

Jedediah Morgan Grant The first Mayor of Salt Lake City

Jedediah Morgan Grant was born February 21, 1816 to Joshua Grant and Athalia Nan Howard in Windsor, New York. He was baptized into the Church of Christ on March 21, 1833, at the age of 17. By age 18, he had participated in Zion's Camp, marching from Kirtland, Ohio, to Missouri under the direction of Joseph Smith. Though physical objectives of the march were not met, many members later became leaders in Smith's church. Grant's close relationship with these men from such an early age would last the rest of his life.

Grant was among the first Latter Day Saint missionaries to go to Maryland, North Carolina and Virginia. His preaching efforts in the Toms River area of New Jersey in the late 1830's led to the conversion of members of the Ivins family. Grant was one of a group of men (which also included Brigham Young, Wilford Woodruff and George A. Smith) who were called in 1844 to campaign for Smith's election to President of the United States.

After Smith's death, Grant was called to serve as President of the Seventy. As a Seventy, he assisted with the trek westwards and the setting of the Salt Lake Valley. He would later become the first mayor of Salt Lake City, Utah, serving in that position from 1851 until his death. Morgan County, Utah and Morgan, Utah are both named after him. In 1854, Grant was ordained an apostle, but he did not become a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Instead, he was called to the First Presidency as Young's Second Counselor, filling the vacancy left by the death of Willard Richards.

In 1856, Grant was called by Young to tour the northern sections of Utah Territory, calling the Latter-day Saints to repentance. Grant inspired the Mormon Reformation of 1856 as he delivered speeches on this tour. He issued a call for rebaptism of all the members of the area. Grant's speeches earned him the title "Brigham's Sledgehammer". The effects of his speeches were felt almost immediately. Members throughout the area, as well as in distant parts, were rebaptized to signify their commitment to renew their commitments to the Church of Latter Day Saints and the gospel.

Grant contracted pneumonia after his vigorous tour. He died on December 1, 1856, just nine days after his son, Heber J. Grant, was born to his wife Rachel Ridgeway Ivins. Like many early Mormons, Grant practiced plural marriage. He had a total of seven wives, among them Susan Fairchild Noble Grant, who wrote reminiscences of early life in Utah and was a leader in the Relief Society after Grant died. By his wives, Grant had 11 children (10 biological, one adopted). His son Heber became the seventh President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

Jedediah Grant is buried at the Salt Lake City Cemetery in Plat F, Block 13, Lot 9, Grave 1 West.

