



The Gospel Doctrine Class



Doctrine & Covenants - Lesson 17

The Laws of Tithing and the Fast

“And on this day thou shalt do none other thing, only let thy food be prepared with singleness of heart that thy fasting may be perfect, or, in other words, that thy joy may be full.” (D&C 59:13)

D&C 59:13–14, 21; 119; 120

A study of this lesson will help us strengthen our desire to pay a full tithe and live the law of the fast.

First Presidency: "The simplest state-ment we know of is the statement of the Lord himself, namely, that the members of the Church should pay 'one-tenth of all their interest annually,' which is understood to mean income. No one is justified in making any other statement than this." (First Presidency letter to stake presidents and bishops, 19 Mar 1970 - quoted in A Companion to Your Study of the New Testament: The Four Gospels, p308)

President Joseph Fielding Smith: "It is remarkable how many excuses can be made and interpretations given as to what constitutes the tenth. ... It is written, however, that as we measure it shall be measured to us again. If we are stingy with the Lord, he may be stingy with us, or in other words, withhold his blessings." (Church History and Modern Revelation, 2:92)

President Heber J. Grant: "The law of financial prosperity to the Latter-day Saints, under covenant with God, is to be an honest tithe payer, and not to rob the Lord in tithes and offerings. Prosperity comes to those who observe the law of tithing. When I say prosperity I am not thinking of it in terms of dollars and cents alone, although as a rule the Latter-day Saints who are the best tithe payers are the most prosperous men, financially. But what I count as real prosperity, as the one thing of all others that is of great value to every man and woman living, is the growth in a knowledge of God, and in a testimony, and in the power to live the gospel and to inspire our families to do the same. That is prosperity of the truest kind." (Conference Report, Apr 1925)

President Joseph F. Smith: "By this principle (tithing) the loyalty of the people of this Church shall be put to the test. By this principle it shall be known who is for the kingdom of God and who is against it. By this principle it shall be seen whose hearts are set on doing the will of God and keeping his command-ments, thereby sanctifying the land of Zion unto God, and who are opposed to this principle and have cut themselves off from the blessings of Zion. There is a great deal of importance connected with this principle, for by it shall be known whether we are faithful or unfaithful. In this respect it is as essential as faith in God, as repentance of sin, as baptism for the remission of sin, or as the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost. For if a man keep

all the laws save in one point, and he offend in that, he is a transgressor of the law, and he is not entitled to the fulness of the blessings of the Gospel of Jesus Christ (James 2:10.) But when a man keeps all the laws that are revealed, according to his strength, his substance, and his ability, though what he does may be little, it is just as acceptable in the sight of God as if he were able to do a thousand times more." (Gospel Doctrine, pp 282-283)

President Heber J. Grant: "Every living soul among the Latter-day Saints that fasts two meals once a month will be benefited spiritually and be built up in the faith of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ—benefited spiritually in a wonderful way—and sufficient means will be in the hands of the bishops to take care of all the poor." (Gospel Standards, p123)

President Ezra Taft Benson: "Periodic fasting can help clear up the mind and strengthen the body and the spirit. The usual fast, the one we are asked to participate in for fast Sunday, is for twenty-four hours without food or drink. Some people, feeling the need, have gone on longer fasts of abstaining from food but have taken the needed liquids. Wisdom should be used, and the fast should be broken with light eating. To make a fast most fruitful, it should be coupled with prayer and meditation; physical work should be held to a minimum, and it is a blessing if one can ponder on the scriptures and the reason for the fast." (Ensign, Nov 1974, pp66-67)

President Spencer W. Kimball: "Some-times 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 ... and give, instead of the amount we saved by our two meals of fasting, perhaps much, much more—ten times more where we are in a position to do it." (Conference Report, Apr 1974, p184)

President Gordon B. Hinckley: "Think ... of what would happen if the principles of fast day and the fast offering were observed throughout the world. The hungry would be fed, the naked clothed, the homeless sheltered. Our burden of taxes would be lightened. The giver would not suffer but would be blessed by his small abstinence. A new measure of concern and unselfishness would grow in the hearts of people everywhere." (Ensign, May 1991, pp52-53)

Next Week's Reading Assignment
D&C 95; 109; 110; Our Heritage, pages 33–36