

Fasting Outline – Mike Baird

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What fasting is not

- Isaiah 58:3-5

"Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours.

Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high.

Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the LORD?"

What is fasting

- Isaiah 58:6-7

"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 thou 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?"

What are the blessings of fasting

- Isaiah 58:8-11

" Then shall thy 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 rereward.

Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity; 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 noonday:

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.

And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in."

- Joseph B Wirthlin:
"Fasting in the proper spirit and in the Lord's way will energize us spiritually, strengthen our self-discipline, fill our homes with peace, lighten our hearts with joy, fortify us against temptation, prepare us for times of adversity, and open the windows of heaven." ("The Law of the Fast", Ensign, May 2001, 73)

Fasting and Prayer

- Joseph B Wirthlin:
"Without prayer, fasting is not complete fasting; it's simply going hungry. If we want our fasting to be more than just going without eating, we must lift our hearts, our minds, and our voices in communion with our Heavenly Father. Fasting, coupled with mighty prayer, is powerful. It can fill our minds with the revelations of the Spirit. It can strengthen us against times of temptation." ("The Law of the Fast," Ensign, May 2001, 73)
- Ezra Taft Benson:
" If you want to get the spirit of your office and calling as a new president of a quorum, a new high [councilor], a new bishop [or, I might say, a Relief Society president]—try fasting for a period. I don't mean just missing one meal, then eating twice as much the next meal. I mean really fasting, and praying during that period. It will do more to give you the real spirit of your office and calling and permit the Spirit to operate through you than anything I know." (The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson, 331–32.)

Fast Offerings

- Joseph Smith:
"Let this be an [example] to all saints, and there will never be any lack for bread: When the poor are starving, let those who have, fast one day and give what they otherwise would have eaten to the bishops for the poor, and every one will abound for a long time. ... And so long as the saints will all live to this principle with glad hearts and cheerful countenances they will always have an abundance." (History of the Church, 7:413)
- Spencer W Kimball:
"Let's also teach our obligations relative to the law of the fast. Each member should contribute a generous fast offering for the care of the poor and the needy. This offering should at least be the value of the two meals not eaten while fasting.
Sometimes we have been a bit penurious and figured that we had for breakfast one egg and that cost so many cents and then we give that to the Lord. I think that when we are affluent, as many of us are, that we ought to be very, very generous. ...
I think we should ... give, instead of the amount saved by our two meals of fasting, perhaps much, much more—ten times more when we are in a position to do it." (Conference Report, Apr. 1974, p. 184)