

How Firm a Foundation

Question and Answer Period

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I don't have to wait for anyone's permission to observe the Law of Consecration. What is necessary for us, we will be held accountable for that. You have to decide that, but you know what it is: Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content.

Brigham Young recognized more than anyone else that there has to be a physical, practical foundation. That's what made him the great founder, the great builder and everything else--the great city founder and so forth. He was planning streets, trees and fresh water way back (inaudible). He saw that. And if you're building not according to this law, then you won't know what to do. We say, "Well, this is the only solution I have, I have to accept this, it is all we have got." It is all we have got because we have thrown out everything else. We refuse to accept anything else. The Lord says, "If you would live my way then you would be surprised what you would discover."

The Lord says to the rich men of the church (Martin Harris), "What is property to me? I own everything, I don't need it." He will give it to you too. These problems will be solved. To look upon that as an insolvable problem with only one solution... (i.e. population --a real problem) Brigham Young prophesied that there would be food shortages because there wouldn't be any more farmers--not because there would be bad years or because crops would fail--but because there just would not be room to grow the crops. Too many people for the oasis springs of the Wasatch Front. He could foresee that. Then there

would have to be some other solution. But it would be obvious what to do.

If you live by a stream, the obvious thing to do is to wash in the stream, to drink from the stream, etc. because of convenience. But you soon discover that you can't do all of these things. Brigham saw all that right from the beginning. You have to hold back, you have to anticipate problems and complications that are going to arise. Before you know it, your problem with the stream becomes very complex, whereas it seemed so very simple when you were living by the babbling brook all by yourself.

But it has been shown that the English could actually clean up the Thames River--that's nothing short of a miracle when you consider what a sewer the Thames was. It's amazing what things can be done. It costs something, but there it is, you see. It has to be undertaken by... under this law (consecration) where all of the funds are administered from a center. Here again, we're not talking about our form of government; we're talking about another one. We're talking about a totally different set-up. In that case problems can be solved which can't be solved otherwise.

There are nations that have far denser populations than ours and they have not had to run into this horrible pollution. There is something to be done about our problem. The minute you start saying, "Oh, no. This won't fit into our situation..." There it is. We are talking about a different ballgame.

We must be led by inspiration. And we are not going to get any inspiration until we live the rules the Lord has given us. Follow the rules first, then the doors will be opened.

Remember (this is what we seem to forget here) that in the same breath, the same sentence, Adam was told, "We have created for you this earth and have put in it everything you need." The earth is

full and there is more than enough. Here is all you will need. All you have to do is take it. It is all a free gift. And what do we do? The Lord gives us everything as a free gift and we spend our days fighting each other to see who can grab the most. And some people have grabbed enormous amounts. "And He has commanded all living creatures, along with every form of vegetation also to multiply." Then He immediately add: "And we command you to multiply, too, and we give you dominion--put you in charge of this whole thing." Now the plan is that other creatures should also multiply and fulfill the measure of their existence in their proper sphere and have joy therein--they have the same privilege as you do--and you are put in charge to see that they realize those privileges.

Well, it depends on the economy that we are going to use. You can remember the times not so long ago when they thought you could get only such and such a yield per acre--you couldn't possibly get more than that. Now we have techniques where we can get groves more. The Green Revolution and so forth. These are possibilities we are overlooking.

We have to share the earth with other creatures and we have to share it with each other. But we don't do that.

Brigham Young says--There is one activity upon which God smiles and that is planting. "Dress this garden, take care of it and be happy therein." Be a gardener--I've discovered the wisdom of that. "But, behold the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air and that which abound on the earth is ordained for the use of man." If you need it you're welcome to it.

"That ye might have in abundance. But it is not given that one man possess that which is above another. Wherefore the world lieth in sin." If one person grabs it all you're not going to have this distribution of abundance that He's talking about. Question- Could we coexist with neighbors if we began to live the law of consecration?

If we even began to live it, the results would be so sensational the majority would gladly join in. But remember, the Lord said you'll get into trouble. He says a number of times, because of this you will be persecuted, so you can expect that. As we said before, they were driven out. Though not because of this but because they observed it so half-heartedly. But there is nothing in the Constitution to prevent it. You can do it. I mean, if I start living it, should that offend my neighbor in any way? No, not at all. If we start, we may have an advantaged economy. Things will be selling cheaper and we might have in abundance but they'd be bound to want to share in that. The prophets and prophecies have had a lot to say about that: How gladly the world would participate and how eagerly they would welcome a system that would give the whole community much greater economic stability. But...I don't need to discuss that--the Lord has given to me and I have accepted it. It is beyond discussion as far as I am concerned. And if I don't keep it I will be in Satan's power. And I am. Debt--that's what debt is--the Hebrew word means "money"--that's what the root is. You're in a man's power as long as you owe him a debt at all. This is not an exaggeration, we are all enthralled by debt. In Utah we do not have a very high standard

of ...ing, which is a shame and a disgrace. Brigham Young said, "I can make these people, in a very short time, the richest the world has ever seen, if they would just follow this rule." But, he says, maybe it's better not because they'd be spoiled. And that's another thing--the Book of Mormon cycle. They are exceedingly blessed and the first thing you know they start setting their hearts on the stuff, then you're in real trouble.

President Kimball gave a Bicentennial address in which he said this, remember? "On the whole we are an idolatrous people." We are not Zion, we are an idolotrous people--that's what President Kimball said.

The Brethren have often tried. John Taylor tried, Brigham Young tried, they all did, Wilford Woodruff...the Saints were unwilling. They gave Joseph Smith a bad time.

Question- The D&C says the rich will be made poor and the poor made rich. How do you reconcile that with Brigham Young saying he'd make them a rich people?

Well, the idea is this: If you raise the poor and you bring the rich down then you've got your equality. Remember, whenever He gives this commandment He says, "That ye may be equal in temporal as in spiritual. How can ye be equal in spiritual if ye are not equal in temporal?" It's not the work ethic. Every-thing can be done without that motivation. We can't do the Lord's work now. We do very little because we have to spend all of our time with this other stuff.

We used to tell the world the terrible things that were going to happen. Now they are telling us the terrible things

that are happening and we shrug out shoulders.

Question-about the word 'scenario'.

Actually scenario is a Renaissance word, it is an address by the director of a play to the actors before they begin rehearsal to tell what each person's particular role was; to give them the background, to tell them what the whole play is about. To give them an idea of what they were doing. And that is what Joseph Smith gave us--he gave us a real scenario. So that when you read the scriptures you know where you fit in. You know what the play is, what the drama is all about. You can take an intelligible part in it. It's a glorious thing. Nobody else had a scenario. There was none, really, nobody had anything.

Question-on Jubilee year.

We don't have a Jubilee year, of course, but they recognized the justice in that because the purpose of the Jubilee year was to go back to the time when Israel was living as Israel should. It is to go back to the Paradise of Eden, it's a lovely phase where all things are shared equally and so forth. All debts are cancelled which makes everybody equal again and they start out with a clean sheet. Recognizing the basis of this thing you'd say nothing on earth could be more impractical than that. I mean, to have to cancel all of your debts, to wipe out all of your banking, all of your interest and all of that. You'd think it would completely destroy the economy, but it didn't, it kept it going actually.

Question- What would happen if a group of people from the church

decided to go off and live with everything in common?

There are lots of them. They do that all the time. A group in Springville just two weeks ago tried to get me in this and that's what I said to them. No, you don't go off and live it by yourself. I don't have to join your group and form a splinter. I don't have the authority--you don't have the authority. All I know is that I'm stuck with it and I can live it. And I don't have to join your particular group. Various fundamentalists say we are not living the law--well of course we are not living the law but does that authorize them? It's like the Seventh Day Adventists: they may recognize that we are keeping the wrong Sabbath but that doesn't authorize them to re-establish the rights of the Aaronic Priesthood, the Temple, The Ark of the Covenant and all of the rest. The fact that you recognize a thing needs to be done does not authorize you to do it. But I am authorized to keep this so far as I am obliged to keep it. And I've made the covenant.

Question- How do we do it, etc. Who do we consecrate to?

The way it is stated in the D&C is to the bishop--and you can go right to the bishop and give it to him. Everything that you consider surplus you can give to the bishop and he will gladly accept it right now. And he'll give it to the poor where it is supposed to be. What's better than that?

Question- What is the motivation to produce--doesn't this reduce everyone to the lowest common denominator?

It reduces everybody to a common ground but it could be a very high one, much higher than it is now. In the last U.S. News and World Report there's a list of the average income of the various states and Utah is right down at the bottom of the list.

As far as motivation is concerned, my gosh, you work your head off on projects you don't get paid for. On the stage, in literature, or the stuff I write and so forth--I've just been knocking myself out to write a particular pamphlet (I think it's a pretty good one) for the church missionary committee, and things like that. There's no limit. And it says, "This is to liberate you to improve your talents." You may have to work on something drab. (Go to the cannery). But as Brigham Young said, it's just a matter of a couple of hours a day--a few hours a week. That's not going to ruin you at all, that little bit of exercise. Machines are doing more and more of it anyway. Of course, that is one of the troubles in our economy. The technological unemployment and so forth. Machines are doing it all. We've got to find out something else to do. There's no shortage of motivation and work to be done--I assure you.

Question- Granted we are in Satan's power. How do we get out?

Well, I observe the law, as far as that goes. We do that individually, of course. This is the marvelous thing about the church, not only do we make these covenants with the Lord separately, but you have your own testimony. You have your guidance, you have the experience. "Everyone has to be wrought," Joseph Smith says. To any Latter-day-Saint, the Holy Ghost is nothing but the spirit of Prophecy--we should be led by that. You don't go to the Head of the church with all these things--the Lord says, "Don't bother me about these kinds of things." You'll be guided all right. This is a very important part of the gospel. But also working together the same way. The leaders

will be inspired--the Lord will lead the way.

I was just looking at Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith before I came over here, and he says every Latter-day-Saint should know for himself when we speak truth and when we don't. He should have the spirit of the Lord so that he doesn't depend on any other person for guidance. Only the Lord himself. He says the saints have been trusting in the prophet too much, and are thereby darkening their minds.

Question- If we are not to be of the world nor in the world why are we told to be so involved?

Well, our missionaries go into the world but they are not becoming of it. That's a good example. They go into the world but they are not involved with it. What's more, the economy is ridiculous. They are not getting paid for it. Some churches just cannot conceive of that. Missionaries are working under the Law of Consecration, which is that they will get everything they need, and in return they give everything they've got. A missionary does give everything he's got to the work of the Lord, and in return he receives everything he needs.. All your contacts with the world are in the nature of a missionary context. As far as the rest is concerned--for any other purpose except missionary work--it's not justified. It is not given to you to live after the manner of the world. You must live by the celestial law, "otherwise I cannot take you in to me." There is that separation, and we see it again and again in these latter days. We are the Saints. The word 'sanctus' means divided, set apart, it is a force and it sets us apart. You are not of the world when you are Saints. And you're reminded of it everytime you hear the

name "Latter-day-Saints". When the Lord rebukes then he calls them Saints. Not meaning that they are holy but meaning that they should not enter the world. They should be separated from the world, they should be removed from the world and not do things after the manner of the world. The scriptures are very clear on that and I don't care what anybody else tells me. As far as the scripture is concerned we are going to have to do what Lehi did, and what the Brother of Jared did--get out of it. That's what the Saints did when they came here. Joseph Smith said at Far West, "we came here to this beautiful place to build Zion, and what did you do? You brought Babylon." Brigham Young said the same thing: "You come to the valley here and what do we do? We brought Babylon with us. In that way, the Lord will not redeem Zion." He said we had to work and fight and pray and be driven for 30 years to acquire what we could have gotten in one year if we would have observed the commandments of the Lord.

I don't know who is telling you to get out into the world and get active in all this kind of thing. But you know (inaudible). There's no explanation for it as far as that goes. Not meaning that you have to go immediately (inaudible) and preach the gospel. We preach by example all the time. But if you mean putting your hearts in the way of the world and going after the way of the world--well the scriptures have a great deal to say about that. In Third Nephi the Lord says, "I pray not for the world." He says, I pray for these, the disciples and those that hear them and they that follow them, "That they may become one, as we are one. That they may be out of the world, etc."

Always a sharp distinction between the world and those who are set apart from it. You can't go among the world without being defiled in some way.

Question- The church wants to be accepted of the world today.

We love to be accepted by the world. (Inaudible.) Today we follow them, they don't follow us, as far as that goes. So it is a question...and I know some rather grim stories where the brethren with heavy hearts, very reluctantly have done things, made concessions, which, uh, (inaudible). But they felt they had to make concessions for particular reasons. This is it, you see, we are told that Satan enticeth and inviteth in one direction (Moroni 7) and God enticeth in another. And we are in the middle. This is the gospel of repentance. "This is my gospel" said the Lord to Lehi, "That my Father calls upon all men everywhere to repent." This is what the world doesn't want and what we have got to do: turn away from sin. As soon as we say we are doing very well and that repentance is for other people...

Inaudible question.

Well, you keep out of the world. Remember this is the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints--of course the "last days". But the last days of what? It's telling us it is soon going to be over. This time is near at hand. Just read D&C 1. The first 18 verses tell us what is happening in the world today. The opening words of the Lord to Joseph Smith in the grove: "Behold the world lieth in sin. None doeth good, no not one. And mine anger is kindled against the inhabitants of the earth to visit them." It's all going to end pretty soon!

This is it--why should we be concerned with these things when we know they are going to end. We are supposed to be sacred. Joseph Smith accepted the call which was to come out of the world. Well, how long does it go? 150 years? That isn't so long. These are the last days.

Inaudible question.

"Partake not of her sins lest ye partake of her plagues." So give yourself a shot of some kind, go into a catalytic state and then wake up sometime when it is all safe to wake up again. No, we are here for the test, for the proving. This is a time of probation. Which side are we going to choose? Where is our heart? Remember, the fatal step in the Book of Mormon is always when they begin to set their hearts on the things of the world. Then they have to defend their holdings by military means. They seek military solutions and it's all over then. That marvelously prophetic Book of Mormon! You find it all there. Question- Do we have a responsibility to make up for past wrongs or just live our life from here out?

That interesting expression of Brigham Young (the great ecologist)--he said, "the world is now fouled and polluted. It will take many years to restore it to its pristine state for the millenium, to make the earth fit for habitation in the millenium." There's this interesting statement here (D&C 77:9) where it says, "We are to understand the angel ascending from the east is he who is given the seal of the living God over the Twelve Tribes of Israel? wherefore he crieth unto the four angels having the everlasting gospel, saying: Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And if you will receive it, this is Elias..."

They are the angels of destruction and they are not to hurt the earth nor the sea or the trees. 40% of the earth's land surface is covered with trees and all of a sudden the trees are being grievously hurt. Not only the terrible fires that rage every year; a million acres a day at least are being destroyed of virgin forest. There's a book out--I just noticed it today--it's called _____--and this is very rapidly taking place. By the year 2000, a world without trees. And then the waters. "Hurt not the seas." Whoever thought the multitudes in the seas could be ____, whoever thought they would be polluted? Well, ask Heyerdahl, ask Cousteau. Wherever they go in the world they find vile pollution.

And take the MX for example.

For the first time they are being systematically, and with stupendously effective machines and with sort of a devilish determination, they are being destroyed--the earth, the seas and trees. That means that those angels have been dismissed now, they have been loosed. The time has come for the great destruction which is now at hand. So you can expect it.

Now you see, I can say that without turning a hair, without blushing--because I remember two world wars very well. I remember the day World War I began! All the excitement and so forth, and we'd go out in the lot and dig trenches and we'd play war and so forth. Then I found myself one day, many years later, in those very same trenches in France which had been preserved from WW I. (inaudible) And there we were in the dugouts and barracks they used in WW I, shell holes all around. Imagine how that would turn a person's stomach. The point is, we hadn't learned any lessons at all. The war was just as silly.

Having seen that, I won't be really surprised. It will happen--it does. People get wiped out all over the place. These are the last days, brothers and sisters. And the Lord has founded his work on a firm foundation. It will not be destroyed. As long as there is one elder who remains true and faithful, the church is there, He says. So we have nothing to worry about as far as that is concerned. All I have to worry about is whether I'm right with the Lord--and that's none of your business! And your's is none of my business. (laughter) So why do I talk about this? Well, if there are no more questions.

Question: about modern technological advantages (microphone).

As a result I have a lousy voice. I can't express myself--as if I were a singer--one of these pop singers, people with no talents, no gifts, no voice whatsoever are able to...it's another form of pollution. It pollutes your ears! This is just the first step. You know, over in the Eyring building there's a "How to Make an Invention" display. And they leave out the most important step of all. First, you decide whether such a gadget would do more harm than good--that has never been decided. They do good, there is a value, but there is also a harm. They must be weighed one against the other, is this really good (a microphone)? I'd be a much better speaker for one thing--and we'd have much better designed meeting places like the Greeks did, if we did not have these things. But these things help--you use gadgets. This is one of the things we learn in the gospel. We come here to master the new medium. We have taken physical bodies--they are a coarser nature than we have known before and our problem is to handle them.

Maccon says that is a difficult problem. He says material control you. But we have to adapt to this difficult medium and control it; don't let it control us. And it is a process of trial and error-- this is part of it. Sometimes it's good, sometimes it's bad. Just like television. In the beginning we imagined the great potentialities and possibilities, but it's damage has been much greater.

So how do we handle these things? As the Lord shall direct. That's why I have the gift of prophecy. So, like I say, I'd probably be better off without these things (microphone). I don't like them and never have liked them. I'm a bad enough speaker, the less people that hear me the better.

Let's go to class.