

lege of living with our Heavenly Father and his Beloved Son in the celestial kingdom.

Elder Marion G. Romney said, "When earth life is over and things appear in their true perspective, we shall more clearly see . . . that the fruits of the gospel are the only objectives worthy of life's full efforts" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1949, p. 39).

The Book of Mormon prophet Jacob declared: "O then, my beloved brethren, come unto the Lord, the Holy One. Remember that his paths are righteous. Behold, the way for man is narrow, but it lieth in a straight course before him, and the keeper of the gate is the Holy One of Israel; and he employeth no servant there" (2 Nephi 9:41).

I pray that we may all enjoy the fruits of the gospel. Let us be faithful and true to our covenants. Let us each be mindful of the straight and narrow way and do all we can to stay within the straight lines in the midst of the storms and temptations of life. Let us study the scriptures, hold to the rod of the word of God, be prayerful in all we do, and perform Christlike acts of service. May we be filled with charity, the pure love of Christ, and may that love be

reflected in our actions. We then will observe the "weightier matters" of God's law while not leaving the rest undone (Matthew 23:23).

I bear solemn testimony that Jesus is the Holy One of Israel, our Savior, and our Redeemer. This is his church. He is the Son of God, our Heavenly Father. Joseph Smith is the Prophet of the Restoration in these latter days, and President Ezra Taft Benson is a living prophet today. I bear this testimony in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

The choir sang "Sing Praise to Him" without announcement.

President Monson

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin, a member of the Twelve, has just addressed us, followed by the Tabernacle Choir singing "Sing Praise to Him."

Following my remarks, the Tabernacle Choir will conclude this session by singing "We Have Partaken of Thy Love." The benediction will then be offered by Elder L. Lionel Kendrick of the Seventy, and the conference will then be adjourned until two o'clock this afternoon.

President Thomas S. Monson

Historic changes in eastern Europe

As the year 1990 moves inexorably toward its close, all members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints can pause and reflect on the momentous happenings that have occurred in our time, in our day, and in our lives.

In the month of May, my wife and I were in the historic city of Berlin. We boarded a taxi and asked that the driver take us to the Berlin Wall. When the driver failed to respond to the direction provided, again the desired destination was given. Still no movement. Then he turned toward us and, in halting

English, explained, "I can't. The wall is *kaput*—gone!" We drove to the Brandenburg Gate. We viewed its restoration. We gazed from West Berlin to East Berlin, now one Berlin, and reflected on the events which followed the wall's demise: a new mission of the Church established in Poland, another in Hungary, yet another in Greece, and a mission reestablished in Czechoslovakia. And now, official recognition of our Leningrad Branch in the Soviet Union. Who, except the Lord Himself, could have foreseen these historic events? It was He who declared, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached

in all the world for a witness unto all nations" (Matthew 24:14). Surely the purposes of the Lord continue to unfold to our view if we but have eyes that truly see and hearts that know and feel.

The Toronto Ontario Temple

Another transcendent blessing came the last weekend of August when a magnificent temple of the Lord was dedicated in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. In its gleaming glory, the temple seems to beckon to each who views its splendor, "Come! Come to the house of the Lord. Here is found 'rest for the weary and peace for the soul.'"

And how the people did come! First they thronged to the public open house, where reverently and quietly they viewed the interior of the temple and learned the purpose for its erection and of the blessings which the temple can provide. One visitor described the temple's beauty with the words, "This is a center of serenity."

As she was about to leave the temple, a young Asian girl said, "Mommy, this is beautiful here. I don't want to go."

One woman surprised an usher with her request: "I have been so impressed with what I have seen. How do I join your church?"

Then came the faithful membership of the Church to the dedicatory sessions. From Ontario and Quebec they came. Others traveled from those cities in the United States which are a part of the temple district. Some journeyed to Toronto from the distant Maritime Provinces of Canada. None who came returned home disappointed.

A boy of tender years viewing the cornerstone-laying ceremony was, by the spirit of inspiration, called to take trowel in hand and assist in the sealing of the cornerstone.

Dora Valencia, who had lain four years in the Ajax Ontario Hospital, mustered her courage and fulfilled the desire to attend. From her hospital bed,

which was wheeled into the celestial room, she not only basked in the spirit found there, but she also helped to provide that spirit. As I walked past her, upon leaving the room, and gazed at her expression of profound gratitude to the Lord, I bent low and took her hand in mine. Heaven was very near.

Angelic choirs lifted spirits heavenward as they sang the beautiful "Hosanna Anthem." When the congregation joined with the choir to sing "The Spirit of God like a fire is burning," no eye remained dry and no heart untouched.

Speakers recounted the history of the Church in the Toronto area, and the beautiful dedicatory prayer given at each session whispered peace. The words of Oliver Cowdery, spoken of another time, seemed to capture the spirit of the dedication: "These were days never to be forgotten" (Joseph Smith—History 1:71, note).

The Church in eastern Canada

As we recount the history of the Church in eastern Canada, we come to appreciate the tender feelings of the members of the Church on having a temple in their midst.

As early as April 1830, Phineas Young received a copy of the Book of Mormon from Samuel Smith, brother of the Prophet, and a few months later traveled to upper Canada. At Kingston, he gave the first known testimony of the restored Church beyond the borders of the United States.

The Prophet Joseph Smith, with Sidney Rigdon and Freeman Nickerson, was in Brantford and Mt. Pleasant, Ontario, in 1833. Joseph and Sidney had long been absent from their families and felt great concern about them. In the revelation we now know as the 100th section of the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord counseled:

"Verily, thus saith the Lord unto you, my friends Sidney and Joseph, your families are well; they are in mine hands. . . .

"Therefore, follow me, and listen to the counsel which I shall give unto you.

"Behold, . . . I have much people in this place, in the regions round about; and an effectual door shall be opened . . . in this eastern land" (D&C 100:1-3).

Toward the people, the Prophet evidenced the same kind feelings that the Lord had shown to him and Sidney Rigdon. Of them he makes entries in his journal, such as, "The people were very tender and inquiring," and again, "O God, seal our testimony to their hearts" (*History of the Church*, 1:422-23).

In 1836 Parley P. Pratt went to Canada following a great prophecy uttered by Heber C. Kimball in which Brother Pratt was instructed to go to Toronto. He was told that he would there find people waiting for him who would receive the gospel, and that from there the gospel would spread into England, where a great work would be done. In Toronto he found President John Taylor, the Fieldings, and many others.

In August of the next year, 1837, the Prophet Joseph Smith, with Sidney Rigdon and Thomas B. Marsh, then President of the Twelve Apostles, visited Toronto. Riding in a carriage and holding evening meetings by candlelight, they visited the churches. Elder Taylor accompanied them. He said: "This was as great a treat to me as I ever enjoyed. I had daily opportunities of conversing with them, of listening to their instructions, and in participating in the rich stores of intelligence that flowed continually from the Prophet Joseph."

Recounting this history brings to my mind the experience of John E. Page as the Prophet Joseph Smith called him to serve a mission in Canada. "But I can't go on a mission to Canada, Brother Joseph," protested John E. Page. "I don't even have a coat to wear."

"Here," said Joseph Smith, removing his own coat, "take this, and the Lord will bless you."

John E. Page left Kirtland, Ohio, May 31, 1836, on his first mission as an

elder of the Church. He labored in Canada for two years. During that time, he traveled over five thousand miles, mostly on foot, and baptized some six hundred people.

The Archibald Gardner family

One of the great families to join the Church in Canada was that of Archibald Gardner. From his journal, we learn of the family's experience in Canada during the year 1843.

Robert Gardner describes the day of their baptism: "We went about a mile and a half into the woods to find a suitable stream. We cut a hole through ice eighteen inches thick. My brother William baptized me. . . . I was confirmed while sitting on a log beside the stream. . . ."

"I cannot describe my feelings at the time and for a long time afterwards. I felt like a little child and was very careful of what I thought or said or did lest I might offend my Father in Heaven. Reading the Scriptures and secret prayer occupied my leisure time. I kept a pocket Testament constantly with me. When something on a page impressed me supporting Mormonism, I turned down a corner. Soon I could hardly find a desired passage. I had nearly all the pages turned down. I had no trouble believing the Book of Mormon. Everytime I took the book to read I had a burning testimony in my bosom of its truthfulness."

Archibald Gardner added: "[My] mother . . . [accepted] the Gospel at once and whole heartedly, after hearing it. . . . Not long after contacting the new faith she became desperately ill, so ill that her life was despaired of. She insisted on being baptized. The neighbors said that if we put her in the water they would have us tried for murder as she would surely die. Nevertheless, we bundled up, and tucked into a sleigh, we drove her two miles to the place appointed. Here a hole was cut in the ice and she was baptized in the presence of a crowd of doubters who had come to witness her demise. She was taken

home. Her bed was prepared but she said, 'No, I do not need to go to bed. I am quite well.' And she was" (in Delilah G. Hughes, *The Life of Archibald Gardner: Utah Pioneer of 1847* [Draper, Utah: Review and Preview Publishers, 1970], pp. 25-27).

Down through the years, this same spirit of faith and confidence in the Lord has continued. During the period 1959 to 1962, my family and I lived in Toronto, where I served as the mission president. We are witnesses to the love God has for the Saints in that area. May I describe some of these "never to be forgotten" events?

Donald Mabey

One situation featured the Donald Mabey family. Brother Mabey had moved his family from Salt Lake City to North Bay, Ontario, because of a business transfer by his company. Don was an elder in the Church but had been less than fully active in priesthood callings. He was about thirty-five years of age at the time and had a lovely family. The North Bay Branch was a struggling unit desperately in need of priesthood leadership. When I attended that branch and recognized this fact, I held an interview with Brother Mabey and said to him, "I am calling you to serve in the presidency of the North Bay Branch."

He replied, "I can't do it."

I asked, "Why?"

He answered, "I have never done it before."

"That's no hindrance," I responded. I took fresh hope from Don's name, *Mabey*, and the words of a once-popular ballad, "Please don't say no—say maybe."

Brother Mabey said yes. Today he is a high priest living here in the West. All of his family members have entered temple doors and have received temple blessings.

A chapel for the St. Thomas branch

Another evidence of faith took place when I first visited the St. Thomas

Branch of the mission, situated about 120 miles from Toronto. My wife and I had been invited to attend the branch sacrament meeting and to speak to the members there. As we drove along a fashionable street, we saw many church buildings and wondered which one was ours. None was. We located the address which had been provided and discovered it to be a decrepit lodge hall. Our branch met in the basement of the lodge hall and was composed of perhaps twenty-five members, twelve of whom were in attendance. The same individuals conducted the meeting, blessed and passed the sacrament, offered the prayers, and sang the songs.

At the conclusion of the services, the branch president, Irving Wilson, asked if he could meet with me. At this meeting, he handed to me a copy of the *Improvement Era*, forerunner of today's *Ensign*. Pointing to a picture of one of our new chapels in Australia, President Wilson declared, "This is the building we need here in St. Thomas."

I smiled and responded, "When we have enough members here to justify and to pay for such a building, I am sure we will have one." At that time, the local members were required to raise 30 percent of the cost of the site and the building, in addition to the payment of tithing and other offerings.

He countered, "Our children are growing to maturity. We need that building, and we need it now!"

I provided encouragement for them to grow in numbers by their personal efforts to fellowship and teach. The outcome is a classic example of faith, coupled with effort and crowned with testimony.

President Wilson requested six additional missionaries to be assigned to St. Thomas. When this was accomplished, he called the missionaries to a meeting in the back room of his small jewelry store, where they knelt in prayer. He then asked one elder to hand to him the yellow-page telephone directory, which was on a nearby table. President Wilson took the book in hand and

observed, "If we are ever to have our dream building in St. Thomas, we will need a Latter-day Saint to design it. Since we do not have a member who is an architect, we will simply have to convert one." With his finger moving down the column of listed architects, he paused at one name and said, "This is the one we will invite to my home to hear the message of the Restoration."

President Wilson followed the same procedure with regard to plumbers, electricians, and craftsmen of every description. Nor did he neglect other professions, feeling a desire for a well-balanced branch. The individuals were invited to his home to meet the missionaries, the truth was taught, testimonies were borne, and conversion resulted. Those newly baptized then repeated the procedure themselves, inviting others to listen, week after week and month after month.

The St. Thomas Branch experienced marvelous growth. Within 2½ years, a site was obtained, a beautiful building was constructed, and an inspired dream became a living reality. That branch is now a thriving ward in a stake of Zion.

When I reflect on the town of St. Thomas, I dwell not on the ward's hundreds of members and many dozens of families; rather, in memory I return to that sparse sacrament meeting in the lodge-hall basement and the Lord's promise, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20).

Temples like the Toronto Temple are built with stone, glass, wood, and metal. But they are also a product of faith and an example of sacrifice. The funds to build temples come from all tithing payers and consist of the widow's mite, children's pennies, and workmen's dollars—all sanctified by faith.

Gustav and Margarete Wacker

Whenever I attend a temple dedication, I think of Brother and Sister

Gustav and Margarete Wacker of Kingston, Ontario. He was once the branch president of the Kingston Branch. He was from the old country. He spoke English with a thick accent. He never owned or drove a car. He plied the trade of a barber. He made but little money cutting hair near an army base at Kingston. How he loved the missionaries! The highlight of his day would be when he had the privilege to cut the hair of a missionary. Never would there be a charge. When they would make a feeble attempt to pay him, he would say, "Oh, no; it is a joy to cut the hair of a servant of the Lord." Indeed, he would reach deep into his pockets and give the missionaries all of his tips for the day. If it were raining, as it often does in Kingston, President Wacker would call a taxi and send the missionaries to their apartment by cab, while he, himself, at day's end would lock the small shop and walk home—alone in the driving rain.

I first met Gustav Wacker when I noticed that his tithing was far in excess of that expected from his potential income. My efforts to explain to him that the Lord required no more than a tenth fell on attentive but unconvinced ears. He simply responded that he loved to pay all he could to the Lord. It amounted to about a third of his income. His dear wife felt exactly as he did. Their unique manner of tithing payment continued.

Gustav and Margarete Wacker established a home that was a heaven. They were not blessed with children but mothered and fathered their many Church visitors. A sophisticated and learned Church leader from Ottawa told me, "I like to visit the Wacker home. I come away refreshed in spirit and determined to ever live close to the Lord."

Did our Heavenly Father honor such abiding faith? The branch prospered. The membership outgrew the rented Slovakian Hall where they met and moved into a modern and lovely chapel of their own to which the branch

members had contributed their share and more, that it might grace the city of Kingston. President and Sister Wacker had their prayers answered by serving a proselyting mission to their native Germany and later a temple mission to that beautiful temple in Washington, D.C. Then, in 1983, his mission in mortality concluded, Gustav Wacker peacefully passed away while being held in the loving arms of his eternal companion, dressed in his white temple suit, there in the Washington Temple.

Homeward to heaven

All of this history and much more crowded my mind during the dedication services of the Toronto Temple. I reflected on the many nationalities represented by our members there. English, Scottish, German, French, and Italian predominated, but there were also members from Greece, Hungary, Finland, Holland, Estonia, and Poland. Surely, Toronto is an example of the promise of the Lord found in Jeremiah: "I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion" (3:14). This He has done; and from this Zion called Toronto, the word now goes

forth in these native tongues to the home nations of those He has gathered.

When I prepared to leave Toronto following the concluding dedicatory session, I gazed upward toward heaven, that I might offer a silent prayer of gratitude to God for His watchful care, His bounteous blessings, and for "days never to be forgotten." High above the gleaming white temple, which personifies purity and reflects righteousness, is the gold-leafed statue of the Angel Moroni. I remembered being told that from that height of 105 feet, on a clear day one can see all the way to Cumorah. I noted that in Moroni's hand was his familiar trumpet. He was gazing homeward—homeward to Cumorah. The beautiful Toronto Temple prepares all who enter to return homeward—homeward to heaven, homeward to family, homeward to God.

That all of us may travel safely to our eternal home is my humble prayer. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

The choir sang "We Have Partaken of Thy Love."

Elder L. Lionel Kendrick offered the benediction.

SECOND DAY AFTERNOON SESSION

The fifth session of the 160th Semiannual General Conference commenced at 2:00 P.M. on Sunday, October 7, 1990. President Gordon B. Hinckley, First Counselor in the First Presidency, conducted this session.

The Tabernacle Choir provided the music, with Donald Ripplinger conducting and John Longhurst and Robert Cundick at the organ.

President Hinckley made the following remarks as the meeting began:

President Gordon B. Hinckley

We welcome you this afternoon to the fifth and concluding session of the

160th Semiannual General Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. To those in the adjacent Assembly Hall, we note that Elders Marvin J. Ashton, Robert E. Wells, and L. Aldin Porter are seated on the stand.

We send our greetings and blessings to members of the Church and many friends everywhere who are participating in these proceedings by radio, television, cable, or satellite transmission.

The Tabernacle Choir, directed by Donald Ripplinger and accompanied by John Longhurst and Robert Cundick, will provide the music for this session. The choir will begin this service