

Joseph Smith—History 1:39

The angel Moroni told the Prophet Joseph Smith about the coming of Elijah, who would restore the sealing power and spark interest in family history.



HE ALSO QUOTED

“It is tremendously significant to me that this declaration, this repetition of the wondrous words

of Malachi concerning the 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 either the Aaronic or Melchizedek 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.”

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008), “A Century of Family History Service,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1995, 61.



HE SHALL PLANT

“With [Elijah’s return at the Kirtland Temple], natural affection between generations began to be enriched. This restoration was accompanied by what is sometimes called the Spirit of Elijah—a manifestation of the Holy Ghost bearing witness of the divine nature of the family. Hence, people throughout the world, regardless of religious affiliation, are gathering records of deceased relatives at an ever-increasing rate.”

Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “A New Harvest Time,” *Ensign*, May 1998, 34.



PROMISES MADE TO THE FATHERS

“What was the promise made to the fathers that was to be fulfilled

in the latter days by the turning of the hearts of the children to their fathers? It was the promise of the Lord made through Enoch, Isaiah, and the prophets, to the nations of the earth, that *the time should come when the dead should be redeemed.*”

President Joseph Fielding Smith (1876–1972), *Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:154.

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.*

DIFFERENTLY

Joseph Smith is referring to the version of this scripture found in Malachi 4:6. This prophecy about Elijah’s coming is so important that it appears in the Old Testament (see Malachi 4:5–6), the New Testament (see Luke 1:17), the Book of Mormon (see 3 Nephi 25:5–6), the Doctrine and Covenants (see D&C 2:1–3; 27:9; 110:15; 138:47), and the Pearl of Great Price (JS—H 1:39). Some of the versions differ slightly. What can you learn from these differences?



UTTERLY WASTED

Utterly wasted—entirely destroyed or of no use.

“The vicarious ordinances we perform in temples, beginning with baptism, make possible an eternal welding link between generations that fulfills the purpose of the earth’s creation. Without this, ‘the whole earth would be utterly wasted at [Christ’s] coming.’”

Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “The Redemption of the Dead and the Testimony of Jesus,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2000, 11.

HEARTS OF THE CHILDREN SHALL TURN

You are among the children spoken of in this scripture. How can you turn your heart to your fathers? Here are some ideas:

- Research and record information about your ancestors.
- Ask your parents and grandparents about their lives.
- Perform vicarious ordinances in the temple for ancestors.
- Participate in indexing.
- Help others with their family history.

Editor’s note: This page is not meant to be a comprehensive explanation of the selected seminary scripture mastery verse, only a starting point for your own study.