

Fasting

Part 11

“¹ Shout it aloud, do not hold back. Raise your voice like a trumpet. Declare to my people their rebellion and to the house of Jacob their sins. ² For day after day they seek me out; they seem eager to know my ways, as if they were a nation that does what is right and has not forsaken the commands of its God. They ask me for just decisions and seem eager for God to come near them. ³ ‘Why have we fasted,’ they say, ‘and you have not seen it? Why have we humbled ourselves, and you have not noticed?’ ‘Yet on the day of your fasting, you do as you please and exploit all your workers. ⁴ Your fasting ends in quarreling and strife, and in striking each other with wicked fists. You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high. ⁵ Is this the kind of fast I have chosen, only a day for a man to humble himself? Is it only for bowing one’s head like a reed and for lying on sackcloth and ashes? Is that what you call a fast, a day acceptable to the LORD? ⁶ ‘Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? ⁷ Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter—when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? ⁸ Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the LORD will be your rear guard. ⁹ Then you will call, and the LORD will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I. ‘If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk, ¹⁰ and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday. ¹¹ The LORD will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail. ¹² Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins and will raise up the age-old foundations; you will be called Repairer of Broken Walls, Restorer of Streets with Dwellings. ¹³ ‘If you keep your feet from breaking the Sabbath and from doing as you please on my holy day, if you call the Sabbath a delight and the LORD’s holy day honorable, and if you honor it by not going your own way and not doing as you please or speaking idle words, ¹⁴ then you will find your joy in the LORD, and I will cause you to ride on the heights of the land and to feast on the inheritance of your father Jacob.’” (Isaiah 58:1-14)

A fasting day is a day that suppose to be pleasant to the Lord; a day that would be acceptable to the Lord our God. Fasting is to withhold from taking food or drink of any nutritional value for a period of time; for example from morning till evening. Our aim from fasting is to please God and to draw near to Him. But that will not come only by withholding from taking food but at the same time is to do things that please God as we can conclude from the chosen passage of the Bible, and as the following:-

1) Fasting is a day of repentance of sins: “Declare to my people their rebellion and to the house of Jacob their sins.” Repentance is to confess and forsake your sins, turn to God, and have faith in the Lord Jesus. Repentance is to start to do the good work and fulfill God’s purpose that He created for.

2) Fasting is to stop doing the following sinful acts: Like injustice by exploiting all your workers, corruption, quarrelling, strife, pointing finger and malicious talk. If

such things are in your life then don’t expect that the Lord will hear you. If you want God to hear your prayer then instead of injustice then give each one his rights and what is due for him. Fasting means to avoid quarrels and strives. Fasting mean to keep love and harmony as the Lord Jesus commanded us: *“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” (John 13: 34-35)*

3) Fasting is to share the blessings with others: To share your food with the hungry and to provide to the poor. God had commanded us to help the poor and the needy. *“There will always be poor people in the land. Therefore I command you to be openhanded toward your brothers and toward the poor and needy in your land.” (Deuteronomy 15:11)* Fasting means not to turn away from your own flesh and blood. Fasting is to care for your own children whom God gave to look after and do your responsibility toward them.

4) Fast and not neglect the sabbath: To keep the Sabbath is to keep the day of worship to the Lord. Our requirement to God in worshipping Him, serving Him and other commitments need to be honored in your life. Fasting is to do what God wants and likes, not what you desire. God had showed us His great love when He sent His Son Jesus Christ to save us. Jesus died on the cross for our sins; He was buried but rose from the dead on the third day to give eternal life to those who believe in Him and follow His steps in their lives. For such a great sacrifice God wants us to be truthful to Him and to His Word that we read in the Bible. Therefore when we fast we cannot mock God. In addition to the empty stomach God wants us to be meek, humble, repentant, obedient to His Word, kind to the poor and needy, considerate, and helpful to those under injustice and in bondages in order for them to be set free from the power of devil.

If you will consider the above points in your life then you will reap the following blessings when you pray and fast to the Lord:

- 1- Guidance and direction from the Lord: “The Lord will guide you always” (Isaiah 58:11a)**
- 2- God will satisfy your needs even in a desert land and will give you the strength to be sustained: “He will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail.” (Isaiah 58:11b)**
- 3- You will have the joy in your life unto God and will be able to move on and possess the land: “then you will find your joy in the LORD, and I will cause you to ride on the heights of the land” (Isaiah 58:14)**
- 4- Your light will shine before others and they will see God clearly working in your life: “Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the LORD will be your rear guard.” (Isaiah 58:8)** In addition there will be healing of sicknesses, breaking of bondages and deliverance from demonic forces and traps of the devil.
- 5- God will answer your prayers and you will be well helped by the Lord: “Then you will call, and the LORD will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I.” (Isaiah 58:9a)**

My Dear and Beloved: God wants you to be truthful to His every Word, and He will use you to rebuild the ancient ruins and will raise up the age old foundations, then you will find joy in the Lord, and great victory in His name as you agree to pray

My Prayer: Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died for my sins on the cross and rose from the dead to give me eternal life. Lord humble me, change my character and make me more loving to others and obedient to Your Word so that my fasting will be acceptable to you and you would answer my prayers. Lord please do that to me, this is my prayer in Jesus name, Amen.