

Sunday, April 7

You may have observed that I have not used the term *delinquency*. I chose *waywardness* for this discussion, because I wanted to give to youth the benefit of all doubt possible. Wayward youth has gone his own way, in large measure because he has not adequately been shown the right way.

I humbly pray that all the forces at our command, the home, the church, the school, the government, and the exemplars of the nation, shall all com-

bine to show wayward youth the right way, which is God's way, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

He to whom you have just listened is President Stephen L Richards of the First Presidency of the Church. Elder George Q. Morris, a member of the Council of the Twelve, will now address us.

ELDER GEORGE Q. MORRIS

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

MY DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS, I sincerely pray that the Lord will direct me to say that which I should say to you this morning. He has blessed us through this great conference from the inspired and powerful address of President McKay through all the sessions. I sincerely pray that his blessings may be with me, that that Spirit shall be continued.

This is fast day in the Church, the regular monthly fast day, and I should like to dwell with you for a few moments upon its importance and our relation to it.

In the early days of the Church, there were urgent needs to be met, and so the Prophet Joseph Smith, who had a plea made him from Kirtland for help for the poor and the needy, told the Saints to establish a fast day. Each month it was to be observed, and they were to fast for the day and bring to the one in charge the food that they would have consumed so that it might be dispensed to the poor.

What a beautiful, simple, direct, and inspired provision the Lord made through the Prophet Joseph Smith! People were to endure hunger and not partake of food they had but bring that food that others might not endure hunger.

The Lord revealed to Isaiah the true observance of the fast day; after rejecting the methods used by Israel at that time, he then points out the right way that the day should be observed.

Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?

Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that you bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?

Then shall the light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward.

And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon day:

And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not. (Isaiah 58:6-8, 10-11.)

What a beautiful description of a day that we should follow once a month for the alleviation of suffering, for our own spiritual growth and development, and to carry out the purposes of the Lord that there shall be no want, no suffering, but every attention given to those who are afflicted and in distress.

I was told the other day (I did not learn any more of the details) that a bishop invited some of the members of his ward to a banquet, and as one man had his plate presented to him there was on it a small piece of meat and a small piece of carrot. I do not know what the man's impressions were or what questions arose in his mind, but

it was explained to him that that represented the fast offering that he had been giving to the needy. [Laughter.] Now that was surely a very realistic way of pointing out his relation to the fast offering and his obligations. And it reminded me of a sobering statement that the Prophet Joseph Smith made at the funeral of James Adams in 1843, and refers back to the powerful statement and announcement made by President McKay, that it is by doing the will of God that we will attain salvation and accomplish his purpose, and in no other way.

Incidentally, as we build up false hopes on something else, there will be a time of terrible awakening. So the Prophet Joseph Smith declared:

If men will acquire salvation they have got to be subject before they leave this world to certain rules and principles which were fixed by an unalterable decree before the world was.

The disappointment of hopes and of expectations at the resurrection will be indescribably dreadful. (DHC 6:50-51.)

It is for us to avoid that dreadful experience that he refers to and keep the commandments of God and bring to pass the purposes of the Lord. It is not only that we do not obey the Lord as far as we personally are concerned, but it is a serious sin as well that we frustrate the purposes of God, at least for the moment; and a condition that he wishes to bring to pass among his people for the alleviation of suffering, for the comforting of the afflicted, and for the strengthening of his Church, fails because we do not keep his commandments. That is a most serious thing. It seems to me that we must take it into account. The first is, in a way, personal, but the second is rejecting God and blocking his plans and his purposes, by which he means to bless his people.

I think we may not and must not be casual or indifferent regarding this fast day which is so common among us. I am sure we are not giving it the thought that it deserves. Many people seem indifferent. But what a wonderful thing it would be if the stake presidencies and bishoprics of wards and presidents of branches, through the help of the Lord, could instruct the people and inspire

them all so that they would give in full to the Lord their free-will fast offering. What a strength and power it would be towards the bringing to pass of the purposes of God among his people and in the earth.

And the way to do that is simple, if the people would understand and accept this principle and obey it. I believe it hinges on the one fact, so far as I am concerned, that it is just as necessary to pay an honest fast offering as it is to pay an honest tithing.

The Lord has told us how we shall pay our tithing and we are able to pay it properly and we call it a full tithing. The Lord has told us what the fast offering shall be, that it shall be the equivalent of the food of which we did not partake.

Great strength and power would come to us, so far as having means in the Church (and the Lord says he wishes to "have meat in his house") to accomplish his purposes. Yesterday we were advised that we are approaching a million and a half people. Let us consider a million people and realize that if we paid a full and honest fast offering, joyfully and gladly before the Lord, there would come into the hands of the servants of God each year, paid by a million people, the value of twenty-four million meals. What a strength that would be to the great welfare movement, what a spiritual blessing would come to all of the Church, for God promises great blessings, and what means would be in hand to bring about the alleviation of the suffering and the needs of the people!

This thing goes right to the heart of the gospel. The Lord found it necessary to charge ancient Israel with robbery, that they had robbed him in their tithes and their offerings, and they were under a curse, but he said,

... prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. (Mal. 3:10.)

I wish to read some of his words, just a few short selections, to emphasize the need of obeying the law of the fast and giving offerings for the poor and afflicted. They affect our salvation;

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they affect the forgiveness of our sins; they affect our souls being saved. We will not be saved, our prayers will not be answered, and the Lord will reject us as his disciples if we do not remember the poor and the afflicted.

These are his words directly through his prophets:

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.)

And now, for the sake of these things which I have spoken unto you—that is, for the sake of retaining a remission of your sins from day to day, that ye may walk guiltless before God—I would that ye should impart of your substance to the poor, every man according to that which he hath, such as feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and administering to their relief, both spiritually and temporally, according to their wants. (Mosiah 4:26.)

Yea, and when you do not cry unto the Lord, let your hearts be full, drawn out in prayer unto him continually for your welfare, and also for the welfare of those who are around you.

And now behold, my beloved brethren, I say unto you, do not suppose that this is all; for after ye have done all these things, if ye turn away the needy, and the naked, and visit not the sick and afflicted, and impart of your substance, if ye have, to those who stand in need—I say unto you, if ye do not any of these things, behold,

your prayer is vain, and availeth you nothing, and ye are as hypocrites who do deny the faith. (Alma 34:27, 28.)

Wo unto you rich men, that will not give your substance to the poor, for your riches will canker your souls; and this shall be your lamentation in the day of visitation, and of judgment, and of indignation: The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and my soul is not saved! (D & C 56:16.)

And remember in all things the poor and the needy, the sick and the afflicted, for he that doeth not these things, the same is not my disciple. (Ibid., 52:40.)

May the Lord help us to discharge this great obligation in gladness and in joy, with all our hearts, I humbly pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

The Choir and Congregation will now sing, "O Say, What is Truth?" Elder George Q. Morris of the Council of Twelve has just concluded speaking.

The Choir and congregation sang the hymn, "O Say, What Is Truth?"

President David O. McKay:

We shall now hear from Elder Hugh B. Brown, Assistant to the Twelve, who has just returned from an assignment by the First Presidency to officiate at the laying of the cornerstone of the New Zealand Temple.

ELDER HUGH B. BROWN

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

I HUMBLY PRAY that I may have the liberty which comes from the possession of the Holy Spirit and that your prayers and mine may be effective to that end.

As mentioned, we have just returned from a tour of the missions in the South Pacific, and we are sure that you parents, friends, and relatives of the missionaries who are laboring there will be interested in knowing that they are well, happy, and doing a wonderful work. They send to you and to all members of the Church their love,

greetings, and gratitude. We met 575 of them while there, held meetings with them, listened to their testimonies, discussed with them some of their problems, and were inspired by their faith and devotion.

Everywhere we went the people were living in the afterglow of the recent visit of President David O. and Sister McKay. To thousands it marked the pinnacle of their spiritual experiences. We wish publicly to thank him and his counselors for the priceless privilege of visiting the wonderful people of those islands and