

designated in regular order to act in such an emergency. Such an appointment holds good as coming from duly constituted authorities. But if this be not done, then the voice of the Saints at the meeting must decide who of the qualified persons present shall take the lead; and a High Priest or any one else has a right to make suggestions or call the meeting to order with a view of determining the choice of one to conduct the services.

### THE PROPHECY OF AMOS.

"A Reader," residing at Sandy, Utah, submits the following inquiry to the NEWS:

There has been a difference of opinion among a number of the brethren here concerning the eighth chapter of Amos, 11th and 12th verses, which read as follows:

"11. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord.

"12. And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it."

It is held by some that this was fulfilled in the condition of the world from the time of the general apostasy to the restoration of the Gospel through the Prophet Joseph. Others hold, and claim that this was the general version given by missionaries in the old country years ago, that it has not been fulfilled, but will be when the Gospel is withdrawn from the nations. Can you inform us through the columns of the News which is correct?

A careful reading of the prophecy of Amos, and comparison with the predictions of contemporary and succeeding Prophets, will show that in the part of the prophecy quoted, Amos had direct reference to the Israelites who inhabited the land of Palestine. He had told the people of their wrongdoing, had exhorted them to repentance, and reminded them of what the Lord had done for them. His exhortations seemed to have no effect in turning them to the right, so he set forth in visions the approaching destruction of the people, until the inhabitants of Bethel tried to prohibit him from prophesying any more among them (chapter vii). But he continued in the name of the Lord, who had sent him, to describe the near destruction of the nation. Having done so, he closes his prophecy with a few verses (chapter ix: 11-15) on a still future restoration, the glory of which shall be shared by Edom and other Gentile nations—a prediction referred to in Acts xv: 16, as beginning to be fulfilled in the establishment of the Church of Christ.

The date of Amos's prophecy referred to is about 787 B. C.; and it may be noted that in 2 Kings xv: 10, is recorded part of its fulfillment, to 773 B. C.—that mentioned in Amos vii: 10; thus showing that it was directly to Israel, and began with the immediate future, continuing to the promise of final restoration, in the general form in which it is often mentioned. Further, the seventh chapter of Ezekiel parallels the eighth

chapter of Amos in several respects, notably the second verse of each, which makes the direct application to Israel, and Ezekiel vii: 26, which contains the same idea as that our correspondent has quoted. This found ready fulfillment in the period following Malachi, 397 B. C., if indeed it did not do so between Nabum and Zephaniah, 690 to 640 B. C. A condition of darkness similar to that described by the Prophet Amos also existed in Palestine after Christ, and generally during the great apostasy of the later dispensation, as history frequently repeats itself in the life of successive nations.

As to a supposed possible fulfillment of this particular prophecy at a future time, it should be remembered that the Gospel will not be withdrawn from the nations except by their rejection of it, and that it will not be withdrawn from earth at all so that those who search honestly and diligently for it cannot find it. The word of the Lord is revealed to earth, and will continue to be proclaimed by the voice of His servants, and by His judgments upon wrongdoers, till the ushering in of the great and final restoration foretold by the Prophets.

### ABOUT FASTING.

A reader of the NEWS writes from Teton, Idaho, asking the following questions:

1. What was the fast predicated on?
2. Was it for the benefit of the poor, or to receive more of the Spirit?
3. Can a member eat breakfast and receive as much benefit by paying as much as if he had fasted? Is it as acceptable to the Lord?

1. The fast was predicated on the commandment of the Lord to fast and pray. It has been an order in His Church from the beginning, as may be ascertained by the sacred records of both eastern and western hemispheres. It is a potent means of invoking the divine blessing.

2. Fasting is a means of sacrifice and humility to obtain blessings from the Lord. The fast is not for the benefit of the poor any more than for the benefit of any one else who fasts, or in whose behalf fasting and prayer are resorted to. Proper fasts are a means of receiving divine grace. The payment of the fast offering was instituted for the benefit of the poor, and also for the benefit of those who make this sacrifice to bless the poor.

3. If a member breaks fast, he cannot be classed as fasting. If he pays as much offering—or double as much, which the rules require of such—he gets the benefit of the sacrifice made, that of the voluntary offering made to the poor. He is rewarded for his liberality to the poor; but while generosity to others brings its recompense, it is not a substitute for the self-sacrifice involved in fasting, any more than double fasting would meet the wholly distinct requirement of giving to the poor. Each has its particular object and effect, but both are combined as to time when the obligation accrues, for the common good. As to the acceptability of any person's fast, so

much depends on the individual's position that a categorical reply to that part of the question cannot be given. Some people find it much easier to fast than do others; and some live so much better lives in other respects, and exercise so much more faith, than do others, that an equal amount of fasting brings different results. Salvation comes by keeping the whole law of God, and cannot be meted out by isolated acts or principles.

### THE GOSPEL PRIMER.

This is the title of a little treatise on the first Gospel principles, written by William A. Morton, and printed by the Juvenile Instructor office. The author states that a desire to assist parents to teach their children the first principles of the Gospel prompted the publication of the little book. It is divided into eleven chapters, each devoted to one of the following fundamental principles: The Gospel—only one true Gospel; faith in God; faith in Jesus Christ; the power of faith; repentance; water baptism; the Holy Spirit; the Sacrament; divine authority; Church organization; prayer. We believe parents and Sunday school teachers will be pleased with the treatise and find in it many useful hints and thoughts.

### A FRISCOAN'S INQUIRIES.

A NEWS subscriber at Frisco, Utah, presents the following questions, to which he desires a reply:

1. By whom was John the Baptist set apart to preach and baptize? I realize that he was sent of God, but who set him apart to baptize on the earth? Some argue that it was his father, but I can find nothing directly to that effect.
2. Will those lectures now being delivered in the Assembly Hall appear in pamphlet form?

1.—There is no available record that we know of as to whether or not John the Baptist was set apart by his father Zacharias, who was a Priest, and as such had authority to ordain Priests according to rules that governed the administration of his office. There are also many other incidents in the life of John the Baptist and others which history does not relate, and which might be very interesting. But the point is not a vital one to the calling of John the Baptist. The essential fact is that he was sent of God. As to the date of his ordination to Priesthood or the individual who performed the ceremony, knowledge of these might be interesting; but the fact that he was so authorized or sent, and that by the Almighty, is the only question as to his authority, and that is definitely settled, as the inquirer says he realizes. And it is not an economy of time or effort to speculate further than the record shows about acts which are logically known to have been performed, but of which the record fails to give a precise date or tell of some of the actors therein. John the Baptist was blessed by an angel to the mission which he fulfilled as the fore-