



# The Gospel Doctrine Class



Doctrine & Covenants - Lesson 39

Redemption for Our Ancestors

*“Therefore, the keys of this dispensation are committed into your hands; and by this ye may know that the great and dreadful day of the Lord is near, even at the doors.” (D&C 110:16)*

D&C 2; 110:13–16; 138;  
Joseph Smith—History 1:37–39

*A study of this lesson will help us understand the need to seek out our ancestors and receive priesthood ordinances in their behalf.*

Joseph Smith: "In the days of Noah, God destroyed the world by a flood, and he has promised to destroy it by fire in the last days: but before it should take place Elijah should come first and turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, etc.

"Now comes the point. What is this office and work of Elijah? It is one of the greatest and most important subjects that God has revealed. He should send Elijah to seal the children to the fathers, and the fathers to the children.

"Now was this merely confirmed to the living, to settle difficulties with families on earth? By no means. It was a far greater work. Elijah! what would you do if you were here? Would you confine your work to the living alone? No, I would refer you to the Scriptures, where the subject is manifest: that is; without us, they could not be made perfect, nor we without them; the fathers without the children, nor the children without the fathers. [Heb. 11:40; D&C 128:18.]

"I wish you to understand this subject, for it is important; and if you will receive it, this is the spirit of Elijah, that we redeem our dead, and connect ourselves with our fathers which are in heaven, and seal up our dead to come forth in the first resurrection; and here we want the power of Elijah to seal those who dwell on earth to those who dwell in heaven. This is the power of Elijah and the keys of the kingdom of Jehovah." (History of the Church, 6:251-252)

President Joseph Fielding Smith: "Now the duty of a man in his own family is to see that he and his wife are sealed at the altar. If married out in the world before they joined the Church, or if they have been in the Church and have been unable to go to the temple, it is that man's duty to go to the temple, have his wife sealed to him and have their children sealed, so that the family group, that unit to which he belongs, is made intact so that it will continue throughout all eternity. That is the first duty that a man owes to himself, to his wife, and to his children. He receives this blessing by virtue of the priesthood.

"Then it is his duty to seek his record as far back as he can go and do the same thing for each unit. He should begin with his father and mother and their children, and his grandfather and his children, great-grandfather and his children, and have the work done in like manner, linking each generation with the one that goes before. That is the responsibility resting upon every man who is at the head of a household in this Church." (Doctrines of Salvation, 2:206)

President Brigham Young: "We enjoy the privilege of entering into a

temple, built to the name of God, and receiving the ordinances of his house, with all the keys and blessings preparatory to entering into the 'lives'; we also enjoy the privilege of administering for our fathers and mothers, our grandfathers and grandmothers, for those who have slept without the Gospel.

"In the spirit world those who have got the victory go on to prepare the way for those who live in the flesh, fulfilling the work of saviors on Mount Zion.

"To accomplish this work there will have to be not only one temple but thousands of them, and thousands and tens of thousands of men and women will go into those temples and officiate for people who have lived as far back as the Lord shall reveal." (Discourses of Brigham Young, p394)

President Wilford Woodruff: "This is a preparation necessary for the second advent of the Savior; and when we shall have built the temples now contemplated, we will then begin to see the necessity of building others, for in proportion to the diligence of our labors in this direction, will we comprehend the extent of the work to be done, and the present is only a beginning. When the Savior comes, a thousand years will be devoted to this work of redemption; and temples will appear all over this land of Joseph-North and South America-and also in Europe and elsewhere; and all the descendants of Shem, Ham, and Japheth, who received not the gospel in the flesh, must be officiated for in the temples of God, before the Savior can present the kingdom to the Father, saying, 'It is finished'." (Journal of Discourses, 19:229-230)

President Heber J. Grant: "If we have a desire to do a thing, we can generally find the time to do it. I made up my mind several years ago that I would like to go to the temple once a week when I was in Salt Lake City, although I had so much work to do that quite frequently I got out of bed at 4:30 in the morning and talked to the dictaphone—I have dictated many times more letters before going to my office at 8:30 than any stenographer can write in one day. I had felt for years that I did not have the time to go to the temple, but finally I got the desire to go, and from that time on I had no difficulty in finding the time to go once a week. Occasionally I went twice a week, and it so happened that one week I went all four nights that the temple was open. . . .

"I believe that if I could find the time to go to the temple and do temple work once a week, there is hardly a man in the entire Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints but who can find the same time if he wishes to plan his work accordingly. The trouble with so many people is they do not have the desire. (I am speaking of people who live where there is a temple.) If you get it into your heart and soul that this is one of the most important things you as Latter-day Saints can do, you will find a way to do it." (Gospel Standards, pp256-257)

Next Week's Reading Assignment  
Review Class Member Study Guide

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