

Now time will not permit me to say more. There is so much that could be said, much perhaps that ought to be said. But those who violate this sacred and solemn covenant are going to have a sorry time of it if they are guilty when they come to the judgment seat of God, for they have broken the bands of an eternal union and lost their promise of exaltation in the kingdom of God.

The Lord bless you I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Singing by the congregation and the Choir, "O Ye Mountains High."

### ELDER DELBERT L. STAPLEY

*Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

My brothers and sisters, I rejoice with you for the blessings of this conference. I have completed one year of service, and I am most grateful for the experiences of this past year. I want to welcome Elder Marion G. Romney into the Council of the Twelve. For years I have admired and respected him for his devotion and for his friendly spirit. I am sure we will all be happy with the quality of the service he is able to give the people of the Church. I also want to welcome those who have been selected as assistants to the Quorum of the Apostles, and pledge them my love and support.

I hope, my brothers and sisters, I will not detract from the spirit of this conference. I earnestly pray for the blessings of our Heavenly Father. Through the sessions of this conference we have had a tremendous spiritual uplift, and the counsel given to keep the commandments of God and to stand in holy places has been timely indeed.

### FASTING AND PRAYER

As I have traveled about the Church these past few months with members of the general welfare committee and listened to their talks on fasting and prayer, I have felt this principle has great spiritual power and opportunity for the blessings of God to the people of the Church and to the Church itself. I have been impressed by its great spiritual significance. It seems to me it is a source of strength, a source of power, a source of blessing that perhaps as a people we are not using enough; that it does have tremendous spiritual value to those who observe the law, and who apply it faithfully. It also seems to me that fasting and prayer can be employed to bless others, and if we would faithfully observe the law, the blessings of our Heavenly Father would collectively be given to the people of the Church.

President Joseph F. Smith said, speaking of the fast, that "the law to the Latter-day Saints as understood by the Authorities of the Church is that food and drink are not to be partaken of for twenty-four hours, 'from eve to eve,' and that the Saints are to refrain from

all bodily gratifications and indulgences." Most Latter-day Saints, I think, understand the doing without two meals in connection with the monthly fast and giving the cash equivalent to the bishop as fast offerings, but I am wondering along with our fasting do we gather our families together and pray with them that they may enjoy the blessings of the Lord? Do we also understand that the true fast presupposes self-restraint and purity of body by refraining from all bodily gratifications and indulgences? It seems to me that the soul cannot be humbled nor sanctified for the blessings of God unless this is true.

#### OBSERVANCE BRINGS BLESSINGS

The Saints by fasting and praying can sanctify the soul and elevate the spirit to Christlike perfection, and thus the body would be brought into subjection to the spirit, promote communion with the Holy Ghost, and insure spiritual strength and power to the individual.

By observing fasting and prayer in its true spirit, the Latter-day Saints cannot be overpowered by Satan tempting them to evil. This morning in the radio address of Elder Cowley, titled, "Man Cannot Live by Bread Alone," he emphasized the forty-day fast of the Savior. As I have thought about the Savior's long fast and prayers unto God, I know his spirit was humbled, his soul was sanctified, and it gave him the moral strength and the spiritual power to resist the temptations of Satan. It also prepared him to go forward and complete the great mission that God had sent him on earth to perform in the interest of mankind.

It was through fasting and prayer that the angel of God appeared to Cornelius, and gained for him and his household the gospel of Jesus Christ. When Peter came to the home of Cornelius, he wanted to know for what reason he had been called. Cornelius said:

Four days ago I was fasting until this hour, and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house and behold a man stood before me in bright clothing and said, Cornelius thy prayer is heard and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God. (See Acts 10:3-4.)

#### SONS OF MOSIAH

When Alma was traveling southward from Gideon to the land of Manti, he encountered the sons of Mosiah returning to the land of Zarahemla. These sons of Mosiah had spent fourteen years doing missionary work among the Lamanites. Alma in all this time had not seen them and was overjoyed at this chance meeting. He was made glad because they were still brethren in the Church and kingdom of God, and says Mormon in his abridgment of Alma's record:

. . . yea, and they had waxed strong in the knowledge of the truth; for they were men of a sound understanding and they had searched the scriptures diligently, that they might know the word of God.

But this is not all; they had given themselves to much prayer, and fasting; therefore they had the spirit of prophecy, and the spirit of

revelation, and when they taught, they taught with power and authority of God. (Alma 17:2-3.)

This indicates the great blessings that come to those who observe and keep this very sacred principle of fasting and prayer.

#### MISSIONARY OBSERVANCE

Recently it was my privilege to tour the Northern California Mission, and as I listened to the missionaries, your sons and daughters, make their reports and bear testimony, I was so pleased when they referred time and again to fasting and prayer, and this they resorted to often to obtain God's blessings for themselves in their work. They fasted and prayed for those who were sick among them, and when they found it difficult to impress people with the gospel message of the restored Church, they fasted and prayed about it and received great blessings from such fasting and prayer.

Many of them were fasting and praying that their folk at home, inactive, would become active in the Church. It seems to me you who are leaders would do well to fast and pray for the Holy Ghost to guide you in the selection of officers and teachers for Church positions. Let the Lord give unto you by his Holy Spirit the men and women whom he has chosen.

#### CALLING OF BRETHREN

We read in the thirteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles that there were in the Church at Antioch certain prophets and teachers, that among these were Barnabas and Saul. The record says,

As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. (Acts 13:2-3.)

We had occasion in the upper room of the temple the other day to witness a similar experience in the selection of Elder Romney to the Council of the Twelve. As his name was presented, there was a unanimous feeling that this man had been called of God to the important position that he now occupies.

#### NEED FOR SPIRITUAL POWER

I feel, my brothers and sisters, that in our work, and our callings, also in our homes, that we individually need the spiritual power, the strength, the guidance, and the blessings that fasting and prayer will obtain.

On one occasion when Jesus came to his disciples, he found the scribes asking them questions. When he inquired as to the nature

of their questions, a man stepped forward and said he had brought his son, possessed of an evil spirit, to the disciples, and they could not cast him out. He pleaded with the Savior to cast out this evil spirit that was sorely vexing his son. The Savior asked him if he believed, and he said, "Lord, I believe; help thou my unbelief." The Master did cast out the evil spirit from the son and restored him to the father. As he entered into the house, the disciples came to him and said, "Why could not we cast him out?" And Jesus answered, "This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting." (See Mark 9:14-29.)

It seems to me, my brethren and sisters, particularly my brethren holding the Melchizedek Priesthood, that when we are called to administer to the sick who are sorely afflicted, if we would humble our souls through fasting and prayer, we would be close to our Heavenly Father and have claim upon him for the blessings to those we love and seek to help.

#### CITY OF NINEVEH

In the interest of saving time (as many other examples showing the great value of fasting and prayer could be given) may I say that there are great powers, virtues, and blessings in this divine law. When Jonah was sent to the city of Nineveh to warn them of their destruction because of wickedness, they repented in sackcloth and ashes, and by decree all in that city fasted and prayed. Their flocks and herds were also required to do without food and drink. God accepted this display of repentance and humility through fasting and prayer and turned aside his anger and the city was not destroyed.

It seems to me that if a city could obtain such a blessing by fasting and prayer, a nation also could be similarly blessed of God. We as a people, by emphasizing this principle, could obtain great blessings for ourselves and for the Church in general.

Many times during this conference we have been reminded that conditions are serious, that the affairs of the world are in a muddle, that there are many uncertainties, that men in and of their own wisdom and learning are not finding the great answers to the problems of humanity and the world. And as a result, the hearts of men are failing them. Surely in these conditions of uncertainty, these conditions of wickedness and vice we need the sustaining and guiding power of Almighty God, which we can obtain from our Heavenly Father through the exercise of this great principle of fasting and prayer. As a people we need the direction, the revelations, and the blessings of Almighty God, which we can only obtain by humbling our souls through fasting and prayer and in keeping God's commandments. Therefore, we should fast and pray for those in high Church positions, that God will favor them with the revelations of his mind and will that we may be guided through this period of uncertainty and darkness.

## EXAMPLE OF NEPHITES

We read in the Book of Mormon that in the beginning of the fifty-first year of the Judges, the people of Nephi enjoyed peace, prosperity, and plenty, but yet they were a faithful people in keeping the commandments of our Heavenly Father. However, during this year of the Judges, pride started to creep into the hearts of the people, and those who had been lifted up in this pride began to persecute their brethren; therefore it was difficult for the faithful members to exercise the freedom of their church beliefs. The account reads:

Nevertheless they did fast and pray oft, and did wax stronger and stronger in their humility, and firmer and firmer in the faith of Christ, unto the filling their souls with joy and consolation, yea, even to the purifying and the sanctification of their hearts, which sanctification cometh because of their yielding their hearts unto God. (Helaman 3:35.)

My brothers and sisters, if we fast and pray often I am sure that we, too, can wax stronger and stronger in our faith and in our humility that our hearts will be filled with joy and consolation; that we will also purify and sanctify our hearts, which sanctification will come because we do yield our hearts unto God.

May God bless us, may he help us to understand this great principle of the fast, help us to observe it in its true spirit, help us that we may give to the bishop the cash equivalent of the meals we do not partake of in the interest of the poor of the Church; and I am sure, and I promise you that as a people we shall be blessed. You will also be blessed individually in the observance of this great principle. May this be true, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

## ELDER S. DILWORTH YOUNG

*Of the First Council of Seventy*

This conference, I am sure, has had as its theme the home.

## EXAMPLE OF MCKAY FAMILY

Twenty-eight years ago I was adopted by the people of Ogden and Weber County. I believe now that I can safely say I belong to them. As I have seen it, I think that the greatest influence in Weber County through the years has been the example of the McKay family in establishing and keeping a home. I say the McKay family because President McKay has many brothers and sisters. I have never seen such unity in a family. Weber County knows that. I have had many happy associations with Brother Thomas McKay. I was happy that Brother Petersen said what he did the other day concerning him. If there were time, I could and would tell you other things which have shown me the breadth, and the love, and the desire of this good man who sits down in the lower tiers to give of himself to the people of that county, and to the Church. There isn't