

Ir-D&C-14
The Law of Consecration
D&C 38 and the rest of the Gospel Doctrine Study Guide references
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(Here is inspirational background. **We can more fully understand this Law if we first read D&C 38, as it explains the Lord's overall purposes.**)

I. It was highly significant that the saints were called into the wilderness of Ohio where “the Law” was to be given them. The Lord was establishing a “new Zion” or “new Israel” as He had done in the past.

A. These events followed the pattern set by ancient Israel and by Christ and His New Israel.

B. In both those cases, the Lord called a people out of bondage, [both physical and spiritual], into a wilderness. There He gave them His Law, and the promise of a Covenanted Land.

1. Moses revealed God's Law at Sinai, prior to Israel's going to their Promised Land.

2. Jesus gave His Law in the wilderness at the Sermon on the Mount, prior to His opening the true Promised Land [inheritance of Eternal Life] by His later Atonement and Resurrection.

3. Joseph Smith was to lead the Lord's Latter-day Zion into the wilderness, to receive God's Law, prior to their receiving their inheritance of a Promised Land. While there would be an earthly component, the True Promised Land would be the inheritance of Eternal Life. [You will find all these elements referred to in D&C 38. In particular see verses 4; 18-20; 22; 31-33).

II. **A very important part of God's Law was that all men would become “One.”** This was an essential part of “Zion.” (See the preparatory teachings concerning in D&C 38 as listed below.)

A. It is the Lord who makes some rich. Therefore, He has no reason to respect persons, v. 16.

B. The righteous, whether poor or rich now, will receive the greater riches of heaven, v. 18-20.

C. We must esteem each other as ourselves, v. 24

D. Our loving Father, does not desire some of his children to be in rags while others are in costly robes, v. 26.

E. The Lord would call leaders to specifically care for the needs of the poor, v. 35.

III. The Law of Consecration was only one of several laws given at this time and setting.

A. The saints were also commanded to go forth, after receiving authority and being ordained, to preach the fullness of the gospel as contained in the Bible and the Book of Mormon, and as directed by the spirit, calling to repentance and baptizing (42:6-17).

B. They were given the essence of the ten commandment (42:18-29), and many other guidelines concerning how to become a holy people (42:43-93).

IV. The Law of Consecration was a very important part of these laws because it is a **major means to accomplish what the Lord desires --- that His people be of one heart and one mind.** Note how His subsequent teachings are meant to accomplish this principle.

A. “And let every man deal honestly and be alike among this people, and receive alike, that ye may be one, even as I have commanded you” (D&C 51:9).

B. “For if ye are not equal in earthly things ye cannot be equal in obtaining heavenly things” (D&C 78:6).

C. “He that is a faithful and wise steward shall inherit all things” (D&C 78:22).

D. "... behold this is the way that I the Lord have decreed to provide for my saints, **that the poor shall be exalted, in that the rich are made low.**" (D&C 104:17). [One way this occurs is through fasting, then donating the money meant for those meals to the poor].

E. "For the earth is full, and there is enough and to spare; yea, I prepared all things, and have given unto the children of men to be agents unto themselves. Therefore, if any man shall take of the abundance which I have made, and impart not his portion, according to the law of my gospel, unto the poor and the needy, he shall, with the wicked, lift up his eyes in hell, being in torment" (D&C 104:18).

V. **While the Law of Consecration, particularly as lived under the United Order, has changed, we can keep it wholly today, if we truly have the desire.**

A. There is more than one way to do so, but Elder Robert D. Hales taught of one way. "Going on a mission teaches you to live the law of consecration. It may be the only time in your life when you can give to the Lord all your time, talents, and resources" (*Ensign*, May 1996, 36).

B. There are so many wonderful examples of individuals who are truly keeping the law of consecration in this way. And they have kept the law of consecration not by serving just one mission but by serving several missions.

1. One couple who are great examples of doing this are Tom and Linda Brighton.

He served as mission president of the Dublin Ireland Mission. After that three year mission, they returned to build a lovely home in Woodland Hills, Utah. Sister Brighton was blessed with an especially lovely kitchen, with great working space and multiple purpose ovens.

But they were not in this home long. They soon submitted their papers for another mission. They were called to serve a humanitarian mission to China. They left their lovely home for a tiny apartment. Sister Brighton exchanged her lovely, full kitchen for a very tiny one consisting only of a toaster oven and a hot plate. They spent most of their time delivering wheelchairs provided by LDS Humanitarian funds to those who desperately needed them in many parts of China.

They completed that 18 month mission and returned to their home in Utah. But not for long. They applied and served one summer as hosts at the Palmyra Pageant. And then they were called to serve as Director and wife for the Oakland Temple Visitors Center. Even before completing that mission they were called to serve as President and Matron of the Palmyra Temple.

They had approximately a month to visit elderly parents and family before they headed east for their new assignment. During that time, they lived in her sister's home, as during the years they had been serving, they let family members live in their own home. And they were still there.

This is one example of saints living the Law of Consecration today.

I have come to know many other senior couples who have applied to serve missions over and over. **The Law of Consecration is still alive, if we desire to live it, we can find ways to do so.**

VI. The Establishment of the Bishop's Storehouse.

A. The Lord speaks often in these scriptures about establishing a Bishop's Storehouse. It is remarkable that there is now an extensive network of Bishop's Storehouses being used to serve the poor and needy in far-flung areas.

B. I am grateful to have had many personal opportunities to participate in this now functioning storehouse system, helping the church to feed the poor by participating in welfare projects.

C. While serving as Stake Public Affairs Director in Houston I saw an extra benefit from the Bishop's Storehouse system. In January of 2003, the Humanitarian Aid Director of our Metro Public Affairs group, announced he had contacted the Houston Food Bank and the Church and

worked out a deal whereby the Church's peanut butter canning facility would be used to can around 65,000 jars of peanut butter for the Food Bank. The Church would provide the cannery and the jars and lids. The Food Bank would buy the peanuts (at lower costs). Volunteers were to be obtained from the community to assist us.

I had decided one good possibility was the Houston Fire Department. I asked a ward member who was a fireman, if he could get us volunteers. He agreed and obtained permission to do so from the Department Heads.

January 9th --- the time had come to kick off this significant event. The Fire Department arrived with a full roster. The event was covered by all three local news stations. It was fun to see the firemen working there, even the one who wore his shirt which said "Haz Mat." (Peanut butter is hazardous material!)

This beginning has mushroomed into a very successful partnership between the Church and other community organizations to help feed the poor. In 2012, The Church was given a special Outstanding Community Service Award for using its peanut butter cannery, still in conjunction with local businesses and other community organizations, (including companies like Hewlett-Packard and Merrill-Lynch). Peanut butter is one of their most needed and popular items.

In 2015, the cannery produced 880,000 jars of peanut butter, 400,000 going to Bishop's Storehouses, 480,000 to the community food bank systems. In 2017 they've expanded again to partner with Feeding America, a nationwide network of Food Banks. **Their new goal is to provide 950,000 to 1 million jars of peanut butter for the Feeding America group.**

These blessings come from the spirit of the Law of Consecration. **It is a magnificent concept.** And it is not only blessing Latter-day Saints, but more and more peoples throughout the world.

D. In fact, this follows the **pattern of Joseph and his Egyptian grain storage** plans. While he fed the nearby world with grains, his latter-day descendants are helping to feed the needy with protein. We are able to do this because of the blessing of revelation: for the Lord revealed from the very beginning how we might provide for our people and bless others as well. Because succeeding prophets have seen and acted on the same vision, these things are now a reality.