



CONTINUING TO ENJOY THE BLESSINGS OF TEMPLE ATTENDANCE

“For behold, I have accepted this house, and my name shall be here; and I will manifest myself to my people in mercy in this house” (D&C 110:7).

OBJECTIVE

To follow up on the class members’ first visits to the temple and help them prepare to enjoy the temple throughout their lives.

PREPARATION

1. Be prepared to make this lesson a time of sharing. Most class members will want to discuss their first visit to the temple.
2. Assign a class member to be prepared to read Doctrine and Covenants 110:1–10 and share his or her feelings about it.
3. Assign a class member to summarize the information about Elijah presented in *Preparing to Enter the Holy Temple*, pages 23–24.
4. Prepare to answer questions that may have arisen during the first visit to the temple, but do not discuss questions or information that should be reserved for discussion in the temple itself. Where such questions exist, encourage individuals to plan additional visits to the temple.

LESSON PRESENTATION

Invite someone to give an opening prayer.

Ask class members if they have any questions. Take the time required to answer questions to the best of your ability and as guided by the Lord’s Spirit. Remember that some aspects of temple work must not be discussed outside the temple.

MAINTAINING A LOVE FOR TEMPLE SERVICE

- How did you feel when you were in the temple?

Explain that temple service will bring continuing blessings into the lives of those who go often to the temple. Tell the class members that while their experience in the temple is still fresh in their minds, they may want to write their feelings about it in their journals. Remind them that although they may record their feelings, they should not write about some details of temple work, which are not to be discussed outside the temple.

- What can you do to maintain a love for temple service throughout your life?

Write the class members' ideas on the chalkboard. You may also want to present the following ideas:

1. Ponder the temple experience each day.

Explain that some people have more opportunities to visit the temple than others. But once we have been to the temple and felt the Spirit there, we should take the opportunity each day to ponder the temple ceremonies and reflect upon the covenants we have made. Doing this will encourage us each day to think and act in more righteous ways.

We will not be able to remember everything about the temple, but we should try to remember as much as possible after each visit. We should also study the scriptures and words of the prophets about the temple. Some of these have been presented in this course.

You may want to have a class member summarize the following statement, found on page 10 in *Preparing to Enter the Holy Temple*:

"The temple ceremony will not be fully understood at first experience. It will be only partly understood. Return again and again and again. Return to learn. Things that have troubled you or things that have been puzzling or things that have been mysterious will become known to you. . . .

"When you have the opportunity to attend an endowment session in the temple or to witness a sealing, ponder the deeper meaning of what you see demonstrated before you. And in the days following your visit keep these things on your mind; quietly and prayerfully review them and you will find that your knowledge will increase.

"One of the great values of the temple experience is that it presents the broad, sweeping panorama of God's purposes relating to this earth. Once we have been through the temple (and we can return and refresh our memories) the events of life fit into the scheme of things. We can see in perspective where we are, and we can quickly see when we are off course."

2. Remember that the center of all temple worship is the Savior, Jesus Christ.

The scriptures teach that an important reason for building temples is so "that the Son of Man might have a place to manifest himself to his people" (D&C 109:5). The symbols and rituals of the temple help to focus our attention on the Savior.

Explain that the Savior did manifest Himself in the Kirtland Temple. He appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery to accept the temple as His house. This visit is recorded in Doctrine and Covenants 110:1–10. Ask the assigned class member to read and comment on this passage.

- What blessings did the Savior promise to those who build and attend temples?

IN THE TEMPLE, FAMILIES ARE SEALED TOGETHER FOR ETERNITY

Ask the class members to read Malachi 4:5–6.

Ask the assigned class member to summarize the information about Elijah found in *Preparing to Enter the Holy Temple*, pages 23–24.

Explain that Elijah has returned and restored the priesthood keys that allow families to be sealed together in temples for eternity.

Have the class members review Doctrine and Covenants 110:13–16. Then ask a class member to read the following statement, found on page 28 in *Preparing to Enter the Holy Temple*:

“From that very day, April 3, 1836, the hearts of the children began to turn to their fathers. Thereafter ordinances were not tentative, but permanent. The sealing power was with us. No authorization transcends it in value. That power gives substance and eternal permanence to all ordinances performed with proper authority for both the living and the dead.”

The Savior described the sealing power when He spoke to His Apostle Peter, as recorded in Matthew 16:19. Have the class members read this verse.

Explain that these same keys are held today by the prophet and President of the Church. “That sacred sealing power is with the Church now. Nothing is regarded with more sacred contemplation by those who know the significance of this authority. Nothing is more closely held. There are relatively few men who hold this sealing power upon the earth at any given time—in each temple are brethren who have been given the sealing power. No one can get it except from the prophet, seer, and revelator and President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints or from those he has delegated to give it to others” (*Preparing to Enter the Holy Temple*, 24, 26).

Explain that the sealing ordinances include the sealing of a husband and wife to each other and the sealing of parents to children. When parents are sealed in the temple, the children born to them are born in the covenant of their parents’ sealing and do not need to be sealed to their parents.

- How do you think being sealed together in the temple might affect the daily thoughts and actions of a family?
- What blessings do you think would come to a family because of their temple sealing?

President Gordon B. Hinckley said: “Was there ever a man who truly loved a woman, or a woman who truly loved a man, who did not pray that their relationship might continue beyond the grave? Has a child ever been buried by parents who did not long for the assurance that their loved one would again be theirs in a world to come? Can anyone believing in eternal life doubt that the God of heaven would grant his sons and daughters that most precious attribute of life, the love that finds its most meaningful expression in family relationships? No, reason demands that the family relationship shall continue after death. The human heart longs for it, and the God of heaven has revealed a way whereby it may be secured. The sacred ordinances of the house of the Lord provide for it” (“Why These Temples?” *Temples of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* [1988], 4).

TEMPLES GIVE US OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE THOSE WHO HAVE DIED

Have the class members read Obadiah 1:21.

The Prophet Joseph Smith explained how members of the Church can become saviors on Mount Zion:

“But how are [the Saints] 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*, 6:184).

“This vicarious work performed in our temples must be carried forth in the same spirit of selfless devotion and sacrifice that characterized the life of the Master” (President Thomas S. Monson).

Explain that as part of His plan of salvation, our Heavenly Father has prepared a way for those who died without receiving the saving ordinances of the gospel to receive these ordinances. The people in the spirit world have the opportunity to hear the gospel. They can accept it there, but they cannot receive the ordinances of the gospel for themselves. The Lord has commanded us to perform these ordinances for them in holy temples. We should make special efforts to do family history work so we can receive ordinances in behalf of our own ancestors.

Ordinances for the dead performed in temples include baptisms, confirmations, ordinations to the priesthood, endowments, and sealings of husband to wife and parents to children.

We should return to the temple as often as our circumstances permit so that we can serve those who have died by performing ordinances for them. We will bless the lives of those we serve and bless our own

lives as well. Information about how to do family history work and perform ordinances for our ancestors is provided in *A Member's Guide to Temple and Family History Work* (34697).

President Thomas S. Monson said:

“An appreciation for the temple endowment and the sealing ordinances will bring the members of our families closer together and there will be quickened within each family member a desire to make available these same blessings to our loved ones who have gone beyond. . . .

“This vicarious work performed in our temples must be carried forth in the same spirit of selfless devotion and sacrifice that characterized the life of the Master. When we remember him, it becomes easier for us to do our individual parts in this vital work. Each time we gaze upon one of these holy houses, may we be reminded of the eternal opportunities which are found inside, not only for ourselves, but for our dead” (*Pathways to Perfection* [1973], 206–7).

CONCLUSION

Emphasize that temple attendance allows us to serve others and to continue to gain greater spiritual knowledge. Share the following statement:

“No work is more of a protection to this Church than temple work and the genealogical research which supports it. No work is more spiritually refining. No work we do gives us more power. No work requires a higher standard of righteousness. . . .

“If we will accept the revelation concerning temple ordinance work, if we will enter into our covenants without reservation or apology, the Lord will protect us. We will receive inspiration sufficient for the challenges of life. . . .

“So come to the temple—come and claim your blessings. It is a sacred work” (*Preparing to Enter the Holy Temple*, 37).

End the lesson by sharing testimonies. Encourage the class members to return often to the temple so that they can be taught by the Spirit of the Lord.

You may want to mention that the class members may be able to obtain from Church distribution centers and view at home the video presentation *Mountain of the Lord* (53300). This 73-minute presentation tells the story of the building of the Salt Lake Temple.

Invite someone to give the closing prayer.