

Seek Him with All Your Heart

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Tadiavo amin'ny fonao rehetra Izy

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If Jesus Christ sought quiet time to commune with God and to be strengthened by Him, it would be wise for us to do the same.

Several years ago, my wife and I served as mission leaders in Tokyo, Japan. During a visit to our mission by then-Elder Russell M. Nelson, one of the missionaries asked him how best to respond when a person tells them that they are too busy to listen to them. With little hesitation, Elder Nelson said, “I would ask if they were too busy to eat lunch that day and then teach them that they have both a body and a spirit, and just as their body will die if not nourished, so will their spirit if not nourished by the good word of God.”

It is interesting to note that the Japanese word for “busy,” *isogashii*, is made up of a character with two symbols (). The one on the left means “heart” or “spirit,” and the one on the right means “death”—suggesting perhaps, as President Nelson taught, that being too busy to nourish our spirits can lead us to die spiritually.

The Lord knew—in this fast-paced world full of distractions and in commotion—that making quality time for Him would be one of the major challenges of our day. Speaking through the prophet Isaiah, He provided these words of counsel and caution, which can be likened unto

Koa satria na i Jesoa Kristy aza dia nitady fotoana mangina hifandraisana tamin' Andriamanitra sy mba hankahereziny, dia ho fahendrena ho antsika ny manao tahaka izany ihany koa.

Taona maro lasa izay, dia mpitariky ny misiôna tany Tokyo, Japana izahay mivady. Nandritra ny fitsidihana iray nataon'ny Loholona Russell M. Nelson tamin'izany tany amin'ny misiônanay, dia nisy misiônera iray nanontany azy ny fomba tsara indrindra hamaliana rehefa misy olona iray milaza amin'izy ireo hoe sahirana loatra ka tsy afaka hihaino azy ireo. Tsy nialasalala akory ny Loholona Nelson namaly hoe “Hanontaniako izy ireo raha toa ka sahirana loatra amin'io andro io ka tsy afaka hisakafo antoandro; ary avy eo dia hampianariko azy ireo fa sady manana vatana izy ireo no manana fanahy, ary tsy misy hafa amin'ny hoe ho faty ny vatan'izy ireo raha tsy omena hanina, dia ho faty araka izany koa ny fanahiny raha tsy fahanana amin'ny teny soan' Andriamanitra.”

Mahavariana fa ny teny Japôney ilazana ny hoe “sahirana,” *isogashii*, dia ampiasana tarehin-tsoratra misy kisary anankiroa (). Ilay eo amin'ny ankavia dia midika hoe “fo” na “fanahy,” ary ilay eo amin'ny ankavanana dia midika hoe “fahafatesana”—izay milaza angamba, araka ny nampianarin'ny Filoha Nelson, fa ny hoe sahirana loatra ka tsy afaka mamahana ny fanahintsika dia mety hitarika ny fahafatesantsika ara-panahy.

Fantatry ny Tompo fa ny fanokanana fotoana ho Azy, eto amin'ity tontolo mihazakazaka sy feno zavatra misarika ny saina ary anaty korontana ity, dia ho lasa anisan'ireo fanamby lehibe indrindra amin'izao androntsika izao. Tamin'ny alalan'ny mpaminany Isaia no nanomezany ireto

the tumultuous days in which we live:

“In returning and rest shall ye be saved; iniquity and unbelief shall be your strength: and ye would not.

“But ye said, No; for we will flee upon horses; therefore shall ye flee: and, We will ride upon the swift; therefore shall they that pursue you be swift.”

In other words, even though our salvation depends on returning to Him often and resting from the cares of the world, we do not. And even though our confidence will come from a strength developed in quiet times sitting with the Lord in meditation and reflection, we do not. Why not? Because we say, “No, we are busy with other things”—fleeing upon our horses, so to speak. Therefore, we will get further and further away from God; we will insist on going faster and faster; and the faster we go, the swifter Satan will follow in pursuit.

Perhaps this is why President Nelson has repeatedly pled with us to make time for the Lord in our lives—“each and every day.” He reminds us that “quiet time is sacred time—time that will facilitate personal revelation and instill peace.” But to hear the still voice of the Lord, he counseled, “you too must be still.”

Being still, however, requires more than just making time for the Lord—it requires letting go of our doubtful and fearful thoughts and focusing our hearts and minds on Him. Elder David A. Bednar taught, “The Lord’s admonition to ‘be still’ entails much more than simply not talking or not moving.” To be still, he suggested, “may be a way of reminding us to focus upon the Savior unfailingly.”

Being still is an act of faith and requires effort. Lectures on Faith states, “When a man works

teny manoro hevitra sy mampitandrina ireto izay azo ampitahaina amin’ireo andro tsy milamina izay iainantsika izao:

“Amin’ny fiverenanasy ny fitsaharanano hamonjena anareo, amin’ny fahanginanasy ny fahatokianano hisian’ny herinareo; nefa tsy nety ianareo.

“Fa hoy kosa ianareo: Tsia, fa handositra mitaingin-tsoavaly izahay; koa noho izany dia handositra tokoa ianareo; Ary hoy ianareo: Hitaingina ny faingan-tongotra izahay; ka dia ho faingan-tongotra koa ny manenjika anareo.”

Amin’ny teny hafa, na dia miankina amin’ny fiverenana Aminy matetika sy ny fitsaharana amin’ny ahiahin’izao tontolo izao aza ny famonjena antsika, dia tsy manao izany isika. Ary na dia avy amin’ny hery azo ao anatin’ny fotoana fahanginana i araha-mipetraka amin’ny Tompo ao anaty fandinihana sy fieritreretana lalina aza no hitomboan’ny fahatokiantsika, dia tsy ataontsika izany. Fa nahoana moa? Satria milaza isika hoe, “Tsia, mbola sahirana amin-javatra hafa,” mandositra mitaingin-tsoavaly, raha izay no ilazana azy. Ka dia hianalavitra hatrany an’ Andriamanytra isika, hikiry handeha haingana kokoa hatrany, ary arakaraka ny handehanantsika haingana no maha faingana kokoa an’i Satana manenjika antsika.

Izany angamba no antony nahatonga ny Filoha Nelson namerimberina niangavy antsika mba hanokana fotoana ho an’ny Tompo eo amin’ny fiainantsika—“isan’andro isan’andro.” Mampahatsiahy antsika izy fa “fotoana masina ny fotoana hanginana, fotoana izay hanamora ny fanambarana ho an’ny tena manokana sy hampisy fiadanana.” Fa raha te hahare ilay feo tonin’ny Tompo, dia nanoro hevitra izy hoe “mila tony ihany koa ianao.”

Saingy ny hoe tony dia mitaky mihoatra noho ny hoe manokana fotoana ho an’ny Tompo fotsiny. Mitaky ny hialantsika amin’ireo eritre-ritsika feno ahiahy sy tahotra sy ny fampifantohantsika ny fonsika sy ny saintsika Aminy izany. Araka ny nampianarin’ny Loholona David A. Bednar hoe “ny famporisihan’ny Tompo hoe -mitonia- dia midika mihoatra lavitra kokoa noho ny tsy miteny sy tsy mihetsika fotsiny.” Ny hoe mitony hoy ny nampianariny, dia mety “fomba iray hampahatsiahivana antsika mba hifantoka tsy tapaka amin’ny Mpamonjy.”

Ny hoe mitony dia fanehoana finoana ary mitaky ezaka. Ny Lectures on Faith (toriteny

by faith he works by mental exertion.” President Nelson declared: “Our focus must be riveted on the Savior and His gospel. It is mentally rigorous to strive to look unto Him in every thought. But when we do, our doubts and fears flee.” Speaking of this need to focus our minds, President David O. McKay said: “I think we pay too little attention to the value of meditation, a principle of devotion. ... Meditation is one of the ... most sacred doors through which we pass into the presence of the Lord.”

There is a word in Japanese, *mui*, that, for me, captures this more faith-filled, contemplative sense of what it means to be still. It is comprised of two characters (). The one on the left means “nothing” or “nothingness,” and the one on the right means “to do.” Together they mean “non-doing.” Taken literally, the word could be misinterpreted to mean “to do nothing” in the same way “to be still” can be misinterpreted as “not talking or moving.” However, like the phrase “to be still,” it has a higher meaning; for me it is a reminder to slow down and to live with greater spiritual awareness.

While serving in the Asia North Area Presidency with Elder Takashi Wada, I learned that his wife, Sister Naomi Wada, is an accomplished Japanese calligrapher. I asked Sister Wada if she would draw for me the Japanese characters for the word *mui*. I wanted to hang the calligraphy on my wall as a reminder to be still and to focus on the Savior. I was surprised when she did not readily agree to this seemingly simple request.

The next day, knowing that I had likely misunderstood her hesitance, Elder Wada explained that writing those characters would require a significant effort. She would need to ponder and meditate on the concept and the characters until she understood the meaning deeply in her soul

momba ny finoana) dia milaza fa “rehefa miasa amim-pinoana ny olona iray dia miasa amin’ny alalan’ny ezaka ara-tsaina.” Nilaza ny Filoha Nelson hoe: “Tsy maintsy aorina mafy eo amin’ny Mpamonjy sy ny filazantsarany ny fifantohan-tsika. Mitaky ezaka ara-tsaina be ny fiezahana mibanjina Azy amin’ny eritreritrarehetra. Kanefa rehefa manao izany isika dia hisinda ireo tahoatra sy ahiahy.” Momba izany filana mampifantoka ny saintsika izany dia nilaza ny Filoha David O. McKay hoe: “Mahita aho fa tsy dia raharahiantsiaka loatra ny lanjan’ny fisaintsainana, izay fitsipika iray maneho fitsaohana. ... Ny fitsaintsainana dia iray ... amin’ireo varavarana masina indrindra izay hidirantsika ho eo anatrehan’ny Tompo.”

Misy teny iray izay amin’ny fiteny Japôney hoemuiizay ho ahy dia mahalaza tsara io hevitra feno finoana kokoa sy mandinika kokoa entin’io hoe mitony io. Tarehin-tsoratra roa no mandrafitra azy (). Ny tarehin-tsoratra eo ankavia dia midika hoe “tsy misy na inona na inona” na “tsy fisian’ inona na inona,” ary ilay eo amin’ny ankavanana dia midika hoe “manao.” Rehefa atambatra izy ireo dia midika hoe “tsy manao na inona na inona.” Raha raisina ara-bakiteny dia mety ho diso fandrany isika hoe “tsy manao na inona na inona” no dikany, tsy misy hafa amin’ny hoe ny “mitony” dia mety ho diso hevitra isika mandray izany ho “tsy miteny na mihetsika.” Kanefa toy ilay teny hoe “mitony” ihany, dia manana hevitra lalina kokoa izy io. Ho ahy izy io dia fampahatsiahivana handeha milamina kokoa ary hiaina ao anatin’ny fahaizana mahatsapa kokoa ireo zavatra eo amin’ny lafiny ara-panahy.

Tamin’ny izaho tao amin’ny Fiadidian’ny Vondromparitra Azia Avaratra niaraka tamin’ny Loholona Takashi Wada, dia nahare aho fa Raha-vavy Naomi Wada vadiny dia mpanao sorakaliana Japôney avo lenta. Nangataka an-dRahavavy Wada aho hanoratra ho ahy ireo tarehin-tsoratra Japôney maneho ny teny hoemui. Niriako ny hanantona ilay tarehin-tsoratra voakaly eo amin’ny rindrina ho fampahatsiahivana mba ho tony sy hifantoka amin’ny Mpamonjy. Gaga aho fa toa tsy narisika izy hanaiky io fangatahana toa tsotra io.

Ny ampitson’io, noho ny fahafantaran’ny Loholona Wada fa mety diso fandrany aho teo anatrehan’ny fisalasan’ny vadiny, dia nanazava izy fa mitaky ezaka be ny fanoratana ireo tarehin-tsoratra ireo. Mila mandinika sy misaintsaina ny fotokevitra sy ireo tarehin-tsoratra izy

and could give expression to these heartfelt impressions with each stroke of her brush. I was embarrassed that I had so casually asked her to do something so demanding. I asked him to convey my apologies to her for my ignorance and to let her know that I was withdrawing my request.

You can imagine my surprise and gratitude when upon my leaving Japan, Sister Wada, unsolicited, gifted to me this beautiful piece of calligraphy featuring the Japanese characters for the word *mui*. It now hangs prominently on the wall of my office, reminding me to be still and to seek the Lord every day with all my heart, might, mind, and strength. She had captured, in this selfless act, the meaning of *mui*, or stillness, better than any words could. Rather than mindlessly and dutifully drawing the characters, she approached her calligraphy with full purpose of heart and real intent.

Likewise, God desires that we approach our time with Him with the same kind of heartfelt devotion. When we do so, our worship becomes an expression of our love for Him.

He yearns for us to commune with Him. On one occasion, after I gave the invocation in a meeting with the First Presidency, President Nelson turned to me and said, “While you were praying, I thought how much God must appreciate when we take time from our busy schedules to acknowledge Him.” It was a simple yet powerful reminder of how much it must mean to Heavenly Father when we pause to commune with Him.

As much as He desires our attention, He will not force us to come to Him. To the Nephites, the resurrected Lord said, “How oft would I have gathered you as a hen gathereth her chickens, and ye would not.” He followed that with this hopeful invitation that also applies to us today: “How oft will I gather you as a hen gathereth her

ambara-pahatakarany lalina ao amin’ny ati-panahiny ka ahafahany manolotra zavatra afakamamoaka ireo fahatsapanatsapa ao am-po ireo amin’ny alalan’ny tsipika tsirairay amin’ny borosy fanoratany. Menatra aho fa nohamaivaniko ery ny fomba nangatahako azy hanao zavatra mitaky ezaka be toy izany. Nangatahako ny Loholona Wada hampita amin’ny vadiny ny fialan-tsiny avy taty amiko noho ny tsy fahalalako, ary hampahafantatra azy fa foanako ilay fangatahako.

Azonao an-tsaina ny fahatairako sy ny fankasitrahako raha handao an’i Japana aho dia nanolotra ahy ity sorakaliana kanto ity Rahavavy Wada, maneho ny tarehin-tsoratra Japôney ho an’ny teny hoemui. Ankehitriny dia mihantonana talakimaso eo amin’ny rindrina ao amin’ny biraoko izy io, mampahatsiahy ahy mba hitony sy hikatsaka ny Tompo isan’andro amin’ny foko sy ny heriko sy ny saiko ary ny tanjako manontolo. Vitany ny naneho, tao anatin’io fihetsika feno fandavantena io, ny hevitra ny hoemui, na fahatoniana, tamin’ny fomba tsara kokoa noho izay mety ho azo atao amin’ny teny hafa. Tsy nimokomoko tsy am-piheverina nanoratra ireo tarehin-tsoratra izy, fa niroso tamin’ily sorakaliana tamin’ny finia van’ny fo manontolo sy ny fikasana marina kosa.

Torak’izany koa, irian’ Andriamanitra isika handray ny fotoanantsika miaraka Aminy amin’ny fitsaohana avy ao am-po mitovy karazana amin’izany. Rehefa manao izany isika dia ho lasa fanehoana ny fitiavantsika Azy ny fitsaohan-tsika.

Maniry mafy Izy ny hifandraisantsika Aminy. Nisy fotoana rehefa nanao vavaka fanombohana tamin’ny fivoariana iray niarahana tamin’ny Fia-didiana Voalohany aho dia nitodika taty amiko ny Filoha Nelson ary niteny hoe: “Rehefa nivavaka ianao dia nieritreritra aho fa tena tsy maintsy tian’ Andriamanitra izao isika maka fotoana hankasitrahana Azy na dia eo aza ireo fandaharam-potoanantsika tototra loatra”. Fampahatsiahivana tsotra nefa nahery vaika izany ny amin’ny zavatra mety ho tsapan’ny Ray any An-danitra rehefa miato isika mba hifandraisana Aminy.

Na dia maniry mafy ny hifantohantsika Aminy aza Izy dia tsy hanery antsika hanatona Azy Izy. Hoy ny Tompo efa nitsangana tamin’ny maty tamin’ireo Nefita: “Impiryaho no tahanangona anareo toy ny reniakoho managana ny zanany ary tsy netyanareo.” Narahany tamin’ity fanasana ity izany izay mihatra amintsika ankehitriny

chickens under her wings, if ye will repent and return unto me with full purpose of heart.”

The gospel of Jesus Christ gives us opportunities to return to Him often. These opportunities include daily prayers, scripture study, the sacrament ordinance, the Sabbath day, and temple worship. What if we were to take these sacred opportunities off our to-do lists and put them on our “non-doing” lists—meaning to approach them with the same mindfulness and focus with which Sister Wada approaches her calligraphy?

You may be thinking, “I do not have time for that.” I have often felt the same. But let me suggest that what may be needed is not necessarily more time but more awareness of and focus on God during the times we already set aside for Him.

For example, when praying, what if we were to spend less time talking and more time just being with God; and when we were to speak, to give more heartfelt and specific expressions of gratitude and love?

President Nelson has counseled that we not just read the scriptures but savor them. What difference would it make if we were to do less reading and more savoring?

What if we were to do more to prepare our minds to partake of the sacrament and joyfully pondered the blessings of the Atonement of Jesus Christ during this sacred ordinance?

On the Sabbath, which in Hebrew means “rest,” what if we were to rest from other cares and to take time to sit quietly with the Lord to pay our devotions unto Him?

During our temple worship, what if we were to make a more disciplined effort to pay attention or lingered a little longer in the celestial room in quiet reflection?

hoe: “Impiry aho nohanangonaanareo toy ny reniakohoko manangona ny zanany eo ambany elany, raha mibebaka ianareo sy miverina Amin'ny fo feno finiavana.”

Manome fahafahana antsika hiverina Aminy matetika ny filazantsaran'i Jesoa Kristy. Anisan'ireo fahafahana ireo ny vavaka isan'andro, ny fandalinana soratra masina, ny ôrdônansin'ny fanasan'ny Tompo, ny andro Sabata ary ny fitsaohana any amin'ny tempoly. Ahoana raha esorintsika tsy ho ao anatin'ny lisitry ny “zavatra atao” ireo fahafahana masina ireo fa afindrantsika kosa any amin'ny lisitry ny “tsy manao na inona na inona,” izany hoe mandray azy ireny amin'ny fandinihana sy fifantohana mitovy amin'ny fandraisan-dRahavavy Wada ilay sorakaliana nataony?

Mety mieritreritra ianao hoe, “Tsy manana fotoana amin'izany aho.” Mahatsapa izany matetika aho. Saingy mamela ahy handroso aminareo fa ny zavatra tena mety ilaina dia tsy voatery ny hoe manokana fotoana misimisy kokoa fa fahatongavan-tsaina sy fifantohana kokoa amin' Andriamanitra kosa mandritra ireo fotoana izay efa atokantsika ho Azy.

Ohatra, rehefa mivavaka, maninona moa raha mba hahenantsika ny fotoana hitenenantsika ary manokana fotoana bebe kokoa hiarahana amin' Andriamanitra isika; ary rehefa miteny isika, maninona moa raha mba manao teny maneho fankasitrahana sy fitiavana avy amin'ny fo sy mazava kokoa isika?

Nanoro hevitra antsika ny Filoha Nelson fa tsy mamaky soratra masina fotsiny isika fa mankafy azy ireny. Inona no mety hiova raha toa isika ka mamaky vitsivitsy kokoa kanefa mankafy kokoa?

Maninona moa raha mba manomana kokoa ny saintsika isika handray ny fanasan'ny Tompo, ary misaintsaina amim-pifaliana ireo fitahiana avy amin'ny Sorompanavotan'i Jesoa Kristy mandritra io ôrdônansy masina io?

Amin'ny Sabata izay midika hoe “fitsaharana” amin'ny teny Hebreo, maninona moa raha mba mitsahatra amin'ireo zavatra hafa iasan'ny saintsika isika ary maka fotoana hipetrahana mangina miaraka amin'ny Tompo hanehoana ny fanol-rantenantsika Aminy?

Mandritra ny fitsaohantsika any amin'ny tempoly, maninona moa raha mba manao ezaka feno fifehezan-tena kokoa isika ka hitandrina na hitoetra elaela kely kokoa ao amin'ny efitra seletialy amim-pandinihana mangina?

When our focus is less on doing and more on strengthening our covenant connection with Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, I testify that each of these sacred moments will be enriched, and we will receive the guidance needed in our personal lives. We, like Martha in the account in Luke, are often “careful and troubled about many things.” However, as we commune with the Lord each day, He will help us to know that which is most needful.

Even the Savior took time from His ministry to be still. The scriptures are replete with examples of the Lord retreating to a solitary place—a mountain, the wilderness, a desert place, or going “a little way off”—to pray to the Father. If Jesus Christ sought quiet time to commune with God and to be strengthened by Him, it would be wise for us to do the same.

As we concentrate our hearts and minds on Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ and listen to the still, small voice of the Holy Ghost, we will have greater clarity about what is most needful, develop deeper compassion, and find rest and strength in Him. Paradoxically, helping God hasten His work of salvation and exaltation may require that we slow down. Being always in motion may be adding to the commotion in our lives and robbing us of the peace we seek.

I testify that as we return often to the Lord with full purpose of heart, we will in quietness and confidence come to know Him and feel His infinite covenantal love for us.

The Lord promised:

“Draw near unto me and I will draw near unto you; seek me diligently and ye shall find me.”

“And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.”

I testify that this promise is true. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Rehefa tsy dia mirona loatra amin'ny zavatra atao ny fifantohantsika fa amin'ny fampahatan-jahana kokoa ny fifandraisantsika ara-panekem-pihavanana amin'ny Ray any An-danitra sy Jesoa Kristy kosa, dia mijoro ho vavolombelona aho fa hihatsara ireo fotoana masina tsirairay avy ireo ary handray ny fitarihana izay ilaina amin'ny fiainantsika manokana isika. Tahaka an'i Marta ao amin'ny tantaran'i Lioka dia matetika isika no “maro ahina sy maro herehina.” Kanefa rehefa mifandray amin'ny Tompo isan'andro isika dia hanampy antsika hamantatra izay tena ilaina indrindra Izy.

Na ny Mpamponjy aza dia naka fotoana tao amin'ny fanompoany mba hitoniana. Feno ohatra ao amin'ireo soratra masina momba ny Tompo izay nihataka tany amin'ny toerana mitoka-monina, na tendrombohitra, na tany hay na tany foana, na “nihataka kely” mba hivavahana tamin'ny Ray. Koa satria na i Jesoa Kristy aza dia nitady fotoana mangina hifandraisana tamin' Andriamanitra sy mba hankahereziny, dia ho fahendrena ho antsika ny manao tahaka izany ihany koa.

Hanana fahazavana lehibe kokoa mikasika izay tena ilaina indrindra isika sy hampivelatra fitserana lalina kokoa ary hahita fitsaharana sy hery ao Aminy rehefa mampifantoka ny fo sy ny saintsika amin'ny Ray any An-danitra sy i Jesoa Kristy sy mihaino ilay feo tony sy malefaky ny Fanahy Masina. Tena mahavariana fa ny fanampiana an' Andriamanitra hanafaingana ny asa famonjeny sy ho an'ny fisandratana dia mety hitaky antsika mba handeha miadana kokoa eo amin'ny fiainana. Ny hoe sahirana lava dia mety hanampy trotraka ireo rotoroto efa eo amin'ny fiainantsika ary handroba ilay fiadanana izay katsahintsika.

Mijoro ho vavolombelona aho fa raha mitodika matetika amin'ny Tompo amin'ny finavian'ny fo manontolo isika dia lasa hahafantatra Azy ao anatin'ny fitoniana ny fahatokiana ary hahatsapa ny fitiavany tsy manam-petra ho antsika.

Nampanantena ny Tompo hoe:

“Manakaikeza Ahy dia hanakaiky anareo Aho; tadiavo fatratra Aho dia hahita Ahy ianareo.”

“Ary hitady Ahy ianareo, dia ho hitanareo Aho, raha katsahinareo amin'ny fonareo rehetra.”

Mijoro ho vavolombelona aho fa marina io fampanantenana io. Amin'ny anaran'i Jesoa

Kristy, amena.