

H. Tracy Hall
1711 No. Lambert Lane
Provo, Utah 84601

29 March 1978

Dear Children:

Last Sunday was usual enough except for that dream from which I awakened at 3:00 a.m. I took my usual shower, washed my hair, shaved, and brushed my teeth. I have always brushed my teeth before eating. Breakfast tastes better that way. However, it was Fast Day so there was no breakfast this day. I said my personal prayers (in the bath-room, of course) Think of the billions of prayers that go up from bath-rooms. I've often thought that it may not be the best choice of rooms, but where else in the house can one have locked-door-privacy? The tithing received by mail during the preceding week was removed from my locked desk drawer and the mail from church headquarters was placed in my attache case and I was off in the cool morning darkness to Bishopric Meeting.

All the time there was the question, "what about that dream?" Bishopric meeting, Melchezidec Priesthood committee meeting, and welfare meeting passed, and Priesthood meeting began. We had the opening song, opening prayer, and the announcements followed by the call for any visitors to introduce themselves (I was conducting all the meetings this day- the members of the bishopric rotate in this responsibility every week, as you know). A tall young man, crew cutted (most unusual for this day and age), shot up from his location up front on my right. "I'm Link Hunn; I'm a Quaker," he said and promptly sat down. I shot right back, "welcome, we're always glad to have Quakers attend our meetings, please come up to the rostrum and see me as soon as these proceeding end." A few more persons introduced themselves and the opening exercises were concluded. Lincoln Hunn came up, said he was from New Jersey, was attracted to come here on account of the Osmonds to see what Mormonism was about (we have a lot of this).

Incidentally, the Osmonds live in the Pleasant View 2nd Ward which meets in the same building on Stadium Avenue as our Pleasant View 1st Ward and the Pleasant View 3rd Ward. ~~It creates a lot of problems.~~ Teen agers show up from England, Japan, and other places just to get a peek at Donnie or Marie. It creates a lot of problems. In fact, we call it the "Osmond Problem".

It was Easter Sunday, Quaker Hunn was expecting some kind of early morning Easter extravaganza. He was twenty two so I took him to the Elder's quorum meeting. Bishoping is interesting for a number of reasons not the least of which are the surprises. About a month ago when I asked visitors to introduce themselves, a man (again up front and to my right) stood up and looking squarely at me did not introduce himself but said in a loud voice, "who are you"?

More meetings. Five youth interviews. Other business. Sunday School began and ended. Unscheduled interviews. Phone calls. Walked home, prayed, turned around and walked back just in time for prayer meeting for Fast and Testimony meeting. High Councilman Lincoln Card was there and I asked him to offer the prayer. My mind was now made up, I had considered the matter all day. I would tell the congregation about my dream!

After the Sacrament Service, it is usual for the person conducting the meeting to lead off in bearing his testimony before turning the meeting over to the congregation for them to bear their testimonies. I began by expressing gratitude for Easter and the sacrifice of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ on our behalf. I then stated that I would bear my testimony in two parts, part of it now and the remainder at the conclusion of the meeting.

In substance, this is what I said: In the second chapter of Joel and also in the second chapter of The Acts Of The Apostles, the Prophet said that in the Latter Days "your young men shall see visions and your old men shall dream dreams." Well, last night I dreamed a dream (pause for ^{mild} slight laughter- I had revealed my age). I was in the dream, you were in the

dream, everybody in this Ward was in the dream. The dream occurred in three sequential scenes. In the opening scene we all beheld a father and mother with a very tall emaciated son. The son was being held in the arms of the father and was visually being presented to us in a plea for assistance. We were moved and wanted to help. But we were afraid. We were afraid that some personal harm would come to each of us if we attempted to help. It seemed that the harm would come from being too close to the son because we would, thereby, contract the illness that had caused his emaciated condition. So, we held back and no one of us helped.

In the second scene, the entire Ward was fishing at a great expanse of water. On the bank were marshes and trees. One large fishing pole was lying on the bank unattended and with a considerable amount of line let out into the sea. The ward was paying little attention to the fishing pole. Presently, the line started to unwind and the reel to turn. The action was not vigorous as in hooking a mountain trout but was rather sluggish. Nonchalantly, we somehow collectively began to reel in the fish. We had a difficult time doing this, not because the fish put up any fight, but because of our own cumbersomeness. We got the line all tangled up around our arms, the trees, and the grass humps in the marshes. Eventually, though, the fish was reeled to shore. But--- the fish was only two thirds of a fish! The entire tail section was missing, being severed from the rearward part of the fish in an irregular, angular cut. Regardless, we wanted the fish very much and also wanted the remainder of the fish that was still out in the sea swimming around. Then, someone remembered that not one of us had a fishing license. Fear again overcame us and we were afraid that we would get caught and suffer some dire consequences. Scene III now begins. ¶ It was discovered that a license could still be obtained a retroactive license as a matter of fact. But it was soon learned that the license could only be obtained from a certain judge and that judge was to be found in scene I of the dream.

29Mar1978 HTH

Once again, we were fearful. We did not want to return to the opening scene of the dream. Incidentally, the license cost money but entitled us to keep the two thirds of a fish already caught and entitled us to fish for the remaining one third still at sea. It was known that the part at sea would be difficult to catch--difficult indeed, but that it was possible.

At this point I said that the first half of my testimony was completed and that if there was a "Joseph" in the audience would he please interpret the dream. There followed a suspenseful pause. H. Reese Hansen, my second counselor sitting at my left leaned over and said, "no one will bear their testimonies, they are all waiting for Joseph." Well, people finally began to bear their testimonies, mainly about things that were on their minds prior to coming to meeting. Brother Card bore his testimony relating how my dream applied to recent happenings in his life; namely, his reluctance to hire an applicant for a school teaching job wherein his heart told him yes but his head told him no because he was afraid that his (Card's) career would be damaged if he hired this man. The man had been rejected by a number of prospective employers, had been out of work for a year and a half, and wore old clothes and had a country hick appearance. Brother Card finally let the spirit direct him, however, and hired the man and everything turned out alright. Later, sister LaPreal Simmons commented on the dream stating her concern as being one who had not been willing to help in scene I.

The meeting continued until it was time to close and it appeared that there ^{would} ~~was to~~ be no Joseph. But as I was ready to leave my seat for the podium to close the meeting, Richard Anderson arose. He apologized in his opening words as to feeling unworthy to being a Joseph but that he knew yesterday that he was to bear his testimony today. So he commenced to interpret the dream. He felt that the dream, while having general meaning to the Ward had a specific meaning for each of us (this is exactly how I felt and brother Card and Sister

Simmons had indicated the same in their testimonies). He said that scene I represented our Father in Heaven presenting the saviour to us for our acceptance. Our fear of accepting him has been expressed before by the prophets of old. It is indeed a grave responsibility and awesome task if we accept him fully as is required. Scene II represented fishing for the souls of men and the one third not caught represented the traditional lost sheep that it was our responsibility to catch (We have 65 persons over 60 years of age that I would like to get on missions before my term is up as Bishop. Also there are 13, eligible young ladies aged 21 years or up who are not married, nor do they have prospects at present and none of them will accept a mission call. On the other hand, our young men respond remarkably well to mission calls). I don't believe Richard responded to the fishing license part but expressed the general theme of the dream that in spite of our great statistics (we probably lead the entire church), We've got to examine our lives and find where we are wanting and do something about it. I then closed the meeting without too much comment because I felt that the dream had its own meaning for each person in some specific way in addition to the fairly obvious general way. I did speak to the fishing license part, however. The fishing license had to be paid for in money in the dream. Money is the symbol of that which is most difficult for the average person to give up. Spiritually, habits and sins are the most difficult to give up. The fishing license for some could represent a temple recommend and some in our Ward have as yet been unable to pay the price for this. It could mean the non-payment of tithing, it could mean failure to complete the task of repentance for fear of confession to the Bishop. It could mean non-observance of the word of wisdom, or failure to take some affirmative action with respect to the temple covenants. The fact that the license could still be obtained after the fish was caught indicates that repentance is still

available to Ward members. I stated to them that the Bishop has a fearful task from which I try hard not to shrink. I am charged with the responsibility of prying into their individual lives in a most personal way but that I strive to do this with as much love and kindness as is possible. I asked that anyone present who needs my assistance, particularly in regard to confession, in assuring themselves of eternal life do not hesitate to seek me out. The meeting was late so I did not elaborate on other things that I saw in the dream (the interpretation, that is).

Important symbolism for our Ward that I saw in Scene I are:

1. We have a father and a mother in heaven.
2. The emaciated young man was indeed the Saviour but in addition represented our brothers and sisters out in the world who are seeking our help, particularly in missionary effort by our older couples.
3. Our ward members are afraid to volunteer for this missionary effort. They are looking forward to an easy, pleasant retirement in "Happy Valley".
4. The sickness we thought we might contract by approaching too closely to the emaciated young man may be real. We may indeed be called upon to risk disease as missionaries in foreign lands but have we not been called upon to give our very lives if necessary?

Some of the things I interpret from Scene II are as follows:

1. The fishing pole lying on the bank unattended represents our indifference. Again, we are very comfortable in Happy Valley.
2. Getting the line tangled while bringing the fish in represents that we need training. We do not yet know it all. We need to be more diligent in the scriptures and probably specific training in missionary work. The fish presented no resistance. We are our own stumbling block. It is ourselves that need to change. Then the task will be easy.
3. The fish could represent mankind, as has been stated, but has a dual meaning in that it could also represent the three degrees of glory. Two thirds of the fish was easily caught, although we were rather clumsy in catching it. We in the Pleasant View 1st Ward have

29Mar1978 HTH

merited the Celestial and Terrestrial Worlds but have not made it to the Celestial as yet. That part of the fish is still out there waiting for us to catch it.

4. The cut at the two thirds mark on the fish was not sharp but was jagged and angled towards the tail. This indicates that we have a toe hold on the Celestial Kingdom.
5. The one third of the fish still at sea, having no mouth would indeed be difficult to catch but we were informed in the dream that it could be done. This would require some increase in faith on our part as it is not clear how this could be from our normal experience.
6. The fact that we did not have a fishing license has already been discussed. We must pay the price required for entry into the Celestial Kingdom.

Some of the things that I interpret from scene III follow:

1. Even though we have caught most of the fish, we can still get a fishing license. This means that there is still time for repentance.
2. The fact that the license must be purchased in scene I means that we must overcome our fear of total acceptance, without reservation, of Jesus Christ.

Well Children, so much for Bishop Hall's dream. I love you and pray for your continued success particularly in your efforts to attain the Celestial Kingdom.

Your eternal admirer,

Dad