

FROM FAMILY HISTORY TO THE TEMPLE

By Kimberly Johnson

My dad didn't want to be baptized," says nine-year-old Hannah Hurtado, "but I begged him, and I prayed for him." Joe Hurtado, and his wife, Connie, had tried several different religions, but their children preferred the activities at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. "Getting Joe baptized was a long road," Connie says. "We attended for a long time, but he just wasn't ready." Hannah kept praying. As the missionaries taught Joe the gospel of Jesus Christ, his heart softened. "It was the hope I saw in the eyes of my children," he says. "A feeling came over me that said it was the right thing to do."

Now that all her family had been baptized, Hannah started praying for them to be sealed in the temple. Connie says, "Hannah's efforts blossomed, and her brothers started praying for the same thing."

The Hurtados began doing their family history after their stake president invited every family in the Rio Rancho New Mexico Stake to begin the "family history to temple experience" together. President Jared Rounsville says, "When people identify their ancestors and

understand that they need their temple ordinances, the natural feelings will be to go to the temple for them."

Family history consultants met with the Hurtados in their home, and while they easily gleaned information about Connie's family, Joe's Japanese and Mexican heritage proved more difficult. "But we persevered," Joe says.

"We like getting our children involved, and our family was strengthened."

Taking family names to the temple for the first time was unforgettable for Joe. "I did the baptism for my grandfather in the temple, and I felt a wave of emotion come over me. I could feel him there. As we have these spiritual experiences, I keep thinking that I have so much farther



ABUQUERQUE NEW MEXICO TEMPLE

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The Turning of Our Hearts: Rio Rancho, New Mexico, U.S.

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Members of the Rio Rancho New Mexico Stake are blessed in ways they never imagined when they accept an invitation to do family history and temple work.

(33:22)

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RESPONDING TO THE INVITATION

Watch a video recounting how the Hurtado family and other members of their stake responded to the invitation to do family history and temple work: lds.org/go/templeE215.

to go, that I'm just starting. The kids in Primary know more than I do because they've grown up with it. I have a long ways to go before I feel worthy enough to return to Heavenly Father. Doing this work and going to the temple has taught me that Heavenly Father really wants all His children back, not just the ones who have grown up in the Church. He

wants them all. He wants his whole family—including me.”

With tears in her eyes, Hannah says, “Prayer is powerful. If you pray with all your heart, and you pray lots of times, it'll come true.” And it did when Hannah and her family were sealed in the Albuquerque New Mexico Temple. ■

The author lives in Utah, USA.



A FAMILY ACTIVITY

“Temple and family history work is part of living the gospel at home. It should

be a family activity.”

Elder Allan F. Packer of the Seventy, “The Book,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2014, 100.