PURPOSE OF MAN'S EXISTENCE.

Discourse Delivered at the Seventy-Fifth Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, on Sunday, April 9, 1905, by

ELDER GEORGE ALBERT SMITH

Opportunity to Gain an Exaltation in the Kingdom of Heaven—A Great Over-ruling Providence Comes From God—Unimpeachable Evidence of Its Existence.

When I look at this large audience I am reminded of something I read in a paper sometime ago. A certain man was driving down a road in the state of Kansas, and he saw out in a field at some distance, a man working in masonry. It was not near a house, and he could not understand why the man was building a fence in that particular place. Finally, he went over to where the man was and asked him what he was building. The man said, "I am building a fence." "Well," said he, "that is the most peculiar looking fence I ever saw; you are building it only three feet high, and you are making it five feet wide, and building it of stone. Now, can you tell me why you are doing that?" The man replied, "I am doing it for a joke." He then asked what the joke was. "Well," he said, "I have built quite a number of fences in this country, and every time I get one built in good shape, one of these cyclones comes along and turns it over, and I am building this fence so that the next cyclone that comes along and turns it over will be mightily surprised to find that it is higher than it was before." When I look into the eager faces of this large audience, I am reminded that the circumstances and developments of the past few months have turned over the fence of "Mormonism" in some quarters, and this audience, and the audience without, and the one in the adjacent building are evidence of the fact that it has been a "joke" thus far. In other words, the faith we have has not been weakened or lessened.

I sometimes wonder if people realize the purpose of their existence, and the importance of the labor that men and women are expected to perform while on the earth. Some believe that when we pass from this sphere of existence, that is the end. It seems incredible to me, when we look into the works of nature, when we investigate the organism of man, the perfection of his body, the pulsation of his heart, the building and strengthening from childhood to manhood, then the gradual decline until this life is ended—that it is possible any of our Father's children can believe that human beings have been born into the world only to live to manhood and womanhood, pass to old age, and die, without some purpose in their having lived here. We should remember that while it is in the power of man to take human life, it is not in the province of any human being or any human agency to give life. The spirit which inhabits the body is not the product of man, and when that spirit leaves the body we believe that it goes back to the source from whence it came. When we look around us and see the beautiful works of nature, we find the sun giving us light and heat from day to day, the planets moving in their regular orbits; we see the trees as they grow up from the ground, and the same sap that makes the bark and the wood feeds the leaf and the blossom; we plant in some spot of ground the seed of a variety of vegetables, and each comes forth according to its kind, although the earth is apparently the same that has nourished each. We look throughout space, and all the conditions that exist give evidence to us that there is a power that is greater than that of man. I am grateful that I have been born among the Latter-day Saints, and that I have been taught to revere the power we call God. I am grateful that I know there is a great and overruling providence, and I have been taught to believe, and do believe, that it comes from God the Eternal Father. We can look back upon the pages of sacred history and find a reason for our belief, though our brethren and sisters who do not believe in God may feel they cannot accept our teachings. We find that Adam, our first parent in the world, was not only given a sphere of action in which to work, but was instructed by God the Father. He knew he was created in the image of the Father for he had seen Him face to face. Adam taught those with whom he was associated that there was a God in heaven, and admonished them to obey His laws. Down to the days of Noah the thought that there is a hereafter and a home beyond the grave was instilled into the hearts of men. But there is in the world two powers—one power for good, and the other for evil. At the time of Noah the power of evil had so taken possession of the hearts of the children of men that it grieved Noah that God had made man, and the Lord in His wisdom sent the floods from heaven and destroyed mankind from the face of the earth, with the exception of a few who listened to the voice of His servant Noah. Then the world began to be peopled again, and great races inhabited many portions of the earth. If we follow down through the line of prophets we find that many of them walked and talked with God, that many received revelations from heaven enabling them to convince the children of men that this was no theory, but that it was a reality, and that there was a purpose in human beings dwelling upon the earth, and that purpose was that they might gain an exaltation in the kingdom of heaven. We find even down to the time of our Savior men generally believed in God, but the power of evil had put into the hearts of the children of men to destroy many of the prophets of the Lord, in order that their voices might be stilled, that the influence of evil might gain greater sway among the children of men. Our Heavenly Father, in His mercy, sent His Only Begotten Son into the world, and He told the people as He labored with them that He was the Son of God. He ministered among them. He healed their sick, unstopped the ears of the deaf, restored the blind to sight, and raised up the dead. He convinced those with whom He came in contact that there was a hereafter, and that the purpose of our living upon the earth is that we may prepare ourselves for that great future life. He eventually gave His life that this testimony might abide in the world. But there was another purpose. It required in the providence of our Father a pure and spotless person to find the way of the resurrection. Jesus Christ was a man without sin. By reason of His purity, His uprightness and His virtue, He was able to unlock the doors of the prison, to overcome death and the grave, and pioneer the way for His fellow creatures unto that heaven where we expect to go. After He gave his mortal life He was permitted to come back an immortal being, and visit with men in the flesh, but when the time came for Him to go again, although He was surrounded by His apostles, He departed heavenward and was received therein. Two angels in white stood before them and promised that as they saw Him going to heaven so should He return again. Then we find that the Apostles who remained behind taught this same Gospel. The power of God descended upon them, even the Holy Ghost, which the Savior had promised should come, to bring things past to their remembrance and to teach them things to come. It came upon them in that upper room, in cloven tongues of fire, and they knew as they knew they lived that they had been endowed with power from on high, and they proclaimed it to all men with whom they came in contact. They did not fear death, but they feared to be recreant to the trust our Father had reposed in them. They feared to turn their backs upon the testimony they had received from heaven itself and from their association with the Son of God. When He said to them, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be condemned," it was the voice of God unto the children of men. When He said to Nicodemus that unless he was born again he could not even see the kingdom of God, it was not the voice of man, it was the voice of God, and is a law binding upon all mankind.

We have been placed here for a purpose. That purpose is that we may overcome the evil temptations that are placed in our way, that we may learn to be charitable to one another, that we may overcome the passions with which we are beset, so that when the time comes for us to go to the other side we may be worthy, by reason of the effort we have put forth, to enjoy the blessings that our Father has in store for the faithful. The Latter-day Saints are believers in the words contained in the holy Scriptures. We believe that God created the heavens and the earth; and the same God that created the heavens and the earth declared that He made man in His own image; male and female created He them. No matter if scientists and great men of the world shall proclaim that we have evolved from the lower order of animals, the witness of the Spirit to you, my brethren and sisters, is that you are the offspring of the Lord, that the spirits which inhabit your bodies are immortal, and that in due time, if you are faithful, you will go back to the presence of that God who gave you life.

Not only do we have the testimony of men who lived upon the eastern hemisphere, but in the providence of the Almighty we have received the testimony of the people who lived upon this western hemisphere. When the Savior ministered in the flesh He told His disciples at Jerusalem that He had other sheep, which were not of that fold, and that He must visit them, that there might be one fold and one shepherd. The question has been raised in the old world that Jesus was not of divine origin, because He was born as a little child, cradled in a manger, His mother being Mary and his reputed father Joseph the carpenter. Many have admitted that He was a great and good man, but they have desired to rob Him of the divinity of His birth. Fortunately, however, for the Latter-day Saints, we have received a witness that these things are true; and in addition to that, we have received the testimony that He came to this western hemisphere, as recorded in the Book of Mormon, and ministered unto the Nephites upon this continent. He did not come this time as a little child, but He came in the clouds of heaven; and His coming was proclaimed by a voice that penetrated to the very center of every person that dwelt in the land. He came this time as a man from heaven, and they saw Him come. They knew that He was the Christ, for His coming had been predicted by their prophets. He gave to them the same organization that existed in the Church at Jerusalem. He taught them that they must be baptized, as He had been, by those having authority to officiate in that ordinance. This was not the word of an ordinary man; it was the word of the Son of God, who had ascended to His Father, and who had come back again, that the children of men might have another testimony added to the number that had already been given to them.

Then in the day and age in which we live there arose another individual. A boy fourteen years of age believed what was contained in the Scriptures. He read in James, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." Believing those words, he went into the woods to pray, and his prayer was answered. His faith brought the blessing he so much desired. He received the record of the Book of Mormon. He not only had the witness of the Bible that Jesus was the Christ, but he saw God the Father standing in the clouds of heaven, clothed with glory, and Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of the world, exalted at His right hand, and he heard the voice of the Lord, saying, "This is My Beloved Son, hear Him." He bore testimony of this glorious vision to those with whom he was associated. Others also received a witness from on high. Their testimony in the divinity of the Savior's mission had been increased and strengthened, so that it was no longer a matter of ancient history that God lived and that Jesus was the Christ; they knew it personally, because they had received a testimony themselves.

As I look into the faces of this audience I realize that this testimony has been handed down to you, not by man, but by the power of our heavenly Father, who has promised it to all of His children that will obey His commandments and keep His laws. You are not dependent alone upon history, nor upon the teachings of any man, to know that this is the work of the Lord, because you have had it burned into your souls by the gift of the Holy Ghost. There is no doubt in your mind as to your origin, nor as to the place you will go to when this life is over, if you are faithful to the trust reposed in you. We are not here to while away the hours of this life and then pass to a sphere of exaltation; but we are here to qualify ourselves day by day for the positions that our Father expects us to fill hereafter. We are here to learn to love one another. The great commandment that was given by the Savior to the children of men in the day in which He lived is binding on us. We are commanded to love the Lord our God with all our might, mind and strength, and to love our neighbor as ourselves. In the language of the poet, "Life is real, Life is earnest," and "the grave is not its goal." The spirit that inhabits the tabernacle is immortal. It lives beyond the grave. The body decays and returns to earth but the spirit lives on. None of us brethren and sisters, can control the beating of the heart? None of us, if it should stop, could start it again? Science has not discovered the secret. Yet there is a power that can do this and continues to do it, and we who are members of the fold of Christ know whence that power comes.

If we believe as we claim, that Jesus is the Christ, and that we are the children of our heavenly Father, then how careful we should be to conduct ourselves that we may be worthy of the temples we occupy, which were created in the image of God. How many of us realize that by taking into our systems things that our Father has forbidden, we defile the temple of the spirit? How many of us stop to consider that when we give way to weakness of the flesh, we deprive ourselves of opportunities that await us in the future, and cut ourselves off from the blessings that the Lord hath in store for the faithful. As members of the Church of Christ, we should keep His commandments and love one another. Then our love should pass beyond the border lines of the Church with which we are identified, of men, that the belief which is growing and reach out after the children in the world that God does not live and that the grave is our goal may be dissipated, and that in the place of that disbelief there may come a living faith, yea, a living knowledge, that Jesus is the Christ, and that we are the children of the Father. Those of you who have received this witness have assumed an obligation which you cannot turn your backs upon if you would. It must be declared by you to the children of men. The revelation that John received, that another angel should fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach to men that dwell upon the earth, has been realized. Joseph Smith taught that he knew there was a hereafter, and that he knew that God lived, and that God knew that he knew that God lived. He was willing to give his life in order that you, my brethren and sisters, might have your faith strengthened and that your confidence in him might not be shaken. He knew the purpose of this life. He knew that we were here to prepare for the future and a more glorious existence. And he was willing, if need be, to give his own life, not simply that he might lose it, for our benefit, but because he knew that the Father had said that he who would save his life should lose it, but he who would lose his life for His sake should find it, even life eternal. It was this knowledge that made it possible for the Prophet and Patriarch of the Church in early days to turn their backs upon loved ones, to be incarcerated in prison, and to give all that they had in this world, that men can give for their brethren—their mortal life.

Brethren and sisters, this is a serious matter. We should think of it seriously. We should look into our own lives and discover if we are prepared for that great future life, if we were called hence tomorrow whether we would be prepared to give an account for our earthly deeds; whether we can feel that we would receive from our Heavenly Father the welcome plaudit of "Well done, good and faithful servant." To preach the Gospel is our mission. Your sons and daughters are proclaiming it in the world. Let it indeed be true, as was suggested by a Mission President from this stand, that when our missionaries look homeward from the islands of the sea and from the nations of the earth they may see a home-guard, who are tried and true, who have been weighed in the balances and have not been found wanting, that their faith in us may not waver, and that they may realize that we are willing and anxious to help the work of the Master in every possible way.

That the Lord may continue His blessings upon this gathering; that the peace which has characterized it so far may remain with all of us; that we may take it to our homes and disseminate it among the people where we live; that we may love the Lord our God; and be willing to keep His commandments, and not only be willing to die for the work, but willing to live for it. Let us see to it that we speak evil of no one, not even of those who speak evil of us. Let us extend to all our Father's children the hand of welcome, and teach unto them that we know without doubt that Jesus was and is the Christ, that Joseph Smith was a prophet of the living God, and that the men who represent the work today receive from our heavenly Father the inspiration and revelation of His mind and will when He desires to give it to them for the benefit of His Church. That we may be worthy of the honor God has given us that we may be worthy of the lineage whence we came that we may be faithful sons and daughters of God, worthy to bear His image in the earth, that we may not defile our tabernacles with anything that is impure or unholy, but that day by day we may let our light so shine that men, seeing our good works, will glorify our Father which is in heaven—that this may be our privilege, and that when our labors are finished and we are summoned back to our heavenly Father we may be welcome there because of our faith and faithfulness here below, is my prayer in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Asthma Sufferers Should Know This.

Foley's Honey and Tar has cured many cases of asthma that were considered hopeless. Mrs. Adolph Buesing, 701 West Third St., Davenport, Ia., writes: "A severe cold contracted twelve years ago was neglected until it finally grew into asthma. The best medical skill available could not give me more than temporary relief. Foley's Honey and Tar was recommended and one fifty cent bottle entirely cured me of asthma which had been growing on me for twelve years, and if I had taken it at the start I would have been saved years of suffering." For sale by F. J. Hill Drug Co.

The most attractive eastern excursion during the coming summer, will be to Asbury Park, N. J., on occasion of the annual meeting of National Educational association, July 3 to 7, inclusive, via the Nickel Plate Road and its connections, either the West Shore or Lackawanna Road, with privilege of stopover at Chautauqua Lake points, Niagara Falls and New York City. Rate $21.35 for the round trip. Dates of sale, June 29 and 30 and July 1 and 2, with extreme return limit of August 31, by depositing ticket. Patrons of this route, may have the choice of a ride over the most interesting mountain scenery in New York and Pennsylvania, and through the celebrated Delaware Water Gap, or through the beautiful Mohawk valley and down the Hudson river, between Albany and New York City, in either direction, if desired. No excess fare charged on any train on the Nickel Plate Road. Meals served in Nickel Plate dining-cars, on American Club meal plan, ranging in price from 35c to $1.00; also service a la carte. Chicago depot La Salle and Van Buren streets. Chicago City ticket offices, 111 Adams street, and Auditorium annex. For further particulars, address Charles E. Johnson, District Passenger Agent, Nickel Plate Road, No. 311 Seventeenth street, Denver, Colo.

National Educational Convention.

On account of the convention of the National Educational Association at Ashbury Park July 3rd to 7th, the Wabash Railroad has put into effect a rate of one fare for the round trip to New York, plus $3.35 from there. This ticket will be good either direct or via New York City, and it is optional with the passenger to use rail or boat line between Detroit and Buffalo and between Albany and New York. All tickets routed via Wabash R. R. will be good for stopovers in either or both directions at Detroit and Niagara Falls and at New York on the return trip. Tickets reading via Wabash R. R. will also be good between New York and Asbury Park on steamers of the Sandy Hook Line, which arrangement will add a little salt to the trip. These tickets will be on sale from June 28th to July 1st, inclusive, and will be good for return till AUGUST 31st.

Mr. Phil P. Hitchcock, G. A. P. D. of the Wabash R. R. at Denver, states that he will be pleased to answer all questions and mail literature pertaining to the trip on request.

Low Rate Excursion to the Seashore, via New York City with privilege of stopover on return trip.

The Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railway will sell round-trip tickets from Chicago to Asbury Park and return on June 29, 30, July 1 and 2, at rate of $23.35, good returning not later than July 10, with privilege of extension until August 31 by deposit of ticket and payment of 50 cents.

Don't miss this opportunity of spending your vacation at the seaside. If you are particular as to comfort and service, we offer something a little superior to any other line. See that your ticket reads via Lake Shore—the route of the "20th Century Limited." Send for itinerary to A. C. BURROWS, Traveling Passenger Agent, 202 Boston Bldg., Kansas City, Mo.

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Trains to Saltair Beach.

Time Table in Effect May 21st.

Leave Salt Lake.		Arrive Salt Lake.	
No. 2	10:00 a.m.	No. 1	12:30 p.m.
No. 4	2:00 p.m.	No. 3	3:30 p.m.
No. 6	3:00 p. m.	No. 5	4:30 p.m.
No. 8	4:00 p.m.	No. 7	5:30 p. m.
No. 10	5:00 p.m.	No. 9	6:30 p.m.
No. 12	6:00 p.m.	No. 11	7:30 p.m.
No. 14	7:00 p.m.	No. 13	8:30 p.m.
No. 16	8:00 p.m.	No. 15	9:30 p.m.
No. 18	9:00 p.m.	No. 17	10:30 p.m.
No. 20	*10:00 p.m.		

*Sunday last train leaves Salt Lake at 9:00 p.m.; and Saltair 10:00 p.m.
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Simon Bamberger, Pres. and Gen. Mgr. A. D. Pierson, G. P. & T. Agt.

Time Table in Effect May 30th, 1905.

Leave Salt Lake—
6:30, 9:00, 11:00 a. m.; 2:00, 4:00, 6:00, 7:00, 8:00 p. m.

Leave Lagoon—
7:30, 10:00 a. m., 12 m., 3:00, 5:00, 7:00, 9:00, 10:30 p. m.

Extra Trains on Sundays and Holidays. Leave Salt Lake 2 and 3:00 p. m. Leave Lagoon, 4:00 and 6:00 p. m.

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SALT LAKE ROUTE

TIME TABLE
Effective May 1st, 1905.

DEPART DAILY.

From Oregon short Line Depot, Salt Lake City.

No. 6—For Stockton & Tintic District ..... 7:45 a.m.
No. 52—For Provo, Mercur, Manti and Points on San Pete Valley ..... 8:00 a.m.
No. 31—For Provo, Nephi and Lynn ..... 3:00 p.m.
No. 1—For Los Angeles and Intermediate Points ..... 8:30 p.m.
No. 35—For Nephi and Intermediate Points ..... 11:30 p.m.

ARRIVE DAILY.

No. 3—From Los Angeles and Intermediate Points ..... 6:30 a.m.
No. 32—From Lynn, Provo and Intermediate Points ..... 9:00 a.m.
No. 36—From Manti, Nephi and Intermediate Points ..... 1:30 p.m.
No. 34—From Nephi, Provo and Intermediate Points ..... 5:40 p.m.
No. 6—From Tintic District and Intermediate Points ..... 6:00 p.m.

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OREGON SHORT LINE RAILROAD

Time Table

IN EFFECT June 1st, 1905.

ARRIVE.

No. 4—From Ogden, Chicago, Omaha, St. Louis, Kansas City and Denver, ... 8:15 a.m.
No. 8—From Ogden, Portland, Butte and San Francisco ..... 8:30 a.m.
No. 5—From Ogden and Intermediate points ..... 9:30 a.m.
No. 12—From Ogden, Cache Valley and intermediate points 11:45 a.m.
No. 2—From Ogden, Chicago, St. Louis, Kansas City, Omaha, Denver and San Francisco ..... 4:45 p.m.
No. 10—From Ogden, Cache Valley, Butte, Portland and San Francisco ..... 7:40 p.m.

DEPART.

No. 5—For Ogden, Omaha, Chicago, Denver, Kansas City and St. Louis ..... 7:10 a.m.
No. 7—For Ogden, Portland, Butte, San Francisco and Intermediate points ..... 10:30 a.m.
No. 1—For Ogden, Omaha, Chicago, Denver, Kansas City, St. Louis and San Francisco ..... 1:40 p.m.
No. 11—For Ogden, Cache Valley and intermediate points 4:10 p.m.
No. 3—For Ogden, Denver, Kansas City, Omaha, St. Louis and Chicago ..... 6:00 p.m.
No. 9—For Ogden, Cache Valley, Butte, Helena, Portland, San Francisco and intermediate points ..... 11:45 p.m.

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Note:—Train numbers shown above are Oregon Short Line train numbers and do not apply to the Southern Pacific west of Ogden or the Union Pacific east thereof.

The DENVER & RIO GRANDE RAILROAD

Current Time Table.
In Effect May 21, 1905.

LEAVE SALT LAKE CITY.

No. 10—For Heber, Provo and Marysvale ..... 8:00 a.m.
No. 10—For Park City ..... 8:15 am.
No. 6—For Denver and East ... 8:00 a.m.
No. 15—For Ogden and Local Points ..... 10:25 a.m.
No. 6—For ogden and west ... 10:25 a.m.
No. 1—For ogden and West ... 1:45 p.m.
No. 3—For Denver and East.... 2:00 p.m.
No. 8—For Provo and Eureka... 3:00 p.m.
No. 113—For Bingham ..... 4:10 p.m.
No. 114—For Bingham ..... 9:00 p.m.
No. 11—For Ogden and Local points ..... 6:05 p.m.
No. 4—For Denver and East.... 9:00 p.m.
No. 3—For Ogden and West.... 11:10 p.m.

ARRIVE SALT LAKE CITY.

No. 6—From Ogden and the West ..... 8:40 a.m.
No. 12—From Ogden and Local points ..... 9:50 a.m.
No. 1—From Eureka and Provo.. 10:00 a.m.
No. 5—From Denver and East. 10:25 a.m.
No. 1—From Denver and East.. 1:55 p.m.
No. 14—From Ogden ..... 3:05 p.m.
No. 2—From Ogden and the West ..... 3:40 p.m.
No. 10—From Park City ..... 6:15 p.m.
No. 9—From Heber, Provo and Marysvale ..... 6:00 p.m.
No. 113—From Bingham ..... 10:05 a.m.
No. 112—From Bingham ..... 3:40 p.m.
No. 4—From Ogden and the West ..... 7:10 p.m.
No. 3—From Denver and East. 11:00 p.m.

All trains except Nos. 1 to 5 inclusive stop at intermediate points.

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