

Preparation Guide for August's Devotionals

Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.



Genesis 7:23-24 And the Lord called His people, Zion, because they were of one heart and of one mind, and dwelt in righteousness; and there were no poor among them.

As we look at our two themes this month, “**We are required to seek out and dwell in righteousness**” and, “**We are required to impart of our substance,**” they really do belong together. They blend together and speak to the very core or heart of the coming forth of Zion. I can see why the Patriarch’s chose them for us to consider.

Lori Smith and Janet Williams have done a great job on these two topics. I hope you will be enlightened and inspired when reading what they have shared.

I am reminded of a Zion Flash Card used in 2014 where we quoted Arthur Oakman. I will quote for those who may not have this flash card. Oakman said, “**Sin stands in the way of Zion. Yes, we have spelled it with a “S” because it is a capital problem. It must be got rid of. We do not lack the means to build the city.... We have now all that we need. But we do not have enough Kingdom-**

seeking men (women). There are not enough repentant men (women). It is sin, not the lack of means, that stands in the way of Zion. The choice is before us. No one is going to make us build the Kingdom. But if we want to share in its erection we have got to pay the price. The price is to be rid of sin.... The world needs Zion. God purposes to build it. He pleads with us to rid ourselves of sin so that we may assist Him in this work, and share with Him the song of redeeming love. Men and Brethren (and I add women) what shall we do?”

I guess that is the question that the Patriarch’s are asking of us. Are we willing to do it, are we willing to pay the price? Will we give up sin and seek out righteousness? Are we willing to pay the price and share our abundance with those who are less fortunate?

Zion, righteousness and taking care of the poor are interconnected. You cannot separate them. They come as a packaged deal; but oh, the great blessings that await us, if we will but respond to the call given to us.

The following scripture **D&C 58:1b-3f** speaks to us of both righteousness (keeping the commandments), and, taking care of the poor and needy (impairing of our substance)—and the great reward that will be ours if we will respond.

1b for verily I say unto you, **Blessed is he that keepeth My commandments, whether in life or in death; and he that is faithful in tribulation, the reward of the same is greater in the kingdom of heaven.**

2a **Ye can not behold with your natural eyes, for the present time, the design of your God concerning those things which shall come hereafter, and the glory which shall follow, after much tribulation.**

2b **For after much tribulation come the blessings. Wherefore the day cometh that ye shall be crowned with much glory; the hour is not yet, but is nigh at hand.**

3a Remember this which I tell you before, that you may lay it to heart, and receive that which shall follow.

3b Behold, verily I say unto you, For this cause I have sent you that you might be obedient, and that your hearts might be prepared to bear testimony of the things which are to come;

3c and also that you might be honored of laying the foundation, and of bearing record of the land upon which the Zion of God shall stand; **and also that a feast of fat things might be prepared for the poor;**

3d yea, a feast of fat things, of wine on the lees well refined, that the earth may know that the mouths of the prophets shall not fail; yea, a supper of the house of the Lord, well prepared, unto which all nations shall be invited.

3e Firstly, the rich and the learned, the wise and the noble; and after that cometh the day of My power;

3f then shall the poor, the lame, and the blind, and the deaf, come in unto the marriage of the Lamb, and partake of the supper of the Lord, prepared for the great day to come. Behold, I, the Lord, have spoken it.

This feast of fat things, I believe, is both physical and spiritual.

I pray we can forge ahead in our journey and become more obedient to God and more aware of the needs of the poor and needy.

May we become a more righteous and a more loving and caring people—that Zion may bud forth!

Will YOU pay the price?

Challenges in the guide prepared by the Patriarchs of the church:

- 5. We are required to seek out and dwell in righteousness.**
- 6. We are required to impart of our substance.**

And the Lord called His people, Zion, because they were of one heart and of one mind, and dwelt in righteousness; and there were no poor among them. Genesis 7:23-24

Action: We are required to seek out and dwell in righteousness; and thereby we are compelled to impart of our substance to those that stand in need.

This Month I will actively seek out righteousness by making sure that all my decisions, my daily choices, are pleasing to God and in accordance with His Commandments. Not only will I practice dwelling in righteousness but I will love those around me and cleave unto charity. In accordance with God’s guidance and direction I will actively choose to succor those who stand in need. I will pray for God to open my eyes to those around me who stand in need. I will seek ways to share my wealth—my blessings both temporal and spiritual—with others. For all I have is really not mine anyway; it all belongs to God. In all areas of my life I will attempt to be righteous that I might be prepared to meet my God face to face.

My Plan to Accomplish this Discipline:

Week #1

Week #2

Week #3

Week #4

My Partner to Assist Me & Help Me Be Accountable Is: _____

Self Evaluation:

How Am I Doing & What Do I Need to Do to Be More Successful:
