



UNTO THE LORD - 7 DAY FAST DAY 4

January 11th, 2023

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DAY 4

FASTING - HUMBLING OURSELVES

Fasting, which is a voluntary abstaining of food for spiritual purposes, is shown from scripture that this is a discipline that should be a regular part of our spiritual life.

1. The Purpose of Fasting is to humble ourself. Some New Testament scriptures concerning self-humbling:

- Matthew 18:4 - "Whoever will humble himself therefore and become like this little child, is greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

- Matthew 23:12 - "Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled, and whoever humbles himself shall be raised to honor."

- James 4:10 - "Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you."

- 1 Peter 5:6 - "Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that in due season He may exalt you."

A part of this process of humbling , fasting is a form of mourning. There are times when fasting and mourning are beneficial . Mourning has a place among the Beatitudes. Mt. 5:4 "Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall receive comfort.

Isiah 61:3 states special blessings for them that "morn in Zion " He promised "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness ." Mourning is a response to the holy Spirit's prompting, through which we share in a small measure God's own grief over the sin and folly of humanity.

2. In the Old Testament we are shown how fasting is a way to humble ourself.

**- Psalm 35:13 we read of David, "I humbled myself with fasting."
(Strong's 6031 - humbled: Hebrew word for abase, self-afflict, force, hurt, chasten self).**

**- Ezra 8:21-23 tells the story of Ezra and the exiles returning to Jerusalem.
21 - "Then I proclaimed a fast at the river Ahava, that we might humble ourselves before our God, to seek from Him a straight and right way for us."**

23 - "So we fasted, and besought God for this, and He heard our entreaty."

- 2 Chronicles 20:1-4 - A great multitude (Moabites, Ammonites, Meunites) came against Jehoshaphat to battle. Then Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the Lord and he proclaimed a fast in all of Judah. In his prayer he recognizes that we have no power, we do not know what to do. They turned to God and waited for His supernatural power.

3. The Day of Atonement - In the Old Testament God ordained one special day each year in which His people were to afflict their souls. From the time of Moses onward , the Jews have interpreted this as a command to fast. In Acts 27:9, it is this annual Day Of atonement that is referred to as "the fast ". Orthodox Jews still observe the Day Of Atonement as a day of fasting.

- Leviticus 16:29-31

29 - "It shall be a statute to you forever that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall afflict yourselves [by fasting with penitence and humiliation] ... (afflict: Strong's 6031)

30 - For on this day atonement shall be made for you, to cleanse you; from all your sins you shall be clean before the Lord."

FASTING is man's response to God's provision of ATONEMENT made available to those who would accept it through fasting, humbling themselves. God did His part and he expected man to respond by fasting. This is the response God often looks for us to do as our part. God absolutely required this of all His people on the Day of Atonement. Anyone who did not fast was cut off from the people of God; they were no longer allowed to be a member of God's people.

4. Conclusion -

Fasting is a means by which a believer brings his body into subjection. 1 Cor. 9:27 "But I keep my body under, and bring it into subjection lest by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." In all the examples we can see that fasting prepares us by humbling ourselves. We recognize that to God belongs the power and the wisdom, it is from Him that our help comes from. We, by humbling ourselves, remove the roadblocks that keep us from receiving what God has for us. Fasting does not change God, but it changes us so we can receive what He desires to give us. I believe in this season that God is allowing us to come to the end of ourselves so that we have a proper perspective that we must look to Him for the answer, the provision that He already wants to give us. Fasting breaks down the barriers in man's carnal nature that stand in the way of the Holy Spirit's omnipotence. With these barriers removed, the Holy Spirit can work unhindered in His fullness through our prayers.