

Date	Title	Author	Place Delivered	Category
14 Aug. 2001	We Must Raise Our Sights	Henry B. Eyring	CES Symposium	A
1 Feb. 2002	Untitled (still unpublished)	Robert D. Hales	Evening with a General Authority	
13 Aug. 2002	Our Creator's Cosmos	Neal A. Maxwell	CES Symposium	D

The Baptisms of Latter-day Prophets

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As Jesus began His three-year ministry in Palestine, His first priority was to seek baptism at the hands of an authorized servant of God, one who held the proper priesthood to perform this sacred ordinance. He sought out His cousin, John the Baptist, and was baptized by immersion in the River Jordan. Likewise, when the Savior appeared to and taught the Nephites on the American continent, one of the first instructions He gave them was the necessity of and the proper mode of baptism. The importance of this crucial ordinance has been emphasized in our dispensation, with the Prophet Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery being instructed in this ordinance by John the Baptist himself.

All our latter-day prophets have followed the Savior's example by being baptized by immersion by one holding the priesthood of God. Our first five prophets were baptized as young men in their twenties or thirties as converts to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Our last ten prophets were baptized as children.^{lxxxvi} 1 The table that follows shows the date of each prophet's baptism, his place of baptism, his age when he was baptized, and the name of the person who performed the ordinance.

Interestingly, only one of our prophets (Gordon B. Hinckley) was baptized in an indoor baptismal font. The other fourteen were baptized in open bodies of water or makeshift fonts. Two prophets (Joseph Smith and Lorenzo Snow) were baptized in rivers, two (Brigham Young and Harold B. Lee) in ponds, six (John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, Joseph F. Smith, George Albert Smith, David O. McKay, and Joseph Fielding Smith) in streams or creeks, one (Heber J. Grant) in a wagon box, one (Spencer W. Kimball) in a tub and then later in a canal, one (Ezra Taft Benson) in a canal, one (Howard W. Hunter) in a swimming pool, and one (Gordon B. Hinckley) in a baptismal font in a chapel.

I can find no records that specifically state where Joseph Fielding Smith was baptized. However, he was baptized on a warm July day in 1884 by his father, Joseph F. Smith, and we can assume he was baptized in City Creek, a commonly used baptismal area of that day and the place where Joseph F. Smith himself was baptized.

Wilford Woodruff's baptism must have been memorable for several reasons. He was baptized in an icy stream on 31 December 1833 in Richland, New York. He recorded the following in his journal concerning his baptism: "The snow was about three feet deep, the day was cold, and the water was mixed with ice and snow, yet I did not feel the cold!"^{lxxxvii} 2 Wilford was baptized just two days after first hearing the gospel preached.

Interestingly, I have not been able to determine who baptized Heber J. Grant.

Prophet	Date of Baptism	Place of Baptism	Age at Baptism	Name of Baptizer
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Prophet	Date of Baptism	Place of Baptism	Age at Baptism	Name of Baptizer
Joseph Smith	15 May 1829	Susquehanna River near Harmony, Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania	23 years 5 months	Oliver Cowdery, as directed by John the Baptist
Brigham Young	14 April 1832	A millpond near Mendon, Monroe County, New York	30 years 10 months	Eleazar Miller, an early Church missionary
John Taylor	9 May 1836	A stream near Toronto, Ontario, Canada	27 years 6 months	Parley P. Pratt, an Apostle
Wilford Woodruff	31 Dec 1833	An icy stream near Richland, Oswego County, New York	26 years 10 months	Zera Pulsipher, an early Church missionary
Lorenzo Snow	3 June 1836	Chagrin River, near Kirtland, Lake County, Ohio	22 years 2 months	John F. Boynton, an Apostle
Joseph F. Smith	21 May 1852	City Creek, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, Utah	13 years 6 months	Heber C. Kimball, First Counselor in the First Presidency
Heber J. Grant	2 June 1864	A wagon box rigged up as a font near City Creek, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, Utah	7 years 6 months	
George Albert Smith	6 June 1878	City Creek, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, Utah	8 years 2 months	James Moyle
David O. McKay	8 Sept 1881	Spring Creek, near Huntsville, Weber County, Utah	8 years	Peter Geertsen
Joseph Fielding Smith	19 July 1884	Probably in City Creek, Salt Lake County, Utah	8 years	Joseph F. Smith, his father
Harold B. Lee	9 June 1907	Bybee Pond, near Clifton, Franklin County, Idaho	8 years 2 months	Lester Bybee, a neighbor and

Prophet	Date of Baptism	Place of Baptism	Age at Baptism	Name of Baptizer family friend
Spencer W. Kimball	28 Mar 1903	A hog-scalding tub (the family bathtub), Thatcher, Graham County, Arizona	8 years	Andrew Kimball, his father
	5 Oct 1907	Union Canal, Thatcher, Arizona; rebaptized because of concerns about the propriety of the tub baptism	12 years 6 months	
Ezra Taft Benson	4 Aug 1907	Logan River Canal, Whitney, Franklin County, Idaho	8 years	George Taft Benson, his father
Howard W. Hunter	4 April 1920	Natatorium swimming pool, Boise, Ada County, Idaho	12 years 5 months	George W. Willis
Gordon B. Hinckley	28 April 1919	Font in First Ward chapel, Salt Lake Liberty Stake, Salt Lake City, Utah	8 years	Bryant S. Hinckley, his father

Notes

1. I am indebted to the following article for some of the baptismal information: William Hartley, "Our Prophets' Places of Baptism," *Friend*, August 1997, 42–43.
2. Matthias F. Cowley, *Wilford Woodruff* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1964), 35.

Joseph Smith and the Messiah: Prophetically Linked

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Links from Old Testament prophets to Book of Mormon prophets and to the modern-day Prophet Joseph Smith span place and time: Old World to New World and antiquity to modern day.

Ancient prophecies that were quoted by Book of Mormon prophets and later personally delivered by Moroni to the boy Joseph Smith bear witness of Christ, the One who sees all the dispensations of time before Him. These holy men testified that Jesus is the Messiah and that Joseph Smith is one "like unto Moses" who was "raised up" as a "choice seer" to restore the gospel that makes ready the way for the Savior's return. These men also stand as witnesses of the prophetic link between Christ and Joseph. Through the Book of Mormon, we learn that the Holy Messiah and Joseph Smith are inseparably connected both in the visions and words of ancient prophets. A