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# ENDTIME FASTING

By Tommy Cook & Deorham Bholan

“Is not this the fast that I have chosen? To LOOSE the bands of wickedness, to UNDO the heavy burdens, and let the oppressed GO FREE, and that ye BREAK EVERY YOKE?” – Isaiah 58:6

UNFORGIVNESS

RESENTMENT

CURSES

FEAR

GRIEF

LUST

OCCULT

SUICIDE

REJECTION

POVERTY



**ENDTIME  
FASTING**

**BY  
TOMMY COOK  
AND DEORHAM BHOLAN**

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Every Thursday, LHBC fasts breakfast and lunch,  
and prays for the nation and the many prayer  
requests that come in through the mail, over the  
phone, and by e-mail.

These messages on fasting were given on  
Thursday during the 1988 Mid-Winter  
Campmeeting  
and are taken from tape 88LH12-13.

# **ENDTIME FASTING**

**TOMMY COOK**

Father, again today, we thank You, Lord. This is the day that You have made. Help us to rejoice and be glad in it, Lord. We thank You for health and strength. We thank You, Lord, for Your peace and Your joy today. Hallelujah. Lord, as we approach the Word again, we approach it reverently. We ask that You would quicken us together in the Word today. AMEN.

Today is fast day for a couple of meals. We all need to learn to fast, don't we? Praise the Lord! We know that there are different kinds of fasts that people go on, that God puts people on. Not everybody can fast in the same way. Not everybody can fast as long as some people can. It takes faith to fast.

There are two kinds of fasts. There's the kind that the Lord calls, then there are times when men call fasts for certain reasons. But, whatever the reason is, we need to fast. We need to, I say, instead of going on long fasts - although there are times for that - live a life of fasting. We need to learn some discipline. We need to know how to rule the body. To be honest, our bodies are ruling us most of the time. We need to know how to rule the body. Amen?

The word “fasting” means “to cover the mouth.” That means more than just not putting food in it. It also means to watch what we say. I find that once we begin to fast and cry out to God that we’re not so prone to misjudge others, as we do sometimes. We need some help in that respect. Praise the Lord.

I think we have to adjust our bodies as to what kind of fast we can go into. As I said, some can do more fasting than others. In my own life, I’ve found at times that by just eating one meal a day for a couple of weeks and drinking water not only do I benefit from it, but my body benefits. I can lose ten pounds. That helps too, sometimes, doesn’t it? But our motive should not be just to lose weight. Our motive should be to please the Lord. Amen? Amen. Our motive should not be how much power we can get or how much we can get from God. Our motive is to be obedient to the Holy Ghost and to the Lord. Whatever comes from that fast, of course, we will benefit from it.

Let’s look at some Scriptures. Turn to Matthew, chapter 6. Let’s start there and look at a few Scriptures together. Matthew 6:2. Jesus said, “*Therefore, when thou doest alms, do not sound a trumpet before men....*” He expects us to give to the kingdom. He didn’t say, “if you want to.” He said, “when you do it.”

Then, in verse 5, He said, “*When thou prayest....*”, not, “if you pray,” but, “when you pray.”

In verse 17, He said, *“But thou, when thou fasteth....”*, not, “if you fast,” but, “when you fast.” *“...anoint thy head and wash thy face...”* God doesn’t want us to go around looking down in the mully-grubbs if we’re going to fast. He wants us to, what did He say here? *“Anoint your head and wash your face.”* A lot of poisons come out in your face, don’t they? So, we need to anoint our heads and wash our faces, *“...that ye appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father that is in secret”*, or private, *“and thy Father which seeth in secret shall”*, do something, *“reward thee openly.”* Hallelujah! When you come unto the Father secretly and minister to Him, He will reward you openly.

Fasting without prayer is just a diet. We need to fast and pray. I have seen many people who fast but don’t pray. But it’s prayer AND fasting, isn’t it? If we are going to fast, what should we do? We need to pray as much as possible and worship the Lord and so forth. He said, *“when you give alms, when you pray, when you fast....”*

Turn to Psalm 68. Let’s look at some Scriptures here concerning fasting. Let me say this before we turn there.

First, there is fasting without water, for three days. If you go beyond three days, you’d better hear the Holy Ghost! And I think that you need to hear the Holy Ghost to go the three days without water.

Number two, as I said, sometimes you can fast a meal a day for a period of time, as your body can do it. Or, you can go on a fruit fast for a period of time. There are people who eat only fruit, then there are people who go on juices. Let me put it this way. A hard fast is a shock to the body. If you go on a lengthy fast, you've got to hear from God, because it is a shock to the body.

How many have gone on a fast and gotten a headache? One of the reasons is because we don't fast enough. Or, you may be having a reaction from sugar or caffeine. We need to deal with those things in our bodies. It's a shock to the body.

If you are going to go on a lengthy fast, if God is leading you, go into it gradually. Don't just go into a total fast all at once. Gradually come into that as the Lord leads you. Praise the Lord. Of course, it's up to the Holy Ghost.

Psalm 69, look at verse 7. Listen to what David said. *"For thy sake I have borne reproach; shame has covered my face. I am become a stranger unto my brethren."* Have you ever felt like that? *"and an alien unto my mother's children, for the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up"*. This is prophetic, *"and the reproaches of them that reproach thee have fallen upon me."*

Verse 10 David said, *"When I wept"*, and what? *"... chastened my soul with"*, what? *"... fasting and that was to my reproach."* He wept and he chastened his soul with fasting. Let me ask a question.



What is that part of us that doesn't want to fast?

It's the soul and the body, isn't it? How many of you have woke up in the morning and God has spoken to you, and you knew it was God, and He's said, "I want you to fast today." Immediately, you have to make a decision, isn't that right? The decision is in your soul, in your will. You have to make a decision whether you're going to or not. Your soul can side with the spirit or with the flesh, depending on what decision you make. Hallelujah! So, David said, "*I wept and chastened my soul with fasting and that was to my reproach.*"

Look over in Psalm 35:11. David said, "*False witnesses did rise up and lay to my charge things that I knew not; they rewarded me evil for good to the spoiling of my soul. But as for me, when they were sick....*" Have you ever fasted for others who were sick? I believe that Sister Erma said that some had fasted for her one time. It works. Hallelujah. Those who will fast for you when you're sick, they really love you. Isn't that right? They're dedicated, not only to God but to you. Hallelujah.

David said, "*...when they were sick my clothing was sackcloth.*" In Revelation, the two witnesses are going to wear sackcloth. That means they are in a flesh and blood body and that they're going to be in fasting, mourning, and prayer and intercession. So, he said, "*I humbled my soul*", my will, my mind, my emotions, my desires, "*with fasting and my prayer retuned to my bosom.*"

Look at Psalm 109:24. Do you ever get weak from fasting, if you go long enough? Listen to what David said. *“My knees are weak through fasting and my flesh faileth of fatness.”* Well, that would help all of us, wouldn't it? Amen? The weight will come off when you start fasting. He was weak. His knees were weak and he began to lose weight. Then he said, *“I have become a reproach to them that looked upon me.”* They shook their heads, you see. Evidently he lost a lot of weight.

Turn to II Corinthians 6. How many here are ministers? How many know that we all are? Maybe not a five-fold, but we're all ministers. II Corinthians 6. Let's see what Paul said about fasting. II Corinthians 6:3. The apostle Paul said, *“Giving no offense in anything, that the ministry be not blamed: but in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience.”* Patience comes by tribulation isn't that right? *“... and in afflictions, necessities and distresses and strifes, imprisonments, tumults, labors, watchings and fastings.”* By being approved, one of the things we must do is fasting. Amen? Notice that the word “fastings” is plural there, more than one.

Look in chapter 11, verse 27, Paul is telling all of the things that he went through, all of his persecutions. *“in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger, in thirst, and in fasting often...”* That's a disciplined life, isn't it? *“.. And in cold and in nakedness...”* There are some people in certain countries who have no food, they have to

fast until they can get food. But in this Scripture he said, “*in hunger.*” That was when he didn’t have any food. And he said, “*in thirst.*” That was when he didn’t have any water. But he also said, “*in fastings,*” possibly when he had food. There was discipline in this man’s life. Praise the LORD.

Notice the next verse. You’d better fast because besides these things he said that are without, “*...there cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.*” If you are in a place of responsibility, it’s going to take some fasting to get some answers from God. Isn’t that right? Amen! We all need direction.

Let me say a word here. Sometimes people have damaged their bodies through fasting. They have damaged their kidneys or their stomachs. I know people who have bad stomach problems because of their long fasts and possibly not using wisdom and so forth. I knew a man who actually fasted forty days without anything to drink or eat, but I don’t recommend that. Amen? Unless God would direct, and you’ve got to know that it’s God. There are a lot of voices in the world. You’ve got to know that it’s God speaking. Not all voices that come to tell you to fast are God. I’ve experienced that. I’ve woke up and a voice would come and say, “I want you to fast.” I knew it wasn’t God so I just ignored it. Other times, I knew it was God and I didn’t want to. Be honest. Our flesh doesn’t always want to.

If you have high blood pressure or any kind of kidney problems, or sugar problems, you need to use some wisdom about fasting. We need to get healed in order to fast. Praise the Lord.

Let's look at a few more Scriptures, quickly. Praise the Lord. Look in the book of Esther. We need to fast in time of danger. Let me tell you what was happening. In chapter 3, the enemy was out to kill the Jews. Mordecai got a revelation about it. In chapter 4, verse 1, notice that Mordecai rends his clothes, he puts on sackcloth and ashes which is a type of fasting and prayer. In verse 3, others begin to mourn and weep and to wail and put on sackcloth and ashes. Of course Esther was grieved. She sent and told Mordecai to put on his clothes. There are those who would discourage you from praying and fasting. How many have ever run into that?

In verse 13, though, *“Mordecai commanded to answer Esther, Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house more than all the Jews. For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shalt there enlargement and deliverance rise for the Jews from another place. But thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed; and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this? Then Esther bade them return Mordecai this answer, Go and gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan and fast ye for me; neither eat nor drink.”* Now, notice no eating or drinking, for how many days? *“...for three days, night or day. I also and my maidens will fast likewise and so will I go in to the king which is not according to the law and if I perish, I perish.”*

She went in to the king and was received, the scepter was extended to her. Then, of course, God moved in that situation and Haman, who had made the gallows which was fifty cubits high to kill Mordecai on, was hung. Fifty is the number of Pentecost. The Holy Ghost hung him. Hallelujah. Amen?

Let's look at one other Scripture about danger. Turn to Ezra 8:21. Have you ever been tested on your testimony? Things that God has done for you and you've told others, then you've come under a test because of it? We're going to see it right here.

Chapter 8, verse 21. *"Then I proclaimed a fast." Notice that he proclaimed a fast. "... at the river Ahava that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of Him." They've got to have an answer. "... a right way for us and for our little ones and for our substance." That's for each individual, their children, and all that they had. "For I was ashamed to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy in the way, because we had spoken to the king saying, The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek Him, His power and His wrath against all them that forsake Him."*

He had testified to the king and he refused to take protection from him. *"So we fasted and besought our God for this, and He was entreated of us...."* If you read on down, you'll see that they weighed the gold and all that they had, that they were going to take back with them. But look in verse 31. *"Then we departed from the river Ahava*

*on the twelfth day of the first month to go unto Jerusalem and the hand of our God was upon us and He delivered us from the hand of the enemy and such as lay in wait by the way and we came to Jerusalem.”* Through fasting, God protected the people, the children, and all their substance. Amen. God made a way for them.

There are some things that cannot be changed with fasting. For instance, when David committed adultery and they had the child, he sought God and fasted, but the child died. He did not change the situation.

Turn to Jonah. Glory to God. In chapter 3, notice what it says in verse 5, as Jonah came the second time to preach. When we disobey, God has two methods of getting you and me. He’s got a custom built submarine. Amen. Hallelujah. Or He’s got a hog pen. We don’t need either one of them, do we? Hallelujah. He’s got a ticket going one way and He’s got a ticket going the other way.

Chapter 3, verse 5. It says, after the preaching of Jonah, *“So the people of Ninevah believed God.”* We’re talking about wicked people aren’t we? The judgment was coming on the city. God waited one century before He judged this people. *“They proclaimed a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them; for the word came to the king of Ninevah.”*

**Would to God that our leaders would see the need of fasting and prayer in this next year.**

*“...and he arose from his throne and laid his robe from him and covered him with sackcloth and sat in ashes. And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Ninevah by the decree of the king and his nobles.”*

Now look at verse 8. *“But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth and cry mightily to God.”* Back in verse 7, he said that beast and man were not to take anything. *“Let them not feed nor drink water cry mightily unto God. Yea, let them turn every one from their evil ways.”* Do you want to fast? Let’s turn from our evil ways, even though we know the Lord. *“... and from the violence that is in their hands. Who can tell if God will turn and repent and turn away from His fierce anger that we perish not?”*

Look at verse 10, *“And God saw their works.”*... He sees ours, too. *“...that they turned from their evil ways; and God changed His mind of the evil that He said He would do unto them and He did it not.”* In the eyes of many today Jonah would have been a false prophet, but God can change His mind.

Now, look at the last verse. Verse 11 of chapter 4. Jonah got mad because God didn’t destroy them. *“And God said, Should not I spare Ninevah, that great city, where are more than six score*

*thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand and also much cattle?”* God is a merciful God. And fasting and prayer can change some things, especially us. We need to be changed, don't we?

Let's look at another Scripture together. Turn with me to Nehemiah. "Nehemiah" means "comforter." How many need comforting? All of us. Before we read, let me say something about Nehemiah. He was the cupbearer. The cupbearer became a construction boss. He was a man that could be proved and trusted. Nehemiah ministered to the king. That speaks of communion. We're to minister to our King. He knew the taste of wine which he would drink before the king. That speaks of discernment. We need some discernment. He would risk his life daily, forsaking all, for the king. He was completely committed. He was what He did. We are what we do.

Nehemiah 1:1, *"The words of Nehemiah,"* or the comforter, *"the son of Hachaliah. And it came to pass, in the month of Chisleu in the twentieth year, as I was in Shushan the palace, that Hananiah"* - "Hananiah" means "grace" - *"... one of my brethren came, he and certain men of Judah; and I asked them concerning the Jews,"* today we'd say the Christians, *"who had escaped, which were left of the captivity, concerning Jerusalem. And they said to me, The remnant that are left of the captivity that are in the province are in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem is broken down and the gates are burned with fire.*



*And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept.”*

Do you ever see things in the church that cause you to weep? Some Christians go around with their eyes closed. We need our eyes opened. There are hurting people, aren't there? We may be hurting. Your neighbor may be hurting and may not say anything. We need some discernment, don't we?

Here, he sees the situation, in the natural, and he sits down and weeps. He mourns “...*certain days and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven.*” God sent him back to rebuild the walls and gates. Do you know what that's a type of? It's a picture, number one, of building up the church, but it's also a type of building up the soul, which I won't go into.

One other Scripture. Let's turn to Daniel. When you start fasting you are going to be opposed. When you start praying more you are going to be opposed. You become a threat to the enemy. Daniel 10:2. Daniel had got a revelation of some things concerning the end time as well as his own captivity “*In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks; I ate no pleasant bread.*” My margin says no desirable food. “*Neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all until those three weeks were fulfilled.*”

Verse 12 “*Then said he to me, Fear not, Daniel*

*for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand.” How many want understanding? With all your getting, get understanding. Daniel began to seek the Lord to get understanding. When you begin to seek the Lord to get understanding you are going to be opposed. “... and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for your words; but the prince...”. There are princes today, in the heavenlies. “But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days; but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia.” Then in the next verse he talks about the later days and so forth. We know Daniel’s words were heard from the time he started praying and fasting, but the angel was held up for twenty-one days. But, he got through. As Daniel held out in faith and believed and sought God, the angel came on through. Praise the Lord.*

**There was a warfare as he began to  
fast and pray.**

If you and I today want understanding from God, and knowledge from God, we’re going to have to seek the Lord. Amen? Hallelujah. We need to fast. We need to pray. We need to lead a disciplined life before God. That’s what pleases God. To come into a place where we can truly rule our bodies.

Let’s stand for a minute before Brother Bholan comes. I want us to pray. I want us to repent of the times that we haven’t fasted.

Father, in Jesus' name, we repent today, Lord God, of our slackness and lack of discipline in not fasting and praying as we should have, Lord. We repent before Thee, Almighty God, and before Thy people, each one of us here today. We ask for forgiveness and cleansing by the Blood of Jesus. Help each one of us to discipline our lives and to please Thee, Lord, above all. We thank You for that, Lord. And everybody said? AMEN.

## DEORHAM BHOLAN

I would like you to turn with me to Joel chapter 2 starting with verse 12. Joel is called a minor prophet, but he has a major message. Joel sees a scene of famine, a scene of the crop being blighted, the pastures being bereft of the green vegetation, the cattle moaning and in distress. He's calling on the priests of God to call out to God because of the disaster that has befallen the nation.

*“Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to Me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth Him of the evil. Who knoweth if He will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him; even a meat offering and a drink offering unto the LORD our God?”*

*Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elder, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth out of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet. Let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep between the porch and the alter, and let them say, Spare Thy people, O LORD, and give not Thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God? Then will the LORD be jealous foe His land, and pity His people.*

*Yea, the LORD will answer and say unto His people, Behold, I will send you corn, and wine, and oil, and you shall be satisfied therewith: and I will no more make you a reproach among the heathen: But I will remove far off from you the northern army, and will drive him into a land barren and desolate, with his face toward the east sea, and his hinder part toward the utmost sea, and his stink shall come up, and his ill savour shall come up, because he hath done great things.*

*Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the LORD will do great things. Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field: for the pastures of the wilderness do spring, for the tree beareth her fruit, the fig tree and the vine do yield their strength. Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God: for He has given you the former rain and moderately, and He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month. And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with wine and oil. And I will restore to you the years that the locusts hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, My great army which I sent among you. And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God, that hath dealt wonderously with you: and My people shall never be ashamed. And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the LORD your God, and none else: and My people shall never be ashamed.”*

Hallelujah! Oh, there is so much here. But, what I have read for you is a picture of the last three feasts. *“Blow ye the trumpet in Zion.”* That’s the Feast of Trumpets. *“Sanctify a fast.”* That’s the Day of Atonement. God responds by sending the corn, the wine, and the oil. That’s the ingathering of the harvest. Hallelujah! And the northern army is put to flight, which is a nation north of Israel.

A lot of folk are singing about this army, but I see that there is more than one army. God can call Pharaoh his instrument. God can raise up a man like Cyrus and call him, *“My anointed.”* He can use whomsoever He will. What did He say of the Assyrian? *“The rod of My anger, the staff of My indignation is in their hands.”*

Here is a call to us as God’s people to hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches. For, you know, the trumpet is linked with the message. God is telling us much in these days, but it will do us no good to only hear and not obey. God wants us to not only hear, but do.

The LORD Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount, did refer to fasting. He also said, *“Whosoever shall do and teach.”* Not teach then do. *“Whosoever shall do and teach.”* That puts a lot of responsibility on our shoulders, but His grace is sufficient to help us. He never asks of us that which He doesn’t give us the grace to accomplish. Praise His wonderful name!

As I think of this matter of fasting, there are several kinds of fasts. But, if our fasting is unto the LORD, then God is pleased.

It is God's will to do a cleansing within the body of Christ. When we think of cleansing, we only think of the physical part. But, you see, we are spirit, soul, and body. I believe that God is saying that He wants us to become cleansed from all filthiness of spirit. You see, our spirits can get infected, else why would He say, *"Let us cleanse ourselves having these promises, dearly beloved, from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."*?

One can have a bitter spirit. One can have a proud spirit. One can have a spirit that is contaminated by the enemy. But it is God's will for us to have a pure spirit, a holy spirit, a meek and quiet spirit. Hallelujah!

Meekness is not weakness. Meekness is strength under discipline. That is what meekness is. When you see a horse that is trained and will stop and go at the rider's command, that's the discipline. And so, Moses was called one of the meekest men, because he was a disciplined man. That's a word we all don't like. But if we are going to be His disciples, then we will have to learn discipline. Judgment must begin first at the house of God. If you will judge yourselves, you will not be judged. So, all of us need help, including myself.

## **The LORD wants to cleanse our spirits.**

Then he wants to cleanse our souls. He wants to cleanse our bodies. Fasting, even without prayer, is a cleanser. But fasting with prayer is dynamite! *“For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.”* One of those spiritual weapons is fasting, coupled with prayer.

In the armor that Paul gave in Ephesians 6, he mentions six pieces, but he doesn't give a protection for the back. That means you are not to flee! You have to face the enemy. But he says, *“And above all, praying with all manner of prayer...”* He didn't just say to pray. *“...praying with all manner of prayer and supplication...”* All manner of prayer means that there is more than one way to pray.

There is also a way that we can pray when we fast. Fasting and prayer can cause hard situations to be conquered even as Jesus said, *“This kind cometh not out but by fasting and prayer.”* I don't know the mystery behind that, but I know that in my teenage years I used to do some partial fasting and I would get weak. But I always felt that God honored it because I did it unto the LORD.

Whenever I had a problem and I prayed, God would give me the answer. But other times, when I would fast and pray, the answers would also come in a wonderful way. I learned that when



fasting is joined to prayer it seems that the faith we have in us is being stirred up. We can have faith, but sometimes it is lying dormant and it needs to be activated. It needs to be strengthened.

As we humble ourselves, God sees the cry of our hearts. It was David, the man who fasted so many times who said, *“A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.”*

God wants to cleanse in the inner man. Israel, as a nation, was given one day in the whole year to fast. That day was the Day of Atonement. The Day of Atonement fell on the tenth day of the seventh month. The seventh month, in the Hebrew, was called Tisri or Ethanim. Tisri means “to open”. Ethanim means “permanent streams”. Oh hallelujah! God wants to open the windows of heaven. God wants the streams to flow from the throne and there is no contamination in that water. All the rivers on earth today are contaminated, even the river that flows in our bodies is polluted. But there is coming a day when God says,

***“I will cleanse their blood that I have not cleansed.” Joel 3:21***

He is first cleansing our spirits. He’s cleansing our souls. He wants to cleanse our very bloodstreams from all the taint of sin inherited from our first father, Adam. God wants to change us, but He’s not changing us all in a day, but from glory to glory.

The Day of Atonement was the day when something happened to the soul. Psalm 35:13 says, *"I humbled my soul with fasting."* Psalm 69:10 says, *"I chastened my soul with fasting."* Let us open our Bibles to Leviticus 23, and see what happened on the day that Israel fasted and see what God calls it.

*"And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Also on the tenth day of the seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict..."* What part of your being? *"... your souls"* It's amazing how many times God speaks of the soul.

A lot of God's people think only of the soul. They don't think of the spirit. But the spirit and soul and body are vital parts of our make-up.

Our spirits have been reconciled to God through the atoning work of the Lamb and our believing in the Lamb and accepting Him as our own. Our soul is cleansed by that blood. But you see, God wants us to do a deeper work in the soul. When we fast, we are afflicting our souls.

God says here, *"... ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD. And ye shall do no work in that same day: for it is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the LORD your God. For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people."*

Verse 32, *“It shall be unto you a Sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month at even, from even to even, shall ye celebrate your Sabbath.”*

These feasts were times not just of eating and drinking. When we think of a feast, we think of eating and drinking. There’s a place for that. But among these seven feasts was one that was a fast day. If you take the letter “e” from “feast”, what do you get? Fast!

I found out one day that the basic meaning of the word “feast” is a convocation, a holy assembly, an appointed time. It could be that every time we come together at this camp, we should regard it as a time of feasting. We’re feasting on the manna. The One who is the Bread of heaven. We’re drinking of the river that never shall run dry. We’re eating of His flesh and drinking of His blood in a spiritual sense.

Here it was a time of afflicting their souls. One of the end-time signs of apostasy that Jesus gave was men getting involved in surfeiting, drunkenness, and the cares of this life. He gave us those words in Luke 21. *“Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting.”* What is that? Overeating. Overindulgence. Beloved, any good thing can be carried to an extreme. We must learn to be temperate in all things. Not only surfeiting, but what? Drunkenness.

The LORD warned about some of His servants who would say, “*My LORD delayeth His coming.*” They would begin to eat and drink and get drunk and beat the other servants. How many are beating the flock rather than feeding the flock? Beating them with condemning instead of bringing a word that will release them!

God requires of us who are His servants to be good servants. We don’t need to eat and drink of the wine and the flesh of Babylon. Daniel and his friends refused it.

God is saying, “Be clean, ye that bear the vessels of the LORD.” We are His vessels, aren’t we? He has put His treasure in us, hasn’t He? He wants our whole spirit and soul and body to come under His rule. As we afflict our souls, it may seem for the moment to be grievous, and our body feels discomfort. But if we obey the LORD and humble ourselves, chasten our souls, afflict our souls, God will do a cleansing in our souls.

What day was this fast day? Number ten. That’s the number of the soul. One is the number of the body. One hundred is the number of the spirit. God is a mathematical God. I don’t claim to know all His numbers, but I’m fascinated by numbers. Every number is telling us something. We know that there is a negative school of belief. We know that the enemy kind of fights the truths of God with his false numerology, but there is a true understanding of numbers. Why else would there be a book in the Bible called Numbers?

God knows the times and the seasons. Why did He pick the tenth day of the seventh month to be the fast day? That's a good question. I don't know how to answer it. Maybe I'm asking more questions than I'm giving answers. I see this as a picture of the time of the end as God says, "*I'm going to clean up My house.*"

We're not ready for tabernacles until we come through atonement. A lot of folk want the glory, but if God were to send the glory on vessels that are not cleansed we would have more monstrosities and confusion than anything else! God is not the God of confusion! He is the God of peace. So, He is saying to us to cleanse ourselves. It is true, we can't cleanse ourselves by ourselves, but He has made provision.

It is true that God cleanses us, but there is a Scripture that says we are to cleanse ourselves. It is true that God sanctifies us, but there is a Scripture that tells us to sanctify ourselves. You see, there is God's part, and there is my part. That means that I must choose to go with God. Or, I can choose to do my own thing.

It's wonderful to see that when Israel came to the end of the wilderness and were ready to cross Jordan, God let them encamp by the Jordan for a while. When they crossed the Red Sea, everybody was in a hurry to get over when they saw Pharaoh behind them. But when it was time to cross the Jordan, no enemies were pursuing them. When the

Red Sea was opened, it was a narrow way. But when God dried up the Jordan, the distance was vast, for about fifteen miles the waters were removed. There was a wide passageway. Before they crossed the Jordan, Joshua said that they were to sanctify themselves.

Beloved, the wilderness is coming to an end for some people. *“Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness, leaning on her beloved?”* There are two companies that come out of the wilderness, as you study the Song of Solomon. We haven’t come out of the wilderness yet. Some say that we are in the promised land already. Well, we’re in both. If we are walking with God we are in the promised land but we are still in the wilderness of testing. It depends on how you look at it. There is coming a day when a people will break through the wilderness, but such a people must be sanctified.

Fasting is God doing a cleansing, God doing a purging, not only in our bodies, but in our spirits and in our souls. We all want God to change us, but the greatest work that He is doing is a secret work. It is being done in our souls. Our souls are like the female and our spirits are like the male and the two are to become one. But many times our spirits want to go one way and our souls want to go another way. And a house divided against itself cannot stand. God intended the two to become one. One!

There is Adam, there is Eve, and there is the

garden. Adam is the spirit, Eve is the soul, and the garden is a picture of the human body. Had Eve, instead of facing the serpent on her own, asked Adam for counsel, and had the two of them been in unison, what would have happened? Would the enemy have succeeded? The enemy worked through the woman, which is a type of soul, and instead of the spirit helping the soul, the soul dragged down the spirit.

I want to show you how important this is by looking at the woman at the well of Sychar. The word “Sychar” means “drunk”. She had to go every day to drink at this well. That woman is a type of all of us. Our souls are drinking of that which cannot satisfy. She has had five husbands and the man she was living with was not her husband. Those five husbands are our five physical senses that the soul is bondage to. The man she was living with that was not her husband is the devil. All of that is a picture of human bankruptcy before God, but this woman was approached by the LORD.

The LORD said, *“If you drink of this water, you will thirst again. But if you drink of the water which I will give you, you will never thirst.”* And she said, “Oh please, show me where that is!” But He wasn’t talking about literal water. The LORD told her something. He didn’t say, “OK, woman, receive it.” He didn’t say that. Do you know what He told her? *“Go call your husband.”* In case you don’t believe me, read John chapter 4 again. Why did the LORD say that? That’s God’s symbolic

language to show us that the soul must be joined back to the spirit. Hallelujah! When that happens, the soul is free from the bondage to the five husbands, set free from bondage to satan, and becomes joined to the true husband, the LORD Jesus Christ.

There is an eating and drinking that is only of this order, but the LORD says, "*Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness...*" What will happen to them? "*...they shall be filled.*" Yes, beloved, as we humble ourselves in fasting, God will give us food to eat that man doesn't know about.

Have you ever wondered how you would survive in case famine came to our great nation? I believe that famine, literal famine, will come here. Even now there is a famine of hearing the Word of God. Some may be led to prepare food and raise farms. We should condemn no one if they are being led by the Spirit of God. But suppose we don't have that kind of resource? Is God though with us? No.

When Elijah was fleeing from Jezebel, the LORD sent an angel to bake him a cake and get him some water. One time He caused the angels to bring him bread and flesh. The Bible says that after Elijah had eaten and drunk of that supernatural cake, that he had the strength to go on a journey of forty days and forty nights.



Somebody has discovered Ezekiel's bread. They claim that it has been a great help to the human body. God has many ways to provide for us. But let us not be among those of whom Paul says, "*Their god is their belly.*" It is true that we need to eat. We need to eat to live. But we don't need to live to eat. God is saying. "I want to do a cleansing within your spirit, within your soul, and within your body." As we walk in this humble, broken, contrite way, then God says, "I will release you the corn, and the wine, and the oil. I will give you the corn of My Word. I'm going to give you the wine of My Kingdom. I'll give you the oil of My Spirit. And My people shall eat and be satisfied and shall never be ashamed."

I believe that God is getting us ready to feed others. But what are we going to feed them? We don't have enough flour. We don't have enough of the natural to feed, but it's like the LORD told the disciples as the day was coming to an end. He said, "Give them to eat." "What are we going to give them, LORD?" Will you be broken like bread to feed the hungry? Will you be so one with Me that I may do just as I will to become life and light and love, My Word fulfilled?

God is processing us and making us ready. As God works in us, He is putting a deposit within you and me. When Simon Peter came to the lame man at the Temple gate Beautiful, he said, "*Silver and gold have I none...*" Maybe we can't say that, because we have silver and gold. But he had something that silver and gold could not buy.

Simon wanted that power by paying money and Peter said, "Your silver perish with you." He wanted power just for the sake of power. I'm afraid that there are many people fasting today because they want to get a big ministry. That's not the right motive for it. Fasting will never puff up any man's ego. Fasting is causing us to go low before God. "*God resisteth the proud, but He gives grace to the humble.*"

A man's day is over. It's no more a one man, one star. God's going to be revealed through a many membered man. He alone will be exalted in this day. I say to you, it may be a time of sore affliction but God is beautifying the inner man. As the soul is going through the change, the blood, which is the last part of us, is going to be changed. Hallelujah! Think of it! What do we inherit from our parents and from our forefathers? Blood! People say, "I've got this in my blood."

God is saying, "*You were not redeemed with corruptible things such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ.*" God is saying, "I want to set you free from all the bondages of the natural order, all the curses that have come. I want you to come through atonement." That's our reason for fasting, that as we lay low before God, He will search us. Maybe we can pray another prayer that David prayed. "*Search me, O God: know my heart. Try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me.*" Not in somebody else, start with me, LORD. And if there be any wicked way in me, let's add this, "Please remove it from me, Lord. Deliver me and lead me in the way everlasting."

I have one or two more Scriptures that I want to read to you. Psalm 109:24. *“My knees became weak through fasting.”* Yet, Paul teaches us a lesson, *“When I am weak, then am I strong.”* Also in Psalms, *“Let the weak say, I am strong.”* It is because we glory in His strength.

We refer to the woman as the weaker vessel, yet sometimes I’m amazed at how the women can put us men to shame. A woman, in the spirit, is stronger. Sometimes we who are men are weak, and the weak women are strong because they are more dependent on God. *“Blessed are the poor in spirit....”* When you are poor, you are dependent. When you are rich, you are independent.

Is it by accident that the Lord sent a woman to tell the disciples that He was risen? What was said of this woman? He delivered her from how many devils? Seven devils. God is freeing our souls from all the devils. He’s cleansing and strengthening the inner man so that the enemy will find nothing in us.

We all want to reach that realm where the enemy cannot plant any wrong thought in us; where he comes to tempt us, but like Joseph we refuse to compromise, like Daniel we stand our ground. May God make this inner man more strong! Without that inner strength we will all collapse under the weight. *“If any man thinks he stands, let him take heed lest he fall.”* We cannot glory in ourselves, beloved. Our glory is all in the Lord. Here am I except for His grace and His keeping. *“He has shown thee, O man, what is good. And what*

*doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.”*

I want to end with Isaiah 58 starting with verse 3. If you really want to know the principles of fasting, this chapter has them. I want to show you that God is calling us to the right attitude and motive in fasting.

*“Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours. Behold, ye fast for strife and debate....”* Sometimes we can win an argument but lose a friend. We can be right, and still wrong. We can have the right doctrine, but have a wrong spirit behind it. How we need help!

*“Behold you fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high. Is it such a fast that I have chosen? A day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord? Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?”*

God wants to start the work in us first, before we can be used to help others.

*“Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou coverest him; and that thou hidest not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward.”*

*“Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity; And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday: And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and I satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not. And they that shall be of thee shall buildup the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.”*

God is raising up a people who will repair the breach, who will restore the lost paths of God. Such a people will experience transition. They will come into the possession of what was lost. Joel says, “God says, I promise that I will restore all that the enemy has taken away from you.” The enemy is trying to take away from us, but God is telling us that we are in a time of restoration. But

restoration can only come through our afflicting our souls. This is God's call to us in this day, beloved.

However the Spirit leads you to fast, whether it be a partial fast, whether it be a fast for a day or three days or ten days, let us obey the Spirit of God. Let us not compete with others in this matter, but let us do what He expects us to do. *"If you love Me, keep My commandments."* His commandments are not grievous.

God is getting ready to overcome in these perilous times. He's given us weapons that are different from the conventional weapons that man uses in his warfare. He's raising up a Gideon army. He's putting trumpets in one hand and pitchers with a lamp or light within them in the other. The enemy will come in all his numbers, seeking to overwhelm us. God is saying, "I want you to have the trumpet of My Word."

But remember, the lamps could not be put in vessels that were clogged up. For the lamp to be in the vessel, it had to be empty. God is emptying all the uncleanness out of us, out of our spirits and our souls, and all of the clogging out of the physical part. He wants us to become a pure vessel. Then we can hold the light. When the trumpet sounded, they were to break the vessels. The Day of Atonement is a day of cleansing and crushing and breaking, but out of it comes joy. *"Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."*

When the vessels were broken, the light shone forth. That's the change that will come about in these bodies.

God is saying, "Submit to this cleansing." He has given us three agencies to cleanse us; the Blood, the Word, and the Spirit. Keep in mind that God did a deeper cleansing at Atonement than at Passover. Passover was when their sins were passed over. Then the sins had accumulated. As we are coming to the end of the wilderness, God is saying, "I want you to be fully cleansed and delivered, not only from your sins, but from your sinful nature so that you can be pure within. Then you can become pure without." *"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."* May God help us to be that kind of people.

Father, take these words that have been sown this day, may Your Spirit quicken them to us. May we walk softly before our God, for truly this is a day when You want to reveal more of Yourself to us. You are looking for a people who have no ambition of their own, no desire to build a personal kingdom, but a people who will become one with You in thought, word, and deed. Search us, LORD! Cleanse us, LORD! Purge us, LORD! Bake us, LORD! Melt us, LORD! Mold us, LORD! Shape us and discipline us until we become vessels emptied of self and filled with Thee, vessels unto honor, fit for the Master's use. As we pour out our hearts to You in praise, in worship, and in petition, as we bring all these requests, we

thank You, Lord, that You will open the heavens and pour out great blessings, that these needs will reach the Throne, that You will mingle our prayers with the incense of Your infinite worth, Your infinite holiness, that these prayers will be answered, that Your people will rejoice and we will see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living. So be it, for the glory of Thy Name! Amen and Amen.

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