DELIVERANCE
Prayer Study #366
First Love Ministries of Perry, Georgia USA

Handout #18: PRAYER AND FASTING

Matthew 17:21
Howbeit, this kind goeth not out except by prayer and fasting.

This verse Jesus spoke to His disciples who were puzzled at why they could not cast out an epileptic spirit.

Before the Lord comes again, there will be another outpouring of the Holy Spirit called the "latter rain" that will prepare the Church of Jesus Christ-especially the Zion Company Remnant of the Last Days-for the Great Harvest at the end of the age. I believe that, even now, the Lord is preparing those who will bring in this Harvest and that the babies being born now will have a special anointing in evangelism to bring many sons and daughters to the kingdom. To bring us to the point of worldwide revival, God's people, like you and I, must move into emergency measures of rending the heart and not our garments, of calling solemn assemblies and waiting on the Lord, of declaring fasts and sounding an alarm in Zion. This movement towards the deeper things of God will center on PRAYER, which is relational and communicative with the Father, and FASTING, which is denial of the flesh in order to walk more fully in the Spirit. *Now is the time* for us to get our light, i.e. the Spirit living in us, out from under the bushel basket of our fleshly desire both to satisfy our lusts and to please people more than we desire to please God. Then our little light will shine. These lights are our witness for Jesus, and how the world needs to see these lights in our day.

There are many ways to fast. We usually suggest skipping a meal for 21 days, a total food fast (only water) one day a week for three weeks, a three day food fast with only fruit juices, or a "pleasant bread" fast for those who cannot physically or who choose not to fast whole meals. This latter fast could be skipping sweets, television, or any activity that you most enjoy, for a certain time. I do not see, however, any kind of fast in scripture except fasting of food, but some cannot fast food due to health concerns.

Fasting humbles you, chastens the soul, crucifies the flesh, shows obedience and gives evidence that we want the Lord above all else, aids in overcoming temptation, helps to attain power over demons, develops faith,

crucifies unbelief, and aids in prayer. A study of the following scriptures would be very helpful for those who want to know more about fasting: Psalm 35:13, Psalm 69:10, 2nd Samuel 12:16-23, Matthew 4:1-11, 1st Corinthians 7:5, Matthew 17:14-21.

People should fast when under great stress (chastening) - 2nd Samuel 12:16-23; under judgment-1st Kings 21:27; in need-Ezra 8:21; in danger-Esther 4; when worried-Daniel 6:18; in trouble-Acts 27:9 & 33; in spiritual conflict-Matthew 4:1-11, and when desperate-Acts 9.

The following was copied from a bulletin from Central Baptist Church in Warner Robins, Georgia, and gives the Biblical kinds of fast:

1. **Disciple's Fast-**Isaiah 58:6 **-** *"to loose the chains of injustice"* - The purpose of this fast is to seek for God to free us and others from addictions to sin. The background would be when Jesus cast a demon out of a young man after his disciples' failure to do so.
2. **Ezra Fast**-Isaiah 58:6- "*to untie the cords of the yoke"*-This is a fast to solve problems, inviting the Holy Spirit's aid in lifting loads and overcoming barriers that keep us and others from walking with the Lord. The background here is when Ezra was seeking protection for his people in rebuilding Jerusalem.
3. **Samuel Fast**-Isaiah 58:6-*"to set the oppressed free"*-This is a fast for revival and soul winning so that people can be brought out of the darkness into God's marvelous light. The background here is that Samuel led God's people in a fast to celebrate the return of the Ark from Philistine captivity and deliverance from the sin that allowed it.
4. **Elijah Fast**-Isaiah 58:6-*"to break every yoke"*-This is for the purpose of conquering mental and emotional problems that would control our lives and return that control to the Lord. The background here is Elijah's going without food while fleeing from Queen Jezebel and how God provide. This fast helps us be free from the bands of wickedness.
5. **Widow's Fast**-Isaiah 58:7-*"to deal thy bread to the hungry"*-This is for the purpose of meeting the humanitarian needs of others. The background is how God worked a miracle through the widow of Zarephath to feed Elijah, the widow and her son. 1st Kings 17:16 says, *"The jar of flour was not used up and the jug of oil did not run dry."*
6. **Paul Fast-**Isaiah 58:8-*"Then your light will break forth like the dawn"*-This is for the purpose of bringing light and perspective for

crucial decisions. The background is Saul being blinded by light on the Damascus Road. After three days, Ananias came to visit and God restored Paul's eyesight. Acts 9:9 says, *"And he was three days without sight and neither ate nor drank."*

7. **Daniel Fast-**Isaiah 58:8-*"and your healing will quickly appear"*-This is for the purpose of a healthier life or for healing. The background is Daniel and his three friends who refused the rich pagan foods of meat and wine for things healthier. Here is an example of a fast with food, i.e. only meats and wine, that is an option for diabetics, pregnant women, and those with health needs. Daniel 1:8 says, *"Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies nor with wine which he drank."*
8. **John the Baptist Fast-**Isaiah 58:8-*"then your righteousness will go before you."* This is for the purpose of strengthening our testimonies and influence for Jesus. As a Nazarite, John fasted from wine or strong drink. This was an adopted lifestyle meant to influence others.
9. **Esther Fast-**Isaiah 58:8 concludes-*"and the glory of the LORD will be your rear guard"*-The purpose here is that the glory of the Lord will protect us from the evil one. The background here is Queen Esther's risking her life to save her people from death and destruction by appealing to the King of Persia. She, her cousin Mordecai, and all the Jews fasted and asked for God's protection.