

# Brigham Young

President of the Church, 1847–77

“I feel like shouting Hallelujah, all the time, when I think that I ever knew Joseph Smith,” said Brigham Young (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, sel. John A. Widtsoe [1954], 458). He proved to be a loyal friend and follower of the Prophet Joseph.

His example of speaking out for truth and righteousness caused some to label him the “Lion of the Lord.” “I care nothing about my character in this world,” he declared. “I do not care what men say about me; I want my character to stand fair in the eyes of my Heavenly Father” (Brigham Young Office Minutes, Apr. 24, 1859, Church History Library, Salt Lake City).

As a colonizer of the West and as governor of Utah Territory, he established orderly cities and fruitful orchards. He acknowledged the Lord’s hand in making the desert blossom: “We prayed over the land, and dedicated it and the water, air and everything pertaining to them unto the Lord, and the smiles of heaven rested on the land and it became productive” (*Discourses*, 483).

He left this counsel to those who hesitate to pray: “It matters not whether you or I feel like praying; when the time comes to pray, pray. If we do not feel like it, we should pray till we do” (*Discourses*, 44).

1801 Born on June 1 to John Young and Abigail Howe Young in Whitingham, Vermont

1824 Age 23, marries Miriam Works on October 8; she dies in 1832

1832 Age 30, baptized on April 14 in his own millpond near Mendon, New York

1832–33 Ages 31–32, serves a mission to Canada and leads a small company of converts to Kirtland, Ohio

1834 Age 32, marries Mary Ann Angell on February 18; she dies in 1882

1835 Age 33, ordained on February 14 as one of the original members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles by the Three Witnesses to the Book of Mormon: Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris

1839–41 Ages 38–40, serves a mission to Great Britain

1840 Age 38, sustained as President of the Quorum of the Twelve on April 14

1844 Age 43, becomes leader of the Church as President of the Quorum of the Twelve at Joseph Smith’s death on June 27

1846–47 Ages 44–46, leads the exodus west to the Salt Lake Valley and then returns to Winter Quarters

1847 Age 46, sustained as President of the Church on December 27, with Heber C. Kimball and Willard Richards as counselors

1853 Age 51, lays the cornerstone for the Salt Lake Temple

1877 Age 76, dies on August 29 in Salt Lake City after presiding over the Church for more than 30 years

## Summary

Brigham Young, second President of the Church, was the pioneer leader who guided the Saints west to the Salt Lake Valley. He sent families

to establish towns and colonies throughout the West. He taught the people to stand for truth and righteousness, to work hard, and to be educated.

THE CHURCH OF  
JESUS CHRIST  
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

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