

2018 TRANSITIONING :

Moving from Where We Are...

...to Where God Wants Us

Through **FASTING...**

Sunday, May 06, 2018

Fasting_ Going without food or drink voluntarily, generally for religious purposes. Fasting can be done however for other reasons. It was sometimes done as a sign of grief, distress, or _____. The Law of Moses specifically required fasting for only one occasion_ the Day of Atonement (an annual day of fasting and prayer among the Israelites). This custom resulted in calling this day "the day of fasting" (Jer. 36:6) _____

or "the Fast" (Acts 27:9) _____

What was Moses doing on Mount Sinai (Exod. 34:28) and how long did he fast? and what did he fast from? _____

What was the result of the voluntary *group fast* (not specified in the law) (Judges 20:26 and I Samuel 7:6)? _____

It was at a *called fast* that witnesses accused Naboth, setting the stage for his what? (I Kings 21:9, 12) _____

In times of grief people fasted. When the bones of Saul and his sons were buried, *how long* did the people fast? (I Samuel 31:13; I Chron. 10:12) _____

Fasting was practiced by individuals in times of distress. David fasted after hearing that Saul and Jonathan were dead (2 Sam. 1:12). _____

• What did Nehemiah do when he heard that Jerusalem remained in ruin since its destruction (Neh. 1:4)? _____

• When King Darius placed Daniel in the den of lions, how long did he fast? (Daniel 6:18) _____

• Going without food and water of itself was not effective in accomplishing the desires of those who fasted. In fact, the people of Isaiah's complained that they had fasted and God had not responded favorably (Isa. 58:3, 4). What did the Lord require (Isa. 58:5-7)? _____

- (1) _____
- (2) _____
- (3) _____
- (4) _____
- (5) _____
- (6) _____
- (7) _____

This is abuse of the custom.

- What was the occasion of David fasting (II Sam. 12:16, 21-23)? _____
- Religious fasting was observed as a sign of mourning for sin. Fasts were not necessary religious in nature. They were commonplace when someone near and dear died. When did the inhabitants of Jabesh fast (I Sam. 31:13)? _____
- Anna served God with _____ and prayers night and day (Lk. 2:37).
- Jesus fasted for how long (Mt. 4:2)? _____
- Who else fasted for the same period of time (I Kings 19:8)? _____
- Four Kinds of Fasting
 1. The _____ fast is going without _____ for a definite period during which you ingest only liquids (water and/or juice).
The duration can be 1 day, 3 days, 1 week, 1 month or 40 days. Extreme care should be taken with longer fasts, which should only be attempted after medical advice from your physician.
 2. The _____ fast allows no food or water at all, and should be _____. Moses fasted for 40 days; but this would kill anyone without supernatural intervention, and should never be attempted today. Be sure to test the spirit that tries to talk you into a 40-day fast, even if it includes liquids.
 3. The _____ fast is one that omits _____ or is on a schedule that includes limited eating. It may consist of omitting one meal a day. Eating only fresh vegetables for several days is also a good partial fast. John Wesley ate only bread (whole grain) and water for many days. Elijah practiced partial fasts at least twice. John the Baptist and Daniel with his three friends are other examples of those who participated in partial fasts. People who have hypoglycemia or other diseases might consider this kind of fast.
 4. A _____ fast consists of eating or omitting certain families of foods for designated periods. For example, grains may be eaten only every fourth day. The various food families are rotated so that some food is available each day.

Fasting in the Old Testament

The word "fast" is derived from the Hebrew term *tsom*, which refers to the practice of _____ - _____. The New Testament using the Greek word *nesteia* for the fast, also refers to _____ - _____.

Most scholars believe that the practice of fasting began with the loss of appetite during times of great distress and duress. Hannah, who would later become the

mother of Samuel, was so distressed about her barrenness that "she wept and _____" (I Sam. 1:7). Also, when King Ahab failed in his attempt to purchase Naboth's vineyard, he "would eat _____" (I Kings 21:4).

Fasting apparently began as a natural expression of grief; however, after time it became customary to reflect or prove one's grief to others by abstaining from food and /or showing sorrow. David fasted to demonstrate his grief at Abner's death (see 2 Sam. 3:35). Many references in Scripture describe fasting as "afflicting" one's soul or _____ (see Isa. 58:3, 5 KJV). Fasting came to be practiced as an external means of demonstrating and later encouraging an internal feeling of remorse for _____.

Fasting was a perfectly natural human expression of human grief; therefore, it became a religious custom to placate the anger of God. People began fasting to turn away God's _____ from destroying them. Eventually, fasting became a basis for making one's petition effective to God. David defended his fasting before the death of his son by Bathsheba, indicating _____ that while the child lived David's prayer might be answered. When the child died, David promptly ended his fast, denoting that he knew then that neither _____ could any longer avail (see 2 Sam. 12:15-23).

When God vented His wrath against a nation for its wickedness, fasting became a national mode of seeking divine _____. Therefore, it was only natural that a group of people should associate themselves in confession, fasting, sorrow for sin and intercession to God.

Fasting in the New Testament

In the New Testament, fasting was a widely practiced discipline, especially among the Pharisees and the disciples of John the Baptist. As we have noted, when the apostles of Jesus were criticized by both the Pharisees and John the Baptist's disciples for _____, Jesus defended their not fasting while He was present, but implied that they would fast after He was taken from them (see. Matt. 9:14, 15). _____

Jesus gave His disciples no specific guidelines concerning the frequency of fasting. He taught that their fasting should differ from that of the Pharisees in that they should fast to _____ rather than to impress others with their supposed spirituality (see Matt. 6:16-18). _____

Fasting was later practiced in the New Testament Church, especially when ordaining elders and /or designating people for special ministry projects (see Acts 13:1-3). _____

Fasting was apparently practiced by Paul and other Christian leaders fairly regularly (see I Cor. 7:5; 2 Cor. 6:5). _____

Instances of Fasting

• Why did Daniel fast and pray according to Daniel 9:3? _____

• Daniel fasted at the time of his _____ (Daniel 10:1-3).

• The Ninevites, when Jonah _____ to them (Jonah 3:5-10).

• Paul fasted at the time of his _____ (Acts 9:9).

• The disciples fasted, at the time of the consecration of _____ and _____ (Acts 13:2, 3).

• Fasting preceded the consecration of the _____ (Acts 14:23).

• Fasting is the laying aside of food for a period of time when a believer is seeking to know God in a deeper experience. It is to be done as an act before God in the privacy of one's own pursuit of God...

Exodus 34:28 _____

I Samuel 7:6 _____

I Kings 19:8 _____

Matthew 6:17 _____

• Fasting is to be done with the object of seeking to know God in a deeper experience (Isa. 58; Zech. 7:5). _____

• Fasting relates to a time of confession (Ps. 69:10). _____

• Fasting can be a time of seeking a deeper prayer experience and drawing to God in prevailing prayer (Ezra 8:23; Joel 2:12). _____

• The early church often fasted in seeking God's will for leadership in the local church (Acts 13:2). _____