

# Teaching in foundations about fasting

God is a rewarder of those who diligently seeks him

**Hebrews 11:6** And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who approaches Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him.

This verse should be the ground and reason for everything we do to approach the Lord. He will accept nothing less that we have faith in him that he will reward us when we seek him. It is impossible to please him without faith.

## 1. Prayer, fasting and repentance in the Old Testament

Fasting was required in the Old Testament when it came to the law given to Moses.

### **Leviticus 16:29** Amplified Bible

“This shall be a permanent statute for you: in the seventh month (nearly October) on the tenth day of the month you shall humble yourselves [by fasting] and not do any work, whether the native-born or the stranger who lives temporarily among you;

Derek Prince also talks about humbling yourself before God by denying yourself food.

### **Nehemiah 9:1** New International Version

On the twenty-fourth day of the same month, the Israelites gathered together, fasting and wearing sackcloth and putting dust on their heads.

This is a fast connected to repentance and facing a great disaster. Meeting with a prophet bringing forth a message from God.

Many times, throughout the Old Testament the fast is triggered by difficulties like wars, famine, repentance from sins, and desire to know which direction to go. Daniel also fasted from certain types of food and wine when he was mourning. The fasting is always closely connected to prayer and sometimes they even clothed themselves in humbling outfits.

## 2. Fasting after Jesus was born but before He took on His great mission.

**Luke 18:12** we learn that the Pharisees – so the priests they fast twice a week. And another place it is mentioned that the disciples of John were fasting.

### **How was Jesus's experiences with prayer and fasting in His life.**

Jesus starts out His ministry by fasting for 40 days in the desert. Pay attention to this – a fast will not give us relief from temptations. Remember from Jesus 40 days of fasting. The devil is there trying to find a weak spot in him. But he is prepared – as should we be – and his response is from the Bible. He is armed with the sword – word of God to defeat the temptations. But the fast gave him strength to defeat the temptation.

The Bible does not say that Jesus fasted after this. But his disciples often describe how He went for Himself to seek His Father.

Prayer and fast are closely knitted together. There is always prayer involved. There is no use in fasting if you do not have a will to search for God's presence.

## **What was His advice to the disciples regarding prayer and fasting for the disciples.**

**Mathew 9:15** Jesus himself points out that there is no reason to fast on days of the feast. Meaning as long as He was among them there was no reason to fast, but He also prophesized that there would come such a time that fasting would be required and desired. Because the groom would no longer be with them.

Jesus is also very clear with the disciples when He was asked about fasting. That they should not do it the way the hypocrites is doing it. So – if you fast – do not boast – do it in silence – the word of the Lord even encouraged them to keep their face bright shining so no one can see it.

**Mathew 6:6** - last part of the word. ...” then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.”

Jesus also advises fasting when it comes to throwing out demons. I think that this communicates that fasting and prayer gives us more power and authority into the spiritual realm.

### **Acts 13:1-3**

1 Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. 2 While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” 3 So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

### **3. Prayer and fasting the right way and the wrong way.**

Is fasting for you as a Christian today? Let us remember what Jesus says about fasting after the bridegroom is taken away. And how the disciples fast after the Lord is taken up to heaven.

Victory over demons – more power over demons and better equipped to fight temptations.

Jesus is a good example on how to fast and pray before entering a service in the kingdom of God.

Fasting is a way to seek God that maybe requires a step-by-step program to reach the level where you can fast for several days. For example – do not despise the small beginnings. Start with half a day – a few hours. When you have control over your body in this and can exercise self-control you are ready to expand the amount of time.

Make sure you don't have too many stressful things on your agenda for these days. You need to focus on the Lord.

**When I started to fast in the beginning.** I was home with the children, and I was able to set aside time and prioritize fasting for half a day in the beginning.

After some time, I could do it for a whole day. At that time, I had lots of issues so I could not see for myself that it was actually working, but what happened was that I got to testify for many people, I got words of knowledge for random people in our neighborhood. And we started a small house group with one of our old neighbours.

It was not until 4 years ago Ronny (my husband) and I were able to do a three day fast together. Which resulted in two mission trips to Wales where we were able to bring words of knowledge to three churches in a small town named Bangor. We also got to pray for lots of people and God was so good to us during these trips. We also took some time praying and fasting on the trips.

We prepared the fasting well by planning the days with sort of a schedule. Like in the morning we prayed and sought the Lord how to spend the day. The Holy Spirit helped us to balance it all with spending some time in prayer, some time studying the word of the Lord, sometime walking in nature and even some time on how to fight the feeling of hunger.

We had a zip of water and maybe a vegetable in the morning, same at dinnertime. The next day my husband did not eat at all, I had a little vegetable and a little coffee next to the water. At the afternoon we had a little brew – just a few zips.

Last day. Lots of time listening to Gods voice just being quiet. And just drinking cold or hot water.

And we received great answers both times we did this.

Last time three days – last winter. I still haven't received a clear direction from that time yet, but I wrote down the pictures the Lord showed me.

Last time I fasted was intermitted fast – just coffee and a banana in the daytime and regular food in the afternoon. Last week and the Word of the Lord really spoke to me about the spirit of familiarity. Why do we let ourselves go, what tells us that small things like respect and cleaning after ourselves is not important anymore. I really felt the Lord bringing me back to basics. And the holiness of the Spirit is a great guide into telling us where to repent.

#### **4. Decisions to fast:**

- To come closer to God.
- To get clear direction if they are by a crossroad, a big decision, not know the road ahead
- To conquer sin/diseases/temptations
- To cast out demons
- To save people from hell – It says in the bible you can stand in the gap.

#### **The Bible describes three different types of fast.**

- Full fast included fasting from work – Old Testament
- Full fast included humbling clothes – repentance for example Ninevah
- Daniels fast – not eating fat and drinking wine or staying only to vegetables and water.
- Intermittent fast Between fixed times. Can't find a biblical reference for this, but as long as you set aside time to be with God during the fast is has to be according to your faith.

If you want to fast make sure you also set aside time to worship and seek the Lord.

Let us seek the Lord with all our hearts, all our minds and all our strength.