THE EVENING NEWS.

Saturday, . . September 11, 1869.

REMARKS

On the death of Elder Ezra T. Benson, by Elder WILFORD WOODRUFF, delivered in the New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Sept. 5th, 1869.

REPORTED BY DAVID W. EVANS.

anddenly taken out of our midst,-from time into eternity.

or the minds of his friends, perhaps it is on blessed with visions, revelations, knowan occasion like this. It is well known, at ledge, light and truth, a portion of which we least to the Latter-day Saints, that the elders have recorded in what are called the Reveof Israel rise to speak without any written lations of St. John. In the reign of Nerva sermon or preparation of any kind. Many John was recalled, and afterwards wrote or us have been engaged, the greater portion his epistles. The first quorum of Apostles or our lives, in preaching the gospel to the were all put to death, except John, and we world, and on every occasion we depend are informed that he still remains on the for assistance and preparation upon the earth, though his body has doubtless unspirit of fied. This is my position this af- dergone some change. Three of the Netermoon. I rise before you with no prepared phites, chosen here by the Lord Jesus as sermon, and with no particular principles His Apostles, had the same promise-that that I have settled in my mind to address they should not taste death until Christ you upon; depending, as on all occasions, came, and they still remain on the earth upon the spirit of God and the faith and in the flesh. prayers of my friends. This dispensation of Providence causes me many and Book of Mormon of but two quorums reflections; and I presume it is the of Twelve Apostles being chosen previous case with every Latter-day Saint pres- to this dispensation; but in these last days ent. In the first place I will ask the the Lord called upon Joseph Smith, gave question what position did Bro. Benson him power and authority to organize His occupy while in the flesh, and how many church and kingdom again upon the have ever held the same position on the earth and gave him the Holy Priesthood two of the earth. The words contained in and the keys of the kingdom of God. Jothe 7th verse of the 52nd chapter of the pro- seph was ordained to the apostleship under phecies of Isaiah are brought to my mind. the hands of men holding the keys of the While contemplating the great work of kingdom of God in the days of Jesus,building up the Zion of God in the last namely, Peter, James and John. days ho says:

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the test of him that bridgeth goest tidings, that puti shelp peace that bringeth good todings unto Zion, Thy God reignett !"

What position can any man occupy on the face of the earth that is more noble, Godlike, high and glorious than to be a messenger of salvation unto the human family? What more responsible position can a man occupy than to be an apostle of the Lord flesh; the second after his resurrection, for all the endless ages of eternity I try to Jesus Christ? I do not know of any in this here on this continent, and the third, since realize what manner of men we all ought arises in my mind how many individuals have ever held this position on the earth? I find in the history recorded in the Bible, from the days of Adam down through the different dispensations and generations. that prophets have existed on the earth. Adam, himself, was a prophet and he ordained his sons to the Melchizedek priesthood; the gospel of Christ was taught to him after the Fall and he attended to the ordinances of the house of God. He was a high priest and, as a high priest, held the keys of the Kingdom of God. There were many sons who were high priests, having been ordained to this office by their father Three years before his death he Adam. called together Seth, Enos, Jared, Cainan, Mahaleel, Methusaleh and many others of his descendants in the Valley of Adam-Ondi-Ahman, and there rose up and blessed them with his great and last patriarchal blessing. Hons, and that this number pass away every This has been given to us by revelation; and these men were prophets and high three generations pass away in a century; priests. Tracing down the sacred history through the different ages and dispensations we learn that many prophets existed among the children of men. Moses was a lawgiver in Israel and held the office of a prophet, seer and revelator. When I say that many prophets have existed, it probably needs some qualification. The number of persons thus honored of God has not been many when compared with the whole of the people who have lived; but in every gospel age and dispensation God has had bers who have dwelt on the face of the His prophets and servants upon the earth to make known His will to its inhabitants. In the days of Moses elders were chosen, as His counselors; and seventy elders were ordained to bear record of the things of God and to assist Moses in the work to be performed in his day; but we do not read of apostles being chosen under Moses's dispensation, Jesus tabernacled in the flesh to establish the Kingdom of His Father upon the earth, and when he was thirty years of age he went forth administering in the ordinances of the house of God, and he hose twelve Apostles to assist him, and he gave to them the keys of the Kingdom of And the highest office that any man has ever held on the face of the earth in this or any other generation is that of an apostle, We read that God set in His church first, apostles, then prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, gifts, graces and helps; and the dice of an apostle entitles him to hold the keys of the Kingdom of God; and what be binds on earth is bound in heaven, and what he looses on earth is loosed in heaven. The history of the Twelve whom Jesus them that He had other sheep not of this fold whom He was going to visit and minister unto. The Book of Mormon is a the few called in this day to bear testime record of the descendants of the House of to the nations of the earth of the res Israel who dwelt on this continent an-Israel who dwelt on this continent an-ciently. It gives us the history of the Jar-edites who gaves us the history of the Jaredites who came from the Tower of Babel; of Lehi and his family, who came from Je-resalem and also of the Lemanite contraction of the Gods, or at least with his brother he rusalem and also of the Lamanites and Ne- the Gods, or at least whith whether he

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stand of the state of the state of the

phites, the descendants of Nephi and Lem- mingle with the Gods until after the resuruel, sons of Lehi. In that record we find that Christ, after His death and resurreethat Christ, after His death and resurres. tion, visited that branch of the house of Is-rael which dwelt on this continent. On the occasion of that visit we are informed that Jesus chose Twelve Apostles and gave to them the same power, keys, gifts and gra-ces that He had given to His apostles on the eastern continent; and they went forth, and magnified their callings. All of this quorum of the Twelve Apostles had the promise of departing and being with Christ

except three of them. To these three Jesus I am called upon this afternoon to make gave a promise similar to that which He tried to kill John in various ways, placing

I have long since considered it unneces- him, on one occasion, in a cauldron of boil-

Thus we have an account in the Bible

I shall not occupy time with entering into the details of these things. I have referred to them to show the importance of at good, that publisheth savation; that saith the office held by Brother Benson. He was a member of one of the three quorums of Apostles that have ever been chosen on the face of the earth since Jesus Christ tabernacled in the flesh, that we have any knowledge of. The first chosen when Jesus commenced his public lab rs in the the revelation of the gospel in our own day. Here we find only thirty-six men, chosen at various times and dispensations, in six thousand years, to hold this order of priesthood, unless they were chosen in the days of Enoch and at times in which the Bible does not inform us. This number has been increased, however, by others who have been chosen to fill vacancies in these quorums, as in the case of Judas, and others; but it is safe to say that the entire number who have held this office from the days of Adam until to-day has been very limited. As to the number of inhabitants who have dwelt on the earth during that period it is a pretty difficult matter to form any correct idea 'n relation to it; I do not think that any statistician could tell this to any degree of correctness. It is a kind of a given point in these days to say that the population of the earth is about a thousand milgeneration. It is also estimated that about this gives three thousand millions in a century, thirty thousand millions in a thousand years, and one hundred and eighty thousand millions in six thousand years, about the period that is supposed to have elapsed since the creation of man upon the earth. Whether these statistics are anything like correct it is not of much importance to discuss; but it is an important reflection, that Brother Benson, who has been associated with us so many years, is one may be with them in spirit, is privileged of the chosen few, of all the immense numearth, who have been called to hold the office of apostles. Well might the prophet say "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet," &c. I will say that in my boyhood while at-tending Sabbath School in my native State, Connecticut, there seemed something glorious, to me, about the apostles of Jesus Christ who were called to preach the gos-pel of the Son of God to the inhabitants of the earth; and I have many times felt that see a prophet, an apostle or any man called of God who could teach me the way to be saved; a man who held in his hands the power of the priesthood, who could com-mand the elements and they would obey him, and who could declare the words of life in their truth and purity to the inhab-itants of the earth. I always looked upon the lives and missions of these men, though despised by the world generally, as the most important of any men who ever dwelt in the flesh. Jesus himself was called master of the house of Belzebub, and trayelled through a constant scene of poverty, ridicule, persecution and affliction; yet there was something great, good, grand and glorious in the life of the Savior of the world. This was the fate of Him and His apostles; and though they descended below all things they held in their hands the des-tiny and salvation, not only of that genera-

Is there any sorrow or mourning in my heart with regard to the departure of Brother Benson? I would rather follow a thousand apostles and prophets to the grave and see their lifeless remains deposited in the dark and silent tomb, than see one man when they were seventy-two years old, who has tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come make shipwreck of his faith, lose his crown and I am called upon this afternoon to make gave a promise similar to that which He some remarks upon the life and death of Brother Ezra Taft Benson, who has been anddenly taken out of our midst,-from came. History informs us that the wicked standing in the Church, than over all the faithful Latter-day Saints I have seen laid I have long since considered it unneces-sary to make any excuses for performing my duty upon any occasion in public; but if there is any position where a man might have doubts about satisfying his own mind in the tomb. When I see a man depart the last forty years, has had the privilege of dying a natural desth; for most of the apostles who ever tabernacled in the flesh have died as martyrs. We have had two m our quorum who have died thus, besides our prophet and patriarch. True, they will receive a martyr's crown, so will all men who are true and faithful unto death and lay down their lives for the work of God and the test mony of Jesus Christ.

Brother Benson has died among his friends;he had not been in pain or suffering, or endured a lingering sickness. Thank God he died in the harness and has gone home to receive his reward. During the time he has been a member of the church he has been on many missions. I will here remark, without entering into details, that at the time the Saints were driven from Illinois to this land, he was called upon and sent east, as one of the agents of the the earth. church to prove the eastern country,-our Puritan fathers and friends in New England, after we had been driven from our homes, country, and the graves of parents, wives and children, to see if they would stretch out their hand to assist us while in the wilderness. He labored faithfully on that mission, visiting Boston and other leading New England cities, calling for contributions to help the poor, the widow and the father ess who were, in a measure, in a state of starvation in the wilderness after having been driven from their homes in the midst of an inclement winter. I believe he got fifty dollars. If he had gone into Missonri and split rails by the day I guess he would have made considerable more money in the same time. But never mind! He was faithful on his mission, and returned faithful, and continued so from he commencement of his career as a Latter-day Saint until the day of his death. I rejoice in this, and it is a consolation to his family, and to all Jarval to know his family, and to all Israel to know that he has been true and faithful to his calling. When I contemplate and rea-lize that the little time spent here in this mortal life will fix and mould our destiny I have traveled a good deal with Brother Benson and have been acquainted with him, as you have, a good many years past, and I can bear this testimony of him,—he has always been ready and willing to la-bor in either temporal or spiritual things. Here on this road he labored faithfully exercised in their day. during the past year in building a hundred miles of the railroad; he and those associated with him finished their job with punctuality. All these things show the antiring industry and perseverance of the This is the way with all of us. We are all called to labor in temporal and spiritual things in building up the kingdom of God in these last days. We have to preach the gospel to the children of men; we have to warn the nations of the earth. We have been called to do this; this is the command of God to the elders of Israel. In obedience to this they shoulder their knapsacks and without purse or scrip, travel the world over to declare to the children of men the words of life and salvation. In doing this they swim rivers, wade swamps and en-dure much toil and privation. During the Said Jesus, when sending His apostles last thirty-seven years of my life I have tra-veled one hundred thousand miles in obedience to this command. It will be well with all men who are faithful in the performance of these duties. Brother Benson never performed a mission or any other damned. "And these signs shall ollow them that be-lieve: In my name they shall cast out devis; they shall speak with new tongues; "They shall speak with new tongues; "They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall isy hands on the sick, and they shall duty but what he will rejoice over forever and so it will be with us all. The reward of the faithful will amply repay them for all the labors they ever performed or for the privations they have endured. No labor we have ever done that has helped to promote the happiness and well-being of our fellowmen will go unrewarded. Brother Benson, to-day, instead of being with his family in Logan, that is in the flesh, he to mingle with his brethren who have gone before, Joseph, Hyrum, David, Par-ley, Heber and the prophets and apostles of former days. He is mingling with them. They have finished their work in the flesh, so has he. He has been suddenly called away from his labors but his works will follow him. wish to speak to my friends, a little, with regard to the position which we occu-py as Elders of Isael, and as the church and kingdom of God upon the earth. I feel im-pressed to do so. I do not know that I wish to say a great deal more with regard to Brother Beoson. His labors are before us I would willingly walk a thousand miles to and the world, and they are before God and angels. I am satisfied with them and I do know who is not who was acquainted with him. I wish, now, to say something with regard to the organization of this Church and the position occupied by Joseph Smith, Elder Benson and the at ostles and ood of this Church We are living in a very important age, an age in which preparations are making for the second coming of the Messiah to reign a thousand years upon the earth with His Saints. The scriptures of the Old and New ont will never be fulfilled nutil this to pass. An angel of God, the Bevelator John Informs us, was to fly through the midst of heaven, having the everisting gospel to preach to them that dwell on the and give glor The history of the Twelve whom Jesus chose is j to be found in the New Testa, ment; within the lide of that book their travels, the course they pursued and to the world. Nearly the whole of them scaled their testimony with their blood. Some were cruchined as their master was some were beheaded; and all except John suffered martyrdom in some way for the word of Ged and the testimony of Jesus the domination, revealed and organ to of Apostles we have any history of. After the death and resurrection of the Savior, when He ministered to His disci-tion du to full the function, revealed and by the revealations of the Lord Jesus Christ. Thave lived to see the church and by the revealations of the lost image of an and adminis of the neares of the function, revealed and organ and the found in the lessing or a costle. Thar to live to see a prophet or aposite. Thar to the death and resurrection of the savior, when He find that the revealed and organ and by the function, revealed and organ and by the function of the savior. The first ques-song by the function of the save and by the revealations of the cort Jesus Christ. There lived to see the church and by the revealations of the Lord Jesus Christ. There lived to see the church and by the revealations of the Lord Jesus Christ. There lived to see the church and by the revealations of the Lord Jesus Christ. There lived to see the church and by the revealations of the Lord Jesus Christ. There lived to see the church and the the more soft and the the more soft and the the same and the function of the same and the testimony of the same and the the power of the ministry, for the and the the apostie and the twe the gifts of the same and the function of the same to come and the testime on the same of the more same and the function of the same the same the same to come and and the the apostie and the the same the same to the the same the and the neaves to of an in th prevalence of sin in this world, that one of a the greatest honors and blessings ever con-ferred on the sons of men, was to come and dwell in the flesh in a sinful world like this, amid the power of evil, temptation and darkness, that they might have the privi-lege of overcoming them and of inheriting eternal life, which is the greatest gift of God. All the prophets have forescen the justification of God in the last days; they have seen Zion pass through all her travill and persecution to her final triumph, when she possessed great glory, power and dominion upon the land of Joseph, Daniel saw the Kingdom of God, e edifying of the body of Christ, an perfecting of the Saints -- until we a to the unity of the faith, to the kno ne land of om of God, strangertan at at an inclusion of

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the with the Gods until after the resur-on perhaps it is not for me to say. He pone home to receive his reward. What and increased in size until it filled the whole and of reflection it brings to the mind ! Carth. Daniel said this kingdom was to be

turned to the Bible, and there saw that pas-sage in the epistle of James which directs him that lacks wisdom to ask of God. He went into his secret chamber and asked the Lord what he must do to be saved. The Lord heard his prayer and sent His angel to him, who informed him that all the sects were wrong, and that the God of heaven was about to establish His work upon the earth. This angel quoted many of the prophecies of Isaiah, and Jeremiah and told this young man that they were about to be the prophecies young man that they were about to be ful-filled among the nations of the earth; and he also told him that if he would listen and render obedience to the commands of God.

These visits were repeated from time to resurrected dead to attend to it. The ordin-These visits were repeated from time to time, during which Joseph received revela-tion and much instruction in the things of God. He taught some of these things to his father and some of his brothers and a few others, but he had no authority to preach or administer in the ordinances of the house of God. Why? Because, as the prophet has said, "No man taketh this honor unto himself except he be called of God as was Aaron." No man, in any gener-

Sain ts. We have been called to warn this gen eration; we understand the signs of the are at hand. If we had not been faithful to our calling and mission, the Lord would have raised up another people, because the set time is at hand for Him to establish His

inKgdom. There are one or two ideas more I wish to refer to, with regard to the mission of Christ. That mission did not end when He but to remain until sin, Satan and the power of the devil are banished from the face thereof, and until, as the prophets have said, the kingdoms of this world shall be-come the kingdoms of our God and His Christ.

This day we have lived to see. This taber-nacle, this congregation, and the multitudes through the valleys of the mountains ar-the fruits of this work. How did it com-mence? It commenced by an angel of God the fruits of this work. How did it com-mence? It commenced by an angel of God flying through the midst of heaven and visiting a young man named JosephSmith, in the year 1827. That was the time of a great awakening among the sectarians of the day,—a day of revivals and protracted meetings, when the people were called upon to join themselves to the sectarian churches. This young man looked around amid the the confusion among the different sects, each proclaiming the plan of salvation dif-ferently, and each claiming it was right and that all others were wrong; in the midst of the tall others were wrong; in the midst of that all others were wrong; in the midst of this contention he did not know which to join. While in this state of uncertainty he turned to the Bible, and there saw that pas-sage in the epistle of James which directs

haptized and been the means of liberating them from prison in the spirit world, what joy he will have! And it will be so with others. And this work of adminisiering he should be an instrument in the hands of the ordinances of the house of God to the the Lord in establishing His kingdom upon dead, I may say, will require the whole of the millenium, with Jesus at the head of the

honor unto himself except he be called of God as was Aaron." No man, in any gener-ation, has ever had authority to pre.ch the gospel of Jesus Christ unless he was called by revelation. You may read the history of all the prophets and apostles from the creation down, and they have all received the holy priesthood under the hands of God or angels, or under the hands of men who have held this autho.ity. It was so with Joseph Smith. He could not find anybody who possessed this authority, and he called upon the Lord to know what to do, and the headed for his religion. John held the Aaronic priesthood, and he came and ordained Joseph Smith to the same to them we shall fall under condemnation. priesthood. This gave him power to ad-minister in some of the ordinances of the gospel of Christ. He could baptize for the remission of sins, but could not lay on



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children of men. Brother Ezra T. Benson, whose hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost. The

This is the origin of the authority of the the Latter-day Saints; and from that day until the present the little stone cut out of the mountain has been growing. The Church was organized on the 6th of April, 830, with six members, and the elders immediately went forth, one here and another there, bearing testimony and preaching the doctrines the angel made known to Joseph. and some few, out of many, have received and obeyed the same. This gospel is the the same as that taught by the ancient apostles, namely, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, repentance of sin, baptism for the hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost. These were the doctrines taught by the ancient apostles, and the signs that followed

"Go je into all the world and preach the gos "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be

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All these gifts and graces were promised by Joseph and the early elders of the Church, just the same as by the ancient Apostles; and this is the testimony that every elder has borne from that day until the present. Has the Lord backed up this testimony? He has. All of the Twelve who have labored abroad, and we have been doing so, more or less, thirty or forty years, traveling hundreds of thousands of miles, — have made this declaration. I have preached to millions of my fellow-men in my own and other countries; and I and the other apostles, as well as hundreds of elders of is Church and Kingdom, have all made o same proclamation, to kings, princes, residents and rulers and to the inhabitants of the earth wherever we have gone as

far as we have had an opportunity and have had the privilege of opening our months. We have borne the same testimony to all,-Packed in Patent Air Tight Caddies of 3 lbs., 5 lbs., 7 lbs. and 10 lbs. each. This package is entirely new and found the most namely, that all who would receive our testimony and obey the gospel should re-ceive the Holy Ghost. Would we have dared to go forth and bear this testimony if convenient ever introduced, both for dealer and consumer. The trade are invited to we had not known this was the work of give it a trial. God? No, there is not a man on the face of

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the earth who dare to it under any other circumstances, for his hypocrisy and decop-tion would soon have been apparent; the very first man that received his testimony would have proved it. Could we have gathered our hundreds of thousands from gathered our hundreds of thousands from the nations of the earth if we had been de-ceivers, and had presched false doctrines? As the spostle says, "But though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you than that which we have preached unto you then that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." No, we should have had no success; we might have preached false doctrines until we were grey, or as old as Methusaleh, but if we had we should never have seen Utah, this taberna-cle or these valleys of the mountains. But the Lord backed up our testimony, and tans of thousands throughout this Tarritory

lowship with the Holy Spirit, with my Lord afterwards sent Peter, James, and John, who held the keys of the kingdom in their day and generation upon the earth, and they ordained him an apostle, and sealed upon his head every key, power and required of me. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to all who believe

both Jew and Greek. Let us be faithful, keep our covenants, do our duty, and at-tend to all the ordinances of the gospel as far as we can both for ourselves and our When we have done this we shall dead. be satisfied. I pray that God may bless you; that He may bless the apostles who dwell on the earth; that His power may rest on the presiding Twelve, the Seventies, the High Priests, the Bishops, Elders Teachers and Deacons, and all who have entered into covenant to keep His com-mandments. Let us be faithful and we shall obtain our reward; we shall overcome remission of sin, then the laving on of and obtain eternal life and a crown of glory if we magnify our calling by living the religion which we have received, which may God grant for Christ's sake, Amen.

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