

## Family History Saviors on Mount Zion

Cooper Mountain Ward Sacrament Meeting January 29,2012  
Mike Baird

### Intro

- Depends upon the previous speakers
- Malachi 4:5-6 (As Moroni quoted to Joseph Smith)  
"Behold, I will reveal unto you the Priesthood, by the hand of Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.  
  
And he shall plant in the hearts of the children the promises made to the fathers, and **the hearts of the children shall turn to their fathers.** If it were not so, the whole earth would be utterly wasted at his coming."
- I would like to share how the words " the hearts of the children shall turn to their fathers " have come to mean more than just words of scripture to me but something I know and feel inside by the power of the Spirit

## Saviors on Mount Zion

- Obadiah 1:21

"And saviours shall come up on mount Zion... "

- Interesting how 8 words from a prophet we rarely think of can have so much meaning

- Joseph Smith Jr

"But what is the object of [the coming of Elijah]? or how is it to be fulfilled? The keys are to be delivered, the spirit of Elijah is to come, the gospel to be established, the saints of God gathered, Zion built up, and the *saints to come up as saviors on Mount Zion*.

But how are they to become saviors on Mount Zion? By building their temples, erecting their baptismal fonts, and going forth and receiving all the ordinances, baptisms, confirmations, washings, anointings, ordinations and sealing powers upon their heads, *in behalf of all their progenitors who are dead*, and redeem them that they may come forth in the first resurrection and be exalted to thrones of glory with them; and herein is the chain that binds the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers, which fulfills the mission of Elijah." (Documentary History of the Church 6:184, January 21, 1844)

- Note distinctive phrase "*in behalf of all their progenitors who are dead*"
  - Don't want to be misunderstood
    - Need to go for to perform the ordinances and and take on covenants for ourselves
    - Going to the temple for someone that is not an ancestor is a great work and we should go and do it
    - *But the heart of the Spirit of Elijah and being a savior on Mt Zion is doing the work of our ancestors*

**Now let me tell you** how the words of Elijah has been written in my heart and what becoming a savior on Mt Zion has come to mean to me

## **Serving a Mission**

- Served in Sweden
- 1/8<sup>th</sup> Norwegian so excited to go to Scandinavia
- Learned to read/write/speak Swedish – close to Norwegian

## **Returning Home**

- Grandmother excited – Margaretha's box
- Anna's book & letters

## **Anne Larsen**

- Born in 1844 at Stigen Farm near Ringeby
- Moved to Trondheim around 1870
- Had two children Martin and Margaretha (1874)
- Baptized 1880
- Emigrated to Utah at age 48 with Margaretha age 17 in 1892
  - Piece of here trunk on my wall

## **BYU**

- Looked up the Ringeby Parish records
  - Records back to 1690
- Verified but didn't get any further
  - Gothic script
  - Patronymics
- Graduated in 1882 and moved here
- Didn't do much other than fell guilty occasionally as I *knew* it was my responsibility for this line of our family tree

## **November 2000 – Moved by the Spirit**

- Overwhelming feeling to pick up my family history work on Norway
- Went to Family History center
- Checked on records – nothing more had been done
- Got on the internet
  - Found out about Ringeby
  - Church from 11<sup>th</sup> Century
  - Found 1801 and 1865 census on-line!
  - 1801 sliced across right where I needed

- Within days found another generation

### **Parish Records on Line**

- Could see I was in for a long grueling bit of research to get any further
- Felt I needed to go further
- Felt prompted to search some more on the internet
- Found University of Trondheim digitizing Parish records
  - Ringebu on line end of January 2001
  - Only in Norwegian
- By the end of March 2001 I had found some 165 people in Anna Larsen's family line

### **Driven to find them**

- Couldn't leave it alone – night after night
- I could feel they were counting on me
- At times I felt there was rejoicing on the other side as they were "found"
- I could feel the Spirit guiding me
- At times they felt so close – I felt myself drawn to Norway and their lives
- I felt that I came to know them
  - I could envision their farms and how their lives might have been
- I rejoiced when I found marriage or the birth of a child
- I ached and wept over children who died as infants or little children
  - Christen, then Christen, then Christen
  - Didn't know about small pox 8-10 years up to 50%
- Such were my emotions wrenched from joy to sorrow to joy as I searched out my ancestors

## **To the Temple**

- In April of 2001 I took the names to the Family History Center to get ready for the Temple
- Only a handful had the work done for them
- In May 2001 youth went to the temple
- Baptized my children and other youth from my ancestors
  - **First time that feeling of doing work for an ancestor**
  - Everyone who has done the temple work for an ancestor knows it is a different feeling to do for your ancestors
  - Many times now I've felt that feeling that my ancestors are rejoicing as they receive the work being done for them
  - Nancy too
    - The sisters
- Spring of 2002 we did the last of the work for those first 165 people

## **Coincidence on timing?**

- Was it coincidence that when I was "moved upon" that the information was available?
- No

### **Finding a Cousin – Fall 2004**

- Business trip
- Erling Saether my mother's 3<sup>rd</sup> cousin

### **Ringebu Dec 2004**

- Met my cousin
- Visited the town, church
- Visited the farms

### **Stigen Farm**

- Describe standing there
- My feelings as we arrived at the main Stigen farm are hard to describe. After taking photographs, I looked around and in my mind's eye tried to picture how things might have been; the animals, the children and the adults. As I did I was overwhelmed with emotions difficult to describe. Twenty six and ½ years after I first held Anna Larsen's book in my hands, I was standing at the spot where she was born just over 160 years earlier. Four years after I felt an overwhelming desire to find my ancestors from Ringebu, Norway, I had not only found them back in time but I had found them in place as well. As I stood there on the Stigen farm by the fence, looking down over the pasture, out over the Gudbrand valley and the small city of Ringebu, I had a feeling of completeness, and peace in my heart.

### **More work since then**

- Hundreds of more people
- Steady temple work
- Other wonderful experiences
- **This work is a continual blessing in my life**

### **Stake Temple night last fall**

I was attending a stake temple night chapel session. The speaker mentioned something about “saviors on Mt. Zion” which caused me to contemplate my experiences with my ancestors in Ringebu, Norway and to imagine meeting them at some future time.

As I did so

a feeling of the Spirit came over me that as best I could express with words “said” to me. “Your ancestors rejoice and are eternally grateful for the work you have done for them” I received the impression of them watching over me and of my receiving blessings throughout eternity because of the work I had done for them

### **Will we all have the same experiences as I have had?**

- Circumstances unique to all of us so not exactly however...
  - I feel strongly that *all of us* have someone for whom we can be a savior on Mt Zion for
- It is not about me
  - It's about my ancestors and the goodness and grace of a loving Heavenly Father who wishes to bless all his children who did not have the opportunity here on earth to receive the blessings of the gospel
- I feel as an instrument
- If you haven't already can you feel the same way I do – absolutely yes!
  - D&C 18:15
    - " And if it so be that you should labor all your days in crying repentance unto this people, and bring, save it be one soul unto me, how great shall be your joy with him in the kingdom of my Father!"
    - This scripture can equally apply to Family History work

### **What to do if you are not sure what should you do?**

- Opinion that most all of us spend some time on the internet each day or week
  - Youth
    - [lds.org/youth](https://www.lds.org/youth)
  - Adults
    - [lds.org/youth](https://www.lds.org/youth)
    - [familysearch.org](https://www.familysearch.org)

### **Closing**

- I cannot adequately describe with words the feelings I have toward my ancestors in Norway
  - They are family!
  - I look forward immensely to meeting them someday
  - My heart has turned to them
  - I am bound to them and they are bound to me - this I know