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Prayer & (Fasting)

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Notes for talk to BYU 15th ward
28 Feb 1971
4:30 pm 456 MARB

1. How old is prayer & fasting?
2. Read Isaiah 58:1-7 - perversion of fast / true purpose
3. Esther - story Haman Jew's enemy. (lose hands of wickedness help poor)
- 4:16 "Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan (the palace) and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish."
4. Daniel story 6:1-23 King Darius -
"..... verse 18 "Then the king went to his palace and passed the night fasting."
5. New Test. references - Math 6:16-18. on the mount, the saviour said: "Moreover when ye fast, be not as the hypocrites of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou fastest anoint thine head, and wash thy face; that thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.
math 17:21 - casting out devil from youth whom the disciples could not heal. Lacked faith / more mountains?
"Howbeit this kind goeth out not out but by prayer and fasting"
6. Prayer and fasting in modern times indicated in D & C & could from former times.
• Brig. Young (read ans. to Prop. Q. p. 92) Thursday Fast
7. Sunday Fast (" " " " " p. 93)

Summary of fasting purposes

1. Loose the bands of wickedness, undo heavy burdens, let oppressed go free, break every yoke.
2. aid the poor
3. Heal the sick or those possessed by devil
4. cleanse our soul, increase spirituality, induce contrite spirit + humbled heart.

FAST IS CARRIED OUT BEFORE THE LORD in worship.

Reward for proper fast Isaiah 58:8. ^{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 reward.

Fast for ltk mission effort. ^{then shalt thou call and the LORD shall answer...}

next sun. →

Prayer 1. "Saying Prayers"
I often say my prayers
But do I ever pray?
And do the wishes of my heart
Go with the words I say?

I may as well kneel down
and worship gods of stone,
as offer to the living God
a prayer of words alone. annoy.

- Formal Prayers - Sac. ^{set}, Bapt. open + close mtgs.
- "Semi Formal" - Family night + morning ~~break~~ breakfast - dinner.
- Blessing on Food. Wife + Husb. at bedside.
- "Informal" individual personal.

refer to minico. sheet →

- Constant Prayer of the heart (gratitude + thanks)
2. Purpose of prayer
 - a. worship the Lord our God. Express gratitude + thanks ^{to feel in his presence}
 - b. ask blessings for others (that only God can provide)
 - c. " " for ourselves " " ^{give examples}
 - d. Keep us from sin + spiritually atuned + build testimony
 3. Some accessories to prayer.
 - a. faith
 - b. proper language, decorum, + respect, sincerity

4. yes + no answers to prayer - Examples ^{Bro Carlisle / Bony mother} no my teenage experience
5. Prayer + your church service. Strength, desire, equal to task, insights for helping others
6. Prayer when you don't feel like praying. yes. ^{Brig. Young}

A FEW NOTES ON PRAYER

In 2 Ne 32:9 we are told to "pray always" and not perform anything unto the Lord save we have prayed about it. In 3 Nephi 20:1, the Lord tells us there are times when we cease to pray vocally, but we should not cease to pray in our hearts. Sometimes students wonder about the concept of "praying always." Following ~~are~~ ^{are} some selected scriptures from the Doctrine and Covenants in which the Lord tells us why we should pray always and the promised blessings:

1. DC 10:5 Pray always that you may come off conqueror.
2. DC 19:38 Pray always and I will pour out my spirit upon you.
3. DC 20:33 Pray always lest you fall into temptation.
4. DC 32:4 Pray always that I may unfold the scriptures to your understanding.
5. DC 88:126 Pray always that ye may not faint (fail to remain faithful).
6. DC 93:49 Pray always lest that wicked one have power in you.
7. DC 93:50 In speaking to the Bishop of the Church, Newell Whitney, the Lord instructed him to set his family in order so they would pray always or they shall be removed out of their place. The same application can be made to those of us called to labor in the priesthood, in any church calling, or to be a part of the dispensation to build Zion. If we do not pray always we will be removed out of our place, and another worthy because he does pray always ~~we~~ will be given our assigned task.

In April 1966 Primary Conference, Elder Howard W. Hunter said, "The absence of prayer...is a form of atheism."

In that same conference, another prophet, Ezra Taft Benson, said: "If we would advance in holiness--increase in favor with God--nothing can take the place of prayer. And so I adjure you to give prayer--daily prayer--secret prayer--a foremost place in your lives."

John Lyman Smith used to eat at the table with Joseph the Prophet since he played with the prophet's son, Joseph. At one time the prophet called them to dinner and they stood one on each side of him. "After he had looked over the table, he said, 'Lord, we thank thee for the Johnny Cake, and ask thee to send us something better, Amen.' The corn bread was cut, and I received a piece from his hand. Before the bread was all eaten, a man came to the door and asked if the Prophet Joseph was at home. Joseph replied he was, whereupon the visitor said, 'I have brought you some flour and a ham.' Joseph arose and took the gift, and blessed the man in the name of the Lord. Turning to his wife, Emma, he said, 'I knew the Lord would answer my prayer.'" (Juvenile Instructor V. 27:, 1892.

/// get down on your knees, and when the cares of this world intrude themselves upon your devotions, let them wait while you remain on your knees and finish your prayers. Brother Daniel D. Hunt's blessings over a dinner in Missouri...is a very good prayer for us all. It was: 'O Lord, save us from error.' If you can say no more than this...go down upon your knees and say it...Let no person give up prayer because he has not the spirit of prayer, neither let any earthly circumstance hurry you while in the performance of this important duty.

Brigham Young JD 12:102-103