

FASTING FOR THOSE WHO CHOOSE NOT TO BE DUMMIES

FASTING

There are a lot of interesting thoughts, misconceptions, misnomers, fears, dreads, and the like when FASTING is mentioned.

FASTING -- the mere mention of the word strikes dread in many a heart.

FASTING – OH NO! WHY OH?

You have seen the series of books, - **COMPUTERS FOR DUMMIES, COOKBOOKS FOR DUMMIES.**

FASTING FOR THOSE WHO CHOOSE NOT TO BE DUMMIES.

I. TENDENCIES WHEN FASTING.

Only fasting that is done with the right motive, *that of glorifying God*, can be pleasing in His sight.

Isaiah chapter 58 BEST ON TOPIC.

Zechariah 7:5-6

⁵ "Say to all the people of the land, and to the priests: 'When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh *months* during those seventy years, did you really fast for Me — for Me?

⁶ When you eat and when you drink, do you not eat and drink *for yourselves*?

The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector

Luke 18:9-14

¹¹ The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank You that I am not like other . . . ¹² I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.'

PRIDE IS THE BIG ISSUE.

Matthew 6:16-18

Fasting to Be Seen Only by God ¹⁶ "Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.

¹⁷ But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face,
¹⁸ so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who *is* in the secret *place*; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

II. TYPES OF FAST.

The Bible describes four major types of food fast:

A Regular Fast - Traditionally, a regular fast means refraining from eating all food. Most people still drink water or juice during a regular fast. When Jesus fasted in the desert, the Bible says,

Matthew 4:2

² And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry.

This verse does not mention Jesus being thirsty.

A Partial Fast - This type of fast generally refers to omitting a specific meal from your diet or refraining from certain types of foods.

Daniel 1:12

¹² "Please test your servants for ten days, and let them give us vegetables to eat and water to drink.

Daniel 10:2-3

In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks.

³ I ate no pleasant food, no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.

ANNA

Luke 2:37

³⁷ and this woman *was* a widow of about eighty-four years,* who did not depart from the temple, but served *God* with fastings and prayers night and day.

An Absolute Fast - no food OR drink.

MOSES

Deuteronomy 9:9, 18 ". . . 40 nights, I neither did eat bread nor drink water."

PAUL

Acts 9:9

⁹ And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

ESTER

Esther 4:16

¹⁶ "Go, gather all the Jews who are present in Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will fast likewise. And so I will go to the king, which *is* against the law; and if I perish, I perish!"

WITHIN THOSE THERE ARE BOTH CORPORATE FAST AND INDIVIDUAL FAST:

CORPORATE FAST

I Samuel 7:5-6 "And Samuel said, Gather all Israel ... and they gathered ... and fasted ... "

Ezra 8:21-23 "Then I proclaimed a fast ... So we fasted and besought our God ..."

Nehemiah 9:1-3 " ... the children of Israel were assembled with fasting ..."

Joel 2:15-16 "... sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly; gather the people ..."

Jonah 3:5

⁵ So the people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them.

INDIVIDUAL FAST:

1 Kings 21:27

²⁷ So it was, when Ahab heard those words, that he tore his clothes and put sackcloth on his body, and fasted and lay in sackcloth, and went about mourning.

Daniel 9:3

³ Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.

ANNA

Luke 2:37

³⁷ and this woman *was* a widow of about eighty-four years,* who did not depart from the temple, but served *God* with fastings and prayers night and day.

III. TIMES AND LENGTHS OF FAST.
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A. People in the Bible fasted and sought God diligently until;

1. they obtained from God what they

Hannah, I Samuel 1:6-8, 17-18;

Paul - Acts 9:9,17-19) –

2. or until the Lord made it evident that what they requested simply would not be obtained

David - II Samuel 12:15-23

B. The length of a fast may vary.

1. **One night.** - Daniel 6:18

2. **One day.**

I Samuel 7:6

II Samuel 1:12; 3:35

Judges 20:26

3. **Three days and three nights.**

Esther 4:16

Acts 9:9, 17-19

4. **Seven days.**

I Samuel 31:13

II Samuel 12:16-23

5. **Fourteen days.** - Acts 27:33-34

6. **Twenty-one days.** - Daniel 10:3-13

7. **Forty days.**

a. Moses (at two different times)

Exodus 24:18; 34:28

Deuteronomy 9:9, 18, 25-29; 10:10

b. Elijah. - I Kings 19:8

c. Jesus. - Matthew 4:2 (Mark 1:13; Luke 4:2)

IV. TOPICS OF FAST

A. The ordination of elders and commissioning of apostles to ministry.

Acts 13:3 "And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

Acts 14:23 "And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord..."

B. Intercession for the people of God.

Exodus 24:18
Deuteronomy 9:8-9, 12-20, 23-27
Ezra 10:6
Daniel 9:3-4
Joel 2:12-14, 17-18
Jonah 3:5-10

B. Humbling and chastening of oneself.

I Kings 21:27-29 "... See how Ahab humbled himself before me?"

Psalms 35:13 "... I humbled myself with fasting ..."

Psalms 69:10 "I wept, and chastened my soul with fasting ..."

C. Seeking the Lord and His way.

Judges 20:26-28,

II Chronicles 20:3 "And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah."

Ezra 8:21-23

D. Repentance and confession of sin.

I Samuel 7:6

I Kings 21:27-29

Ezra 10:6 "... he ate no bread, nor drank water: for he mourned because of the transgression ..."

Nehemiah 1:4-7, etc. "...when I heard these words, I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed..."

Nehemiah 9:1-3 "... the children of Israel were assembled with fasting ... and stood and confessed their sins ... one fourth part of the day ... they confessed ..."

Jeremiah 36:6-10

Daniel 9:3-5, 20 "... confessing my sin and the sin of my people ..."

Jonah 3:5-10

E. Receiving healing.

I Samuel 1:5-11, 18-20
II Samuel 12:15-16, 22-23
Isaiah 58:8
Acts 9:9, 17-19

F. Petitioning God to withhold His hand in judgment.

Deuteronomy 9:18, 25 "And I fell down before the Lord ... I did neither eat bread, nor drink water, because of all your sins ... because the Lord had said he would destroy you."

Isaiah 58:9

G. Preparation to receive word from God.

Deuteronomy 9:18, 25
Isaiah 58:9

H. Spiritual deliverance.

Isaiah 58:6 "Is not this the fast that I have chose? To loose the bands... to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?"

Mark 9:29 (Matthew 17:21) "And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting."

I. Seeking assistance in time of fear.

II Chronicles 20:3 "And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast ..."

J. Mourning another's death (II Samuel 1:12; 3:35);

K. Seeking protection. Ezra 8:21-23 out of concern for another's safety (Daniel 6:18); or when faced with threats on one's own life (Esther 4:3; 9:1-3).

M. Lacking material provision; in need.

II Corinthians 11:27 "... in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often ..."

V. FINAL WORD ON FASTING.

Fasting in itself is of no spiritual value but it is the attitude of a heart sincerely seeking Him to which God responds with blessing.

Joel 2:12-14

¹² "Now, therefore," says the LORD , "Turn to Me with all your heart, With fasting, with weeping, and with mourning."

¹³ So rend your heart, and not your garments; Return to the LORD your God, For He *is* gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, and of great kindness; And He relents from doing harm.

¹⁴ Who knows *if* He will turn and relent, And leave a blessing behind Him. . ."

**PRACTICAL: CONSULT PHYSICIAN!!!!
DIABETIC or ON MEDICATIONS**

Vegetables for 2-3 days prior to starting fast.

OUR CALL TO FASTING

1. OUR CHURCH:

**BUDGET PAYOFF
BUILDING PLANS**

2. OUR COMMUNITY:

REACHING THE UNCHURCHED

3. OUR COUNTRY:

REVIVAL and SPIRITUAL AWAKENING