

Come Follow Me Insights (Doctrine and Covenants 12–13; Joseph Smith—History 1:66–75, Feb 8-14)

I'm Taylor.

And I'm Tyler.

This is Book of Mormon Central's Come, Follow Me insights. Today, Doctrine and Covenants sections 12 and 13 and Joseph Smith History verses 66 through 75.

Today we're going to be talking about ministering angels from both sides of the veil, and how they come and minister to our needs. To set the stage for what we're going to discuss today in Church history and in the scriptures, I want to begin in a non-conventional way. I want to tell you a story that happened back in 2010. This is the story of Tim and Karen Turner. They lived in Oregon. They had six children, five of which had physical and mental struggles in life, and it was a full-time job for Karen just to take care of these five younger children. In fact, Jessica, their oldest, she was the only one who didn't have any special needs.

In spite of all of the struggles with the children's health, Karen and Tim decided to take a coast-to-coast Church history trip. They lived in Oregon, and they were going to work their way back east, and then home again. They drove down to Utah, to Salt Lake, to drop off their second daughter, who had Cri-du-chat syndrome, and was in a wheelchair, and couldn't very easily go on the trip with the rest of them, and then they continued their journey east.

When they made it to Iowa, a torrential downpour hit, and Tim was driving, and their van hydroplaned and slammed into a cement barrier. This accident left Tim with a broken neck in five different places, a broken arm, severe concussions, and other bodily injuries. It also created some life-threatening injuries for their daughter, Jessica, and one of their other sons, Joshua.

The doctors came into the emergency room to talk to Tim. Here he, is in pain, in shock, with a major concussion, and feeling totally broken, and they informed him that his wife, Karen, did not survive the accident. At that point, you can imagine his world just crushing in upon him. And gratefully, there were some ministering angels for Tim, and for his children. He had two sisters, Tressy and Trisha, who flew out from Salt Lake to Iowa to be with him and the children that were there, and his mother and father-in-law, Floyd and Carol Burnett, flew out.

After a few days, three of the children were taken back to Utah, and Tim, and Jessica, and Joshua, were left in three different hospitals there, in Iowa, to work through their struggles, and Tressy stayed behind, as well as Floyd, to take care of them.

Tim's condition just went downhill. His whole will to live was gone. He was facing a future of trying to deal with all of these struggles with these children, and dealing with the emotional issues of losing his wife, and beating himself up, feeling responsible for that, and no desire to

live. And the doctors kept trying to work with him and feed him, but everything they fed him he kept throwing up.

After six days in the ICU with his deteriorating condition, his sister Tressy said, Tim, you have to live. You have to fight. Your children need you. And he said, nothing sounds good. She said, there's got to be something that sounds good. And he thought for a minute, and he said, the only thing that might stay down is banana bread. At which point she said, but Tim, you don't even like banana bread. He said, I know. But it's the only thing that sounds like it might stay down. At which point Tressy said, wait a minute. And she left his hospital, and went over to where she was staying, and she picked up a bag that had been dropped off just an hour before, at the Ronald McDonald House where she was staying, and she brought it back to the hospital. And she said, Tim, you're never going to guess what happened. And she handed him this bag, and inside was a loaf of still-warm banana bread. That bread had been delivered by a member of the Church there, in Iowa, who had dropped this off for no other reason than she said, I felt like I should bring this bread to the Ronald McDonald House to give to you. She had no idea.

Tim opened that bag, and that warm bread, the aroma, he said, filled his soul. He didn't just see a loaf of banana bread. He saw the hand of God. He said he broke off a corner of that bread, and put it in his mouth, and for the first time since the accident, food tasted good. It went down, and it filled his soul, not just his body, but it filled his soul with nourishment, with a desire to fight, and to move forward, and to live.

Now, here's the irony. There's a dear sister somewhere out there in Iowa, back in 2010, who has no idea that, on that day when she was inspired that morning to make banana bread and deliver a loaf of it to the Ronald McDonald House, she had no idea what that bread was going to do. She was simply acting on an impression.

Brothers and sisters, that dear sister was a ministering angel to one of God's children who needed to know that he had not been forsaken, that somehow, some way, God was going to help him work through all of those struggles and accomplish what needed to be accomplished. That bread didn't solve Tim's problems. It didn't bring his beloved wife back. It didn't fix his broken neck. It didn't help the other two children in the hospital, or comfort the three who were back in Utah, at the time. But it was exactly what Tim needed to get through that next step of his life, to move forward, and since then, in the ensuing ten years since then, Tim's life hasn't been easy. He's had a myriad of problems to continue to wrestle with and work through, but talking to Tim yesterday on the phone, in preparation for this, he said, God has been so good to me. I feel nothing but blessed, because he's given me what I've needed at each phase to be able to move forward.

Brothers and sisters, today's lesson in the Doctrine and Covenants, and in Church history, is about ministering angels from both sides of the veil. And what do they do? They minister to our needs. What do we need, right now, to be able to move forward and progress on the covenant path?

If you turn to section 12, Doctrine and Covenants section 12, you're introduced to this character in Church history named Joseph Knight. And while the emphasis of chapter 12 is on Joseph, let's not forget his dear wife, Polly, who is completely supportive and with him, and probably even encouraging him in many of the things that are going on.

If you look at a map, Joseph and Polly Knight live up in Colesville, New York. It's a long journey from Colesville down to Harmony, Pennsylvania, where Joseph and Emma are, and where Oliver is with them, working their way through the translation process of the Book of Mormon. Joseph Knight made that long journey on several occasions, and the amazing thing about Joseph Knight is while others are persecuting and finding fault with Joseph Smith and what's going on with the translation, Joseph Knight trusts him. He supports him, and he never arrives empty-handed. He's always bringing food, or money, and on one occasion he even brought lined paper to help aid them in the translation process, because money was short and they were struggling.

I love the fact that Joseph Knight doesn't show up and say, hey, if you need anything, just let me know. What does he do? He acts on impressions, and he does good things. He brings them things that he knows they're going to need, whether they ask for them or not. There's a beautiful principle there for us today.

The Lord is going to give us thoughts, and feelings, and impressions of how to minister to people's needs. And if we act on those thoughts quickly, then we'll usually find that the Lord has a purpose for helping somebody through that act. Never suppress an urge, or an impression, to do something nice, or to do something kind for another person. Never suppress that. Just act on it. You never know what a simple loaf of banana bread delivered to a stranger will do in the hands of the Lord. You never know what a kind thought shared, or a little bit of money left with somebody, will do when you're acting on an impression. And that is the story of Joseph and Polly Knight, here.

Now, you'll notice in section 12, he asks Joseph what he can do to help build the kingdom, and you're going to hear some repeat phrases. "A great and marvelous work is about to come forth among the children of men" (Doctrine and Covenants 12:1). We've seen this on a couple of other occasions previously, and he tells him, "...I am God;" (Doctrine and Covenants 12:2). Look at verse 3: "Behold, the field is white already to harvest;" We can read that in the context of Joseph Knight, and Joseph Smith, and the building up of the kingdom of God back in the 1829 timeframe, or we can read that in the context of ministering angels on both sides of the veil today, you being a ministering angel. "...the field is white already to harvest;" (Doctrine and Covenants 12:3).

We are surrounded by people who need help. I just absolutely love the concept that has been shared by President Henry B. Eyring on multiple occasions in general conference where he has asked the question: Lord, who needs me today? Who can I help? That is such a beautiful

concept, a beautiful question to ask, because "...the field is white already to harvest; therefore, whoso desireth to reap let him thrust in his sickle with his might, and reap while the day lasts, that he may treasure up for his soul everlasting salvation in the kingdom of God" (Doctrine and Covenants 12:3).

You'll notice, in the building up of the kingdom, it's less about talking, and more about doing. It's putting your best effort in, and my best effort might not look very good, compared to what other people can do. But it's my best effort, and if I thrust in my sickle, my effort as a missionary, as a leader, as a husband, as a father, as a teacher, whatever role I may be in, as a neighbor, as a ministering brother, or some of you as a ministering sister, you put in your best effort. Brothers and sisters, the Lord is Almighty, and he's able to turn those best efforts into miraculous, life-changing at times, events for people, to inspire them to move forward, and to "try a little harder to be a little better", and to accomplish the things that they need to accomplish.

I love these verses. Verses 3 and 4: "Behold, the field is white already to harvest; therefore, whoso desireth to reap let him thrust in his sickle with his might, and reap while the day lasts, that he may treasure up for his soul everlasting salvation in the kingdom of God. Yea, whosoever will thrust in his sickle and reap, the same is called of God." I love the invitation: it's to act. Don't wait. We don't need to be commanded in all things. We don't have to worry, like am I swinging the proper way? Did I cut that sheaf at the right height? Just get to work. There's so much joyful opportunity to serve, and to be served. And the beautiful thing is God has invited all of us, wherever we're at, to participate in the work. Simply by loving and serving others, you are part of building the kingdom of God.

You don't need an official calling; you don't need position or privilege. It's simply by using your righteous desires to help lift the life of somebody that may be in your life. It doesn't take much. It could be a kind word. It could simply be, as President Hinckley often encouraged us, to try and be a little bit better every day. And as you do this, you will feel the joy of God's love surging through your soul. And this is the purpose of the gospel, this is the purpose of the Restoration: to invite all of us to participate in this great and marvelous work. Whether our swing is mighty or less so, it's just to participate with God, and in doing so, finding the joy.

Look at verse 4 now: "Yea, whosoever will thrust in his sickle and reap, the same is called of God." You'll notice the order. He doesn't say, God calls you, now you go thrust in your sickle. He said, "...[whoever] will thrust in his sickle ... the same is called..." (Doctrine and Covenants 12:4). Sometimes, instead of sitting there waiting for God to send you out to do something, try it on an occasion. Try just doing something kind for somebody else, and see what happens as God then calls you to do more, and to accomplish more. What does this all end up resulting in? Look at verse 6: "Now, as you have asked, behold, I say unto you, keep my commandments, and seek to bring forth and establish the cause of Zion."

One of the things that sets Zion apart is it's not a competition. The way that it's described by Enoch in the book of Moses is Zion is “they were of one heart and one mind ... dwelt in righteousness; and there was no poor among them” (Moses 7:18).

So, isn't it a beautiful fact that as we, on the covenant path, are invited to reach out and lift up other people – this is an insight that was shared with me by my good friend Wayne Dimick years ago. Taking things as simple as a fast offering, for instance, what is it? You, who are rich, give away some of your money so that those who are poor might be lifted up. We become a little bit poorer so that they can become a little bit richer. The insight being, he who was the ultimate in richness – not in money, but in all things – descended below all so that we could be exalted.

Every time you make an offering, whether it be in money, whether it be through the Church, whether it be through a charitable organization, whether it be public or private, every time you give away something that God has granted you, it becomes the symbol of what Jesus does with the Atonement. Those who are rich become a little bit poorer to help those who are poor become a little bit richer. It's the cause of Zion. It's to build this unity, and this oneness, so that there will be no poor among us. And again, we've said it before, it comes in all kinds of forms.

I'll never forget the multiple occasions that a dear, saintly man in my ward would come up to me and shake my hand, and when he pulled his hand away, I'm holding a hundred-dollar bill, or at times two hundred-dollar bills, and he just smiled and he said, put those in your wallet, and keep them tucked away, because the Lord will let you know who needs them. You're going to run into somebody in the next month who that will be a little hug from heaven for them. So just keep it tucked there, and do some good with it.

My family has been the recipient on so many occasions of people bringing a meal, or my sisters, Dana, or Penny, or my brother Tad, dropping off big bags filled with clothing from their children that – it probably wasn't a big deal to them. But it was a big deal to my family to be able to have so much just given to us to help provide for the needs of the family. So, big or small, it doesn't matter as long as we're “[seeking] to bring forth and establish the cause of Zion” (Doctrine and Covenants 12:6). Any those efforts are helping us to progress along the covenant path, and encouraging others to move along as well, as they see the hand of God in their life.

So, as we talk about establishing the cause of Zion, let's talk about this word here for just a moment: “wealth”. Some of us may feel like, well, I'm not wealthy enough to establish the cause of Zion. I'm going to encourage us to think a little more broadly, that wealth is anything the Lord has given us – anything: your time, your talents, your love, your righteous desires. It doesn't have to be money. So, maybe you happen to have a particular skill. I remember as a kid growing up, I was so impressed with people who were good with electrical work, or carpentry. Where I grew up in Minnesota, our home didn't have a finished basement, and I remember this big ward project – well it wasn't really a ward project – but many men and women from the ward coming over and helping my dad finish off the basement. I was so impressed with the people who had a

wealth of knowledge about doing electrical work and carpentry. My mom, who was just an incredible teacher for years in the seminary system – early morning seminary in Minnesota starting at 5:55 a.m. Her desire to share her testimony for fourteen years early morning with those students who – I was one of them – were a little sleepy, but still that testimony burned bright.

You have wealth. You have love. You have kindness. You have a willingness to listen to others. You might know something that could benefit another individual, enlighten their lives. So, there are many ways to be a ministering angel today. And all of us can ask ourselves, what has the Lord blessed me with? What wealth do I have, that I could then give to others? How do I magnify my talents by giving them away? And that is wealth, and that is sharing wealth, and that is building the cause of Zion.

Elder Oaks gave a beautiful Conference talk some years ago about the principle of good, better, best, and I think that's relevant to what we're talking about here in section 12, “[seeking] to bring forth and establish the cause of Zion” (Doctrine and Covenants 12:6). Now, all of us in our lives may be working to establish a variety of things: a family, a household, a job, it may be a political cause, it could be some other cause. Again, there's good, better, best. And if you think again about what Zion is, what we were told in Moses chapter 7 verse 18: "...the Lord called his people Zion, because they were of one heart and one mind...".

So, what's the very best thing we can be doing? Being unified with others, seeking to understand, seeking to focus on building, instead of dividing, instead of causing contention. So, you might find today, is there opportunity for me to listen to somebody else, and to find better understanding, unity, kindness, forgiveness? Can you find unity in your own heart of forgiving something that maybe you did, but you don't feel proud of? The beauty of the gospel is that God's Atonement can overcome any problem and bring that unity. In fact, even the word “atonement” – at-one-ment -- is about Zion. It's about being brought together.

So, we invite you to consider, as God asks us, as we are reaping, as we “seek to...establish the cause of Zion”, the small acts of kindness, the small acts of forgiveness and repentance, that bring the unity that God has invited, and seeking to do the best that's out there, of oneness, and not just only the good, but maybe in the world around us, but the very best of unity and oneness with God (Doctrine and Covenants 11:6, 12:6).

So, to finish this beautiful section given to Joseph Knight, this ministering angel who helped bring forth the Book of Mormon in his own way, look at verse 8: "And no one can assist in this work except he shall be humble and full of love, having faith, hope, and charity, being temperate in all things, whatsoever shall be entrusted to his care." It's this giving your life to the Lord, saying, “Here [I am]; send me” (Isaiah 6:8). Who needs my help? I love, in conjunction with President Eyring's invitation to ask who needs you, I love something that President Thomas S. Monson used to say along the lines of, “I [wanted] the Lord to know that if He needs an errand

run, Tom Monson will run that errand for Him.” I want my life to reflect that more, and you see that, over and over again, in so many people’s lives today, as well as in Church history. It’s a beautiful example.

Now, we jump into section 13. It’s the shortest section in the entire Doctrine and Covenants, one verse long. And it’s simply the words that were spoken by John the Baptist, as he appears to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery near the Susquehanna River, as they were out in the woods, praying, specifically, to know what to do about this issue of baptism. They’ve been translating in the Book of Mormon, and when they come to 3<sup>rd</sup> Nephi chapter 11, with the appearance of Jesus to the Nephites and Lamanites there, the very first thing he teaches them, after all of the introductory experiences is he gives authority to baptize to Nephi, and then teaches him how to baptize, which leaves Joseph and Oliver scratching their heads, saying, but wait a minute, how do we do this today? It’s clearly really important, but we don’t have that power and authority.

So, they go out into the woods to pray, and John the Baptist appears, giving them the keys of the Aaronic priesthood, which is the gospel of preparation; it’s this ability to go and baptize. And then, he invites them, or instructs them, to go into the river and baptize each other. So, Joseph baptizes Oliver and then Oliver baptized Joseph. And after each of them had been baptized, they came up out of the water and were filled with the spirit of prophecy and revelation.

You’ll notice that there’s a lot going on here. It’s May 15, 1829, so we’re still a little under a year away from organizing, officially, the Church, when we now get the Aaronic priesthood given to them. And they are told, if you read in Joseph Smith History, starting in verse 68, this is where the back story is told about what happens in section 13. Verse 70: “He said this Aaronic Priesthood had not the power of laying on hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, but that this should be conferred on us hereafter; and he commanded us to go and be baptized...”

So, here’s John, who had been foreordained as the forerunner, the one to prepare the way for the coming of Christ. So, John the Baptist, his whole life, and his whole mission, is to prepare the way for the coming of Christ. You’ll notice he’s born six months before Jesus. What’s the significance, Taylor?

Yeah, let’s map this out. So, six months is 180 days. If we make that degrees, that is a straight line. Obviously, I’m not John the Baptist because I can’t draw straight lines, but we are told that he makes the way straight. I just think it’s fascinating that God just loves symbolism - that John is born six months, or 180 days, before Jesus, which is 180 degrees, if you think in geometrical terms.

So, you’ll also notice that, in the New Testament account, John was beheaded by Herod shortly before Jesus ends up being crucified. So, he would have probably gone into the spirit world with the same message as he came into this world: repent, “Prepare ye the ways of the Lord, make his [path] straight” for he is coming (Matthew 3:3, Luke 3:4). And now he’s doing that again in the

latter days. He's coming to prepare the way for the coming of the Church of Jesus Christ, and for the unfolding of the Restoration to continue.

What is it that he actually restored? Let's look at that. He tells them: "Upon you my fellow servants, in the name of Messiah I confer the Priesthood of Aaron, which holds the keys of the ministering of angels..." (Doctrine and Covenants 13:1). Just a really quick review: you have the twelve tribes of Israel, right? You have Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, and Benjamin. For a moment let's focus right here: Levi. Levi is the one who becomes the ancestor through whom Moses is going to be born, and Moses's brother, Aaron. So, you're going to get two names to this lesser priesthood: The Levi-tical – the Levitical priesthood-- and the Aaronic priesthood.

You'll notice that once we're out in the wilderness with the twelve tribes of Israel wandering, it's only the family of Aaron in the tribe of Levi. It's only the Levites who hold the priesthood. It's for "the ministering of angels" (Doctrine and Covenants 13:1). You'll also notice that out there in the wilderness, Moses tried to prepare all of the whole family of Israel to be able to come into the presence of God, and they didn't want to come into his presence. They didn't want to speak to him face to face, and they said, no Moses, you go speak with him.

And so, what do we set up: a lesser, preparatory priesthood than this Melchizedek priesthood. So, we call it the Aaronic priesthood. All of Aaron's descendants in the house of Israel, moving forward, are the ones who administer the ordinances of the priesthood for all the other tribes. That's why Levi wasn't given land when they came into the promised land, because his descendants had to be scattered among all the other tribes to perform the priestly functions. They were the go-betweens, symbolic of angels. They were bringing things, both directions, between people and God.

Now it's interesting when you look at that symbolism, what do our deacons, teachers and priests – what does it mean to hold "the keys of the ministering of angels" today (Doctrine and Covenants 13:1)? What are they doing? Think about what happens every Sabbath day, when people go to church, and you see these members of the Aaronic priesthood ministering to the congregation with the elements of the sacrament. They have this errand to bring this heavenly gift to the congregation. It's as if they themselves are angels. They also have "the keys for the ministering of angels", and through all of the other priesthood assignments that are given to them, they become ministering angels on this side of the veil and unlock doors for angels to minister from the other side of the veil as well (Doctrine and Covenants 13:1).

So, if you go back to the Joseph Smith History, the verses we read for this week, 66 to 75, it's all about the ministering of angels. And significantly, I think, in Joseph Smith History verse 65, what do we hear from Professor Anthon? This is when he was asked for his certification of the translation of the Book of Mormon. And when he found out the Book of Mormon was being delivered by the ministering of angels, he said, there's no such thing, now, as ministering of

angels. And literally, the very next section in Joseph Smith History is all about the ministering of angels: John the Baptist, and later Peter, James, and John, later Elijah, all these ministering angels, and yet the Restoration is not yet complete, meaning, there is still ministering of angels today. The work of God, the ministering of angels, is alive and well, and we can take heart that it will be until the Lord returns.

Let's also just spend a moment thinking about the principle, the ordinance of baptism. Baptism means "to be fully immersed". That's what the Greek word means. So, we might ask ourselves, sure, I've been fully immersed in the water as a symbol of being washed clean. But then what am I doing with my life? What am I fully immersing myself in? Am I fully immersing myself in social media? In the news? In chaos, and anger, and hurt? In feelings of frustration? Or am I choosing to remember that when I chose to be baptized, it's a choice to be fully immersed in the love of God? It doesn't mean that all those other things don't exist, the bad and evil in the world, but it's all about the choice of, what will we be fully immersed in? Every week at sacrament, we are invited to actually immerse the love of God into our bodies by eating the bread, drinking the water, but it's a reminder of the immersion at baptism. Every week, we have an opportunity to ask ourselves, where are my choices taking me? What are the things that I'm surrounding myself with?

So, if you find yourself in a state of maybe not feeling as close to God as you want, ask yourself, what are things that I can cut off in my life, to not be immersed in negativity, or chaos, or confusion, or distractions, but instead, be immersing myself in the love of God, by choosing to accept of his forgiveness to me, of being kind to others, being kind to myself, and actually that may be one of the most important ones, that we often are much harder on ourselves than we would be on anybody else. And just know, that is not how God would treat you. He would treat you as his beloved child. And so maybe this week the opportunity is to fully immerse yourself in God's love by being kind to yourself, to know that you're on the path. You are progressing, and it's okay that you're not yet perfect.

Now, to finish this section of Joseph Smith History, you'll notice verse 75: "We had been threatened with being mobbed, from time to time, and this, too, by professors of religion." You'll notice that just because God is doing his work, and there are ministering angels from both sides of the veil helping Joseph and Emma and Oliver as they move forward, you'll notice that it doesn't come without opposition. Just because angels come doesn't mean, all of a sudden, life gets easy. There's still intense opposition. And one of the ironies of what happened here in this particular story is that early on, Emma's family, Emma's father and other relatives, were quite negative towards Joseph, and his prophetic mantle, and the work that he was performing as a prophet of the Restoration. But as the opposition in Harmony ramps up, and people start threatening mob action against them, it's then that Emma's family starts to defend them, and to support them, and to try to push back some of that opposition.

So, those who used to maybe be part of the opposition now actually became part of the army of ministering angels to help them. Notice it says, "And their intentions of mobbing us were only counteracted by the influence of my wife's father's family (under Divine providence), who had become very friendly to me, and who were opposed to mobs, and were willing that I should be allowed to continue the work of the translation without interruption; and therefore offered and promised us protection from all unlawful proceedings, as far as in them lay" (JSH 1:75).

What I see, as I look back through the corridor of time to these events in the spring of 1829, is God performing His work. But once again, it's messy, it's muddy, it's difficult. Things just don't flow freely. They have to seem to struggle through every step of this process, and it makes me wonder, why didn't God make this easier for them? Why doesn't he make life easier for you? Why doesn't he just solve all of our problems? Why doesn't he just make it so we don't have to worry about money at all any more, or health, or loved ones? Why doesn't he take that all away?

Brothers and sisters, the gospel of Jesus Christ is a gospel of progression along the covenant path, the path that was laid out and marked by the Lord Jesus Christ himself. And along that path, we are going to run into mists of darkness, we're going to run into steep sections, we're going to run into terrible storms and dark nights. But to finish, let's go to Oliver Cowdery's words here, at the very bottom of Joseph Smith History. Notice it says here, "Oliver Cowdery describes these events thus: 'These were days never to be forgotten – to sit under the sound of a voice dictated by the inspiration of heaven, awakened the utmost gratitude of this bosom! Day after day I continued, uninterrupted, to write from his mouth, as he translated with the Urim and Thummim, or, as the Nephites would have said, 'Interpreters,' the history or record called 'The Book of Mormon'" (JSH 1:75).

And then he goes on to give you a lot more descriptions of what it was like to have, not just a front-row seat, but he was on the front line with Joseph, moving this work forward, and he's not focusing on the opposition. He's saying, "These were days never to be forgotten..." (JSH 1:75). It's our hope, and it's our prayer that as we move forward, that we can go to the Lord with the question, 'who needs me?' and then get up and "thrust in [the sickle] with all of [our] might", whatever that sickle may be, in whatever direction, and feel like we might be able to do some good to establish the cause of Zion, and to seek to bring forth the kingdom of God more fully in our world around us (Doctrine and Covenants 33:7). Who knows but what there isn't somebody out there who will see a lot more than just some money, or some clothing, or some food? But your simple act, or big act, whatever it may be, will cause them to see the hand of God.

Now, to finish: I heard Tim share his story, one-on-one, when he came to our ward in Providence, Utah, when we lived there. And here sat this man in a neck brace, and a cast, and an arm sling, telling me what he had gone through in the weeks previous to my conversation with him. He was still broken. He still didn't know what was going to happen in his future. He still didn't know how in the world he was going to provide for the needs of his family, and how to work through all of the issues with taking care of his children without his dear Karen beside him.

But he knew that the Lord was beside him, and he knew that he had not been forsaken, and he was going to move forward in faith, as he has these subsequent years since then.

Brothers and sisters, God lives. He's in his heavens. I know there are times when heaven feels very far away, but the Lord is near. He's closer than we'll ever know in this life. And it's our prayer that we'll all recognize and be those ministering angels from this side of the veil. And we leave that with you in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

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