

# John Taylor

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President of the Church, 1880–87

John Taylor enjoyed close association with Joseph Smith and Brigham Young. In the early years of the Restoration he became known as “Champion of Liberty and Defender of the Faith” because of his vocal and written support of the Church and its leaders during times of trouble.

He was shot several times at the martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum Smith. After a bullet struck him, he started falling out the window of his jail cell. Another bullet, though, struck his watch, and the blow forced him back in the room. Of this event he wrote, “I felt that the Lord had preserved me by a special act of mercy; that my time had not yet come, and that I had still a work to perform upon the earth.” (See *History of the Church*, 7:119–20.)

He testified at the funeral of President Brigham Young: “We are not alone! God is with us, and He will continue with us from this time henceforth and forever” (quoted in B. H. Roberts, *The Life of John Taylor* [1963], 325).

He taught that God watches over all the nations and peoples of the earth: “We say we are the children of God. That is true, we are. We are sparks struck from the blaze of His eternal fire. But what of the rest of the world—whose children are they? They are also the children of our Heavenly Father, and He is interested in their welfare as He is in ours” (quoted in Roberts, *The Life of John Taylor*, 421).

1808 Born on November 1 at Milnthorpe, England, to James and Agnes Taylor

- 1833 Age 24, marries Leonora Cannon on January 28; she dies in 1868
- 1836 Age 27, baptized with Leonora in Black Creek at Georgetown, Ontario, Canada, on May 9
- 1838 Age 30, ordained an Apostle by Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball on December 19
- 1839–41 Ages 30–32, serves a mission to England
- 1844 Age 35, seriously wounded in Carthage Jail when Joseph and Hyrum Smith were killed on June 27
- 1846–47 Ages 37–38, serves a second mission to England
- 1849–52 Ages 40–43, serves a mission to France and Germany; has the Book of Mormon published in French and German
- 1854–57 Ages 45–48, presides over the Eastern States Mission
- 1877 Age 68, leads the Church as President of the Quorum of the Twelve at Brigham Young’s death on August 29
- 1880 Age 71, sustained as President of the Church on October 10, with George Q. Cannon and Joseph F. Smith as counselors
- 1884 Age 75, dedicates the Logan Utah Temple on May 17
- 1887 Age 78, dies on July 25 in Kaysville, Utah, after nearly seven years as President of the Church

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## Summary

John Taylor, third President of the Church, was with the Prophet Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum when they were shot and killed at Carthage Jail. Though he was shot several times,

he said, “I felt that the Lord had preserved me by a special act of mercy.” He taught that God watches over all the nations of the earth and loves His children everywhere.

THE CHURCH OF  
JESUS CHRIST  
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS