

how to proceed with a certain problem or situation (and they had many grievous problems and difficult situations), he would often reply by reminding them of the principles by which they should be guided, answering some of their questions directly where he thought they needed answer and then advising them to proceed in accordance with their own best judgment and to handle the situation themselves.

### *Use of Free Agency*

This generation, in many places in the world, has been deliberately conditioned for regimentation, and I am sure that those forces which are committed to the principle of the free agency of man and his intelligent action and responsibility in his own behalf must be more vigorous than ever before in counteracting this contrary influence. I do not know anything, for example, that is more wasteful of time or more destructive of individuality, than making it necessary for people to wait long hours in long lines. I wouldn't say that it was always avoidable, but certainly it must not become our way of life. Certainly these things must not be permitted to be perpetuated beyond actual necessity, lest our lives become reduced to an inflexible pattern.

I would plead with you, my brethren and sisters, and pray our Father in heaven, that, as individuals and as people and as a nation, we may give our full energies to bringing to pass much righteousness; that we may not withhold our labor; that we may get in and do the job that needs to be done, and work and give our strength constructively for the creation and the production of those things which the world so badly needs; that we may proceed with full purpose of heart in accordance with the principles we know to be true; and that we may take responsibility and make decisions and bring to pass much righteousness of our own volition, not waiting to be commanded in all things, for the way is clear before us, and our duties and obligations and responsibilities are not hidden from us. May God help us so to proceed, I ask in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

### ELDER JOSEPH F. SMITH

#### *Patriarch to the Church*

My brethren and sisters, will you give me your faith, and will you join me in my prayer that I may be equal to this assignment?

Night before last in the welfare meeting the President of the Church called attention to the fact that we as a people had suffered relatively little during the war, and he suggested that we think on this. I have been thinking about it since he called it to our attention. This country has suffered relatively little. Grievous as have been our bereavements, the people in this country have not wanted for food;

they have not suffered deprivation. It is well that we think on these things, and think upon the reasons therefor.

### *The Key to True Education*

In the great revelation which contains that famous "Mormon" axiom, "The glory of God is intelligence," we read this:

The Spirit of truth is of God. I am the Spirit of truth, and John bore record of me, saying: He received a fulness of truth, yea, even of all truth; And no man receiveth a fulness unless he keepeth his commandments. (D. & C. 93:26,27.)

That, it seems to me, is the key to true education. No man can receive a fulness of truth unless he keeps the commandments of our Father in heaven. Learning is not wisdom. We have been misled into thinking that learning is the ultimate in education. True education must result in wisdom. The learning in the world is great. We stand breathless before the myriad of marvels of science. The wisdom of the world is puny. Witness the devastation of war. May I take a moment to read a verse from II Nephi which I have often quoted regarding this matter of learning? We have had reference made in this conference to the foolishness of so-called wise men.

... O the vainness, and the frailties, and the foolishness of men! When they are learned they think they are wise, and they hearken not unto the counsel of God, for they set it aside, supposing they know of themselves, wherefore, their wisdom is foolishness and it profiteth them not. And they shall perish. (II Nephi 9:28.)

Amidst the greatest learning that the world has ever seen, we have seen the greatest perishing the world has ever seen, and our greatest learning has been utilized for the destruction of God's children. "But to be learned is good if they hearken unto the counsels of God." (*Ibid.*, 29.) Again, no man receiveth the fulness of truth—no man may be truly educated—except he keep the commandments of our Father in heaven. This great revelation concludes with this statement:

And, verily I say unto you, that it is my will that you should hasten to translate my scriptures, and to obtain a knowledge of history, and of countries, and of kingdoms, of laws of God and man, and all this for the salvation of Zion. Amen. (D. & C. 93:53.)

### *Historical Events*

I should like to take a few moments this morning to give consideration to some historical events. As I go about among young people I find, tragically, that among high school students, the two subjects most heartily disliked by the greatest number of persons, are, first, English, and second, history. Our educational system would do well to think upon that. If we would be wise, we should know how we got the way we are. Only a genuine study of real history

can bring that about. This country, a land choice above all other lands, and the people thereon have enjoyed tremendous blessings. This country was long in preparing. I can't outline the whole story. I'd like to touch just one or two important events.

Way back in 1215 when the barons wrung from King John the Magna Charta, we had the modern beginning of true democracy. Sometime later, in 1517, Luther nailed his famous theses to the door of his church in Wittenberg, and not a great time after that, in 1555, the famous Peace of Augsburg gave freedom of worship to Protestants—breaking the tyranny of Rome. Still later, a band of Puritans, finding themselves persecuted in England because of their religious beliefs, went to Holland, and after twelve years in a foreign land, amongst a foreign tongue, they decided to set out for the new world—for real religious freedom—and in 1620 headed westward across the Atlantic Ocean. The great governor, William Bradford, said of them:

So they left that goodly and pleasant city which had been their resting place for twelve years, but they knew that they were pilgrims, and looked not much on those things, but lifted up their eyes to the heavens, their dearest country, and quieted their spirits.

Their reliance upon the Lord was their greatest safeguard.

### *The Mayflower Compact*

After that memorable and tedious voyage across the ocean, as their little ship lay at anchor in Cape Cod Bay, they were faced with insurrection. They were faced with possible anarchy, because there were those among their number who were determined that there should be an anarchy. The wiser ones among them knew that anarchy must inevitably lead to chaos. But in the cabin aboard the ship they gathered together, and with reliance upon their Father in heaven, brought forth that famous document, the Mayflower Compact,—“the beginning of American democracy.” I would like to take just a minute to read it for you. Notice well the first words:

In ye name of God, Amen. We whose names are underwritten, the loyall subjects of our dread sovereign Lord, King James, by ye grace of God, of Great Britaine, Franc & Ireland king, defender of ye faith, &c., haveing undertaken, for ye glorie of God, and advancement of ye Christian faith, and honour of our king & countrie, a voyage to plant ye first colonie in ye Northerne parts of Virginia, doe by these presents solemnly & mutually in ye presence of God, and one of another, covenant & combine our selves together into a civill body politik, for our better ordering & preservation and furtherance of ye ends aforesaid; and by vertue hearof to enacte, constitute, and frame such just & equall lawes, ordinances, acts, constitutions, & offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meete & convenient for ye generall good of ye Colonie, unto which we promise all due submission and obedience. In witness whereof we have hereunder subscribed our names at Cap-Codd ye 11. of November, in ye year of ye raigne of our soveraigne lord, King James, of England, Franc, & Ireland ye eighteenth, and of Scotland ye fiftie fourth. Ano Dom. 1620

*Declaration of Independence*

There you have the beginnings of truly democratic government, people bound together to frame just laws for their own observance, under the guidance of the Lord. And later the Declaration of Independence was drafted. After setting forth the reasons for the separation, by setting forth their grievances, Jefferson, speaking for the colonies, concludes thus:

We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name and by authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be free and independent states; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britian, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as free and independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which independent States may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the Protection of Divine Providence, We mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor.

*"God Governs in the Affairs of Men"*

This country has enjoyed the blessings that it does, because of reliance upon the Lord. Only a year later—1787—our great Constitution was drafted. I wonder how many in this congregation have read the Constitution in the last ten years? I want to tell you, brethren and sisters, it is the charter that stands between us and slavery, and it would be well for us to think upon that. May I read what Benjamin Franklin said about it. He said this at the time when debate was acrimonious, and there was dissension in the Congress:

I have lived, sir, a long time, and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth: that *God governs in the affairs of men*. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without his aid?

We have been assured, sir, in the sacred writings, that "except the Lord build the house they labor in vain that build it." I firmly believe this; and I also believe that without His concurring aid we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel. We shall be divided by our little partial local interests; our projects will be confounded, and we ourselves shall become a reproach and a by-word down to future ages. And what is worse, mankind may hereafter from this unfortunate instance, despair of establishing governments by human wisdom, and leave it to chance, war, and conquest.

I, therefore, beg leave to move that henceforth prayers imploring the assistance of Heaven, and its blessings on our deliberations, be held in this Assembly every morning before we proceed to business, and that one or more of the clergy of this city be requested to officiate in that service.

*The Lord's Appraisal of the Constitution*

Now there are those in the country who are telling us and particularly our children, that the Constitution was very fine in its day but that it is old-fashioned. "We have passed 'the horse and

buggy days; it is time we were becoming modern." I would like to take a moment to read what the Lord has to say about the Constitution of the United States:

... again I say unto you, those who have been scattered by their enemies, it is my will that they should continue to importune for redress, and redemption, by the hands of those who are placed as rulers and are in authority over you-

According to the laws and constitution of the people, which I have suffered to be established, and should be maintained for the rights and protection of all flesh, according to just and holy principles; That every man may act in doctrine and principle pertaining to futurity, according to the moral agency which I have given unto him, that every man may be accountable for his own sins in the day of judgment. (D. & C. 101:76-78.)

When the Prophet offered the dedicatory prayer in the temple at Kirtland, a prayer which was given to him by revelation, he said this:

Have mercy, O Lord, upon all the nations of the earth, have mercy upon the rulers of our land, may those principles which were so honorably and nobly defended, viz., the Constitution of our land, by our fathers, be established forever. (*History of the Church*, Vol. II, p. 424.)

And in the ninety-eighth section of the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord has this to say about the Constitution:

And that law of the land which is constitutional, supporting that principle of freedom in maintaining rights and privileges, belongs to all mankind, and is justifiable before me.

Therefore, I, the Lord, justify you, and your brethren of my church, in befriending that law which is the constitutional law of the land;

And as pertaining to the law of man, whatsoever is more or less than this cometh of evil. (D. & C. 98:5-7.)

#### *Support Men Who Will Protect the Constitution*

Now, those are the Lord's words. There has been a tendency among some Latter-day Saints, even when the Constitution is mentioned, to say, "There he goes talking politics." I am not talking politics. I am quoting the words of the Lord. Certainly, it is not meet that we should bring politics into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, but just as certainly, it is meet that every member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints take the doctrine of Christ into his politics, and that he evaluate every candidate and every platform under any and every political banner in the terms of the gospel of Jesus Christ. If there be any one who would destroy or weaken the Constitution of the United States, oppose him to the limit of your constitutional rights! Obversely, we should support candidates and foster platforms of whatever parties who will protect the sacred Constitution of the United States—that just document of government which was divinely inspired.

In my various councils today I am wondering how often the Lord is asked for aid? I would like to know if there has been one single instance in the whole history of American labor-management

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disputes when industrialists and labor union leaders, coming together to solve their problems, have asked the Lord for guidance. I would like to know if there has been one single instance. Goodness knows, prayers are rare in civic and national conferences. It is time we learned that the wisdom of men is foolishness, when they think they know of themselves and refuse to rely upon the Lord.

May I turn to the second inaugural address of Abraham Lincoln? I read towards the end:

... "Woe unto the world because of offenses; for it must needs be that offenses come, but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh." If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offenses which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through His appointed time, He now wills to remove, and that He gives to both North and South this terrible war as the woe due to those by whom the offense came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to Him? Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said "the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."

### *Rely Upon the Lord*

The Civil War was fought for the preservation of the Constitution, for the abandoning of slavery, and yet slavery is creeping upon us in this day—anno Domini 1946. Through the wars we did not want but now there is beginning in this country real want. I have heard a number of recitals in the past two or three days of persons destitute, without clothing and without food, because they are suffering economic slavery. Now, brethren and sisters, certainly as Latter-day Saints it is time that everyone of us in all his work: in his vocation, in his exercise of his civic rights, in his presiding at the head of his family, in all he does, that he rely upon the Lord. It is time that civic bodies, economic bodies, national bodies, start relying upon the Lord, even as did our forebears. May I conclude with those famous words of Abraham Lincoln, peculiarly appropriate at this moment:

With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations. (Second Inaugural Address.)

I pray that certainly the Latter-day Saints at least shall do all in their power to preserve that kind of government, that kind of reliance in government upon providence which to this moment has assured us our blessings and which if we abandon, will bring us into ever increasing slavery, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.