

# Fasting for Shem

*Tim was worried.  
Then he realized there  
was something  
he could do.*



**By Elizabeth Hervey Osborn**  
(Based on a true story)

*Turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting (Joel 2:12).*

**T**im jogged up the sidewalk after school. He saw Mom sitting on the porch steps holding a camera. “What’s the camera for?” he asked.

Mom patted the step beside her. “I’d like to take your picture, but I need to talk with you about something first. Sit down for a second, please.”

Tim plopped his backpack on the porch and sat down. He got a funny feeling all of a sudden. Was something wrong?

“I got a call this afternoon,” Mom explained. “Your friend Shem is in the hospital.”

Tim took a quick breath.

“What happened?” he asked. “Is Shem OK?”

Mom slipped an arm around Tim. “No, he’s not. He had to have an operation.”

“But Mom,” Tim protested, “Shem was here just two days ago. He was fine!”

“I know, honey,” Mom said. “But sometimes something goes wrong inside the body very suddenly. An important

blood vessel in Shem's brain stopped working. Doctors aren't sure if he'll be able to see or recognize anybody once he wakes up from the operation."

Tim couldn't think of anything to say. His eyes stung with tears, and his throat hurt. He hugged Mom and thought about Shem. They had so much fun last summer playing knights and dragons in Shem's backyard. He was scared for his friend.

"Why do you want to take a picture of me?" he finally asked.

Mom smiled. "The doctors think it might help Shem if some of his favorite things are nearby when he wakes up. You can't be in Shem's hospital room, but we can send a picture. Would you like to do that?"

"Yes!" Tim jumped up. Anything to help Shem. Mom stepped back and took the photograph.

Tim folded his arms and thought. "Can we do anything else to help?"

"You can pray for him."

Tim felt relieved. Of course! Prayer was the perfect idea. "I'll go do that right now," he said, running inside.

The next morning Mom offered Tim some eggs and cereal for breakfast. Everything looked so tasty, but Tim shook his head. "I don't want any, thanks."

"What's wrong? Do you have a stomach ache?"

"No," Tim answered. "I just think maybe I should fast today. For Shem."

"Oh," Mom said. She knelt down beside Tim. "I think that would be a very good idea," she said quietly.

When Tim got to school, he gave his teacher a note Mom had written, explaining that he wouldn't be eating lunch. Miss Thompson looked closely at him after she read the note. "Shem must be a very special friend," she said. Tim nodded.

Last year my neck was really bothering me. I was in a lot of pain. My mom started taking me to see different doctors. I was very afraid. My family decided to have a family fast. In addition, my dad gave me a priesthood blessing. I started going to physical therapy. It was an answer to our prayers. I started to feel better and get more strength in my neck. I knew it was Heavenly Father watching out for me and blessing my body to feel better. I am grateful that I know prayers can be answered.

**Aubrey P., age 8, California, USA**



All day at school, whenever Tim's stomach rumbled, he said a silent prayer that Heavenly Father would bless Shem. It wasn't easy, but he felt good inside doing this for his friend. On Sunday he learned that other Primary kids had fasted and

prayed for Shem too.

Several days later Tim walked in the house just as Mom was hanging up the phone.

"Great news!" Mom said. "Shem opened his eyes today. And the first thing he said was, 'Where am I, and why is there a picture of Tim?'"

"He saw my picture?" Tim asked, excited. Shem could still see!

"Yes, he did, and he knew it was you," Mom said. "That means his brain still works the way it should. The doctors are calling it a miracle."

Tim let out a whoop of excitement. He leaped up and started running down the hall toward his bedroom.

"Hey! Where are you going?" Mom asked.

Tim paused for only a moment. "I've got to thank Heavenly Father!" ♦

