



Historical Summary

The following chronology provides a brief historical framework for the teachings of President Joseph Fielding Smith in this book.

July 19, 1876	Born in Salt Lake City, Utah, to Julina Lambson Smith and Joseph F. Smith.
July 19, 1884	Baptized and confirmed by his father. Receives his first personal copy of the Book of Mormon from his father.
April 6, 1893	Attends the dedication of the Salt Lake Temple.
1896	Receives the Melchizedek Priesthood and the temple endowment.
April 26, 1898	Marries Louie Emily Shurtliff in the Salt Lake Temple.
May 1899 to July 1901	Serves as a full-time missionary assigned to England.
1901 to 1910	Serves in many Church callings, including as president in a priesthood quorum, a member of the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association general board, a high councilor, and a member of a general Church committee assigned to prepare materials in defense of the Church.
October 1901	Begins employment in the Church Historian's office.

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- 1902 Publishes a family history booklet titled *Asael Smith of Topsfield, Massachusetts, with Some Account of the Smith Family*. This is his first of many publications, including 25 books and numerous articles for Church magazines and periodicals.
- April 8, 1906 Sustained in general conference as Assistant Church Historian, a position he holds until March 1921.
- March 30, 1908 Louie Shurtliff Smith dies after suffering from a severe illness related to her third pregnancy.
- November 2, 1908 Marries Ethel Georgina Reynolds in the Salt Lake Temple.
- April 7, 1910 Ordained an Apostle by his father.
- October 1918 Records a revelation on the redemption of the dead as dictated by his father, who is the President of the Church at the time. This revelation is now found in Doctrine and Covenants 138.
- January 6, 1919 Appointed as a counselor in the presidency of the Salt Lake Temple, a position he holds until 1935.
- March 17, 1921 Named as Church Historian, a position he holds until 1970.
- 1934 Named as president of the Genealogical Society of Utah, a position he holds until 1961.
- August 26, 1937 Ethel Reynolds Smith dies after suffering with an illness for four years.
- April 12, 1938 Marries Jessie Ella Evans in the Salt Lake Temple.

- May to November 1939 Fills a special assignment in Europe with Jessie, visiting England, Scotland, Holland, Belgium, France, Switzerland, Italy, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Czechoslovakia, Austria, and Germany. Directs the evacuation of all American missionaries from Europe after the outbreak of World War II.
- June 8, 1945 Called to serve as president of the Salt Lake Temple, a position he holds until 1949.
- October 6, 1950 Set apart as Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.
- April 9, 1951 Sustained as President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.
- July to August 1955 Fills a special assignment in Asia, with Jessie accompanying him. Dedicates Guam, Korea, Okinawa, and the Philippines for the preaching of the gospel.
- September 1958 Attends the dedication of the London England Temple.
- October 1960 to January 1961 Accompanied by Jessie, visits Church leaders and missionaries in Central and South America.
- May 1963 Officiates at the laying of the cornerstone of the Oakland California Temple.
- September 1963 Dedicates the Pioneer Monument in Kansas City, Missouri, and the Liberty Jail Historic Site in Liberty, Missouri.
- October 29, 1965 Called to serve as a Counselor in the First Presidency under the direction of President David O. McKay.

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| January 18, 1970 | Becomes the senior Apostle and presiding leader of the Church at the death of President David O. McKay. |
| January 23, 1970 | Set apart as President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. |
| April 6, 1970 | Sustained as President of the Church in general conference. |
| August 3, 1971 | Jessie Evans Smith dies. |
| August 27–29, 1971 | Presides at the Church's first area conference, which is held in Manchester, England. |
| January 18, 1972 | Offers the dedicatory prayer for the Ogden Utah Temple. |
| February 9, 1972 | Presides at the dedication of the Provo Utah Temple. Having written the dedicatory prayer, assigns President Harold B. Lee to offer the prayer. |
| July 2, 1972 | Dies in Salt Lake City, Utah, 17 days before his 96th birthday. |