

The Law of the Fast

PURPOSE: Encourage all members of the Church to live the law of the fast in order to receive the promised blessings.

WHY THIS TOPIC MATTERS: The Lord has commanded His Saints to “look to the poor and the needy, and administer to their relief that they shall not suffer” (D&C 38:35). President Thomas S. Monson has taught: “Remember the principle of the true fast. Is it not to deal our bread to the hungry, to bring to our own house the poor who are outcast, to clothe the naked, to hide not ourself from our own flesh? (See Isa. 58:7.) An honest fast offering, a generous fast offering, will certainly be an indication to our Heavenly Father that we know and abide this particular law” (“Guiding Principles of Personal and Family Welfare,” *Ensign*, Sep. 1986, 4).

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Scriptures

[Helaman 3:35](#)

[2 Chronicles 31:10](#)

[Doctrine and Covenants 38:35](#)

[Doctrine and Covenants 59:13](#)

Messages

Thomas S. Monson, “Guiding Principles of Personal and Family Welfare,” *Ensign*, Sep. 1986, 4

Henry B. Eyring, “Is Not This the Fast That I Have Chosen?” *Ensign or Liahona*, Apr. 2015, 22

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

- “The Lord has established the law of the fast and fast offerings to bless His people and to provide a way for them to serve those in need” (*Handbook 2: Administering the Church*, 6.1.2).
- “When members fast, they are asked to give to the Church a fast offering at least equal to the value of the food they would have eaten. If possible, they should be generous and give more” (*Handbook 2*, 6.1.2).
- “Blessings associated with the law of the fast include closeness to the Lord, increased spiritual strength, temporal well-being, greater compassion, and a stronger desire to serve” (*Handbook 2*, 6.1.2).
- The law of the fast is a commandment for the benefit of all Saints, regardless of their economic condition; it is a matter of faith and conversion.
- “A proper fast day observance typically includes abstaining from food and drink for two consecutive meals in a 24-hour period, attending fast and testimony meeting, and giving a generous fast offering” (*Handbook 2*, 21.1.17).

KEY DUTIES OF THE BISHOP

- In administering fast-offering assistance, bishops should promote personal responsibility, sustain life rather than lifestyle, provide commodities before cash, and give work opportunities. Members may also benefit from an invitation to participate in Self-Reliance Services training.
- “The bishopric and members of the ward council encourage members to live the law of the fast. The importance of living the law of the fast should be taught in sacrament meetings, priesthood meetings, Relief Society and other auxiliary meetings, home visits, temple recommend interviews, and tithing settlement interviews” (*Handbook 1: Stake President and Bishops*, 5.2.1).





- The involvement of Aaronic Priesthood quorums in the collection of fast offerings generally results in increased member donations, while blessing the young men who participate. “Those bishops who organize their Aaronic Priesthood quorums to participate in the collection of fast offerings will find increased success in this sacred responsibility” (Thomas S. Monson, in a meeting with the Presiding Bishopric, Feb. 28, 2014).

TEACHING THE DOCTRINE OF THE LAW OF THE FAST

- “The Lord has given us something that we each can do. It is a commandment so simple that a child can understand it. It is a commandment with a wonderful promise for those in need and for us. It is the law of the fast” (Henry B. Eyring, “‘Is Not This the Fast That I Have Chosen?’” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2015, 22).
- Leaders can help members understand the connection between the law of the fast and the principles of discipleship, sanctification, self-reliance, strength over temptation, and Sabbath observance.
- Discipleship and sanctification: “They did fast and pray oft, and did wax stronger and stronger in their humility, and firmer and firmer in the faith of Christ, unto the filling their souls with joy and consolation, yea, even to the purifying and the sanctification of their hearts” (Helaman 3:35).
- Self-reliance: “Since the people began to bring the offerings into the house of the Lord, we have had enough to eat, and have left plenty: for the Lord hath blessed his people” (2 Chronicles 31:10).
- Strength over temptation: “We do not know all the reasons why Jesus Christ went into the wilderness to fast and to pray. But we know at least one of the effects: the Savior completely resisted Satan’s temptations” (Henry B. Eyring, “‘Is Not This the Fast That I Have Chosen?’” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2015, 25).
- Sabbath observance: “And on this [the Lord’s] 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).