

Special Witnesses of Christ

Following is the text from a video presentation by the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

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President Gordon B. Hinckley

President Gordon B. Hinckley speaking in Jerusalem.

This great and ancient city of Jerusalem—it has always been an inspiration to me. It is so because this place bears the imprint of the Son of God. Two thousand years ago, the Savior of mankind was born in Bethlehem, a short distance to the south. He was brought here to the temple when He was an infant. Here Mary and Joseph heard the wonderful prophecies spoken by Simeon and Anna about this tiny babe who was destined to become the Savior of the world.

He spent His boyhood in Nazareth of Galilee to the north of us. When 12 years of age, He was brought back here to Jerusalem. Here He was found by His mother conversing with the doctors in the temple, “and they were hearing him, and asking him questions” (JST, Luke 2:46, footnote *c*).

It was near here that He gazed out over this city and said with sorrow, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, ... and ye would not!” ([Matt. 23:37](#)).

Jerusalem was the scene of the final days of the mortal life of the Son of God. Here He suffered the agony of Gethsemane, His arrest, His trials, His condemnation, the unspeakable pain of His death on the cross, His burial in Joseph⁷

None can fully comprehend the splendor of His life, the majesty of His death, the universality of His gift to mankind. We declare with the centurion, who said at His death, “Truly this man was the Son of God” ([Mark 15:39](#)).

Now, 2,000 years have come and gone since His birth in Bethlehem. Surely this is a time for remembrance and recommitment. In our day the Lord has called 15 special witnesses to testify of His divinity before all the world. Theirs is a unique calling; they are Apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ, chosen and commissioned by Him. They have been commanded to bear witness of His living reality by the power and authority of the holy apostleship in them vested.

I invite you to listen to the testimonies of these special witnesses. They will speak to us from various locations around the earth, testifying of His premortal, mortal, and postmortal ministry. God be thanked for the gift of His Son, the Redeemer of the world, the Savior of mankind, the Prince of Life and Peace, the Holy One.

Premortal Ministry

Elder Neal A. Maxwell speaking from the Lick Observatory on Mount Hamilton, located outside San Jose, California.

Elder Neal A. Maxwell

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

This magnificent, far-reaching telescope is deliberately situated above the smog, so this powerful instrument can better probe the galaxies. So it is with life, and seeing by the lens of faith. If we are to see things more clearly, we too must lift ourselves above the secular smog. Then, in the words of the hymn, we can “in awesome wonder consider all the worlds [God’s] hands have made . . . [and see God’s] pow’r thru-out the universe displayed” (“How Great Thou Art,” *Hymns*, no. 86). Otherwise, we will be kept from probing Jesus’ universal gospel and from seeing “things as they really are” ([Jacob 4:13](#)).

Nevertheless, by viewing the stretching cosmos, we can humbly contemplate the vastness of divine handiwork. Long before He was born at Bethlehem and became known as Jesus of Nazareth, our Savior was Jehovah. Way back then, under the direction of the Father, Christ was the Lord of the universe, who created worlds without number—of which ours is only one (see [Eph. 3:9](#); [Heb. 1:2](#)).

How many planets are there in the universe with people on them? We don’t know, but we are not alone in the universe! God is not the God of only one planet!

I testify that Jesus is truly the Lord of the universe, “that by [Christ], and through him, and of him, the worlds are and were created, and the inhabitants thereof are begotten sons and daughters unto God” ([D&C 76:24](#)).

Having purchased us (see [1 Cor. 7:23](#)) with His atoning blood (see [Acts 20:28](#)) in the great and marvelous Atonement, Jesus thereby became our Lawgiver (see [Isa. 33:22](#)). It is by obedience to His laws and His commandments that we may return one day to His presence and that of our Heavenly Father.

The foregoing cosmic facts should bring us to our knees even now—long before that later Judgment Day, when every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is the Christ. I testify that Jesus fulfilled these great roles

as Creator and Lawgiver out of His desire to immortalize all of Heavenly Father's children, with the most valiant to live in His Father's house, which has many mansions.

When Christ comes again, it will not be to the meekness of the manger; it will be as the recognized Redeemer and the Lord of the universe! Then, in a great solar display, stars will fall from their places in a witnessing way (see [D&C 133:49](#)), with much more drama than at His birth, when "the stars in the heavens looked down where he lay" ("Away in a Manger," *Hymns*, no. 206).

Yet in the vastness of His creations, the Lord of the universe, who notices the fall of every sparrow, is our personal Savior, of which I give apostolic testimony in the holy name of Jesus Christ, amen!

Elder Russell M. Nelson speaking from the grounds of Temple Square in Salt Lake City.

Elder Russell M. Nelson

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Whenever I look at stars in the sky, I am reminded that about 4,000 years ago Jesus the Christ (then speaking as Jehovah—God of the Old Testament) made a covenant with Father Abraham. Included was the promise that the Savior of the world would come through Abraham's lineage and that his seed would be multiplied "as the stars of the heaven." In addition, Abraham was told that through his seed, "all the nations of the earth [shall] be blessed" ([Gen. 22:17-18](#)). This covenant was to be everlasting—even through "a thousand generations" ([1 Chr. 16:15](#)). Abraham was promised "that this right shall continue in thee, and in thy seed after thee ... even with the blessings of the Gospel, which are the blessings of salvation, even of life eternal" ([Abr. 2:11](#)).

From scriptures we learn that this covenant "should be fulfilled in the latter days" ([1 Ne. 15:18](#)). Then the fulness of His gospel would be preached and

In 1836, keys of "the gospel of Abraham" were conferred ([D&C 110:12](#)). In 1843 the Lord declared to the Prophet Joseph Smith that "Abraham received —from whose loins ye are. ... This promise is yours also, because ye are of Abraham" ([D&C 132:30-31](#)).

Brothers and sisters, you may also claim the supernal blessings promised to the faithful lineage of Abraham. The Lord explained that blessings and responsibilities of His priesthood are yours because of your faith, works, and lineage—the lineage declared in your patriarchal blessings. You "are lawful heirs," He said. "remain through you and your lineage" ([D&C 86:9-10](#)).

The ultimate blessings of the Abrahamic covenant are conferred in holy

temples. These blessings allow us to come forth in the First Resurrection and inherit thrones, kingdoms, powers, principalities, and dominions, to our “exaltation and glory in all things” ([D&C 132:19](#)). The fulfillment of the ancient Abrahamic

It is He who has made it possible for us to dwell with God, with Him, and with our families eternally. This is His work and His glory. I love Him; I testify of Him and express my everlasting gratitude for Him now and forevermore, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Mortal Ministry

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin speaking from Salt Lake City.

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Two thousand years ago, two travelers—a man and a woman—looked upon a small city, Bethlehem. The woman, heavy with child, had been traveling from Nazareth. The long journey was most difficult and so uncomfortable for her.

Due to a sudden influx of visitors, every inn, every room in the city was occupied. The only place Joseph and Mary could find shelter was in a place where cattle were kept.

And so He was born: Jesus the Christ, the Messiah, the Beloved Son of God. The Creator of suns and moons and swirling seas lay wrapped in swaddling clothes, His surroundings among the most humble earth had to offer.

At a very early age and continuing throughout my life, I have marveled at the beautiful story of the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. The inspiring part of it all was the announcement through the prophets in the Old Testament and the Book of Mormon. They knew the plan of salvation and the major part He would play in saving all mankind. The singing of the angels as the shepherds in their field were informed of the greatest event of history, and the —these inspired events captured my love and understanding of our beloved Savior.

As His birth, so His life. “Despised and rejected, ... a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief” ([Isa. 53:3](#)), He had no place to lay His head. In our modern age, where glory and fame is wrapped around medals and worldly wealth, it seems almost inconceivable to us that a solitary man, without home, without political influence, could change the course of history and eternity.

But I testify to you that He did. Jesus the Christ taught the words of life. He showed the way to truth, the way to peace, the way to happiness. I testify that when He walked the earth, thousands looked into His eyes—yearning for answers, yearning for release from suffering and grief, yearning that the burdens they carried would be lightened. Everyone who looked into His eyes with faith found healing, peace, and happiness.

As an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, I testify to you this day that the time will come when every one of us will look into the Savior's loving eyes. And we will know then with a surety that a child was born to Mary who was indeed the Son of God, the Savior of the world. We will know that no grief is so great, no pain so profound, no burden so unbearable that it is beyond His healing touch.

He asks that we believe in Him, that we learn of Him, that we strive to follow His teachings. That each one of us may never forget the sacredness of this event and celebrate His birth by coming unto Him and keeping His

Elder Richard G. Scott speaking in front of the baptismal font in the Salt Lake Tabernacle.

Elder Richard G. Scott

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

We all have a vivid memory of our baptism and receipt of the Holy Ghost. As we grow in understanding of the full meaning of the life of Jesus Christ, of what He has done to bless every soul, that ordinance takes on increasing significance. We did live in the presence of our Eternal Father and of His Beloved Son, our Savior. Every mortal that has or ever will come to earth chose that privilege after fully understanding the plan of happiness that would guide our life here.

Only those who make and keep the covenant of baptism, diligently obey His commandments, and receive all of the other necessary ordinances will have a fulness of joy on earth and will live eternally in the celestial kingdom. For the truly repentant, baptism provides a remission of sins because of the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

The Savior said, “enter into the kingdom of God” ([John 3:5](#)). That is an absolute requirement for every soul that would receive a fulness of the blessings offered us. That is why we perform, in holy temples, the ordinance of baptism vicariously for our deceased ancestors. The Master Himself was baptized “to fulfil all righteousness” ([Matt. 3:15](#)). He is our perfect example in all things.

I testify that our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, is a resurrected being of perfect love and compassion. I witness that He gave His life that we might live eternally with Him and our Father in Heaven and our loved ones who qualify, through obedience to the commandments and receipt of all of the ordinances of salvation. I solemnly witness that I know that the Savior lives.

Elder L. Tom Perry speaking from Salt Lake City.

Elder L. Tom Perry

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

There was an experience in my life which has often reminded me of the joy resulting from asking the question “What would the Savior do in this situation?”

I was among the first wave of Marines to go ashore in Japan after the signing of the peace treaty following World War II. Entering the devastated city of Nagasaki was one of the saddest experiences of my life. A large part of the city had been totally destroyed. Some of the dead had not yet been buried. As

The situation was very bleak, and a few of us wanted to give more. We went to our division chaplain and requested permission to help rebuild the Christian churches. Because of government restrictions during the war, these churches had almost ceased to function. Their few buildings were badly damaged. A group of us volunteered to repair and replaster these chapels during our off-duty time so they would be available for the holding of Christian services again.

We had no command of the language. All we could accomplish was the physical labor of repairing the buildings. We found the ministers who had been unable to serve during the war years and encouraged them to return to their pulpits. We had a tremendous experience with these people as they again

An event occurred as we were leaving Nagasaki to return home that I will always remember. As we were boarding the train that would take us to our ships to return home, we were teased by a lot of the other Marines. They had their girlfriends with them saying good-bye to them. They laughed at us and indicated that we had missed the fun of being in Japan. We had just wasted our time laboring and plastering walls.

Just as they were at the height of their teasing, up over a little rise near the train station came about 200 of these great Japanese Christians from the churches we had repaired, singing “Onward, Christian Soldiers.” They came down and showered us with gifts. Then they all lined up along the railroad track, and as the train started down the tracks, we reached out and just touched their fingers as we left. We couldn't speak; our emotions were too strong. But we were grateful that we could help in some small way in reestablishing Christianity in a nation after the war.

I know that God lives. I know that we are all His children and that He loves us. I know that He sent His Son to the world to be an atoning sacrifice for all mankind, and those who embrace His gospel and follow Him will enjoy eternal life, the greatest of all gifts of God. I know that He directed the Restoration of the gospel again here upon the earth through the ministry of the Prophet Joseph Smith. I know that the only lasting joy and happiness we will ever find during our mortal experience will come by following the

Savior, obeying His law, and keeping His commandments. He lives.

This is my witness to you in His holy name, even Jesus Christ, amen.

Elder Henry B. Eyring speaking from the east steps of the Salt Lake Temple.

Elder Henry B. Eyring

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

This building on its east facade has the words “The House of the Lord.” The first time I walked just a few feet into the temple I had the feeling that I had been here before. In an instant, the thought came to me that what I recognized was a sense of peace beyond anything I had felt before in this life, but that I seemed to recognize, and almost remember.

We knew our Heavenly Father and His Beloved Son before we came into this life. We felt peace with Them then, and we long to be with Them again, with our families and those we love.

Dedicated temples are sacred places where the risen Savior may come. In them we can feel the peace of our associations with Him in the life before. In them we can make the covenants which help us to come unto Him in this life and which will permit Him, if we keep our promises to Him, to take us home to the Father, with our families, in the world to come.

Every part of these buildings and all that goes on inside them reflect the love of the Savior for us and our love for Him. I felt that one day, high in this temple. I was in one of the towers, in a place few people would have been since the building was dedicated. In a small room that has rarely if ever been used, I saw exquisite pioneer era woodwork.

I remember the sense of awe that came over me when I imagined the workmen who had so carefully carved and finished the detailed moldings. They toiled away without power tools in a place where, for the most part, only the Lord they loved and heavenly beings would look upon it. They did it not for man or for recognition but for Him, for His house. They knew, as I do, that He lives and that He asked His people to gather and to be worthy to build Him a house,

I know that He lives. I know that Joseph Smith was His prophet and saw in vision not only the shape of the windows for an early temple but the spread of temples across the earth. The Lord has in His loving-kindness entrusted the keys of the priesthood exercised in these temples to His servants, to bless us and our kindred dead and to finish the work for His glorious return. I know that is true, and it brings peace to my heart. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Elder Robert D. Hales speaking from the Bountiful Utah Temple grounds.

Elder Robert D. Hales

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

I have a great love for the scriptures. I love reading about the mortal life of Jesus Christ. There is so much in His life that can lift and inspire and strengthen us in our times of need. To me, one of the most sacred chapters in all the scriptures is John chapter 17. The entire chapter is an intercessory prayer offered by Jesus Christ to His Father. He says, in effect, “If only the world could know you as I know you.” He tells His Father that He has done everything He has been asked to do.

Sometimes we forget how remarkably obedient the Savior was. Everything that He did, everything that He said was out of obedience to His Father. His seeking out and caring for the poor, the calling of His disciples, His teachings both in the land of Palestine and in the Americas—all these things were done because His Father had commanded Him to do them. He had no personal agenda. He said, “I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me ” ([John 8:28](#)). What a perfect example of obedience!

In the choices we make in life, we need to know the Savior. His simple admonition “Come . . . follow me” ([Matt. 19:21](#)) could transform human existence if we would let it. He has the power to make our burdens light if we will turn to Him.

As an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, I have the opportunity to bear testimony as a sacred witness of the Savior. My greatest desire is that my testimony might penetrate the hearts of those who hear it.

I know that Jesus Christ lives. I know that He guides and directs His Church by revelation through His prophet in this very day and time. If we will have faith in our Savior, He will see us through our trials and tribulations, and we will be able to endure to the end and return to His presence after this mortal probation. He lives and knows and loves each one of us. He so much wants to bless us if we will come unto Him. Of this I bear humble testimony and witness in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Elder David B. Haight speaking from the Church Office Building.

Elder David B. Haight

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

I often think of the time President Spencer W. Kimball, a few years ago, called me to the temple. I was busy as an Assistant to the Twelve at that time, and he telephoned me to meet him at the fourth floor of the temple. He said, “David, can you come right now?” And I said, “Yes, President.” And he said, “Right now.” And as I walked to the temple, my heart was beating fast, not knowing, of course, what President Kimball was calling me there for.

But he took me into a room that I hadn't been in before, and there President Kimball interviewed me regarding my worthiness. And, of course, I was
't have any
idea why I was there.

And then he motioned for us to stand, and as I was standing with that wonderful man and he's holding my hands, he said to me, "With all the love that I possess, I'
Apostles." And when he said that, I thought I would collapse with the shock, the astonishment that came into my mind!

And so, as I had sleepless nights after that call, I mulled that in my mind and I have thought of it time and time again. He did not say, "As the President of the Church" or "As the prophet" or "By my authority." He said, in that humble, humble way of his, "With all the love that I possess." He was teaching me that love is essential—the love that the Savior hopes that we will acquire—that we must show, that we must demonstrate, we must feel in our hearts and souls in order to teach the gospel properly.

As we meet with people out in the world and bear testimony of a living God, I have that warm, comfortable feeling in my heart that He 's real, that God lives, that He is our Father in Heaven, and that Jesus is the Christ, the Only Begotten Son in the flesh. I know that that 's true. I so bear my witness and my testimony and my knowledge and the burning that is in my heart that this is true, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior, amen.

Elder Dallin H. Oaks speaking from a chapel located in the Joseph Smith Memorial Building in Salt Lake City.

Elder Dallin H. Oaks

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

At the conclusion of His ministry, Jesus introduced the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. He broke bread and blessed it and gave it to His disciples, saying, "Take, eat; this is my body" ([Matt. 26:26](#)). "This do in remembrance of me" ([Luke 22:19](#)) saying, "This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" ([Matt. 26:28](#)).

The sacrament of the Lord's Supper is a renewal of the covenants and blessings of baptism. We are commanded to repent of our sins and to come to the Lord with a broken heart and a contrite spirit and partake of the sacrament. In partaking of the bread, we witness that we are willing to take upon us the name of Jesus Christ and always remember Him and keep His commandments. When we comply with this covenant, the Lord renews the cleansing effect of our baptism. We are made clean and can always have His Spirit to be with us.

The administration of the sacrament and the renewal of covenants and cleansing that take place in the partaking of the sacrament are the most important acts in the Sabbath worship of Latter-day Saints. We do this in remembrance of the blood of the Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ. He is at the center of our faith. He is our Savior and our Redeemer.

In this year in which we celebrate the 2,000th anniversary of His birth, I add my testimony to that of His other Apostles. I testify that He lives and loves us. I testify that as the Light and Life of the World, He has provided the way for us to return to our heavenly home to enjoy the associations and highest blessings of God our Eternal Father, even eternal life, the greatest of all the gifts of God. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland speaking from the Garden of Gethsemane.

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Few places on earth are as sacred and important as this small grove of olive trees here on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. It was here in the Garden of Gethsemane, on that last night in mortality, that Jesus left His Apostles and descended alone into the depth of agony that would be His atoning sacrifice for the sins of all mankind.

Moving slowly, kneeling, falling forward on His face, He cried, “Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt ” ([Mark 14:36](#)).

To the thoughtful follower of Christ, it is a matter of surpassing wonder that the voluntary and merciful sacrifice of a single being could satisfy the infinite and eternal demands of justice; atone for every human misdeed; bear every mortal infirmity; feel every personal heartache, sorrow, and loss. But I testify that is exactly what Christ did for every one of us. I bear solemn witness that the Atonement of Jesus Christ is the compassionate foundation and central fact in God’s eternal plan for our salvation and our happiness.

Is it any wonder that we walk quietly and reverently here? Is it any wonder that we make sacred covenants because of the love that was demonstrated here? Is it any wonder that Christ, the greatest of all, partook of the bitter cup and did not shrink here, that we might not suffer if we would repent and come unto Him?

I declare my wonder and awe, my adoration and apostolic witness of Him in His redeeming name, the Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

President Gordon B. Hinckley

Just outside the walls of Jerusalem, in this place or somewhere nearby, was the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea where the body of the Lord was interred. On the third day following His burial “came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.

“And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. ...

“And the angel ...
Jesus, which was crucified.

“He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay” ([Matt. 28:1-2, 5-6](#)).

Death—universal and final—had now been conquered. “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” ([1 Cor. 15:55](#)).

To Mary the Risen Lord first appeared. He spoke to her, and she replied. He was real. He was alive, He whose body had been laid in death. Small wonder that when Thomas later saw Him with His wounded hands and side, he exclaimed in wonder, “My Lord and my God” ([John 20:28](#)).

Never had this occurred before. There had been only death without hope. Now there was life eternal. Only a God could have done this. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ was the great crowning event of His life and mission. It was the capstone of the Atonement. The sacrifice of His life for all mankind was not complete without His coming forth from the grave, with the certainty of the Resurrection for all who have walked the earth.

Of all the victories in the chronicles of humanity, none is so great, none so universal in its effects, none so everlasting in its consequences as the victory of the crucified Lord, who came forth from the tomb that first Easter morning.

Those who were witnesses of that event, all who saw and heard and spoke with the Risen Lord, testified of the reality of this greatest of all miracles. His followers through the centuries lived and died in proclamation of the truth of this supernal act.

To all of these we add our testimony that He who died on Calvary’s cross arose again in wondrous splendor as the Son of God, the Master of life and death.

Elder M. Russell Ballard in front of the painting “*Go Ye Therefore, and Teach All Nations.*”

Elder M. Russell Ballard

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

When the Savior originally charged His Apostles, “Go ye into all the world” ([Mark 16:15](#)) geographic region now known as the Middle East. His dynamic Apostles, like Peter, James, John, and Paul, traveling mostly by foot or by ship, did everything they could to keep the little flock together.

But the distance and the lack of communication made their work very “a falling away” from the teachings of the gospel ([2 Thes. 2:3](#)); they also knew that eventually there would come to the world a restoration of the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I testify that the Restoration of the gospel was accomplished, beginning with the appearance of Heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus Christ to the Prophet Joseph Smith in the spring of 1820.

Since that glorious day, more than 90 men have been called to serve as Apostles with the same commission as the Apostles of old, to teach all nations that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God our Eternal Father. Today, our labors are greatly enhanced by jet airplanes and remarkable technology that stretch the reach of our ministry to the furthest parts of the world. Since 1820, over 750,000 full-time missionaries have served in the world, teaching and testifying of Christ in over 100 languages and in 137 nations and territories.

I testify to you that it is the will of our Father in Heaven, through His Beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, that this mighty work moves forward. It is by Him and through Him that our missionaries bear humble and sincere testimony. I’m a witness of that. I came to know for myself the truth of this work and of the Savior’s divinity while serving as a full-time missionary in England 50 years ago. I know it more surely today, through experiences too numerous and too sacred to discuss.

This is His gospel. He stands at the head—holy, divine, supreme, full of power, majesty, grace, and truth. He lived for us, and He died for us, because He loves us. I love Him more deeply and powerfully than I can find words to express. He is my Lord, my Savior, my Redeemer, and my friend. I know that Jesus Christ is the Son of God our Eternal Father. He lives and directs His Church today through His prophet and His Apostles. His great work will continue to roll forth until it fills the whole earth. This is my testimony in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

Postmortal Ministry

President Boyd K. Packer

Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

In this room on April the 3rd, in 1836, there was fulfilled a prophecy which had been given more than 2,000 years before. The closing words of the Old Testament, given by the prophet Malachi, prophesied that, “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord:

“And He shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse ” ([Mal. 4:5-6](#)).

When the angel Moroni appeared to the Prophet Joseph Smith, he quoted many scriptures; among them, this one was separated out and appears as the second section of the Doctrine and Covenants. Then on that day in 1836, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in this room knelt in solemn and silent prayer, and after rising from prayer Joseph said: “The veil was taken from our minds, and the eyes of our understanding were opened.

“[And] we saw the Lord standing upon the breastwork of the pulpit ” ([D&C 110:1-2](#)).

The Lord spoke to them, and then Moses appeared and committed to them the keys of the gathering of Israel. Elias committed to them the keys of the gospel of Abraham. And then it happened: Elijah the prophet came, giving that same statement, the turning of the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to the fathers, and he said, “By this [you] may know that the great and dreadful day of the Lord is ... at the [gates]” ([D&C 110:16](#)).

Now, in our day, the marvelous work is moving forward—the family history work, the temple work in which families are being united for all eternity. And in a world that is degrading itself with the dissolution of families, this work goes forward across the world. It is a supernal work. It is a work designed by the Lord and introduced by Himself as He came to this spot and introduced the prophet Elijah, who gave the keys of this work.

I bear testimony that Jesus is the Christ. This is a supernal work; the mind of man could not have conceived it. It is true. Jesus is the Christ. He lives. He directs and leads this Church. Of this I bear solemn testimony, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President James E. Faust speaking from Nauvoo, Illinois —the City of Joseph.

President James E. Faust

Second Counselor in the First Presidency

I am humbled to stand on this sacred ground in historic Nauvoo. This city was also known as the City of Joseph, named after Joseph Smith, its founder. He it

was who saw in vision God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, in the Sacred Grove in Palmyra, New York. His life is a testament that he communed with the Christ to bring more spiritual truth, keys, and authority to the earth than any other prophet.

So much of the important history of the early days of our Church took place here. A magnificent temple was erected here. It was the second temple built in this dispensation. The Nauvoo Temple was built so that the members of the Church could receive the highest blessings which God has for His people.

As I walk over these hallowed foundation stones of the Nauvoo Temple, my soul is subdued. On the last day before the temple was closed and the Saints left, many virtually lived in the temple. My great-grandparents John and Jane Akerley were among the last to receive their temple blessings in this magnificent building, on February 3, 1846. This was providential, because John Akerley died at Winter Quarters. In time, this magnificent temple will be rebuilt to the glory of the Lord.

This is where the temple baptismal font was located. Said the Savior to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" ([John 3:5](#)). Salvation for both the living and the dead depends upon this and other ordinances, all of which is a powerful confirmation of my belief that Jesus is the Christ.

In the Gethsemanes

I have gone to my knees with a humble spirit to the only place I could for help. I often went in agony of spirit, earnestly pleading with God to sustain me in the work I have come to appreciate more than life itself. I have, on occasion, felt a terrible aloneness of the wounds of the heart, of the sweet agony, the buffetings of Satan, and the encircling warm comfort of the Spirit of the Master.

I have also felt the crushing burden, the self-doubts of inadequacy and unworthiness, the fleeting feeling of being forsaken, then of being reinforced an hundredfold. I have climbed a spiritual Mount Sinai dozens of times, seeking to communicate and to receive instructions. It has been as though I have struggled up an almost real Mount of Transfiguration and, upon occasion, felt great strength and power in the presence of the Divine. A special, sacred feeling has been a sustaining influence and often a close companion.

As I serve in the calling of the holy apostleship, I recognize that I am a very ordinary man. Yet I gratefully acknowledge one special gift. I have a certain knowledge that Jesus of Nazareth is our Divine Savior. I know that He lives. I know that through the unspeakable agony of the Atonement, men and women, if they repent, can be forgiven of their sins. Because of the miracle of the Resurrection, all will rise from the dead. I feel His love and marvel at the price He paid for each of us. I wonder how many drops of blood were spilled for me. This is the testimony I give of Him, even in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Thomas S. Monson speaking from the Grandin Building in Palmyra, New York.

President Thomas S. Monson

First Counselor in the First Presidency

We see today the beautifully and authentically restored Grandin Building situated in Palmyra, New York. The restoration of the Grandin Building had as its objective “ allowing the visitor to be enveloped in the history of the time. ”

This is where the first edition of the Book of Mormon was printed, with the number of copies in this first edition totaling 5,000, an unusually large order for the rural printing business. Mr. E. B. Grandin had acquired a Smith Patented Improved Press from New York. The press featured new technology over the common presses of the day and offered the Prophet Joseph Smith the

Let’s turn back the pages of history that we might more fully appreciate one of civilization ’

Gutenberg discovered the possibilities of movable type, everything was printed with a quill pen, letter by letter, line by line, page by page. It was movable type from which Mr. Grandin printed the Book of Mormon. It was tediously composed by the hands of a skilled compositor, who learned from memory and experience every typeface, font, and size available. After the page was formed, it was inked and printed and then was available for binding.

The Lord brought forth the Book of Mormon at a period of time when printing methods would enhance its distribution far and wide. Modern-day printing presses now enable the Church to print and distribute millions of copies of the Book of Mormon each year.

May I share with you an experience I had many years ago in the southern area of the United States when, after a stake conference, a woman came forward and asked, “Do you know Elder Delbert L. Stapley?” I replied that he and I were Apostles of the Lord, serving together in the Master ’s work. She then handed me a copy of the Book of Mormon which contained an inscription and the signature of Delbert L. Stapley. She indicated the volume had been given to her grandmother when Elder Stapley was a young missionary. She added, “Could you present this book to Elder Stapley and tell him hundreds of my grandmother’s descendants have been converted by this volume; and they, in ”

Stapley. He listened attentively when I explained where and how it had been given to me. Quietly he examined his signature and said, “This is one of the happiest days of my life.”

It is my personal testimony that the Book of Mormon changes human lives. It is indeed another testament of Jesus Christ.

President Monson speaking from the Hill Cumorah.

President Monson speaks at the Hill Cumorah

What a privilege to be here at the Hill Cumorah and to reflect on the momentous events that unfolded on September 22, 1827, when a plowboy prophet took a horse and wagon and, in the dark of night, rode to this hill, where he received an ancient record from the angel Moroni. In a remarkably short time, this untutored young man translated a record detailing 1,000 years of history and then prepared the Book of Mormon for public distribution.

The way of Joseph Smith was not without mean-spirited criticism or monumental effort. Joseph did not wilt, nor did he waver. He later declared: “By the wisdom of God, [the plates] remained safe in my hands, until I had accomplished by them what was required. . . . When, according to arrangements, the messenger called for them, I delivered them up to him ” ([JS—H 1:60](#)).

This beautiful area of God’ of whom come to see the Hill Cumorah Pageant. The visitor often comes with an attitude of curiosity. He or she departs with a soul touched by the Spirit of the Lord.

The Book of Mormon is a new witness of Jesus Christ. Its message spans the entire earth and brings its readers to a knowledge of truth. It answers that “If a man die, shall he live again?” ([Job 14:14](#)).

Many years ago I was called to the bedside of Robert Williams, a young man who lay dying. His wife and their two children stood nearby. We were all trying to be brave, but tears were in our eyes. Robert asked me, “Where does my spirit go when I die?” I offered a silent prayer. I noticed on his bedside table a copy of the triple combination. I reached for the book and fanned the pages.

Suddenly I discovered that I had, with no effort on my part, stopped at the 40th chapter of Alma in the Book of Mormon. I read these words to Robert: “Behold, it has been made known unto me by an angel, that the spirits of all men, as soon as they are departed from this mortal body, yea, the spirits of all men, whether they be good or evil, are taken home to that God who gave them life.

“And . . . the spirits of those who are righteous are received into a state of happiness, which is called paradise, a state of rest, a state of peace, where they shall rest from all their troubles and from all care, and sorrow ” ([Alma 40:11-12](#)).

As I continued to read about the Resurrection, a glow came to Robert ’s face, a smile graced his lips, and his tired and ill body slept. I said good-bye to his wife and children. I next saw them at Robert Williams ’s funeral. In those

precious corridors of memory, I think back to that night when a young man pleaded for truth and, from the Book of Mormon, heard the answer to his question.

I read the words, but God turned the pages. Yes, our Heavenly Father does answer prayers, in His own time and in His own way. I bear an apostolic witness that Jesus is the Savior of the world and that He and His Father appeared to the Prophet Joseph Smith to usher in this dispensation of the fulness of times, and so declare in His holy name, the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Hinckley speaking from the Sacred Grove.

President Gordon B. Hinckley

This is the Sacred Grove. This hallowed ground is revered by Latter-day Saints throughout the world. Here is where it all began, the miracle of this great work which has spread over the earth. This is the scene of the First Vision. It was here that God, the Eternal Father, appeared with His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ, the resurrected Lord. The Father, pointing to His Son, said, *“This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!”* ([JS—H 1:17](#)).

Do you realize the import of that declaration? Here was God, the Eternal Father, the Almighty, bearing testimony in words plainly spoken. No more important or compelling testimony has been given of the Risen Lord than this testimony of His own Father.

The curtains that had been closed for centuries were now parted. A new and glorious gospel dispensation was opened, introducing yet other marvelous revelations. Another testament of Jesus Christ was brought forth to speak as a voice from the dust. The holy priesthood, originally bestowed by the Master on His living Apostles, was restored upon living men by these same Apostles, now resurrected. There followed a veritable “cloud of witnesses” with keys and powers to complete the restoration of the Church established by Jesus when He walked the earth, now to be known as The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Here in this very place the long night of apostasy blossomed into the glorious dawn of a new age. God Himself was both seen and heard. Here, where we stand in the quiet of these trees, in this most sacred of places, the nature of Deity was again revealed.

The uncluttered and receptive mind of a boy became the instrument of the revelation here given and of many more yet to follow. Standing as the 15th in line from Joseph Smith and bearing the prophetic mantle which came upon _____’s account of these events is true, that the Father here bore witness of the divinity of His Son, that the Son instructed the boy prophet, and that there followed a train of events which led to the organization of “the only true and living church upon

the face of the whole earth, with which, ” He declared, “I, the Lord, am well pleased” ([D&C 1:30](#)).

Of the reality and personality of the living God and of His Son, our Redeemer, I stand as a solemn and reverent witness, speaking these words by the power

President Hinckley’s Concluding Statement

How I love my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ! His stirring commission and His divine love motivate all of us in this work. I love my brethren. To a man they are loyal. Without hesitation they respond to every call. They are true disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is He, Jesus Christ, who stands at the head of this Church which bears His sacred name. He is watching over it. He is guiding it. Standing at the right hand of His Father, He directs this work. Unitedly, as His Apostles, authorized and commissioned by Him to do so, we bear our witness that He lives and that He will come again to claim His kingdom and rule as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Of this we are certain and bear apostolic testimony in His holy name, even the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Find it on the web at:
www.lds.org/features/frames/0,5963,252-307-1,00.html

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