

# PURE RELIGION

## The Food That Saved a Life

Eleven-year old Ruben had already chosen the tree where he would hang himself. It wouldn't be hard. All he would have to do is throw a rope over a branch, and in a little while it would all be over.

Ruben lived in a shanty town in northern Argentina. Although still a child himself, Ruben was forced to find food not only for himself but for his younger brothers and sisters. But there was little food to be found. Ruben had dropped out of school and spent his days in the streets of the city, often standing at street intersections offering to clean the windshields of stopped cars.

But as the days wore on, he felt an increasing despair. The few coins he earned were hard to come by and insufficient to feed himself, let alone his younger brothers and sisters. The miracle he had yearned for had never come. It was in this state of mind that Ruben had decided to end his life.

But as he stood, deep in thought, a large truck pulled up beside him. "I'm looking for the barrio, 13 of July," the driver said. "Do you know where that is?"

"That is where I live," Ruben said. "Do you want me to take you to it?"

The driver nodded, and Ruben hopped in the cab and directed the driver toward the place he called home.

"What's in the truck?" Ruben asked.

"Food."

"Where did it come from?"

The driver shrugged his shoulders and said, "What does it matter?"

When they arrived, the driver got out of the truck and explained to a woman who appeared to be in authority that he had brought food.

"Bring the package in here," she said.

The driver opened the back of the truck, revealing not a package but an entire truckload of food.

"What is this?" Ruben asked.

"It's yours. Belongs to the people of your neighborhood."

"All of it?"

"Every box."

The truck was filled to the top with hundreds of boxes of food: rice, beans, oil, sugar, . . . more food than Ruben had ever imagined. Tears formed in Ruben's eyes as people from the barrio surrounded the truck. Then they began to cheer. They cheered that the food had arrived. They cheered for Ruben.

"I brought them!" Ruben said over and over, tears streaming down his face. "I brought them!"

It took eight men two hours to unload the truck. That night, many in the barrio slept next to the boxes of food. "We were afraid it might be only a dream," they said. "We did not want to awaken only to find it had disappeared."

The next day, food was distributed to those in need. And Ruben and his brothers and sisters received enough food to last them for months. From that day forward, Ruben never spoke of suicide again. He had become a hero in his neighborhood. And a hero does not think of killing himself. Ruben returned to school and began looking forward to a new future. He had discovered there was reason to hope. That he was not alone. That others knew of his suffering and cared enough to help.

Not long after, word began to spread that the food had come from a Church who cared for people who were hungry. It had come from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

