

Lindon Temple Groundbreaking

April 23, 2022

Elder Kevin W. Pearson

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

It is a joy to welcome you to the groundbreaking of the Lindon Utah Temple on this beautiful, albeit wet, spring day. We wish the weather had allowed us to meet as originally planned on the temple site. Thank you for your attendance here this morning. We are grateful to Brother and Sister Corbridge and to all who have worked so very hard to make this sacred event possible.

In 1899 President Lorenzo Snow prophesied that “The time will come when there will be temples established over every portion of the land.” At that time there were only four temples, and all of them were in Utah. In the early 1900s, President Joseph F. Smith first prophesied a time when temples would be “dotting the earth”. That phrase “dotting the earth” has since been oft-repeated by many Church leaders.

At that time, this area wasn’t much more than a Post Office located in the Cullimore Mercantile store along State Street near a large Linden tree near the bottom of the hill, and a number of faithful settlers.

Who, but a prophet of God, could have foreseen the explosive international growth of the Church, and the ability of the Church to build so many chapels and temples throughout the world? Who, but God, would have known that this sacred plot of ground here in Lindon, Utah would be the site of the 219th temple announced? If the rate of temple announcements continues at its current pace of 25 new temples per year, by the time the Church celebrates its bicentennial in 2030, there will be nearly 500 temples, if my math is correct, operating, under construction, or announced! And according to President Nelson, that would simply be the beginning of things to come. That is “dotting the earth”!

What is driving this extraordinary expansion in temple construction?

Speaking in the April 2000 General Conference, then Elder Russell M. Nelson said:

“As part of the planned destiny of the earth and its inhabitants, here our kindred dead are also to be redeemed...Families are to be sealed together for all eternity. A welding link is to be forged between the fathers and the children. In our time, a whole complete and perfect union of all dispensations, keys, and powers is to be welded together. For these sacred purposes, holy temples now dot the earth.”

In the vision President Joseph F. Smith received in 1918, regarding the Savior’s visit to the spirit world following his crucifixion, he saw that “from among the righteous, he organized his forces and appointed messengers, clothed with power and authority, and commissioned them to go forth and carry the light of the gospel to them that were in darkness, even to all the spirits of men; and thus was the gospel preached to the dead...even unto all who would repent of their sins and receive the gospel. Thus was the gospel preached to those who had died in their sins, without a knowledge of the truth, or in transgression, having rejected the prophets...The dead who repent will be redeemed, through obedience to the ordinances of the house of God.” (D&C 138:31-33,58).

Although Jesus’ earthly ministry resulted in but a handful of converts, his ministry among the spirits of the dead organized a missionary work in the spirit world that will ultimately bring billions of souls to Christ! After nearly two thousand years of missionary work by the most noble and valiant elders and sisters who have ever inhabited the earth, can you even imagine how many individuals are on date for baptism? Or how many are waiting to be endowed and sealed in the spirit world? Is there any wonder that President Nelson has said that the gathering of Israel on both sides of the veil is the ‘greatest challenge, the greatest work and the greatest cause in the world’?

In his April General Conference message Elder Gerrit W. Gong said: “Experts estimate that 70-110 billion people have lived on the earth...World population grew from 1.1 billion people in 1820 to 7.8 billion in 2020. The year 1820 seems to be an inflection point in history. Many born after 1820 have living memory and records to identify several family generations...Whatever the total number of individuals who have lived on this earth, it is finite, countable, one person at a time. You and I, we each matter.” Isn’t it interesting that Heavenly Father was waiting until the gospel of Jesus Christ and the new and everlasting covenants were restored to the earth before opening the windows of heaven and flooding the earth with His children?

Why do we need to ‘dot the earth’ with temples? The answer is clear! The Lord has been ‘hastening his work’ for some time now! It’s always been the greatest work in the world!

But it will take more than just building more houses of the Lord to accomplish this great work. Temples are nourished with names!--names of individual persons. One of the many miracles taking place on the earth today is the ‘spirit of Elijah’, which is a manifestation of the Holy Ghost, moving on individuals and organizations across the earth to find and compile the complete family tree for the entire human race. All 100 + billion of us!

The Lord is sending knowledge know-how and technology to assist in this enormous task. FamilySearch now has over 10 billion searchable names in its online collection and 1.3 billion individuals in its Family Tree. These numbers continue to increase at a miraculous rate! Nonmembers are rapidly becoming the primary source for collecting and organizing these names. However, only members of the Church can submit names for temple ordinances, and only faithful members with a temple recommend can complete the necessary ordinance work in the temple. Each sacred temple requires hundreds of thousands of names to operate.

Will the faithfulness of the members of the Church continue to increase at the same pace as the announcement of new temples? We have learned that the building of new temples does in fact increase the temple faithfulness of members in the temple district.

And so, as we break ground today for the Lindon Utah Temple, we need a groundbreaking effort to prepare for the dedication of this temple by searching out and preparing our family names to submit and nourish this new temple. Can we also dedicate ourselves to that great effort? Can we mobilize members of this temple district, young and old to this noble task?

Is it possible that ‘dotting the earth’ with houses of the Lord is also intended to bless and protect the Lord’s covenant people in perilous days ahead? President Nelson has stated: “the assaults of the adversary are increasing exponentially, in intensity and in variety. Our need to be in the temple on a regular basis has never been greater. I plead with you to take a prayerful look at how you spend your time...If you have reasonable access to a temple, I urge you to find a way to make an appointment regularly with the Lord—to be in His holy house—then keep that appointment with exactness and joy. I promise you that the Lord will bring the miracles He knows you need as you make sacrifices to serve and worship in His temple.” (Becoming Exemplary Latter-day Saints, General Conference 2018)

“Whenever any kind of upheaval occurs in your life, the safest place to be spiritually is living inside your temple covenants! ...As you are true to your covenants made in the temple, you will be strengthened by His power. Then, when spiritual earthquakes occur, you will be able to stand strong because your spiritual foundation is solid and immovable.” (Pres. Russell M. Nelson, General Conference October 2021)

And so, dear brothers and sisters and friends, with the dedication of the temple site this morning, may each of us rededicate our own lives and recommit ourselves to placing the Lord Jesus Christ and our sacred covenants at the center of our lives, so that the power of the new and everlasting covenant can be manifest more fully in our individual lives and families.

I bear witness that God is our loving Heavenly Father, and that Jesus Christ is the living Son of the living God, the Savior and Redeemer of all mankind. I witness that the new and everlasting covenant made from the foundation of the world, is available through the sacred ordinances of the priesthood in His holy temple. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the kingdom of God on the earth today. President Russell M. Nelson is the Lord’s anointed prophet for the entire earth. May each of us press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and of all men, and always be worthy and willing to be in the temple living inside our sacred covenants, I pray, in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.