

# Portland Oregon Symposium

Saturday, October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2010

## The Temple

- Symposium Program

Life is our book of questions. The more we do in life and the more we learn the more questions we add to our book. We seldom have opportunities to study with scholars in a spiritual setting where we can be guided by men and women whose objective is not intellectual but spiritual. Perhaps this could be described as “spiritually directed intellectual development”.

The Portland Symposium is one such opportunity. Our speakers come highly recommended by our long-time friend and frequent Symposium speaker, John Hall.

A brief biographical sketch for each speaker is included.

We invite you to join us for the Symposium on October 9th.

There are also two firesides on October 8th presented by the same speakers.

October 9th, Portland Symposium with Denver Snuffer and Val Brinkerhoff.  
Beaverton WEST Stake Center, 17140 SW Bany Road, Beaverton, OR 97007.  
9 AM to 3 PM.

October 8th, Symposium Fireside with Val Brinkerhoff.  
Portland Stake Center (99th and Caruthers), 7:30 PM, refreshments served.

October 8th, Symposium Fireside with Denver Snuffer.  
Salem Stake Center, 4550 Lone Oak, Salem 97306, 7:30 PM, refreshments served.

- Introduction by Randy Daniels:

- Br. Denver Snuffer

- Denver C. Snuffer, Jr. is a practicing trial attorney and senior partner in the law firm of Nelson, Snuffer, Dahle & Poulsen in Sandy, Utah. Named as one of Utah’s “Top Legal Leaders” he has an active law practice. He has authored six books on LDS doctrine including *The Second Comforter: Conversing With the Lord Through the Veil*; *Nephi’s Isaiah, Eighteen Verses*, *Ten Parables*, *Beloved Enos* and *Come, Let Us Adore Him*. Mr. Snuffer has taught at the BYU Education Week, instructed graduate Institute classes for the University of Utah College of Law, and taught Gospel Doctrine for 21 years in Pleasant Grove, Alpine and Sandy, Utah wards. He has served in a variety of Church callings including a Bishopric, Stake High Council, Young Men’s organization and Elder’s Quorum Presidencies. He is the father of nine children and married to Stephanie B. Snuffer, currently residing in Sandy, Utah.

- Comments before starting:

- Someone once said, "Brother Nibley, I've never heard that before!"
- Nibley responded: "That's why you're here."
- As you hear what is shared, ask of the Lord

## Notes from Denver Snuffer, Jr.: Part I

- There were some components of original temple of Solomon that were most sacred
- Therefore, those which were could not be profaned
- Anything that came in contact with it became clean
  - Did not make the item unclean
- Example: Killing of Joab in the OT
  - Abner, Absalom, & others killed at his hand
  - Joab spoke frankly to King David
  - Interesting missed character in the OT that could be a great action movie
  - Joab knew that he was slated to death and then went to the temple to hold onto the altar in the temple; killed there and was considered by their tradition as "clean"
- Likewise today, there are some things in the Endowment that are most sacred and guarded by obligations
  - We tend to understand things very literally, concretely and linearly
  - We tend to look at the object and not connect up what the object is attempting to communicate--the underlying holiness
  - Paul asked the question: Know ye not that YE are the temple of God?
    - It's not the building, it's you
  - Questions are so much better than answers, because they get you in contact with whom you should be
- The New Testament begins and ends in Temple
  - Begins and ends in the Holy Place
    - Holy of Holies is beyond it to the west
  - Zacharias was heading into the temple
    - There were two "wing walls" made of wood overlaid with gold
    - There were two veils flush with walls on right & left, with some gap in between
  - Three priests headed in with coals from outside in toward the altar
    - Would walk in facing it, and retreat leaving Zacharias face-toward the altar
    - The angel Gabriel appeared on right side of the altar
    - On the right side of the veil
    - He announced that he was from the actual presence of God
- The end of New Testament has Jesus on the left side of the altar
  - Is the place that Christ referred to as his Father's house
- In between, every revelatory event that occurs happens elsewhere
  - (Side note: regarding the Mount of Transfiguration and who was there: the JST says wasn't Elias but someone else)
  - On the mount, Joseph Smith made it clear that keys of presidency were being passed along
    - A replication of Kirtland Temple events happened on the Mount of Transfiguration
  - Christ's baptism was in Jordan River
  - The Confrontation was in Judean wilderness, although He was confronted on pinnacle of the temple also
  - He Suffers in agony due east from Holy of Holies in Garden of Gethsemane
    - Which was also the location where the offering of Red Heifer took place
  - He suffers death due north of Holy of Holies
  - These follow the same pattern as the slaying of heifers, which were killed outside the temple
- Contemporaries of Christ thought that the building was greater than Christ
  - Tradition of sick being made whole by touching the holy was true in the sense that the woman with the issue of blood was made whole and the lepers were made whole
  - Coming in contact with Him who is Most Holy makes one whole
- We tend to do the same as the Jews: not recognize that the temple is a representation & symbol of Christ--not the end
  - We can even develop a certain degree of pride about expertise with the Temple
  - What the temple is really trying to do is to tell you to come in contact with that which is Most Sacred
    - Is a symbol of the real thing & invitation to the real thing
  - Christ is Most Holy and we must have contact with him to reform us
  - Symbols are not about cosmic reality

- You should consider yourself as if you were respectively Adam and Eve
- In original Endowment would have each person lay down and be woken up as Adam
- Each of us is Adam
  - Is the story of how you came to be here
  - Is the story of how each of us must remain true and faithful and follow messengers of the Lord
  - Must follow true messengers to prepare us to return
- Best definition of repentance: turn away from all other distractions to face God
- D&C 50:24: Speaks of increase of light
  - Notion of being illuminated, or light turned on, are expressions borrowed from scriptural themes
  - Must turn toward and welcome into us light and understanding
- One of greatest tools restored to us is the temple
  - We often tend to look at it as the end, instead of the means to an end
  - Conversing through the veil with the Lord is the goal of it all
- True Chiasmus's center point is revelation where God and Man meet each other
  - Downward point of God touching the upward point of Man
  - The hinge point in Alma 36 is when Alma came in contact with the Lord
  - Some ask why? For Alma
    - Had rebel running around (Alma or Paul) who is suddenly redeemed
    - Instead of a careful long, arduous time, it was quick. Why?
    - Why is it that he comes away clean in his contact with that which is Most Holy made him clean?
      - Same reason woman with issue of blood was
    - He who has capacity to clean does so with his touch
    - In the crowd in the Americas, why did he have everyone come touch Him? For the same reason.
- Myth of the cleansing power of the temple is replaced with power of contact with the Lord
- When Alma came in contact with the Lord, he came away clean necessarily
- Was it therefore easy? No--it was painful.
  - Alma 36 is very deliberate and careful
  - Says Alma was in the very depths of Hell
- Mormon 9:2-4
  - Depiction of being in the presence of God
  - Want to have nakedness & shame covered by God
  - Want to have the borrowed finery of the Lord -- He is the Robe of Righteousness
  - If you want to don the robes of righteousness, you must do it precisely as commanded
    - Won't do to have it on the wrong way
- Alma went through process of cleansing
- James Talmage & Elder McConkie will tell you I'm wrong on this:
  - The Father never abandoned the Son in Gethsemane or the Cross
  - Could not experience the shame & guilt of man without that contact
- "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"
  - Was quoting the Psalm to let people know all prophesy was being fulfilled
  - When John said that Jesus said it, he was never left by the Father
- Cannot get through contact with God without suffering, but relief comes through those keys he holds
  - Alma suffered torment of hell
  - Isaiah came in contact with Lord in chapter 6
    - Angels said Holy, Holy, Holy (three times)
    - "I am undone because of unclean lips" (v. 5)
  - This was Isaiah's response, who was otherwise seemingly qualified, when brought to the same Holy Place
    - Seraph took a coal from altar of incense in tongs
      - Smoke from coals rises up and makes cloud against the ceiling
      - Symbolizes prayers of Israel rising to heaven
      - Column & cloud represents tree of life & redemption of man
    - Presses to the lips of Isaiah: "This hath touched thy lips and thine iniquity is taken away" (v. 7)

- Touch of that which is most holy cleanses his own unclean lips, which he said had separated him from the Lord
    - Instantly cleanses him
  - Was known to those on the other side, but not to Isaiah
  - His reaction that follows at the question of "Who will go for us?"; he then says "Here am I, send me"
    - Was unclean before, but now is worthy
    - Was instantaneous and joy as great as anguish had been previously
- Joy of Redemption and confidence it brings is rooted in the Lord
- Alma could not hardly bear the thought of his sins upon coming in contact with the Lord
  - Once the Lord has forgiven him, who cares what it was before?
  - For Paul or Alma, doesn't matter what others think of you anymore
- Temple purpose is to teach the upward climb
  - Had 40 years to build SLC temple
  - On leaving the garden room, you have to climb an upward stairs & journey
  - You are designed to come in contact with tree of fruit of good & evil
  - We were designed to sin & become familiar with vulnerabilities of the flesh
    - We're supposed to be going through this
  - The Fall is upward
  - Stairway is crooked: you have to go up and traverse making the climb upward in the SLC temple
    - No animal goes straight up, nor do we
  - Up until 12 years ago, there was an assigned temple worker to say "watch your step" on those stairs as part of the endowment
    - Part of upward course is that we must constantly change our course
- Example: Word of Wisdom does not have any virtue in itself
  - Story of biker, Vietnam sniper who left gang in Utah and headed to small town, got tattoo covered over
    - Daughter went to ride horses with him
  - Some of the things we do to be peculiar are to remind us to be different
    - They didn't confer any particular virtue
  - If we are unholy, we are unholy
    - To come in contact with Him is to be cleansed
  - Parable of who is more grateful depending on degree of sin
    - He who controls the debt does so freely
    - The rest is just about our internal reaction
- Everything that went on in the Temple of Herod bore testimony of Christ
  - He was the person who would actually sprinkle his own blood
  - The temple was an emblem of what Christ would actually do
- Temple is not the end--is just the tool to the end
- The reality is the Lord--the keeper of the gate who employs no servant there
  - May send messengers, but only he has the power to cleanse & cure
- We are all lepers; we must all come in contact with Him who is holy to save
- Temple & Book of Mormon are greatest gifts given
  - Are only useful in how they alter you
- Events at the temple
  - Christ kicked out moneychangers in temple twice, beginning & end
    - When confronted by adulteress, told her to go and sin no more
  - Appeared at the temple at 12 years old for as long as 5 days
  - Healed a blind man at the temple
- Everything else happened elsewhere
  - Sermon on Mount, walking on water, feeding 5000
- Temple was as much to rebuke as much as anything else
  - Temple is to make you something other than what you are; the temple is you

## Notes from Denver Snuffer, Jr.: Part II

- Sacred Space that Ought to Be You
  - Extended account between Daniel & the Lord in Daniel 10
    - 24th day of 4th month
    - Saw the Lord and described him
    - If you compare Daniel's description to Joseph & Oliver's, it is very similar
    - Daniel saw it alone; the men with him did not
      - He had no strength in him afterward
      - Other people felt the quaking & dread of the Lord
      - They know that there is some palpable presence with them
    - Asked to stand up then and shook
    - Was concrete, real vision
    - The principle of the Second Comforter: You must ask for it
    - Daniel is physically overcome again, then touched by the Lord to strengthen and revive him
      - It takes three times to get through the vision
      - It required physical contact with the Lord
    - The impression is that this guy keeps falling down & getting up
  - Vision of 3 degrees of Glory to Joseph Smith & Sydney Rigdon:
    - Opened to both
    - Joseph would recite the words and Sydney would confirm them, and then vision would continue
    - Were three others present who recorded it
    - When it ended, Sydney Rigdon was exhausted & overcome
      - Joseph said: Sydney is not used to this like I am
  - John 12
    - Christ and company of apostles
    - Starting in verse 23
    - John heard it and recorded it
      - To others was thunder
      - To others it was an angel speaking
  - 3 Nephi 11
    - At temple of Bountiful
    - Was an open-air temple
    - (I have friends, by the way, that are abundantly convinced this was at Parawan Gap)
    - They heard voice out of heaven, but didn't understand
    - "It did pierce them that heard it to the center" (v.3)
      - Just like those with Daniel--pierced, frightened, & affected
    - No part of their frame that was not caused to quake
      - Is this the kind of burning of witness, or burning of sin coming into presence of the Lord?
    - The second time pierced even further and heard more, "and did open their ears to hear it"
      - It is them opening their ears to hear it and changing themselves and welcoming & accepting
      - No longer fighting the fear, regret, intimidation, etc.
    - The third time they did understand the voice
      - "Behold my beloved Son" (v.7)
  - Took time, patience, exposure of the power of God to these good people
    - The rest had been destroyed
    - These are the elect of God
    - The destruction had occurred 11.5 months earlier and had come to the temple to keep the festival
    - They had migrated and come to keep the festival
    - These are the best of the best; they survived the destruction
    - The Lord patiently leads them through the process of understanding Him
    - It took the God of heaven three times to let the people work through their issues
      - It is ever the same

- It is the stuff inside you, which, when exposed to the purity of the Lord, becomes clear that you do not measure up
  - It is the purpose of the Lord to make clean, redeem, etc.
  - He bestows the capacity to do so
- In v.8, they saw a "man" (capitalized by the printer of the Book of Mormon)
  - They thought this was an angel that appeared to them
- Christ introduces himself, has a ceremony, and then they have the Hosanna Shout in v.17 spontaneously
- Today it is saved for the occasion of a new LDS temple--back then it was for a new people
- He explains who He is, why He is there, and what He is doing
- We are at the harvest season
  - Everything is aligned
  - I do not believe he will return on April 6th
  - It only makes sense that he would return in the harvest season--in the Fall
  - Nephi & Jacob wrote from the perspective of seeing our day
    - Mormon & Moroni did, too
  - When you read the Book of Mormon, it is not a history of an ancient people
    - It is an attempt to provide a guide to latter-day people
  - It uses excerpts from their history to inform us on what our latter-day experience will be
  - 3 Nephi is about telling us of the coming of the Lord in our day
    - It is selectively edited to make it relevant for our day
    - It points out that this is what you should expect to see happen in your day
- There are some who try to argue that three witnesses (of the Book of Mormon) never saw angel but had an emotional experience induced by Joseph Smith and his expectations
- It may be completely possible that if one of us had been there in the crowd in 3 Nephi and did not open our eyes and ears, and did not purge our hearts, we may have felt something dreadful and yet not see, feel, and touch what the Nephites did
  - Because if we could be in the same place as Daniel or Joseph Smith and Sydney Rigdon, we might not see anything, just as with the Nephites at first
- Paul said: whether in the body or not, I know what I saw
  - It is absolutely concrete and real like it was to "doubting Thomas" who then feels the Lord's hands
- When the Lord walked on the road to Emmaus and talked with the apostles
  - They invite Him in and he does something that blows His cover before He departs
  - Then afterward, they realize that their hearts burned within them
  - That was how the Lord was to be recognized
- The person first to see the resurrected Lord was a woman
  - Why was this?
  - He begins with those he is most familiar with and works through a lengthy day before he visits rest of the 12 apostles
  - JST says "Hold me not" instead of "Touch me not"
    - It was an embrace--he needed to return and report
  - It should be as physical, tangible, real, and concrete as the scriptures say
    - "For a Spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have" (Luke 24:39)
- We must change & open up before he can appear to us
- TPJS says in passing: "When the Lord reveals anything to you, he will reveal it to you as if you did not have a body."
  - However, to the person who had the event occur....
- I began investigating the Church after reading D&C 76
  - I was crossing the base and felt darkness overcome me
  - It was malevolent and frightened me
  - Whatever it was had followed me and was black
  - It was tangible and real
  - Something came--it was in the air and I could point to it
  - It was otherworldly

- Sometime later after baptism and receiving the Holy Ghost, I have thought back many times since
  - Perhaps if I had had eyes to see or ears to hear
- The narrative in scriptures are as tangible and real for any other person
- At the Second Coming there will be some that see Him and others that just see brightness
  - It will be the start of the eighth day
- It can be any time for you
  - He is as eager to be received as we should be eager to approach Him
- We must pray for it
  - It is a dreadful thing to come into the presence of the Lord just because of our state
  - What you bring to Him will always be a load of guilt, a load of insecurity, a feeling of fear
  - Horror settled on Abraham, and will be the same as with any of us
  
- Question & Answers
  - How can Christ be distinguished from the Father?
    - When the Father is seen, the Father is seen in connection with the Host
      - Christ is always seen as the individual
    - The only time the Father came in physical contact with the Earth, was with the Garden of Eden
      - Otherwise is high and disconnected
      - The Savior is connected to the earth and not otherwise
      - The Son can act and speak as the Father
    - Throughout the Book of Mormon the Father & Son are one and the same
    - Jesus Christ is the Father, and the Father is a separate being from Jesus Christ
    - When you return to heaven, the Son will present you to the Father
    - By bringing you Eternal Life, He has become your Father
      - This is when a soul is redeemed and brought back into the family of God
  - Regarding Psalm 22 being the Messianic Psalm
    - "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?"
    - This is a hymn for which anciently there was a tune
    - The Savior did not have the strength to sing out the entire Psalm
    - But He was trying to say: I am He; You are the ones that pierced my hands and sides
    - He is essentially bearing testimony that He is the Lord
    - He is not saying that the Father left Him
    - Nothing about process of dying on the cross was designed to preserve any dignity at all
      - All clothing was taken and parted among them
  - Doesn't D&C 76 and several other places say that the Lord was alone?
    - The Church's position is that He was abandoned in the Garden and on the cross
    - My own testimony is that the Father did not leave him
    - It was necessary that he feel the shame and still be in the presence of the Father so that he could experience that and overcome it
  - Did the Father experience everything that the Son did in the suffering?
    - Isaac & Abraham suggest that the Father experienced more
    - The King Follett discourse may not have captured Joseph Smith's teaching here correctly
    - No one knows who the angel was that visited the Son
      - My own view was that it was the Father
    - You can read more on this in "Come Let Us Adore Him"
  - The Lord will give us what we ask for, but we must do what He needs to get us there
    - We may ask for an answer and receive it, but He may not be able to give that additional information
  - Comment: Wasn't he separated from the Father at His death?
    - Christ's retreat into spirit world is separation from the Father, certainly

The notes above were taken in person by Vaughn Hughes, who was present for the lectures given by Denver Snuffer, Jr., in Beaverton, Oregon, on Saturday, October 9th, 2010. Notes taken from lectures the same day by Val Brinkerhoff are not included here.