

ciple of eternal marriage. After studying and gaining a conviction, he was baptized. He loved and lived the principles taught by the gospel of Jesus Christ. In due time, he was found worthy to receive a temple recommend. They were sealed over the altar of God for time and for all eternity. Twelve children were born to this union. All of their children have been married in the temple of the Lord and are serving in some capacity in the Church at the present time, following the beautiful example taught by the parents.

They came through many hardships, financial depressions, etc., yet never lost sight of the fact that they were rich with spiritual blessings. Now the love, the harmony and unity taught in this one home extends to twelve other homes.

May I quote a statement from President McKay: "The secret of good membership in the Church or good citizenship in the nation lies in the home." (The Improvement Era 66: [April 1963] p. 252.)

With these truths in mind, let us stay close to our children: play, work, pray, and worship together. These values will truly bring living power into the place we live regardless of where it may be and will make it a worthy home for his spirit children. Then our house will be a home—our castle—a sacred place.

I pray that all of us here assembled and all within the sound of my voice, especially those having membership in the Church, will desire to take inven-

tory and make of our houses homes where the Spirit of the Lord may dwell and where all are unashamed to keep and live the commandments of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Then I pray for all who are listening in who may not have membership in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. May you come to a knowledge and acceptance of the truths of this glorious gospel which will bring peace and harmony in your home.

I bear you my witness that I know that God lives. I know that Jesus is his divine Son. I am grateful for this testimony. I bear witness of the divine mission of the Prophet Joseph Smith and those who have succeeded him down to President David O. McKay whom I uphold and sustain as the mouthpiece and prophet of the Lord, holding the keys of the kingdom and the mantle of authority. May we be consistent in living the gospel of Jesus Christ in our homes, remembering again that our latter-day prophet has said: "The secret of good membership in the Church or good citizenship in the nation lies in the home."

God bless us to this end, I pray humbly in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder John Longden, Assistant to the Twelve, has just concluded speaking. Elder Alma Sonne, Assistant to the Twelve, will now address us.

ELDER ALMA SONNE

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

My brethren and sisters, it is a great privilege to stand here. It is also a great responsibility. It occurred to me as I was listening to the speakers today that there is much encouragement and much inspiration in the history of this Church. I recall many years ago of hearing Elder James E. Talmage deliver a baccalaureate sermon. In his sermon he said:

"The Mormon pioneers were well nigh perfect in the work which they did." He also said that their program was con-

structive throughout, and that they laid a solid foundation for that part of the vineyard which has been planted in the heart of these Rocky Mountains.

During the month of July 1847, Brigham Young looked into the Salt Lake Valley and remarked: "This is the place." After the lapse of 115 years you and I know he was right. It is still the place. It is the best place on the earth for the Church to grow, develop, and expand, and to direct its activities in the

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process of building up God's kingdom.

I am sure Brigham Young had no doubts nor misgivings as he made that famous declaration, for the work of colonization had already commenced. Fields were being plowed and irrigated. Crops were planted, and homes provided. Scarcely a week had passed before he had designated the very spot where a temple was to be built and where it now stands. "Here we will build a temple to our God," he said. Do you catch the significance of that statement?

There was so much to do to provide the material comfort for his people and for all those who were to follow. Ordinarily his chief concern would be for the physical well-being of these people. They were in a desert land. The hard and stern reality was before them. They could not return, for they had nowhere to go. By every law of probability they should have perished in the desert country, and yet this prophet-leader thought first about the spiritual welfare of those who were to come. I can think of nothing on the pages of history to match it.

Brigham Young knew that no people can endure permanently without God. Nations crumble and fall when they ignore the standards and the concepts by which they arose to power and influence. President Young's ambition was to lay a solid foundation that would not corrode nor disintegrate; but what was the situation when he undertook to lay this foundation? Where were the Saints? Where was the body of the Church? They were scattered from the British Isles to the Great Basin in the Rocky Mountains.

As the year 1847 closed there were approximately 10,000 church members in England; 2,000 in Scotland; and 4,160 scattered on a world-wide basis. The church population in the Great Salt Lake Valley was about 2,000, and between 5,000 and 13,000 were at Winter Quarters in Nebraska, and between 2,000 and 4,000 in the various settlements in Iowa. Less than 200 remained in Nauvoo, and between 200 and 300 in the city of St. Louis, Missouri. There were between 7,000 and 13,000 scattered throughout the eastern

and the southern states, and 2,000 in the Society [Tahitian] Islands.

The Mormon Battalion numbering 200 were stationed in San Diego and Sutter's Mill. The church membership in 1847 was approximately 40,000 souls. Most of them were headed for the Rocky Mountains, the place of gathering in fulfilment of prophecy, for according to Micah: ". . . in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it." (Micah 4:1.)

The Latter-day Saints, no matter where they were, knew they were a chosen people. Their movement westward was not an accident. The Prophet Joseph Smith had referred to the West when he prophesied that the Saints would become a mighty people in the midst of the Rocky Mountains.

We need only review the history of the Church to feel the importance of what was done in those early days. These daring, venturesome men and women believed in God. They worshiped him in spirit and in truth. In the desert, coming and going, they had time to think and pray and to appraise their new faith and make comparisons with all they had left behind.

And so they laid a foundation that makes for permanency. Again I say the pioneer movement was not a venture. It was a directed movement, God-inspired and sustained by an over-ruling providence. It was a search for freedom, where sincere and honest men could worship God in their own way.

May that freedom be preserved in this land of America and wherever there is a liberty-loving people, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder Alma Sonne, Assistant to the Twelve, has just spoken to us.

The congregation and chorus will now join in singing "O Say, What Is Truth?" conducted by Elder James L. Bradley.

After the singing Bishop John H.