

## ***Fasting***

### ***Part 18***

God's word will enrich us more about the subject of fasting. And we will discuss in this issue about the occasions that speak about people who fasted but they did not fast to the Lord. As their prayer and fasting were not based on the word of God then their prayer and fasting is not honourable by the Lord, because they prayed and fasted but not in line with the word of truth.

Around you and us are people who pray and fast but their prayer and fasting is not directed to the Lord the creator of heaven and earth. Then you may ask to whom their prayer and fasting are directed? Their prayer and fasting are directed to Satan and the demons with him, who is rebellious to God and disobedient to God's word.

So be careful and discern, when you see people who worship other gods are fasting to their gods such fasting is not honourable by the Lord. As well as be careful and discern when you see people praying and fasting but their prayer and fasting and their request unto God it does not go along the Scripture; such fasting is not honourable by the Lord as well. The following are some of these examples that we can read in the bible.

***1- Prayer and fasting to dramatize and justify putting to death Naboth the Jezreelite in order to take his vineyard by Ahab the wicked king:*** “<sup>1</sup> Some time later there was an incident involving a vineyard belonging to Naboth the Jezreelite. The vineyard was in Jezreel, close to the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. <sup>2</sup> Ahab said to Naboth, “Let me have your vineyard to use for a vegetable garden, since it is close to my palace. In exchange I will give you a better vineyard or, if you prefer, I will pay you whatever it is worth.” <sup>3</sup> But Naboth replied, “The LORD forbid that I should give you the inheritance of my fathers.” <sup>4</sup> So Ahab went home, sullen and angry because Naboth the Jezreelite had said, “I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers.” He lay on his bed sulking and refused to eat. <sup>5</sup> His wife Jezebel came in and asked him, “Why are you so sullen? Why won't you eat?” <sup>6</sup> He answered her, “Because I said to Naboth the Jezreelite, ‘Sell me your vineyard; or if you prefer, I will give you another vineyard in its place.’ But he said, ‘I will not give you my vineyard.’” <sup>7</sup> Jezebel his wife said, “Is this how you act as king over Israel? Get up and eat! Cheer up. I'll get you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.” <sup>8</sup> So she wrote letters in Ahab's name, placed his seal on them, and sent them to the elders and nobles who lived in Naboth's city with him. <sup>9</sup> In those letters she wrote: “Proclaim a day of fasting and seat Naboth in a prominent place among the people. <sup>10</sup> But seat two scoundrels opposite him and have them testify that he has cursed both God and the king. Then take him out and stone him to death.” <sup>11</sup> So the elders and nobles who lived in Naboth's city did as Jezebel directed in the letters she had written to them. <sup>12</sup> They proclaimed a fast and seated Naboth in a prominent place among the people. <sup>13</sup> Then two scoundrels came and sat opposite him and brought charges against Naboth before the people, saying, “Naboth has cursed both God and the king.” So they took him outside the city and stoned him to death. <sup>14</sup> Then they sent word to Jezebel: “Naboth has been stoned and is dead.” <sup>15</sup> As soon as Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned to death, she said to Ahab, “Get up and take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite that he refused to sell you. He is no longer alive, but dead.” <sup>16</sup> When Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, he got up and went down to take possession of Naboth's vineyard.” (1King 21:1-16) Their intention of that fasting was to murder an innocent man and to steal from him his property. The Lord judged and condemned that evil deed when He sent the prophet Elijah who carried God's judgment message on Ahab and all His household:

***“<sup>17</sup> Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite: <sup>18</sup> “Go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, who rules in Samaria. He is now in Naboth's vineyard, where he has gone to take possession of it. <sup>19</sup> Say to him, ‘This is what the LORD says: Have you not murdered a man and seized his property?’ Then say to him, ‘This is what the LORD says: In the place where dogs licked up Naboth's blood, dogs will lick up your blood—yes, yours!’”*** <sup>20</sup> Ahab said to Elijah, “So you have found me, my enemy!” “I have found you,” he answered, “because you have sold yourself to do evil in the eyes of the LORD. <sup>21</sup> I am going to bring disaster on you. I will consume your descendants and cut off from Ahab every last male in Israel—slave or free. <sup>22</sup> I will make your house like that of Jeroboam son of Nebat and that of Baasha son of Ahijah, because you have provoked me to anger and have caused Israel to sin.” <sup>23</sup> “And also concerning Jezebel the LORD says: ‘Dogs will devour Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.’” <sup>24</sup> “Dogs will eat those belonging to Ahab who die in the city, and the birds of the air will feed on those who die in the country.” (1King 21:17-24)

***2- The plot to kill Paul by the Jewish:*** “<sup>12</sup> The next morning the Jews formed a conspiracy and bound themselves with an oath not to eat or drink until they had killed Paul. <sup>13</sup> More than forty men were involved in this plot. <sup>14</sup> They went to the chief priests and elders and said, “We have taken a solemn oath not to eat anything until we have killed Paul. <sup>15</sup> Now then, you and the Sanhedrin petition the commander to bring him before you on the pretext of wanting more accurate information about his case. We are ready to kill him before he gets here.” (Acts 23:12-15) Sure they were keeping that oath for Satan. But the Lord saw what they were doing evil and worked out to rescue Paul from their hands as we can read here: “<sup>16</sup> But when the son of Paul's sister heard of this plot, he went into the barracks and told Paul. <sup>17</sup> Then Paul called one of the centurions and said, “Take this young man to the commander; he has something to tell him.” <sup>18</sup> So he took him to the commander. The centurion said, “Paul, the prisoner, sent for me and asked me to bring this young man to you because he has something to tell you.” <sup>19</sup> The commander took the young man by the hand, drew him aside and asked, “What is it you want to tell me?” <sup>20</sup> He said: “The Jews have agreed to ask you to bring Paul before the Sanhedrin tomorrow on the pretext of wanting more accurate information about him. <sup>21</sup> Don't give in to them, because more than forty of them are waiting in ambush for him. They have taken an oath not to eat or drink until they have killed him. They are ready now, waiting for your consent to their request.” <sup>22</sup> The commander dismissed the young man and cautioned him, “Don't tell anyone that you have reported this to me.” <sup>23</sup> Then he called two of his centurions and ordered them, “Get ready a detachment of two hundred soldiers, seventy horsemen and two hundred spearmen to go to Caesarea at nine tonight. <sup>24</sup> Provide mounts for Paul so that he may be taken safely to Governor Felix.” (Acts 23:16:24)

***My Dear and Beloved:*** We learn much from the word of God that show us clearly the evil practices that are prevalent in the world around us. Therefore be discerning, looking carefully on what is going on around you, and taking this word of God as advice, “<sup>21</sup> ***Test everything. Hold on to the good. <sup>22</sup> Avoid every kind of evil.***” (1Thessaolonians 5:21-22) as you agree to pray.

***My Prayer:*** Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the cross for my sins and rose from the dead to give me eternal life. Lord thank you for your word that showed me your ways and the full truth. Lord gives me discernment so I can follow you more accurately, discerning your true ways and shunning all evil. This all I ask and pray in Jesus name Amen.