relief Society sisters have supported this great work. In Nauvoo in 1842, Sarah M. Kimball’s desire to help the temple construction workers prompted a group of sisters to organize themselves so that they could serve more effectively. As they began to meet, the Prophet . . . organized the first Relief Society after the pattern of the priesthood. From that time on, the Relief Society sisters helped further the work on the Nauvoo Temple. . . .

“In 1855, eight years after the Saints first arrived in Utah, the Endowment House was established. Eliza R. Snow, who had been one of the original members of the first Relief Society and had preserved the records of that organization, was called by President Brigham Young in 1866 to be the general Relief Society president. She and other sisters were faithful workers in the Endowment House. Then, as the St. George, Logan, and Manti Temples were completed, these sisters traveled to each temple so they could do work for the dead there.”¹

NOTE

1. Mary Ellen Smoot, “Family History: A Work of Love,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1999, 15.

