

Fasting By Biblical Characters and Commentary on Isaiah 58

Dedicated to those who encouraged and helped
me to fast, and who prayed for me.

Front cover by Church of the Brethren Network.
Island of Crete - Where most of my long fasts were experienced.
Back cover by Xerxes Wahl (www.wisementrading.com)

Michael David Bentley
michaeldbentley7@gmail.com
www.To-The-Jew-First.org

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“MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD ON HIGH.”



Bethany Baptist Church
Pastor – David Langley



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Forward

God called me to serve Him and pastor His flock while I was young and without experience. Very soon I realized this ministry is so hard, and I needed much more power and strength to be able to serve the church. More than 25 years ago I met my dear Brother Michael and I remember one evening when he invited me to pray together. I thought it would be a one or two minutes prayer but when he begun to pray I lost the sense of time, and I was very impressed when Michael was praying. It was like Jesus was just face to face with us. He asked me about fasting and I told him I used to fast one day from time to time. I was amazed because I never heard anybody speaking or teaching about fasting. He opened the Bible at Isaiah 58 and taught me how to fast and how powerful it is this combination prayer and fasting. This book he has written about Isaiah 58 it is one of the most powerful tools for every Christian, every servant of the Lord who really wants to be efficient in the ministry of personal walk while on the path of faith.

I want to share with you one of my first experiences about fasting when Michael Bentley lived in my house and told me he would fast 10 days. I challenged the church to have prayer meetings every morning during these 10 days. While Michael fasted all these 10 days we just kept fasting one by one. Michael took me with him to buy potatoes and a lot of food for poor families and we went together to distribute to fulfill (verses 7 and 10) from Isaiah 58. These 10 days of fasting encouraged me very much. Then I decided to fast 40 days only skipping breakfast every day and eating after 12 or 1 pm according to my strength. I will share with you a great testimony about 40 days fasting. In 2004, I prayed many times to be able to sell our house. I fasted 1-3 days then I fasted 5 days with my wife, and nothing happened then I decided to have 40 days fasting together with my wife and the children. We use to wake up every morning, read the Bible, and pray together and fast till 1 pm every day for 40 days. At the beginning, I thought it would

be a piece of cake and it was the first 7-10 days, but after that it became day by day more like a spiritual battle and more difficult than I thought. So, I needed strength and determination to keep fasting for 40 days, but at the end we were amazed. Exactly on the 40th day on Sunday evening at 22:15 the phone rang, and someone asked me if we had a house for sale. I said yes. Next day they came to sign the paper and we shouted a big hallelujah! It was almost unbelievable, exactly after 40 days in fact in the 40th day evening after we finished the 40 days fast. God sent the answer to our prayer. How powerful a combination of fast and prayer is to fight the spiritual battle. I learned from this teaching about fasting from Isaiah 58 written by my dear friend Michael that we are in the middle of a spiritual battle. We do not fight with the flesh and blood but with the power of principalities who are in the heavenly places. I am sure you will read this book because you need to learn some spiritual keys to have victories and be full of power against our enemy. God bless you all of those who will read this powerful teaching about fasting from Isaiah 58.

Pastor Ioan Tone
Maranatha Baptist Church
Bucharest, Romania 2020



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Sotiris and Mary Karalis of Crete, Greece. They kept me in their house during my extended fasts on the Island of Crete during the years 1992 to 2005. Sotiris was pastor of Bible Team Church in Heraklion, Crete. This church stood with me in my extended fasts.

In January 1990, the Lakeland Bible Church in Lakeland, Florida, provided me with lodging for my first 40 day and night fast. I am thankful for Christ's protection over me during the extended fasts. In Crete in May 1988 I slept in a tent on Elias Tubbeh's olive orchard for a 30 day and night fast. In November 1991 I slept in my Volkswagen Passat station wagon on the Island of Crete for a 40 day and night fast. As best I can remember in all my extended fasts I never had a headache. Only in one fast I experienced physical difficulty. In 2001 in Crete I planned a 40 day and night fast. By the 30th day I had trouble with my stomach. I continued to day 37, but I then decided to stop the fast.

The guiding and protecting hand of God was evident in my extended fasting. I am thankful for this unique period of my Christian life and experience. It was fruitful in my personal life, the many persons, churches, and Christian organizations especially Christian missions that I prayed for.

Michael D. Bentley

Preface

After 58 years of prayer and fasting, and with years of teaching fasting, I decided to write a book on the subject. Many of the 30 to 40 day fasts were recorded and sent to supporters. From my study of fasting in the Bible, I became convinced it was one of God's means of blessing His servants and their service. There is confirmation of the effectiveness of fasting by born again Christians.

Fasting came early and easily for me in my Christian life. I was saved in late 1960. I was teaching Sunday school in the Naval Air Station in Jacksonville, FL, in 1962. I chose a breakfast fast because Communion was taken before Sunday School. In September 1963 I started Bible College at Tennessee Temple University. Evangelist Lester Roloff spoke to the schools each year and encouraged us to fast one day a week. It has been my practice to fast one day a week ever since. When I travel, I normally do not fast.

Early in my Christian life, I started to fast one day and after several times increased to two days, then three. I soon reached a week with no food. In 1966 on an undetermined fast as a student and working a job, the assistant Pastor J.R. Faulkner cautioned me about fasting while being full-time. As I recall that fast stopped on day 27. During my 20 years in Israel I recall a fast of 15 days. I remember finishing fasts in Israel on the Eastern Syrian shore of the Sea of Galilee.

The regular long fasts began in May 1988, after I was expelled from Israel. The long fasts were often decided upon a year before the fast occurred. A day and night fast of 30 to 40 days requires preparation and after the fast it is best to be quiet for a week. After the long fast caution must be exercised in breaking the fast. I was able to stop my evangelistic missions and concentrate on the fast. On a 40 day fast, J. Harold Smith would continue his Radio Revival Hour responsibilities.

I chose to free myself of normal responsibilities for the fast as much as possible. It is my prayer and purpose in sharing my fasts and Bible teachings on fasting that Christians, who read this booklet, will better understand and appreciate Biblical fasting. I pray that those who are already fasting will continue, and that those Christians who have not, will begin fasting. There may be physical reasons why a believer cannot fast. If a believing Christian can fast but has not yet started to fast I would encourage him or her to be open to begin fasting.

Michael D. Bentley
Missionary - Eastern Europe



Fasting By Biblical Characters

*Jews Who Were Important In The Plan Of
Salvation And In The Writing Of The Bible.*

The idea for this message came to me in the summer of 2005. It was at Maranatha Baptist Church in Colentina, Bucharest, Romania. I was asked to speak briefly at an evangelistic meeting. The pastor Ioan Tone likes me to talk about fasting. I chose Biblical characters who fasted and who were involved in giving us the Bible.

I showed the price they paid.

Later that summer I was at camp in Rucar, Romania and was asked to come and speak at a Tudor Church in Rucar. I wanted to speak on fasting. When I arrived I was given the evangelistic message. Fasting is a message for believers, not the unsaved. I decided to give the part fasting had in making salvation and the Word of God available today to all. I wanted to impress upon the unbeliever the investment Jewish believers made to make the Word of God and salvation available to all.

On another occasion I was in Saone, France at a Sunday morning meeting. I shared this message of fasting. I emphasized the sacrificial fasting of the Jews especially concerning their writing the Bible. There was a communist at the meeting. After the meeting he came to me to say he did not realize the commitment of the Jews to write the Bible. The message has now been further developed. By this message I want to show the investment Jews made so salvation could be available to all today and their work to record the Word of God. To receive the Word you have to have the People of God, the Jews, to originally record it and then the Word to be preached and translated by believers. The believing Jew had to be in the right Spiritual state to be able to receive the Word by inspiration of God. 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Part of the ministry of the believing Jews who are called the remnant of Israel was to keep the People of God close to God. Often it meant bringing them back to God. It also often meant they fasted to bring the People of God back to Him. Jehovah in Joel 2:12 commanded all the Jews to turn to Him with fasting.

“God had many purposes for the Jews, here are two.”

1. To make salvation available to all: John 4:22, Jesus is speaking to the Samaritan women. “Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.”
2. To write the Word of God: Romans 3:1-2, “What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.”

They were to bring salvation to this world, and they were to write the Bible. God is the author of salvation, and He is the author of the Bible. But He used the Jewish Believing Remnant to give us salvation and the Bible. Romans 9:4-5, “Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.” Jesus was born of a Jewish woman of the tribe of Judah and of the family of David. Judah: Genesis 49:10, David: Isaiah 9:6-7 and Micah 5:2. Romans 11:11-12, “...but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.” Gentile Christians are to provoke the Jews to jealousy. Matthew 5:16, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

Fasting is a voluntary act of devotion. It proves sincerity and manifests love. To prove the sincerity of their love Paul asked the churches of Macedonia to send the money promised. 2

Corinthians 8:8, “To prove the sincerity of your love.” In 2 Corinthians 8:24 their offering given is proof of their love. Fasting is a sacrifice, and it is difficult. It requires determination and deep commitment. It is a proof of one’s love to God and His Word, to the unsaved and to the born again Christians. James 2:20, “But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?” James 2:26, “For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.”

One purpose of this message is to show the extent to which Jewish men and women of the Bible went to give us the Bible and make salvation available to all today. Their dedication could be shown in several ways. They were brave and spoke the truth at the risk of their lives. Jeremiah was imprisoned for speaking the truth before the King of Judah. Micaiah was put in prison by Ahab because he spoke the truth from God (2 Chronicles 18:26). They manifested their love to Israel by telling them the truth whatever the cost. They were also men and women of prayer. They were faithful to God and His Word in a time when most Jews were not. They had faith. I want to use fasting as a means to show their dedication to God and man.



Mioveni Church Camp of 20 years in Rucar, Romania.

Old Testament

We see the anointing of Jesus by Mary in John 12:2, Matthew 26:6-13. Jesus said it was an anointing for His burial. Fasting is a form of anointing of JESUS CHRIST in His honor and acknowledgement of His authority and exalted position.

ELIEZER

Abram said, “the steward of my house is Eliezer of Damascus” (Genesis 15:2). Abram sent Eliezer to his kindred to find a wife for his son Isaac. Eliezer found Rebekah and he met her family. Genesis 24:33 says, “And there was set meat before him to eat: but he said, I will not eat, until I have told mine errand. And he said, speak on.” It was not time to eat. There were far more important concerns on his heart. This is a fundamental part of Biblical fasting. This was the beginning of a new approach to God.

MOSES

1. Moses was to receive the Law from God. The Jews were to follow this Law for 1,500 years until “The Messiah” came and died and was resurrected. God would give the instructions for worshipping Him through the ministry of the priests and the tabernacle. Jesus fasted 40 days and nights before He began His public ministry. Ezra and Nehemiah fasted before beginning their return to Jerusalem. It was a very strategic time and very important ministry which Moses was given. He wanted to be at his best spiritually. He wanted to please God, and to be sure he had it right what he was to give to the People of Israel. That is looking at it from the human side. The Word Moses gave us was inspired by the Holy Spirit. But the Jew had to be in a spiritual state to receive the inspired word (Exodus 34:27-28, Deuteronomy 9:8-21). Moses’ fast of 40 days and nights without food and water, is recorded in Exodus and in Deuteronomy. It was only at the end of the 40 days that Moses

received the two tables of stone also called tables of the covenant (Deuteronomy 9:11, Exodus 31:18). We learn in Exodus 32 Israel's impatience to wait the 40 days for Moses to finish his fast and return from the mountain. They convinced Aaron to make them gods. Aaron made a golden calf. God was so angry at the Israelites that He wanted to destroy them and make another nation in their place. That would have made an interesting history (His-Story). He said to Moses "Let me alone, that I may destroy them..." (Deuteronomy 9:14). God knew the power of Moses' prayers. Moses was so angry at the People that he broke the two tables of stone (verse 17). He did it because of the sins of the People (verse 18). Moses knew how angry God was so to save the People he went into prayer and fasting again 40 days and nights without food or water for them, as he had fasted for receiving the Word. He won their lives (verse 19). The second time is related in Deuteronomy 9:18 and Deuteronomy 10:5. Exodus 32:32-33, "Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written. And the LORD said unto Moses, "Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book." Moses also had to plead for the life of Aaron his brother (verse 20) Deut. 9:20. Paul was willing to be accursed from Christ if that would help the Jewish People (Romans 9:3). The first 40 day fast was for the Word, the second was for the People. In Daniel 9, Daniel fasted to understand the words of Jeremiah and at the same time he carried the burden of the sins of Israel.

"Fasting is a teaching and a practice found in the Bible."

2. Moses was a mediator between God and the Israelites. Jesus Christ is the Mediator between God and man. 1 Timothy 2:5, "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." On the cross He prayed for the forgiveness of those who crucified Him. Fasting by the Holy Spirit's leading will help Christians to be mediators. Exodus 34:27, "And the LORD said unto Moses, Write thou these

words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel. Exodus 34:28, “And he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments.”

3. Leviticus 16 the Day of Atonement: Verses 29 and 31 use the verb anah – ענה, teahnu - חענו (verse 29) veeinitem - ועניתם (verse 31). This verb is used with fasting in Psalm 35:13, and Ezra 8:21. The word fasting is not mentioned here in Leviticus 16, but the Jews have from before the New Testament believed that on the Day of Atonement Jews should fast. In Leviticus 16:29 and verse 31 it says, “ye shall afflict your souls”. It does not say afflict your body. God’s work begins with His word. Once the believer understands the truth, then the truth must also reach the soul. Fasting affects the body, but God is working through fasting to reach the soul. In Psalm 35:13, David said, “I humbled my soul with fasting.” The verb anah is used and in literal order reads, “I humbled with fasting my soul.” Here Anah is translated humbled rather than afflicted.

BENJAMITES

Judges 20:26-28 - Some Benjamite, sons of Belial, wanted to abuse a Levite, “that we may know him...”, who was spending the night in Benjamin (Judges 19:22). The concubine of the Levite was given to these evil men instead of the Levite and they abused her all night. In the morning she was at the threshold of the house dead (Judges 19:26-28). All the tribes gathered in Mizpeh to decide what to do (Judges 20:1). The tribe of Benjamin needed to be judged for their treatment of the Levite and his concubine. The rest of the tribes were as one in agreement that Benjamin must be judged (20:8,11). The tribes asked Benjamin for the sons of Belial who did this sin, but Benjamin refused to give them for their judgment (20:13). Therefore the whole tribe of Benjamin must be judged. After the tribes that had attacked Benjamin lost twice, they fasted until evening with weeping and offering sacrifices to know

God's will (verse 26). Should they attack again (verses 27-28)? Jehovah told them to attack this being the third time and then they succeeded in destroying Benjamin (Judges 20:39-48). Fasting is helpful in knowing God's will. Fasting can lead to victory. God's guidance found by fasting is also seen in Ezra 8:21-23 and taught by Isaiah in Isaiah 58:11.

Fasting during a war, or just before the war, can give assurance that Jehovah is leading. The fasting of the 11 tribes was in accordance with physical and spiritual conditions. But in the case of Saul's fast while fighting the Philistines it was not the proper time to fast (1 Samuel 14:24). Saul's motive was not spiritual. Saul proclaimed the fast in the flesh, not in the spirit of God. A spiritual act must be done with a spiritual attitude. The Israeli army suffered because of it. "And the men of Israel were distressed that day: for Saul had adjured the people, saying, Cursed be the man that eateth any food until evening, that I may be avenged of mine enemies. So none of the people tasted any food." (verse 24). After the battle "... and the people were very faint. And the people flew upon the spoil, and took sheep, and oxen, and calves, and slew them on the ground: and the people did eat them with the blood." (verses 31-32). Saul made this his battle, not Jehovah's. He was trusting in fasting, not trusting Jehovah. Jehoshaphat properly fasted just before he was attacked in Jerusalem by three armies (2 Chronicles 20:1-3). Jehoshaphat sought Jehovah's will. The people were with him in spirit. Jehovah said: "Be not afraid or dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's" (2 Chronicles 20:15).

HANNAH

1 Samuel 1:6-28 - She was troubled by the devil because she was barren (verses 2,5, and 6). Her troubled spirit acted up especially each year as she went to the house of the Lord in Shiloh. She wept and did not eat. Fasting and weeping often go together (verse 7). [See also David in 2 Samuel 1:12, 12:21-22 and Joel 2:12-17]. Her heart was grieved her husband noticed

(verse 8). She was in bitterness of soul and prayed and wept sore (verse 10). She vowed that if God gave her a son, she would give him to God all the days of his life (verse 11). She told Eli that she was a woman of sorrowful spirit and that she had poured out her soul before the LORD (verse 15). This is what it takes for a person to come to the end of himself. Eli prayed for her to have her request (verse 17). She had faith, got the victory, and was no longer sad (verse 18). And so God remembered her, and she gave birth to a son. She called him Samuel because she had asked him of the LORD (verses 19-20). She gave Samuel to the Lord after she had weaned him (verse 22). Once she would leave him at the temple he would abide there forever. Hannah lent Samuel to the Lord (verse 28). Surrender was an integral part of Hannah's receiving a man child. It appears to me that Jehovah would not give Hannah a child until she was willing to give him to Jehovah. Hannah needed to surrender her man child to the service of Jehovah. This is a call Christian mothers should be willing to accept.

SAMUEL

1 Samuel 7:1-9 - Samuel called the Israelites to repentance: "If ye do return unto the LORD with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the LORD, and serve him only: and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines" (verse 3). The people responded in a positive sense (verse 4). Then the people of Israel were ready to repent so Samuel called all Israel to Mizpeh and prayed for them (verse 5). The people first poured out water as an offering to Jehovah then fasted in repentance with Samuel judging them. "And they gathered together to Mizpeh, and drew water, and poured it out before the LORD, and fasted on that day, and said there, We have sinned against the LORD. And Samuel judged the children of Israel in Mizpeh" (1 Samuel 7:6). The corporate fast is especially blessed of Jehovah. Because Israel gathered together, the Philistines prepared to attack them in Mizpeh. Samuel

sacrificed a suckling lamb as “...a burnt offering wholly unto the LORD: and Samuel cried unto the LORD for Israel; and the LORD heard him” (1 Samuel 7:9).

1 Samuel 31:1-13 The Philistines defeated Saul and his army in the valley of Jezreel and on Mount Gilboa (1 Sam. verses 1-9). Jews of Jabesh-gilead rescued the bodies of Saul and his three sons from the wall in Beit Shean and carried them to Jabesh-gilead, burned them and fasted seven days (verses 10-13). “And they took their bones and buried them under a tree at Jabesh, and fasted seven days” (verse 13). The week of fasting was a time of grieving for Saul, his three sons and for the army of Israel. It was their way of separating from them. It was common to fast for the rest of the day after a death. David and his men when they heard of the death of Saul and Jonathan and the army of Israel they fasted until evening (2 Samuel 1:11-12). Why did Jabesh-gilead fast seven days? Saul was a Benjamite. When the 11 tribes judged and destroyed the tribe of Benjamin virgins were sought for the men of Benjamin left alive. In the last day of the battle 25,000 Benjamite soldiers were killed (Judges 20:46). Six hundred men were left alive (verse 47). Then the rest of the tribe of Benjamin was destroyed (verses 47-48). In chapter 21 we learn that virgins were sought from the tribe that did not come to fight Benjamin. Jabesh-gilead did not come. Therefore Jabesh-gilead was destroyed, but 400 young virgins were spared (Judges 21:12). Perhaps because 400 young virgins of Jabesh-gilead became the wives of Benjamin, the men of Jabesh-gilead risked their lives to recover the bodies of Saul and his sons to give them a Jewish burial and honor them with a seven day fast.

“There is a right time and a wrong time for a FAST...”

SAUL

Saul was not guided by Jehovah but by his own spirit when he commanded the fast in 1 Samuel 14. On the day of battle with

the Philistines, Saul proclaimed a fast for the whole battle (1 Samuel 14:24-52). Jonathan and his armour bearer before the battle left the camp unannounced to Saul. The battle was imminent (1 Samuel 14:1-23). Saul did not know that Jonathan would discover that Jehovah would deliver Israel from the Philistines. When you see the suffering of the soldiers who fought without eating available food you sense things were not ordained by Jehovah. Jonathan received strength from tasting the honey. Jonathan did not know of Saul's oath to charge the army to fast. The army was not in a spiritual state as they fell upon the animals and ate them with blood, which was forbidden to do. Fasting is to be Holy Spirit led. Isaiah 58:2-5 shows the false, rejected fast. Jesus spoke of the false fast in Matthew 6:16-18. Saul fasted the day before his death. (1 Samuel 28:20-25).

DAVID – The king of fasting

There are at least 6 references to David and fasting.

1.) 2 Samuel 1:12 And they mourned, and wept, and fasted until even, for Saul, and for Jonathan his son, and for the people of the LORD, and for the house of Israel; because they were fallen by the sword. David weeps and fasts because of the death of Saul.

2.) 2 Samuel 3:35 - David fasts and weeps over the death of Abner. He refused to eat before the sun went down. Here is an example of fasting for a part of a day.

3.) 2 Samuel 12 - David fasts for his dying son. Nathan has brought David's sin with Bathsheba and the murder of Uriah her husband, to David's attention, and he has responded in repentance. The judgment was the death of the child and trouble in David's family the rest of his days. When the child became very sick (verse15), David hit the ground, started fasting and did not leave the ground or the fast for seven days. He did not eat (verses 16-18). David fasted and wept (verse 22). When the child died David arose from the earth, washed himself, changed his clothes and went into the house of God to worship (verse 18)

20). I believe David got the victory. The seven days were for David. He may have received the thoughts of Psalm 51 during this time. Psalm 51 was written after Nathan had spoken to him, after he came into Bathsheba. David's first move after rising from the ground was not to eat, but to clean himself and to worship.

I think it was in early 1965, I needed money to pay for the Winter Semester of Tennessee Temple University. If I did not pay I could not take the final exams which were in one week. I told God I would not eat or drink until He gave me the money. It was seven nights and seven days later I got the notice that the bill had been paid. My first desire was not to drink, but to get alone and worship God and thank Him for His care for me. Only after that did I go to drink and eat.

*The Messiah came through the family of David.
David was the writer of several Psalms.*

4.) Psalm 35:13 - A Psalm of David. "...I humbled my soul with fasting;" The verb anah, {aniti is - I humbled} Fasting was one of the ways David kept himself spiritually fit and humble. He was a successful king, powerful, smart, rich and blessed of Jehovah. He needed to humble himself. Fasting helped him to be humble.

5.) Psalm 69:10 - A Psalm of David. "When I wept, and chastened my soul with fasting, that was to my reproach." Chastened in KJV is added. וְאַבְכָה בְּצָוֹם. Ve-evkeh vatzom. Darby Bible translated "And I wept, my soul with fasting: that also was to my reproach." David wept while praying and fasting. Not only did David weep while fasting, but his soul was exercised at the same time. When David fasted He not only met God, but he also saw the evil in his life. That was a reproach to him. When others see a fasting Christian they notice the thinness of the faster and that can be a reproach to the faster and to the one noticing the loss of weight. Hannah in 1 Samuel

1:7, “therefore she wept and did not eat.” In Esther 4:3 “there was great mourning among the Jews, fasting, weeping, and wailing...” In Joel 2:12-14, “Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning:”

6.) Psalm 109:24 - David said: “My knees are weak through fasting; and my flesh faileth of fatness.” This is part of the price David paid to stay in a spiritual state and to be able to receive the Word of God. Some effects of fasting on the body: during a long fast sometimes while walking my knees would buckle. My knees lacked their normal strength. “I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled” (Daniel 10:3). “...I became dumb... and I have retained no strength” (Daniel 10:15-16). During Daniel’s 21 day partial fast he had a vision, and he was left without strength. Jesus after His 40 day and night fast needed physical help. “Then the devil leaveth Him, and behold, angels came and ministered unto Him” (Matthew 4:11). His human body was deprived of nourishment during 40 days and nights which rendered Him physically weak. Added to that the spiritual warfare against Satan left Him so weak He needed angelic ministry. This 40 day fast was necessary for Jesus’ three and a half years of ministry that were before Him. It was preparatory for His public ministry. This is why the Holy Spirit led Him to fast 40 days and nights (Matthew 4:1-2 and Luke 4:1-2). Moses fasted 40 days and nights during the time he received the Law of Jehovah. It also prepared him for leading Jehovah’s people in the wilderness.

DISOBEDIENCE AND DEATH OF THE MAN OF GOD

In 1Kings 13:1-32, The man of God, a prophet, from Judah, was sent to prophesy against Jeroboam’s altar. When Jeroboam rejected the message and ordered that the prophet be seized, Jeroboam’s hand was “dried up, so that he could not pull it in again” (1 Kings 13:4). The prophet was instructed to not eat or drink while in the northern kingdom. The prophet prayed for

the King, and the King was healed. The King invited the prophet to come to his house. He refused the hospitality of Jeroboam. The prophet explained why: “for so was it charged me by the word of the LORD, saying, Eat no bread, not drink water, nor turn again by the same way that he came to Beth-el” (verse 9). An old prophet of God tricked or tested the prophet and invited him to eat. The prophet ate and drank (verses 18-24). As the prophet was on his way back to Judah a lion killed him. Fasting is a serious commitment to God and to His Son JESUS CHRIST. I pray this study about fasting will show you the seriousness of fasting.

KING JEHOSHAPHAT

2 Chronicles 20, Life threatening danger, destruction of city. Jehoshaphat brought about a revival of faith in Jehovah (2 Chronicles 17:6-9, 19:4). He, Judah and Jerusalem were threatened by three advancing armies from the Southeast. They were already in En-gedi, on the shores of the Dead Sea. He sought the Lord and proclaimed a fast throughout Judah (2 Chronicles 20:3). It is not normal to proclaim a fast just before a battle. Saul did it and it was a disaster for his army (1 Samuel 14:24-45). We studied in Judges 20:26-28 that the 11 tribes fasted before the third attack against Benjamin. Jehovah told them to attack again. Judah gathered together in the temple before Jehoshaphat (verses 4-5). Corporate prayer is especially blessed of God. Jehoshaphat confessed his inability to do anything and that he did not know what to do. In verses 6-12 is found “the King’s prayer.” The Jews and their families were there before Jehovah (verse 13) Israel did not have to physically fight in the battle. Jehovah would fight for Israel. Therefore Israel was not to fear. Here is encouragement for believers today (verse 15-17). Jehoshaphat had faith, assurance, boldness, and courage as they marched toward the enemy (verses 20-21). When they started to sing, Jehovah moved against the enemy (verses 22-23). When Israel arrived at the battlefield all were dead, they killed each other. It took three days to collect the spoil (verses 24-25).

EZRA

Ezra was a scribe of the law of God (Ezra 7:11-13). Some Jews needed to return to Israel. Ezra had permission from King Artaxerxes to take Jews who wanted to return to Jerusalem to rebuild it. Verses 12 and 13 are in Aramaic. Ezra was not sure if he should approach the King to ask for an armed guard to accompany them back to Jerusalem. He therefore fasted with the Jews to find the will of God (8:21-23). The verb in verse 21 says they afflicted themselves. This verb is used several times in the Old Testament related to fasting (Leviticus 16:29, 31, Psalm 35:13, Isaiah 58:3,5, Daniel 10:12). Proper fasting afflicts the soul. Jehovah was intreated of them. Therefore Ezra understood he had Jehovah's permission to ask of the king an armed guard to accompany the Jews back to Jerusalem. God revealed His will. Jews needed to be in Israel for the appearing of the Messiah 450 years later. The armed guard would help to assure the arrival of the Jews to Jerusalem with all that they brought with them. Jerusalem needed to be built up and inhabited. Fasting is helpful in finding God's will (Judges 20:26, Isaiah 58:11).

NEHEMIAH

Nehemiah heard of the condition of the Jews in Israel and of Jerusalem. He was burdened so he sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven (Nehemiah 1:4). Jerusalem was the center of God's work on earth in the Old Testament times. For God's purposes to be accomplished, Jerusalem must be built up. And Jews needed to be living in Bethlehem for here the Messiah would be born. Nehemiah went back 14 years after Ezra arrived in Jerusalem. The Jews were living in sin, many had taken non-Jewish wives (Nehemiah 9:1-3). In the seventh month the Jews of Jerusalem gathered with fasting. They separated themselves from the strangers and confessed and read the book of the law for a fourth of the day and confessed one fourth of the day. Fasting was used to bring Jews back to where they could

accomplish God's will and work (Nehemiah 9:1-3). Nehemiah wrote the book of Nehemiah.

QUEEN ESTHER

King Ahasuerus who reigned from India to Ethiopia had authorized evil Haman's plan to destroy all the Jews in his Kingdom (Esther 3:6-11). When the Jews heard it they turned to mourning, fasting and weeping (Esther 4:3). Mordecai told Queen Esther of the plan and challenged her to plead for the life of the Jews before the King, her husband. She risked being killed because she had not been called in to the King for one month (Esther 4:11).

Esther was well trained in spiritual matters by Mordecai. She was willing to die, but she would do what she could to get God's protection and blessing. She asked all the Jews present in the city where she lived in Shushan to fast, eating and drinking nothing for three days and nights. Esther fasted as well (Esther 4:16). The Jews were saved from annihilation. Esther sent the history of this deliverance with its fasting's to all the Jews in the 127 provinces (Esther 9:29-31). This fast is never to be forgotten by Bible believers. All the Jews could have been destroyed. That would have meant that there was no longer a family of David from which the Messiah had to come. Looking at it from a human viewpoint Esther had a definite part in this deliverance, and so did the fasting.

ELIJAH

1 Kings 19:8 "And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God." Some believe this was a fast. If Elijah did not eat did he also not drink for the 40 days and nights? This has been my experience many times, to have eaten my last meal and not eat any food nor drink juice or tea but only water for 30 to 40 days and nights. I drink only water on an extended fast. After 40 days and nights of no food I was still functioning. If Elijah did not eat during 40 days and nights I assume divine

strength was given to make the walk to Mount Horeb. Jesus, after His fast of 40 days and nights, was ministered to by angels (Matthew 4:11). One secret to ending a fast and beginning to eat is caution, care and discipline. Slowly, very slowly return to eating. Eat small amounts. Overdoing it will result in having to start all over again to retrain your system.

ISAIAH

Isaiah devoted a whole chapter to fasting (Isaiah 58). I have an extended teaching on this chapter on my website: To-The-Jew-First.org. He spoke as one who understood fasting. He explained the false fast (58:2-5). At the end of that discussion he gave a very clear statement of what the true fast is. Verse 6 “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?” This is what a chosen fast accomplishes. After this verse he gave practical instructions about what the faster can do and what blessings the one fasting would receive.

In 1991, I was in the midst of my second 40 day and night fast, drinking only water, nothing else. I was on Crete, sleeping in my car in the countryside, near Lefkogia and Monastery Moni Preveli. I wanted to be alone for 40 days and nights. I was asked to come and speak in the Evangelical Free church in Iraklio, but beside that I did not want to see a person, only Jesus Christ. Moses and Jesus when they fasted 40 days and nights were alone with God. But people began coming by where I was parked. There were many living in the wild in the area. The first was Enzo from France, with whom I spent time during the fast. There came a Greek woman to me. She was living in a cave about 100 meters from me! She was living off the land. She said there were many people in the area who were poor. She had friends who had orange trees who gave her permission to take as many oranges as she wanted. She had no car, but I did. She asked me to help her go get oranges for these poor people here. I told her I wanted to be alone for 40 days. I was fasting and did not want to have anything to do with food. I

told her tomorrow I would give my answer. After this, I read Isaiah 58:7: “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 cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?” That verse convinced me to go get the food and help her to distribute it. It worked for the furtherance of the gospel as I met the people and was able to witness to them. To some, I returned several times with food and a witness. In the seven day and night fast without water in 1965, verse 11 was a great comfort to me: “And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and 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” (Isaiah 58:11). I drank from that spring many times during those seven days. Once I found grace, I was able to continue the fast without water. In a 30 day and night fast on Crete in 1988 I took verses 2-5 and turned them into a positive sense. What the Jews knew about the spiritual life is profound. They were well instructed. They were not accomplishing what they said they were doing. But they knew what they should be doing in order for Jehovah to accept their fast. But their attitude was not right. It is a challenge to me to consider what they wanted to accomplish. I want to do that in my spiritual life. Jehovah said to these hypocritical Jews “...ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high” (Isaiah 58:4). A proper fast will make your voice to be heard on high. Isaiah appears to me to have been a man who knew what fasting was, by experience.

DANIEL

Daniel 6:18 - This is in an Aramaic section. It is not the normal Hebrew word for fasting. Daniel was in the lions' den and King Darius could not sleep. He asked for no music and no food. { הִנֵּה Strong's translates hungrily}. Daniel 9:2-3 says Daniel had read in Jeremiah about the 70 years in the desolations of Jerusalem (Jeremiah 25:11-12). He was sad because of what would happen to Jerusalem and its people. I imagine his concern also for the promises of Adonai Elohim to Jerusalem

were in his thinking. With a heavy heart and with great respect for Jerusalem and the Jews he sought the Adonai Elohim. “And I set my face unto the Adonai Elohim” (verse 3). He naturally began praying and making supplications with fasting which then led to confession. Daniel’s confession is in verses 4 to 21! Fasting often leads to confession. We see when Gabriel came in verses 21-23 it was to give Daniel understanding of the seventy years. The understanding Daniel received is an amazing prophecy (Daniel 9:24-27). It gives the date of the birth of the Messiah and speaks of His death. It gives the final reconciliation of Israel to Jehovah. Daniel paid the price needed to care for God’s People, Jerusalem, and God’s Word. Daniel 10:1-21 was mourning three full weeks, “I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks where fulfilled” (verse 3). Daniel saw in a vision an amazing man, so much so, that he was left with no strength (verses 5-8). He heard his voice and Daniel had his face flat upon the ground (verse 9). The man touched Daniel and Daniel arose (verses 10-11). “Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words” (verse 12) “to chasten thyself” is the reflexive of anah, *וללהתענוֹת-ulehitahnot*. This is now the third English word used to translate the meaning of anah. The reflexive form of anah is also found with fasting in Ezra 8:21. “Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river Ahava, that we might afflict ourselves (*lehitahnot-תַּעֲנוֹת*) before our God, to seek of him a right way for us and for our little ones, and for all our substance.” The reflexive verb of anah used in Daniel 10:12 speaks of the nature in which Daniel sought Jehovah. This angelic man had tried for 21 days to reach Daniel, but the demonic opposition was too great. So one of the chief princes (Archangel) Michael had to help the angel reach Daniel (Daniel 10:13). In verse 21 the importance and power and authority of Michael is described. In chapter 9 the angel Gabriel gave Daniel understanding.

We believers are in the midst of spiritual warfare. Fasting will help us persevere and conquer. Fasting and Ephesians 6:10-20 are to be joined together. “And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken” (Ecclesiastes 4:12).

JOEL

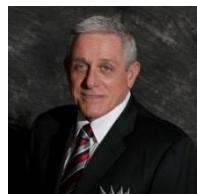
Joel 1:14 - 2:12-15 and Joel 1:1-12 describe total devastation of the land, especially of its agriculture, Spiritually as well for there are no meal offerings or drink offerings being brought to the priests (verse 9 and 13). The priests mourn and there is no joy among the people (verse 12). Joel called the elders and the people back to Jehovah by fasting. “Sanctify ye a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the LORD (Jehovah) your God (Elohim) , and cry unto the LORD (Jehovah)” verse 14. In Joel 2:12 with fasting and weeping and mourning. “Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning” (Joel 2:12). It was to avoid the judgment of Jehovah soon to fall on them. In Joel 2:12 it was Jehovah who told them to fast. In both references the people are called to sanctify a fast. A fast done for God is holy. Those who proclaim salvation will come from among the people of Israel. Jesus said to the Samaritan woman “Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews” (John 4:22). After the Jews brought salvation to this world, those who were saved after that proclaim salvation to their generation. The shofar was blown and a fast was proclaimed. “Blow the trumpet (shofar) in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly:” 2:15. Fasting and weeping go together. Weeping is called for in verses 12 and 17. Hannah wept and fasted (1 Samuel 1:7). David wept and fasted for his son (2 Samuel 12:21). When God calls for a fast, whether it be an individual or a church, believers are to fast. After Jesus was baptized He received a call from the Holy Spirit to go to the desert for a 40 day and night fast (Matthew 4:1-11). He was obedient, will we be?

ZECHARIAH

From Zechariah it is seen that there were several fasts during the year. Several months had its proper fast (Zechariah 7:5). The fasts of the fifth and seventh months are mentioned. In the seventh month comes the fast of Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. Leviticus 16 and Zechariah points out in verse 5 that their fasts were not accepted during the 70 years. These are the 70 years of disobedience before the Babylonian captivity. Their fasts were false, and they did not observe the sabbatical year of not farming in order to give the Land a rest. Jehovah exiled the Jews for 70 years in Babylon (Jeremiah 29:10-13) for sabbatical punishment (2 Chronicles 36:21 and Leviticus 26:32-39). Zechariah 8:19 adds the fast of the fourth , and the tenth months. The LORD of Hosts also says the fast is to be joy, and gladness, and cheerful feasts; therefore love the truth and a feast was a prearranged Holy Day. It is the same Hebrew word used in Leviticus 23:4. “The feasts of the LORD.” Fasting gives the faster the possibility to search his soul to see if he is spiritually right with God or not. Is the faster in truth or in deception and sin. Regular fasting was a part of the Old Testament faith. We see that it is carried over into the New Testament in the disciples of John and of the Pharisees (Matthew 9:14, Luke 18:12). Fasting helps a backslidden Christian to return to Christ and helps a Christian to maintain a spiritual life.

I joined Central Missionary Clearinghouse-CMC in 1984. As an Independent Baptist Missionary, I found that CMC became an amazing help to my ministry. Since 1984 CMC has experienced phenomenal growth.

Larry Maddox - Pastor, Central Baptist Church, Houston, Texas President Central Missionary Clearinghouse a non-profit corporation. Since the inception of Central Missionary Clearinghouse in 1974, our sole desire has been to render a service to missionaries who have been called of the Lord to serve Him,



primarily on the foreign mission field. It is our purpose to provide for "... *those for whom nothing has been prepared.*" (Nehemiah 8:10), and to that end we endeavor to serve missionaries at as little cost to them as possible.

New Testament

ANNA

Luke 2:36-38 Anna (Hebrew Hannah) a widow served God with fastings and prayers night and day. For Hannah's (mother of Samuel) testimony of fasting see HANNAH. "And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day" (Luke 2:37). Anna in the New Testament was in such a spiritual state that she was able to recognize the eight day old Jesus to be the Christ. She was also ready to speak to those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem. It appears she knew who in Jerusalem sought the truth. "Birds of a feather flock together." She lived with her husband for seven years until his death. She immersed herself into a life of fasting and prayer. "Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and in prayers night and day" (1 Timothy 5:5). I believe her fasting had a significant part in her being in such a spiritual state to be able to recognize the baby Jesus as the Messiah. And God wanted those in Jerusalem "them that looked for redemption Jerusalem" to know of the birth of the Christ.

May the testimony of Anna be a challenge to Christians to make fasting an integral, ever present practice in their lives. In 1963 or 1964 I was challenged by Lester Roloff to fast one day a week. I have kept this goal before me ever since. I did not fast every week, but it was my desire to fast one day a week when possible.

Christians have left record of their fasting through the ages.

JESUS

Matthew 4:1-11 and Luke 4:1-13. After Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit at His baptism, He was led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. Jesus then fasted 40 days and nights. I am interested in knowing why the 40 day and night fast. Did the Holy Spirit put it in Jesus' mind to fast 40 days? Did Jesus understand that a 40 day and night fast was necessary if He was to be tempted of the devil? 40 in the Bible is a time of testing. From Luke's description of the 40 days it appears to me Jesus was tempted of the devil all during the fast. "And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season" (Luke 4:13). Luke describes the time of temptation in the singular. It appears Luke called the 40 days, "The Temptation." The fast was to prepare Him to be tempted of the devil. I believe Christ also prepared Himself during this fast for His three and a half years of public ministry. That has been a part of many of my fasts of 30 to 40 days. This has to do with what the Christ came to accomplish. This was done so that we might have the Word and Salvation. These Jews of the Old Testament and New Testament who fasted paid a heavy price to please their God, to be able to accomplish their part in salvation's story. While Jesus was alive the Old Testament still was in valid. How skillfully Jesus used the Word of God, all from Deuteronomy, to resist and defeat the temptation of the devil three times. It is interesting to me to know more about the part the human body plays in a believer accomplishing Christ's calling by fasting. It appears to me the devil's three-pronged temptation came after Jesus was hungry, at the end of the 40 days fast. This was the final phase of the 40 days of the devil's temptation against Jesus. The devil chose this moment to attack Jesus Christ. This would be His weakest moment of the fast. Jesus is God, but while on earth He was also a human. Fasting greatly affected Him, as it would any human being.

I was doing a 30 day and night fast on Gouves, Island of Crete. The time to break the fast was set. Half an hour before the end of the fast I could pray no more. I sat down and immediately

fell asleep. I woke up just before the end of the fast to offer a last prayer before breaking the fast. We are not told that Jesus 40 day fast was without water. Moses' 40 days and nights fast on Mount Horeb was without water (Deuteronomy 9:9). It has been taught that at the end of a fast of 40 days and nights the body will tell you when the fast must be stopped. If the faster goes beyond this his body begins starvation. That is why Jesus became hungry and so He would begin to decide how He would break the fast. This returning hunger may be for a 40 day fast without water. I have fasted three times for 40 days with water. In those three fasts I do not recall the hunger returning. One brother I read said the hunger could return shortly before the 40th day or just after. It depends on the faster's body. In 2001 I was on my fourth 40 day and night fast with water. By the 30th day I sensed something was not right. This was probably my body telling me the fast is over. I forced myself on to the 37th day, but by then I was convinced I must stop the fast.

The First Temptation

Jesus knew that His fast was soon to be broken once the hunger returned. "Satan's one object in the threefold temptation was to induce Christ to act from Himself, in independency of His Father." (Scofield note on Matthew 4:1-11). Satan then told Jesus Christ to prove He was the Son of God by turning the stones into bread. I see in this a double temptation, the manner in which Jesus would prove He is the Son of God and getting bread in this fashion. Jesus understood this was not the moment neither the manner in which the fast should be terminated. It was not for the devil to decide what was to be done. Jesus quoted the last part of Deuteronomy 8:3. "And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live." Life is not found only in eating bread, but true life is given by the word of God. Jesus: "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he

shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world” (John 6:51).

The Second Temptation

The devil took Jesus to the Holy City which is Jerusalem and put Him on a pinnacle of the temple (Matthew 4:5). The devil quoted Psalm 91:11-12 (verse 6). The promise is given in Psalm 91 that the angels will deliver Him. “For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.” Jesus knew this was not the way in which these verses were to be applied. Therefore Jesus quoted Deuteronomy 6:16. “Ye shall not tempt the Lord your God, as ye tempted him in Massah.” For Jesus to jump from the pinnacle and expect Jehovah to save Him would be tempting Jehovah. Satan was trying to take advantage of Jesus’ weakened condition. Angels would be sent to help Jesus after this 40 day fast (Matthew 4:11).

*Another threefold cord...
“Prayer, the Word, and Fasting”*

The Third Temptation

Matthew 4:8-10 - The Devil took Jesus to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. The devil offered all to Jesus if Jesus would fall down and worship the devil. Jesus said to him “Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the LORD, and him only shalt thou serve” (Matthew 4:10). (see Deuteronomy 6:13, 10:20). Jesus, in all His weakness and hunger, stayed firm in His commitment to His Father and the Word of God. Jesus would break the fast but in the proper manner, pleasing to His Father. There are at least two differences between the recording of the 40 day fast of Jesus in Matthew 4 and Luke 4. The order of the temptations is not the same. Matthew uses “Then” in verse 5 which shows Matthew was concerned about the order of the

temptations whereas Luke was not. Matthew says stones in verse 3, Luke in verse 3 says stone. Ellicott's Commentary for English readers says, "The singular form is somewhat more vivid than the plural." Jesus was hungry after the fast. He was weak therefore angels came and ministered to Him. "Then the devil leaveth him, and behold, angels came and ministered unto him" (Matthew 4:2,11). In Gethsemane it was necessary for an angel from heaven to appear in order to strengthen Jesus, "And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him" (Luke 22:43). This 40 day fast Jesus Christ did for us. Now what are we going to do for Him, for God's Word and for the born-again believers and for the unsaved? Before I mention the next instance of fasting in Matthew I want to look at John 4. Jesus and His disciples came to Samaria to the city of Sychar. Jesus rested, because He was tired after the journey at the well of Jacob, while the disciples went to get food (verses 5-8). Jesus witnessed to a woman (verses 7-25). The disciples returned before the woman left. They were surprised Jesus talked to the woman. The disciples offered Jesus food. Before He ate, Jesus wanted to drive home a spiritual lesson. There was something far more important to Him than food. It was to do the will of God His Father who sent Him, and to finish His work (verse 34). In verse 35 Jesus talked about the fields white already to harvest. That was what He was involved in when He talked to the Samaritan woman.

Being Tired: Kaarlo Syvanto, in 1947 was tired after a week of work in a post office in Finland. On the weekend he returned to his home as he did not work in his hometown. As he entered the small train cabin he asked Jesus to let him be alone in the cabin because he was tired. A well-dressed woman entered. Kaarlo began to discuss it with Christ. He said he was tired, and this was a woman. The first stop the woman went out. Soon a conductor came back with the woman telling her to get in the cabin and stay there. Kaarlo gathered courage and he witnessed. Being tired does not give us an excuse to miss an opportunity offered by Jesus Christ. After the witness, the

woman spoke. She said she went out of the train and put her head right at the wheel of the train. She wanted to commit suicide. Fortunately, the conductor saw her and forced her back onto the train and put her in her cabin. In 1962, at the Navy Base, in Jacksonville, Florida, I was eating, and my neighbor was outside her house. I had been wanting to witness to her. I fought as to whether I should continue eating or not. I left my food and witnessed to her. When the Holy Spirit calls, a believer in Jesus Christ is to abstain from food. The believer should respond by fasting.

Jesus' Further Teaching On Fasting

Matthew 6:16-18 - “16 Moreover when ye fast, be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward. 17 But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face. 18 That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.”

Jesus expects those who believe in Him to fast. There are some believers who cannot fast due to physical reasons. But He gives warnings about how one is to fast. We are not to be as the as the hypocrites, which would refer to the Pharisees. They purposely put on a sad countenance and disfigured their faces that thy may appear unto men to be suffering from fasting. They will get recognition from man but no reward from God. When a believer fasts he is to anoint his head and to wash his face. He is not to appear as fasting. He experiences the discomfort of fasting, but understanding, trust, confidence, assurance and patience are his. In 1969 I worked in Israel in Karen Kyemit LeIsrael (Jewish National Fund) in a forest station in Jattir near the 1967 border between Jordan and Israel. It is mentioned in the Bible and is near Eshtemoa. It is one of the cities to which David distributed spoil after he destroyed the Amalekites who had destroyed Ziklag (1 Samuel 30:27-28). The boss of my group showed up at work one day unshaven. I

asked him if he did not have time to shave. He said that he did not shave because he is fasting (Matthew 6:18). “As sorrowful yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things” (2 Corinthians 6:10). Our fast is to be in secret and unto God. The word of Jehovah Tzevaot to Zechariah “Speak unto all the people of the land, and to the priests, saying, When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh month, even those 70 years, did ye at all fast unto me, even to me?” (Zechariah 7:4-5). Our Father who sees the faster in secret shall reward the faster openly. Our fasting is unto God. We are not trying to impress others with our dedication and sacrifice.

Matthew 9:14-15 - The disciples of John said to Jesus that they fast often and so do the Pharisees, but Jesus’ disciples do not fast (verse 14). I assume the fasts of John’s disciples were proper fasts. “And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast” (verse 15). The bridegroom is Jesus Christ and He was taken from His body, the church, when He ascended to His Father. Jesus expects His followers to fast. Fasting is an integral activity of the Christian faith. Believers who are physically able to fast should fast.

Matthew 17:21 - Is a problem verse as some manuscripts do not have this verse. This verse is found in Mark 9:29 where fasting is not mentioned. The King James Version of the New Testament was translated from the Textus Receptus which has Matthew 17:21. This event is also spoken of in Luke 9:37-43. Luke does not deal with the disciple’s question of why they could not cast out the demon. In Matthew 10:5-8 Jesus gave power to the twelve to cast out demons. But here in Matthew 17 they could not cast the demon out. In the case of the lunatic of Matthew 17 more than the disciples had was needed. Jesus says fasting is needed. We believers in Jesus Christ are encouraged to fast for the ministry of deliverance.

Matthew 15:32-39 - Also in Mark 8:1-9. Matthew 15:29-31 gives the setting of the type of ministry Jesus had at this time. He had just returned from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon (Matthew 15:21). Jesus returned to the Sea of Galilee. Jesus went up on a mountain for three days of intense ministry characterized by extensive healing, (verses 29-31). There was no time for eating, Jesus kept the ministry continuing during three days. We hear of no complaints from the multitude about the lack of food! In Israel I was with Yoram who was fasting. We had just climbed Tel Beth-shan. It was a steep strenuous climb. I then went to get gas by the Sea of Galilee. Yoram collapsed while outside the car in the gas station. Beth-shan is at the east end of the Valley of Jezreel on the north side of the valley, not far from the Jordan River (1 Samuel 31:10). Saul's body was placed on a wall in Beth-shan. It appears these three days of Matthew 15:32 were not a set aside time for fasting, but the ministry was so intense no time could be spared for eating. There were 4,000 men beside women and children there (Matthew 15:38). "Then Jesus called his disciples unto him, and said: I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way" (Matthew 15:32). May we believers find the proper balance between our spiritual and physical needs.

PHARISEES

Luke 18:9-24 - In the parable of the Pharisee and the publican, verse 9 explains this parable is given for those who trusted in themselves, that they were righteous, and despised others. The Pharisee said he was not as other men are (sinners) such as extortioners, unjust, adulterers and even as the publican (verse 11). He said he fasted twice a week and he gave tithes of all he possessed (verse 12). It could be that the fast was a 24 hour period as that was common practice among the Jews. These two acts of adoration and service, fasting and tithing, are accepted by God if they are done in the right spirit. But Jesus shows the Pharisee's false, wrongly motivated devotion, was

permeated with pride. This is a false fast. Isaiah 58 exposes the false fast, especially verses 2-5, and Jesus in Matthew 6:16-18. The publican was in submissive humility standing afar off and not lifting up his head to heaven, beating upon his breast. He asked God to be merciful to him a sinner in verse 13. The publican was not forcing himself to be close to God. He did not even look to heaven. Jesus justified the publican but not the Pharisee. The Pharisee was proud of the fact he was not like the publican! Jesus said, “for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted” (verse 14). In Matthew 6:16 Jesus said, “Moreover when ye fast, be not as the hypocrites.” In Matthew 23 Jesus said seven times: “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!”

THE EARLY CHURCH - Fasting in Acts

a.) Acts 9:9 - Paul at his conversion, three days without water, food or sight. Acts 9:1-25 Paul was on his way to Damascus to bind those Jews who were disciples of Jesus Christ. They were called disciples of this way. That were of the Way, that is, Christ (verses 1-2 and John 14:6). Near Damascus Jesus appeared to Saul of Tarsus in light (Acts 9:3-9). In consideration of the light: “For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 4:6). When Paul opened his eyes, he could not see (verse 8). It was such a dramatic experience that he could not eat, drink or see for three days. At such an experience fasting is a typical Jewish response as I have tried to show in this study. The combination of the brightness of the light from heaven and speaking with Jesus overwhelmed Paul. His three day fast helped prepare him for his meeting with Ananias (Acts 9:10-18).

b.) Acts 10:30 - Cornelius was a Roman centurion fasting four days. An angel of God appeared to him while he was fasting. The angel said, “Thy prayers and thy alms are come up for a memorial before God” (verse 4). Cornelius was told by the

angel to send for Peter. Peter then fell into a trance and saw unclean animals in a sheet. A voice said “Rise, Peter; kill, and eat” (verse 13). They were common and unclean animals according to the Law. Therefore, Peter did not want to eat of them. The voice said, “What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common” (verse 15). While Peter was doubting (much perplexed) in himself wondering what the vision meant, men came from Cornelius in Caesarea seeking Peter to bring him to Cornelius to speak to him. Many were waiting for Peter (verse 27). This was now the fourth day Cornelius had been fasting (verse 30). Peter was the apostle to the Jews, but he understood that God was no respecter of persons and that He would save Gentiles as He had saved Jews (verses 34-35). Peter preached Jesus Christ crucified and risen from the grave (verses 38-40). The Holy Spirit fell on the Gentiles! And they were baptized! (verses 44-48). I cannot resist the question: Did fasting have anything to do with this? The fasting of Cornelius showed his sincerity and earnestness. God heard the supplications and pleas of Cornelius (verse 4). For this reason, an angel was sent to Cornelius. Cornelius’s fast was recognized and honored by God.

c.) Acts 13:1-3 - While the church was ministering to the Lord and fasting, “the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.” With fasting and prayer the two were sent away (verse 3). Fasting was a part of the early church’s services. Fasting by the church was used to choose the missionaries and then to send them out. Paul used fasting in establishing new churches.

d.) Acts 14:22-23 - Paul and Barnabas established churches in Lystra, Iconium, Derbe and in Antioch. They confirmed the disciples “and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.” Their praying with fasting was an

encouragement for the churches to practice fasting. Fasting is also for new believers.

e.) Acts 27:33 - Fourteen days on the boat in the storm they did not eat. Fasting is seen in the non-Jews as well as in the Jews. The storm in the Mediterranean Sea was so violent that not one of the 276 men aboard dared to eat, it was a matter of life or death. Just before the 14th day of the storm an angel of the LORD appeared to Paul to assure him that not one person would die for all shall be saved (verses 21-25). I assume the people on the boat were not Jews. There were Roman soldiers with their centurion (verses 42-43). The boat was full of wheat (verse 38). From verse 35 it may give us the idea that Paul also fasted: "And when he had thus spoken, he took bread, and gave thanks to God in presence of them all: and when he had broken it, he began to eat." The prayers of these non-Christians were heard on high. God spared their lives.

Before The Conclusion:

Consider What Paul Said About Fasting In 1 And 2 Corinthians.

a.) Acts 9:3-9 - Paul fasted without water for three days at the time of his conversion.

b.) 1 Corinthians 7:5 - Some manuscripts do not have the word fasting, but the Textus Receptus has it. "Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency." I sense Paul's encouragement to not have sex is when one or both are fasting and praying. Paul considered fasting a very serious spiritual engagement with God. There is a difference between fasting and praying and just praying without fasting. In 1 Thessalonians 5:17, Paul taught believers to "Pray without ceasing." 1 Corinthians 7:5 makes more sense to me when fasting is mentioned. If only praying is mentioned why would Paul speak of a couple defrauding one another? Coffman's Commentaries on the Bible says fasting here is an interpolation (insertion).

c.) **2 Corinthians 6:5 and 11:27** - “Fastings” is mentioned in both of these verses and the message in each is very similar. Paul suffered much to bring the gospel to Jew and Gentile. He was weary, experiencing pain, watchings often, in hunger and thirst. There were times he could not get his necessary food or water. He could have said I have suffered enough without food. Yet he voluntarily added to his sufferings many fasts. Why? Paul fasted because it was the teaching and example of the Old Testament and because the Holy Spirit led him. The Holy Spirit led Jesus to fast (Matthew 4:1-2). Fasting for Jesus at the time of His 40 day and night fast was an immediate, natural Biblical response, there was no other response to be considered. “As sorrowful , yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things” (2 Corinthians 6:10). All can fast, the rich and the poor. Anna lived many years a widow, she may have been poor, but by fasting night and day she made many rich (Luke 2:36-38).

Paul gives a long, impressive list of his sufferings for Christ in 2 Corinthians 11:22-27. All this that I have pointed out to you, in this message, Paul knew. He knew what Jews had done before to receive the Word and to make salvation available to the people. That was his goal, and he would do the same as his predecessors. He knew there was power in fasting that cannot be found in anything else Isaiah 58:6. Paul needed power, guidance, and he needed prayers answered. He was an evangelist and church planter. He had to write a portion of the Word of God and he needed to be in the right spiritual state to receive the Word from the Holy Spirit. In 2 Corinthians 11:28 Paul’s concern for all the churches is mentioned. He prayed for them and fasting helps prayer. They go together like a hand and a glove. Will your hand go gloveless in the cold of winter?

John Wesley (1703-1791) of England in his diary told of fast days, and so did David Brainerd (1718-1747) who ministered to the American Indians. He lived when Jonathan Edwards lived. They were both in the American Colonies and they knew

each other. When Jonathan Edwards preached ‘Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God’ he had fasted three days. During the Welsh Revival of 1904 there was fasting. Men working in the coal mines fasted, even while working.

In USA J. Harold Smith, a Baptist pastor and then evangelist, fasted 40 days and nights. He knew when he left the pastorate he did not have the power needed for the ministry of evangelism. Therefore he felt led to fast 40 days and nights. When he fasted he drank water as I do. His book is titled, “Fast Your Way to Health.” It is out of print. He died in 2001. He said his best meetings as an evangelist were when he got on the plane for a meeting, he ate, then he did not eat until he got back on the plane after the meeting was over.

David Brainerd wrote: “Once more, Never think that you can live to God by your own power or strength, but always look to and rely on Him for assistance, yea, for all strength and grace.” David Brainerd’s body was weakened by tuberculosis, yet he chose to fast. In David Brainerd’s diary, he would note if the day was a fast day. Fasting weakens the body. The faster in his weakened condition is better able to understand his need of Christ’s presence, power and action. After Paul asked Jesus to heal him three times he said: “For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, my grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ’s sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong” (2 Corinthians 12:8-10). And we should appreciate the sacrifice on the part of the Jews who accomplished these two very important works.

The Word of God has been given, and salvation is available. It is our responsibility to know the Word, and the plan of salvation. This knowledge we are to take to others. This is our main task while God keeps us here.

I highly recommend fasting to believers if your health permits it. It greatly helped those we have just studied, and it will greatly help you in your Christian life, in finding God's will for your life, and accomplishing it with power and precision.

Fasting is a calling, a ministry, a prayer, and a spiritual battle. Fasting can help in grief as in the case of a death, in time of testing, for dealing with demon possession, for drug addicts, for alcoholics, for deliverance, for oppressed Christians, for possessed non-believers, for heavy burdens, and for financial needs.

The purpose of this book was to show the part Jews had in writing the Word of God, and in offering salvation to the world. They wrote the Bible, were the first Believers, and they were the first missionaries. Fasting had a definite part in accomplishing this amazing work.

Michael David Bentley

What can fasting prepare us for?

The list is long!

Three Day Fasting Conference in 2023.



Mihai & Maria Czentye



Living Hope Independent
Baptist Church Hunedoara, Romania



John & Dina Poenar



Bethel Codlea Assembly



He took me in Romania, to Bran, Gimbov, Rasnov, Codlea, Brasnov, and Tohanul Vechi, where I taught Fasting.

Commentary on Isaiah 58

“BREAK EVERY YOKE”

Introduction:

This is The Fasting Chapter of the Bible. I sense Isaiah speaks as one who knew the experience and power and results of fasting. This chapter is on one hand a plea against hypocrisy in religious acts, and on the other hand it is a teaching on fasting. This message against hypocrisy is also found in (Isaiah 1:10-20). It is possible to be truly religious and socially indifferent. It is possible to be religious but at the same time to not know the one true God, Jesus Christ.

J.D. Smart, History and Theology in Second Isaiah, Epworth-1965 “One of the unique features of the Biblical faith is that there is no genuine relation with God that is not at the same time a relation with the brothers” (pg. 247). The study of this chapter gives ample opportunity for a professing believer in Jesus Christ to examine his faith. Is God’s righteousness our righteousness? Are we real or are we hypocrites? Are we trying to establish our own righteousness, or are we truly submitting ourselves unto the righteousness of God? “For he made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin: that we might be made the righteousness of God in him” (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Are we operating in our own strength and wisdom or are we relying upon God through His Holy Spirit to lead us and empower us? Are we doing things in our own way according to our own pleasures and knowledge or are we serving God according to His desires and His will? (Isaiah 55:8-9). Is His will our will, are His choices our choices? Are we trying to impress man rather than humbly submitting to God? Is the fast to God? Jehovah said to Zechariah, ask the Jews, and their priests, if their fasts were to Jehovah (Zechariah 7:5). Are we accomplishing our work for Christ in our own strength or in His strength? In John 15:5 Jesus says “...for without me you can

do nothing.” Is our business, our job, our family or anything else interfering with our faith in Jesus Christ? Is Christ pleased with our testimony? Are we pleased with our own testimony? “Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting” (Psalm 139:23-24). In 2 Corinthians 13:5 “Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith: prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates.”

The end does not justify the means. There is a wrong way and a right way to do the right thing. The fasting of Isaiah 58:2-5 was rejected by Jehovah. Their professed goals were right and what Jehovah expected, but their means, their attitudes were sinful. They did not obtain their professed goals or claims. I endeavor to search my heart and soul during fasting. In Daniel nine as Daniel began fasting and praying confession was first upon his heart and lips. “And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes. And I prayed unto the Lord my God, and made my confession...” (Daniel 9:3-4). His confession is found in verses 4-20!

What do I know about Biblical fasting? Do I fast? Is fasting for me? Jesus: “Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward. But thou when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face. That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly” (Matthew 6:16-18). Jesus practiced and taught fasting.

Fasting is not to impress others or to prove to others you are spiritual, but it is to be seen by God and for His glory. Fasting does not forgive our sins, nor does it justify wrong attitudes. I mentioned the false fast of Saul in (1 Samuel 14). The

Philistines gathered at Micmash to attack Saul. Saul's army had no swords (1 Samuel 13:19). Jehovah gave a mighty victory to Jonathan just before the battle (1 Samuel 14:1-15). Saul proclaimed a fast on the day of battle (1 Samuel 14:23). Jonathan did not know of the oath and in the battle found honey on the ground in the forest and ate of it (1 Samuel 14:26-32). Jonathan did not agree with his father's proclamation of a fast on the day of battle. Once the army reached the Aijalon Valley they could resist no longer and fell upon the spoil of the battle and ate the meat of the sheep with their blood, which is forbidden (Leviticus 3:17, Deuteronomy 12:23-24). Obviously Saul had wrong motives in proclaiming the fast at such a strategic time. When Saul found out that Jonathan had eaten he was ready to kill his son, but the people would not let him because the victory was because of Jonathan. Jehoshaphat declared a fast on the day of battle, but it was done in the right spirit and Jehovah accepted the fast and gave the victory over the three armies that were coming against Jerusalem. 2 Chronicles 20:3 "And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah."

Samuel and Joel used fasting to help the Jews to repent and return to Jehovah (1 Samuel 7:6, Joel 2:12-15). Jesus Christ fasted 40 days and nights at the beginning of His public ministry (Matthew 4:1-11). He experienced what a man experiences in a fast. God sees the true fast and He rewards as He chooses. The fast is unto God. "...when ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh month, even those seventy years, did ye at all fast unto me, even unto me?" (Zechariah 7:5). During the fast the Holy Spirit places upon the faster's heart praise and worship and the Father's prayer requests. God the Father is pleased as a believer prays for His prayer requests. God is pleased when His child fasts a proper fast.

Isaiah 58:1

Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob

their sins.” Cry aloud is literally “cry in throat.” Fasting is thinking of and praying for others. To help the Jews one must speak to them of their sins. A similar message is found in (Isaiah 40:1-2, Micah 3:8). Sin must be recognized then dealt with. In Isaiah chapter one, the prophet deals with the sins of the Jews, and Isaiah did that first thing in his long book of 66 chapters! These were practicing Jews who were faithfully doing the required religious acts, such as animal sacrifices, and praying, and keeping the seven feasts of the Law of Moses, even going beyond the required, by fasting. “Come now and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool” (Isaiah 1:18).

Fasting Is A Time Of Worship And Praise Unto God.

Sin today can only be forgiven through personal faith in Jesus the Messiah. The Gentiles have the same need as the Jews, the forgiveness of their sins. Isaiah 57 ends with “There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.” The Jews mentioned here in chapter 58 did not have the peace of God, because they did not have a spiritual fast, only a physical fast. Not only was their fasting was rejected by Jehovah, but all their other spiritual activities were rejected because of their heart attitude. Isaiah one clearly explains this.

Some thoughts here given came from the Keil and Delitzsch commentary on Isaiah. I will refer to this as (K&D) from this point forward. Sin must be declared that it might be known and dealt with. Sin must be exposed so that the sinner can realize his sin and then repent. This is one of the purposes of the Law of Moses (Romans 7:7). Sin in the life of believers must also be exposed. Sin must first be confessed to Jesus Christ, then the sin is forgiven, and then there is the possibility of acceptable service. "...lift up thy voice like a trumpet," (cf Isa. 58:1). In Hebrew, the trumpet is shofar (*bugle; ram's horn*). Loud and clear! with all the strength of the voice. (K&D) With the full

force of the throat, a loud and clear voice with conviction and assurance the message must be proclaimed and then it can be heard, heeded, believed, and obeyed. Perhaps Yom Kippur 2017 just before the Day of Atonement started, I was handing out tracks in Paris. I saw the Orthodox Jew coming and I continued distributing. Suddenly the Jew was opposite me. I knew not what to do. I tried to speak to him, but he stopped. His son was with him of about 13 years old. Immediately we were in spiritual talk. I had asked him a question. He asked me if the Jews will go to heaven! I asked how he could ask of me such a question. He said you asked me a question. I said the Jews will not go to heaven because they have no sacrifice for their sins. I said I have a sacrifice for my sins. He was not angry, but he left. A Christian minister helped his young relative. His parents first sent him to a secular psychological counselor. The young relative did not get the help he needed from the counseling. Then the minister gave him Biblical counseling from God's word dealing with his sins and only then he was greatly helped. Sin must be dealt with. Then the young relative got the help he needed.

In Paul's instructions for the Lord's Supper, 1 Corinthians 11:31 believers are instructed to judge themselves because of their sins before God is moved to judge. God wants His people to see their sins and to repent, then change their attitudes and actions. Here in Isaiah 58 His people are the Jews. Today the Jews are still His chosen people and there has been added to God's family those who have found salvation in Jesus Christ. Most of the Jewish people are not part of the remnant of Israel, who are those who are in a spiritual relation with Jehovah. "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace" (Romans 11:5). God is concerned about the sins of born-again believers. The born-again believer in Jesus Christ must confess his sins (1 John 1:9). The Jews are God's chosen people but that does not include the salvation of their souls. They must be saved by personal faith in Jesus Christ the only Savoir and the true

Messiah of Israel. Jesus Christ is the Kinsman Redeemer, Goel הַגָּאֵל All people must come the same way, only through the LORD Jesus Christ (John 14:6). He is the only Mediator between man and God (1 Timothy 2:5).

Isaiah 58:2

After being expelled from Israel on May 1, 1988, I went to the Island of Crete, Greece, for a 30 day and night fast, drinking only water, eating no food. I camped on a mountain in a tent that Billy Watson gave me. I was in the olive orchard of Elias Tubbeh, who was born in Jerusalem. I visited Elias in March 2017, and 2018, and in January 2020.



Elias Tubbeh
Walking outside his village in
Boodamies Pothiathios, Crete



Neil Freund

Why did I decide to fast for 30 days? Apparently the Holy Spirit was leading me into a new ministry of fasting. Up to this time, as I recall, I had fasted 27 days while a student at Tennessee Temple Schools-Tennessee Temple University, I assume, in 1966. I believe this Crete fast was a time of separating myself from being physically present in Israel. It was a time of healing from the loss of Israel. It was preparation for the new ministry that was ahead for me. During the fast of May 1988, I went through Isaiah 58. I turned the negative points of verses 2-5 into positive goals.

The fasting Jews listed six spiritual acts in verse 2 that they were practicing and accomplishing. They believed they were accomplishing these goals, or at least, claimed they were

accomplishing them. Why did I choose the Island of Crete for fasting? I was expelled from Israel on May 1, 1988. Before I left Israel it was decided that there would be a 30 day and night fast. My friend Neil Freund was a faster and he knew the Mediterranean Sea area. He suggested the place to go fast is the Island of Crete.

God did not accept “1 of the 6”

1) “Yet they seek me daily.” - The word daily here is the translation of day – יוֹם יוֹם, yom used twice for emphasis on their consistency and regularity of their seeking after Jehovah. These Jews who were fasting were hypocrites. They knew from the prophets, the priests, the Word and the scribes what was right for a believer to do. What they claimed they were accomplishing, they were not. They were doing daily religious duties, but Jehovah did not accept their devotion and sacrifice. The “Yet” ties verse two in with verse one (K&D). Here are their sins. In spite of their sins they were daily practicing spiritual exercises.

A backslidden Christian should make an effort to return to Jesus Christ. If his attitude is one of repentance, going to church can help him, as well as reading the Bible, praying, and being with believers who are serving Jesus Christ. Do we seek Him daily with the right attitude? Are we earnest in our seeking His face? Solomon Ostrovsky of Israel had his devotions from 2 AM to 6 AM. He was a pastor in Jaffa, Israel, from about 1930 to 1995. George Wald was a missionary in Egypt for 25 years and 25 years in Israel. He raised four children. He got up each morning at 5 AM for his devotions. When he was about 85 he told me he could not remember a day he did not get up at 5 AM to have his devotions. Let us seek Him daily, let us read the Bible daily and pray daily. May our seeking Him be real and not fake, may our devotion and service to Christ be accepted.

May Christ find pleasure in our seeking Him. May we practice the chosen fast.

2) “And delight to know my ways.” - The same Hebrew word for delight appears in the second spiritual act and at the end of this verse in the sixth act. קָרְפַּתְּזָן yechpatzun This is typical of Isaiah. (K&D) They were delighting in their own ways, not in Jehovah’s ways. Are Christ’s ways our delight? May God search our hearts. From Psalm 40:8 we understand that the Messiah delights to do the Father’s will. “I delight to do thy will, O my God, thy law is within my heart.” The same Hebrew word is used in Psalm 40:8. חָפֵץ - chafetz May Jesus Christ be our joy. JOY = Jesus Our Yearning.

Irene Levy had Bible Clubs for Youth in New York City in 1946 titled “JOY.” Jesus first, Others next, Yourself last. Irene’s biography is “From McComb to Jerusalem.” Macom in Hebrew is place, McComb is the name of the city in USA where Irene was born. Irene was still alive in January 2020, at 100 years old. I visited her in January 2018, the end of 2019, and was blessed fellowshipping with her. She came to Israel in 1948. She fasted in her service for Christ. We desire to reach the spiritual state where God’s will for our lives becomes our will. I confess that has not always been my spiritual state.

Many things I did in my life for Christ I did because I knew it was God's will in spite of the fact I did not want to do it. I have been since 1963. Many of my decisions about what to do were made during a fast. Once I knew God's will I sought His grace to accomplish it. A saying which helped me is "Never doubt in the dark what God has shown you in the light." For me, a decision made during a fast is made in the light. Ezra 8:21-23 (See my commentary of Isaiah 58:11). Ezra was not sure what to do as he was planning with Jews to return to Jerusalem, so he called the Jews and proclaimed a fast to know Jehovah's will. Jehovah responded favorably so that Ezra knew what to do. Not all things related to my personal life decided in a fast came to

pass. But many of them did happen. I am talking about decisions for events in my life. Part of the problem was my failure to do what I was led to do. I was faced with changing the time of my five-year furlough to USA of 2019. During a fast day, the decision was made to change it to 2018. Looking back I am satisfied with the change I made.

3) “As a nation that did righteousness.” - These fasting Jews were righteous in their own eyes, but not in Jehovah’s eyes. Isaiah was thinking of the nation of Israel, but I want to bring it down to the personal level. Do we do right? Is that our aim in life? Do we want to do right in all areas of our lives? Is what we understand to be right, right in God’s eyes? God forgive us and God help us! Is this the goal of our family, or our church? Bob Jones Sr. said, “Do right, though the stars fall, do right.” Are we familiar enough with the Bible to know what is right? If your attitude and actions are just, it will help your fast. If you are a backslidden Christian, fasting will help you to return to Christ, verse 6 of Isaiah 58 teaches this.

Isaiah 58:1 clearly shows the sins of religious Jews. They were trying to establish their own righteousness by their religious observances. Paul said concerning the Jew: “For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God” (Romans 10:2-3). In the Old Testament period there were Jews who were of the remnant of Israel who were honestly seeking Jehovah. Isaiah is an example.

4) “And forsook not the ordinance of their God.” - These Jews forsook the ordinances of God by not doing the ordinances in the right spirit. “The end does not justify the means.” It is God who decides if a spiritual act is done in the right spirit. In the introduction I mentioned Saul’s false fast before fighting the Philistines. He apparently wanted to do a religious act to

impress God. Do we forsake God's ways and His commands? We should remember Isaiah's statement "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD" (Isaiah 55:8-9). When the Messiah Jesus-Yeshua was stricken, the disciples fled. Zechariah 13:7 "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones." Matthew 26:31 "Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad." Peter denied Christ. And what of us? Are we doing Christ's commandments with the accompanying spiritual attitude Christ expects? Let us not forsake our Christ nor Biblical principles. Christ will not leave nor forsake His own (Hebrews 13:5). Paul said, "for I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ." (Romans 1:16). Am I ashamed of the gospel of Christ? Sometimes, too often.

Keeping the commandments of God includes doing them is an attitude that God approves of.

5) "They ask of me the ordinances of justice." - These Jews were asking for Jehovah's ordinances of justice, but they were not able to receive His ordinances of justice because of their hearts' attitude. They had their own ideas about Jehovah's justice (Psalm 50:21). The Jews created a god who was like themselves. In Isaiah 29:13-14 Jehovah exposes the hypocrisy of the religious Jews and that all their wisdom as found in their religious books shall perish. "Wherefore the Lord (Adonai not Jehovah) said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men" (verse 13). What are we asking of God? Are we asking according to the lust of our flesh or as the Holy Spirit leads and as the Scriptures teach? Is God's Truth our Truth? His righteousness our righteousness? Are we in

agreement with God's decisions for our lives? Do we seek to live our lives according to His rules, principles, and justice and according to His will? Isaiah 57:15 tells us we need a contrite and holy spirit. Is our spirit contrite and holy? In March 1988 I was before the Supreme Court of Israel. I was fighting for the right to remain in Israel. I was told by the court to leave Israel. On the wall of the courthouse I read Isaiah 1:27 "Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness." I left Israel on May 1, 1988.

6) "They take delight in approaching God." - יְחִפְצָוּ – yechpatzun. This is the same form as in the delight used in the second spiritual act of this verse. This was a false claim by these Jews. What they believed we do not know, but we know Jehovah's reaction to their self-proclaimed delight. Do we look forward to our moments with God? Do we enjoy our time in God's presence? How precious are our moments with Christ? What are we excited about? Is our joy real, sincere? We cannot fool Jesus Christ, but we can fool ourselves. Do we enjoy reading the Bible? Do we read the Bible?

These hypocritical Jews did this in their own flesh and initiative, expecting much in return. Let the Holy Spirit lead you to regularly approach our God and Savoir Jesus Christ. He awaits our presence before Him. Let God choose what you are to receive. They expected and desired God to come close to them to deliver them, save them, help them, and give them what they wanted (K&D). Reading the Bible can lead to worship and praise. Psalm 35:13 David: "I humbled my soul with fasting; and my prayer returned into my own bosom." We express our burdens in prayer, and they are constantly upon our hearts. Not in the sense that we are not trusting God with the request, but we are concerned about the gravity of the situation as it weighs upon our hearts.

Jesus' parable of the Unjust Judge, also called of the Importunate, or Persistent Widow, in Luke 18:1-8 was to teach

that “men ought always to pray, and not to faint.” Paul had “... great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart” for the lost Jews (Romans 9:2). Paul prayed for them; his heart was right (See also Romans 10:1). May Christ’s burdens lay heavy upon our hearts. Paul: “I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting” 1 Timothy 2:8. Holy hands speak of the right attitude of the worshiper. In the song “God, Our Father, We Adore Thee” it reads “For the riches we inherit, Heart and voice to Thee we raise!” If our heart is right in our worship then our voice will be pleasing to Jesus Christ.

Isaiah 58:3

Here those who believe their works are righteous, hold up their fasting before God, complaining to God for lack of recognition. (K&D) They have two questions to present to God. In verse five these two questions will be followed by six from God. “Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not?” They realize that He does not see their sacrifices, which is in the sense of accepting them. Jehovah saw their fasts, but He did not approve of them. They should have had a deep heart searching when they realized that God took no knowledge of their afflicting themselves by fasting. It is wonderful that they understood that God took no knowledge of their religious acts. Interesting that these hypocrites were able to understand Jehovah’s attitude. At that moment they should have earnestly sought Jehovah with the intention to understand their sin and to repent. In verse 2 they clearly spoke their willingness to know, to seek and to approach Jehovah. There was no spiritual blessing in their fast. In their seeking Him they knew Jehovah was not responding positively to their prayers. It is similar to the question in 1 Samuel 4:3, after Israel lost 4000 soldiers in the battle at Aphek against the Philistines. “And when the people were come into the camp, the elders of Israel said, Wherefore hath the LORD smitten us today before the Philistines? Let us fetch the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of Shiloh unto us, that, when it cometh among us, it may

save us out of the hand of our enemies.” They did not take the time or effort to find out why God smote them but tried a religious ‘trick’ or superstition hoping the holy ark of the covenant would bring God’s deliverance. They were not willing to deal with sin, the sin of the elders, and of the people. The ark did not save them, it did the opposite, it brought judgment from God on them. They were not looking to God, but to something physical from the Tabernacle. Hophni and Phineas were the two of the sons of Eli the high priest. They were evil men. It may have been their idea to bring the arc. The elders and Hophni and Phineas treated the arc as a “good luck piece,” a talisman, an amulet. Hophni and Phineas were killed in the battle. It was not the time to fight a war, but to seek Jehovah, and deal with their sins.

***Fasting Will Help You To Approach God And His Son.
Fasting Will Help Your Spirit To Be Contrite And Holy.
Fasting Will Humble Your Soul.***

God seeks true repentance, followed by a desire to forsake the sin. In Judges, there is the history of a battle the tribes of Israel had against Benjamin. They lost two times against Benjamin. They stopped to find out Jehovah’s will. They fasted and got an answer from Jehovah (Judges 20:26). They sought Jehovah in the right spiritual manner and they were guided by Jehovah. The third attack was successful. The fasting Jews of Isaiah 58 continue “Wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge?” These fasters are hypocrites and liars. It is true that they fasted, but the affliction of the soul or its humbling did not occur. They made their bodies to suffer, but no work of grace was done in their soul. True fasting is designed to humble the soul. These Jews knew what fasting is because the prophets had told them, and I assume showed them by fasting themselves. They knew of Moses’ 40 day and night fast (Deuteronomy 9:9).

The verb used in verse 3 ‘we afflicted’ ענוּ ininu and verse 5 ‘afflict’ ענוּ anot, is the verb often used with fasting in the Old Testament. It is the soul that is to be afflicted. If the heart’s attitude is right, the suffering of the body can help lead to the affliction of the soul. The suffering of the body can facilitate the affliction of the soul. During the fast God ministers to the faster. We can afflict our soul by fasting. The Jews understand this verb to mean fast. The word fasting is not used in the descriptions about the Day of Atonement in Leviticus 16. “Afflict your souls” is in verses 29 and 31. חענוּ – teenu – ye shall afflict, in verse 29, ענייתם – veinitem- and ye shall afflict in verse 31. The Jews fast on the Day of Atonements. I used the plural because in Leviticus 23:27, Yom Hakippurim “day of atonements” is plural. The KJV translated the verb in Psalm 35:13 with; I humbled ענייתִ. David: “I humbled my soul with fasting.” The verb is used in Ezra 8:21. “Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river of Ahava, that we might afflict להתענוּ lehitinanot ourselves before our God, to seek of him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance.” The verb is found here in the reflexive mode.

True fasting does humble the soul. The fasting of the hypocritical Jews in the time of Isaiah was a heartless, dead work, which was worthless in God’s sight. Their false fasts did not produce true humility, nor impress Jehovah. It actually produced pride in the fact that they were able to fast. I imagine at this time there were Jews like Isaiah who fasted with the proper attitude. Jews who were of the believing remnant of Israel were able to do a proper fast, an accepted fast. Soul is mentioned five times in Isaiah 58. When a believer is in a true fast, God can reach his soul. This is one of the main purposes of the fast, to afflict the soul. Fasting facilitates God’s desire and ability to deal with our souls, to touch or access our souls. The soul can be afflicted without fasting but fasting is designed by God to afflict the soul of a believer. The hypocritical fasters were not careful with their fast days. “Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours.” They

were finding pleasure and were involved in their businesses. (K&D) A similar warning is given in verse 13 about the Sabbath. “If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words:”

If the Christian faster has to work during the fast, God understands. I have offended in doing my own pleasure in many fasts. In a one day fast August 15, 2016, I was not careful once again. I have been too occupied with correspondence, phone calls, emails, and internet. May the Holy Spirit give me understanding in this. It has been a fight for many years. In 2020 it was still a struggle. I wrote the first draft of this message during a 15 day fast in Ellerslie, Maryland in September 2006 and it was also true with that fast. I am not saying it is wrong while a believer is fasting to carry on his daily duties, as going to work or a housewife caring for her house and family. There are times when a believer is led to fast and cannot stop his or her daily duties. In 1965 or 1966 I had a 27 day and night fast when I had a fulltime job and was a fulltime student in Tennessee Temple University. When I am busy while fasting, I try to stop at mealtime, read the Bible, and pray. J. Harold Smith says in his book on fasting that in a 40 day fast he continued his strenuous schedule of preaching and radio work. The name of his book is “Fast Your Way to Health.” It is available on Amazon. I highly recommend it. I gave two messages on fasting in Bucharest, Romania, on the same Sunday in two churches. I mentioned J. Harold Smith in my two messages. In each service, I was told of a man who was saved under the preaching of J. Harold Smith. That is two different men. In the morning, my translator was an American and he said his grandfather was saved when J. Harold Smith preached. In the evening meeting an American was in the audience and he said he was saved when J. Harold Smith was preaching. Since I had two strokes in 2008 my ability to stay

concentrated has greatly decreased. The longest fast I have done since then is eight days and nights.

Dr. Paul Freed, founder of Trans World Radio in ‘Towers to Eternity’ spoke of the fasting and prayer of his parents when they were in the Middle East as missionaries. “One of my happiest memories of childhood has to do with Mother and Father’s belief in prayer and fasting. Friday, late afternoon and evening, was set aside in their week for this purpose. But I suppose that the thing that impressed me most as a child was that Ruth (my sister) and I never felt that we had to fast with them. In fact, Mother would go out of her way on prayer and fast night, to prepare for us the most wonderful meal of all. She often let us decide what we would like most for Friday supper. It must have been a real temptation for her as she prepared hot breads or cinnamon rice, and as the kitchen was filled with delicious smells in the evenings when she ate nothing. This evidence of love, plus their allowing us, rather than forcing us to do as they did, stimulated our growth in grace, our desire to learn to walk with the One whom our parents followed closely. *To this day I associate prayer and fasting with an unforgettable time of enjoyment.*” Please note: (Zechariah 8:19).

Once in Bulgaria, in the city of Russe, a sister prepared a nice meal for her sister Valichka, and I. She was in the midst of a 30 day fast, but still made the meal for us. The ideal situation as I see it is to be quiet and alone before God, free from other responsibilities. That’s what Moses did on Mount Horeb two times for 40 days and nights and what Jesus did in His 40 day and night fast in the wilderness, just after being baptized by John the Baptist (Deuteronomy 9:8-20, Matthew 4:1-11). I wonder if John the Baptist visited Jesus Christ when He was fasting in the wilderness? My situation of being in full time service for Christ enabled me to schedule as much as two months, consecrated to a fast of 30 or 40 days and nights. My being single also makes fasting easier (1 Corinthians 7:5). KJV has fasting, but some Bibles do not have fasting. The NIV and

Darby do not have fasting, neither does the Nestle-Aland Greek New Testament, KJV has fasting. The Textus Receptus, also called Received Text, has nestia-fasting. The KJV was translated from the Received Text. “Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.” [Incontinency - wanting in self-restraint especially in regard to sexual appetite. Oxford Dictionary.] After a long fast, it takes two weeks to regain strength and get the body used to normal eating habits. I tried in the long fasts after breaking the fast to remain 15 days where I was before I started traveling. “And exact all your labours.” They deny themselves in fasting and they deny others who are worthy, as workers who work for them. In verse seven “Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry...” they do not give their workers their due wages. The word “labours” - עֲזָבֵיכֶם atzveichem is found in Psalm 127:2 and it is translated “the bread of sorrows” referring to his hard labour, הַאֲזַבֵּם haatzavim - הַעֲזַבֵּי. The laborers were being denied their due. They were exploiting their workers or oppressing them. Their fast day was a day of self-pleasing to the disadvantage of others (Smart-pg. 480). K&D explain that the root word from which fast comes means to press, to tie up, to constrain. God, through fasting, puts pressure on the faster. He ties up their time and constrains them to make things right between God and the faster. He constrains them to pray about special requests which calls the believer to have unique fasting fellowship with God and His Christ. K&D say that the ancient church called a fast, “statio”, because he who fasted had to wait in prayer day and night like a soldier at his post. צוֹם - Tzom is the Hebrew for fast. It has as primary idea the mouth being shut. That is a good time to be quiet! K&D in their comments on verses 3 and 4 say that fasting is voluntary. Let us be volunteers for Jesus Christ, let us follow in His footsteps. If it was necessary for Jesus Christ, is it necessary for His followers? I believe so if he or she is able. But the believer must be willing.

Isaiah 58:4

Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness:" These fasters ended up in strife and debate, instead of in a contrite and humble spirit. Obviously, there was a bad spirit. They went so far as to clench their fists, and strike out with their evil fists at others. This reminds me of Jezebel's fast to kill Naboth in 1 Kings 21. Ahab was sad because Naboth would not sell him his vineyard which was near Ahab's palace in the city Jezreel in the valley of Jezreel. Ahab's main residence was in Samaria. Jezebel devised a plan to kill Naboth so Ahab could have his vineyard. She proclaimed a fast (a false fast because of the purpose) to get the people in an attitude which would help her direct them to kill Naboth. The spirit of Jezebel was anti Jehovah, and the Jews were not in a living relationship with Jehovah at this time. The Jews were as their king and queen. Jezebel was able to inflame them with a spirit of killing a godly Jew. In verses 9 and 12 the fast is proclaimed. Proclaiming a fast was a serious decision and is done normally when there is a threatening circumstance. Her purpose was evil, not spiritual.

Naboth was falsely accused by evil men, children of Belial (verse 13). The godly, Law honoring Naboth was killed. Jehovah was not pleased with the killing of Naboth, so He sent Elijah who lived nearby on Mount Carmel to pronounce judgment on Ahab. Note Ahab's fast, after the announcement of judgment by Elijah (1 Kings 21:27-29). Jezebel's fast was a false fast, but Ahab's was a true fast recognized by God. God acknowledged that Ahab humbled himself (not the normal Hebrew verb used with fasting but נִכְנָה nicnah) before God. The Hebrew verb is used today to express surrender. God changed the time of the judgement on Ahab's posterity. It would be after Ahab's death. Jehu who became King of Israel after Joram or Jehoram would be the avenger of Ahab, his wife Jezebel and his sons (2 Chronicles 22:7). The confusion of Joram's name lies in part, because Ahaziah King of Judah, was

the son of Jehoram, and Ahab King of Israel had a son named Jehoram (2 Kings 8:28-29, 2 Chronicles 22:5-6). Joram the son of Ahab was also called Jehoram.

We are not to hurt people in fasting, we are to help people. That is a general statement thinking of what Jezebel's fast was. We may fast to stop an evil work. The 11 tribes in Judges 20:26 fasted to know if they should attack again the tribe of Benjamin for the third time. The eleven tribes were defeated in the first two attacks. Jehovah led them to attack and this time they destroyed Benjamin. Jehoshaphat of Jerusalem fasted before the battle with the three armies attacking him (2 Chronicles 20:1-3). The three armies were destroyed (verse 22).

Rees Howells of Swansea Bible College in Wales fasted often during WW II for the defeat of Germany. His book, Intercessor, is an encouragement to prayer. You Tube has an audio book of his biography by Norman Grubb. In 1936 they were already fasting and praying about the danger of Nazi Germany. One of the purposes of fasting is given in verse 4. An improper fast will not accomplish this, but a chosen fast, an acceptable fast, will cause your voice to be heard by God. Jehovah designed the human body in such a way, that fasting would help the believer to reach his soul, and to enter into the spiritual state Christ wants him to be in. Fasting can increase faith.

A testimony of Isaiah 56:7: Rachmiel Frydland was a young Orthodox Jew in Warsaw, Poland just before the Germans entered Poland in 1939. He saw written on a church "For Mine House shall be called a house of Prayer for all People" (Isaiah 56:7). He was fascinated that a Christian church would use an Old Testament verse on its building. Rachmiel met Hebrew Christians witnessing on the streets of Warsaw. One of them was Jacob Goren, who I knew in Israel. Rachmiel accepted Jesus Christ as his Messiah and lived through the Holocaust. His book about this experience is titled "When Being Jewish Was a Crime." I had the privilege to know Rachmiel and his

family personally. We visited Jews together in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

When God begins to ask you questions, take it very seriously. It maybe He is trying to point out to you your sin. And He may ask you more than you ask Him! I see six questions in verse five that God asked the Jews. The number of questions depends on how you divide them up.

Isaiah 58:5

This verse starts with a question. God's questions are trying to get the hypocrites to see the real nature of their false fasts and to expose their hypocrisy and lead them to repentance. "Is it such a fast that I have chosen?" K&D translate chosen as pleasure. There is a fast, which God chooses and takes pleasure in. May we believers do those things that please God if we can. The fast described here was not accepted, it was not pleasing to Jehovah. It was not "a day for a man to afflict his soul?" Here is the verb that is often joined with fasting "to afflict" his soul. **תַּנוּ** – anot Fasting is difficult, and it weakens the body. This is part of the purpose of a fast. Though your body weakens, you have the possibility of becoming stronger in spirit (2 Corinthians 12:9). Jesus said to Paul who wanted to be healed: "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness."

*There is a physical benefit to fasting.
I would like to know more about this.*

These hypocritical Jews were only afflicting their bodies, but not their souls, by their fasting. Probably the year was 2010, I came back to Jacksonville, Florida, Friday evening very sick. I cancelled two meetings on Sunday. On Monday or Tuesday I tried also to cancel on Wednesday, but Pastor John Kager asked me to come on Wednesday. I was not sure I was able to drive. I preached and I was mightily blessed with deep crying for most

of the sermon. I believe it was because I realized my weakness and therefore Christ empowered me with His strength for I did not have power in myself. If your heart attitude is not right, fasting is a waste of time for spiritual benefit. A false fast will not afflict the soul, but a true fast will. A false fast will afflict the body but there will be no spiritual growth. Obviously, true fasting increases faith. The purpose of the fast is not to suffer hunger but to arrive at a spiritual state that better enables you to communicate with God, and to pray. Fasting facilitates the access of the believer to his soul and to Christ Himself. There is a physical benefit to fasting. I would like to know more about this.

J. Harold Smith talks about this in his book on fasting (Fast Your Way to Health). He studied to be a brain surgeon. When his studies were finished, Jesus called him into the ministry. As the body weakens the head goes down Isaiah 58:5b, “is it to bow down his head as a bulrush and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him?” Often in a fast I realize my head is down, then I try to walk straight to not appear as if I am weak. David experienced weakness when he fasted. “My knees are weak through fasting; and my flesh faileth of fatness” (Psalm 109:24). The purpose of the fast is not to bow your head down, or weaken your knees, or to impress others with your fasting, but to afflict your soul. Sometimes when I am walking on a long fast, my knees will buckle. Believers do well to strive after a fast in which God is pleased. The use of sackcloth and ashes by fasters was for further recognition of their fasting and their consequent suffering because of denying themselves necessary food. Obviously, sackcloth could be used to show their suffering rather than being an expression of their deep internal feelings. Sackcloth in its origin was an expression of their deep internal suffering. God can use the physical suffering of fasting; with the weakness it creates to humble a soul. In Psalm 35:13 David said, “I humbled my soul with fasting”. The KJV in verse 13 translated aniti עניית with humbled rather than afflicted. The humbling or afflicting depends on the faster’s

attitude. “Wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the LORD?” The Jewish fasters called it an acceptable fast, but not God. In verse 3 “Wherefore have we fasted” they said to Jehovah. If a faster shares his fasting experience, he needs to do it in the attitude of giving glory to Christ and not to himself.

One of the reasons I share my fasting is to encourage Christians and churches to fast. The fasting of the Old Testament and New Testament is to be carried on today by followers of Jesus Christ. In February 2017, I led a three day fasting conference in a church in Romania. This three day fasting conference was inspired by Matthew 15:32. Jesus met with people on a mountain, by the Sea of Galilee, for three days of healing with no food. Jesus said to His disciples at the end of the three days of ministry “I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way.”

The ministry was so intense that JESUS and the disciples could not stop to eat, and neither could the people. They did not want to have a break in the meeting. No one in the Romanian church had fasted more than one day. The church in Romania where I had the three day conference was blessed and a seven day fasting conference was asked for and then planned for February 6-12, 2018. I am satisfied with that fasting conference as well. One of the elders of the church fasted seven days and nights. He always has a headache each night at 3 AM and never sleeps good at night. After the first or second day of the seven day fast he had no headache at night, and he slept through each night. He did not want to stop the fast! The main request of this week of fasting was for a couple who were having family problems. They separated. Work was done by concerned Christians and today they are together. And later they had another child. A seven day fast was also held in June 2019 and February 2020 in the same church. There was also a three day fast with this church August 1-3, 2019. The end of verse 5 says “an acceptable day of the Lord.” The Hebrew word for acceptable

is retzon. רצון. Today in modern Hebrew the verb means want, desire.

What price are we willing to pay to be heard on high? And to be accepted by God Almighty? Are we willing to fast if we are physically able? “Acceptable” in the positive sense is seen in Isaiah 56:7, “Shall be accepted” le-retzon, and 61:2 shnat retzon = acceptable year. Isaiah 56:3 tells us of even strangers, none Jews, who have joined themselves to Jehovah will be accepted by Jehovah. God’s House shall be called a house of prayer for all people, and their sacrifices will be accepted after they come to know Jehovah’s Messiah, Jesus Christ (Isaiah 56:7). Isaiah 61:1-2a Jesus quoted these two verses and said these verses refer to Him. Luke 4:16-21 “To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.” Isaiah 61:2a. In Isaiah 58:6 the chosen fast is acceptable. The verb used in 58:6 is bochaer, to choose. “Is not this the fast that I have chosen.” When God begins to ask you questions, take it very seriously. It maybe He is trying to point out to you your sin. And He may ask you more than you ask Him!

I see six questions in verse five that God asked the Jews. The number of questions depends on how you divide them up. Anna’s service: “...served God with fastings and prayers night and day” Luke 2:37. Why do we serve Jesus Christ? May our service to our Messiah, Saviour, Master, Mediator, and Example be acceptable in His sight. Not just our fasting but all our service done unto Him (1 Timothy 2:5, Psalm 19:14). AMEN!

Isaiah 58:6

This verse starts out with a question by God. “Is not this the fast that I have chosen?” The first word of the Hebrew text of this verse is הלוּ – halo, meaning “is it not so?” Halo introduces a question. After the questions of verse five that led to rebukes, now there will follow a clear statement of what a true fast is and what it accomplishes. This verse expresses a

force that cannot be measured or imagined. This fast is pleasing to God because of what it accomplishes in the life of the faster and in the things the faster prays for. Jesus Christ is blessed when His children seek Him with the right attitude, when they are obedient to Christ, when they humble themselves before Christ. God tells us what He expects to be accomplished by a true fast. A false fast will not accomplish these goals. This verse is a jewel, a classic, glistening as a diamond. It is a verse to be remembered, memorized, and practiced. This verse more than any other in the Bible tells the power and purpose of fasting. A key that can unlock the unlimited resources of God is here given. Let us never forget it. “To loose the bands of wickedness”. We note at the time of the Transfiguration in (Matthew 17:21, KJV). “This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.” The Darby Bible also has fasting in this verse. NIV does not have it. The Nestle-Aland Greek New Testament does not have it. The Textus Receptus from which the KJV was translated has it. 1 Corinthians 7:5 is a similar case. The disciples at the time of the Transfiguration could not cast out the devil (demon) from the lunatic son but Jesus did. Therefore the disciples asked Jesus why they could not cast out the demon (verse19). Matthew 17:20-21 And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, if ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

*Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by
prayer and fasting...Matthew 17:21*

Verse 20, I cannot grasp. It is beyond my experience. Verse 21, I find easier to understand. Verse 21 sheds further light on what Jesus taught in verse 20. Anna knew this truth; therefore she fasted night and day (Luke 2:36-38). From this explanation of Jesus in Matthew 17, I sense that fasting increases faith. The fast is helpful in freeing others from addictions to sin, alcohol

and drugs and from demon possession. Fasting will help believers who are oppressed by demons and non-believers who are possessed by demons. The ability of the non-believers to help themselves is very limited, almost nonexistent. Fasting can help believers who are overcome by sin. Fasting can bring the backslider back to Christ. This is the mountain that needs to be moved! The disciples could not cast out the demon and they asked Jesus why they could not. These two verses, 20 and 21, are Jesus' response to the disciples' question. Elmer L. Towns calls this, The Disciple's Fast. Evil has taken hold of many. They are bound, they are slaves to sin. They are powerless to help themselves. We through our ministry have the possibility to deliver them. We have power through giving them the Word of God and praying for them. All things being equal, fasting and prayer is better, and more powerful and effective, than prayer alone. Persons involved in sexual sins need our fasting prayers. Do you know a prostitute? or a man who has sex with prostitutes? People involved in human trafficking. Fast and pray for them. K & D translate 'bands' as coils. The coils remind me of a rattle snake coiled to strike its victim. This same Hebrew word and in the same form for 'bands' is used in Psalm 73:4. The wicked who prosper appear to have no "bands" and their strength is firm but in reality they are in chains, Psalm 73: 4-6, because of their pride. They can be freed as Isaiah 58:6 says (See Luke 4:18-19).

Here in Luke 4, we have the ministry Jesus was called to fulfill as written in Isaiah 61:1, "The Spirit of the LORD GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." The Hebrew word for bound here in Isaiah 61:1 is not the word used in Isaiah 58:6. These types of ministries can be accomplished through prayer and fasting as it is explained in Isaiah 58:6. Luke adds "the recovering of sight to the blind". Jesus continues His ministry through the lives of believers. Jesus has given us fasting to accomplish His work.

In November 2006, I was in Manitoba, Canada. I saw many drunken Aboriginal people. The drunkards need the Word, Prayer, and the fasting prayer of believers. I was in Thompson, Manitoba, in November 2014, where I met Johnny Miles and his wife Marie. Johnny is on YouTube: Johnny Miles Cree Hymns. He sang Christian Hymns, but in November 2014 he and Marie were drinking alcohol. Johnny and Marie need prayer, fasting prayer, and I have been praying for them since I met them (now October 2020). For around three and a half years I prayed for Johnny, often with tears. During this drinking period in his life he posted no new songs. In 2018 Johnny posted a Christian song!!! He also posted new songs in 2019. To me this was a sign that he has returned to Christ. I saw in Odessa, Ukraine, drunk men sleeping near the sidewalk of the street with wild dogs. Sometimes in a restaurant in Ukraine, you can see a man passed out from alcohol at his table or on the floor next to his table. Christian, when we see a drunkard we should pray for them. But for the grace of God, there go I. Let me say something about tears and fasting. They often go together as a glove upon the hand. In 1 Samuel 1 we meet Hannah, the mother of Samuel. Her husband, Elkanah, had a second wife, Penninah, who had children, but Hannah was barren. Each year they went to the house of God in Shilo. Penninah provoked Hannah because she had no child. So while at the house of God in Shiloh Hannah wept and did not eat (verses 7-8). “And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore.” (verse10). Then she made her vow that if Jehovah gave her a son she would give him to Jehovah (verse 11). In 2 Samuel 12:10 David is under the judgment of Jehovah because of his sin with Bathsheba the wife of Uriah. Jehovah struck the child as punishment and David began fasting for the life of his son. David fasted for seven days because the child lived seven more days. Those seven days were for David to return to Jehovah. Read Psalm 51 to experience David’s repentance and forgiveness. In 2 Samuel 12:21 and 22 David fasted and wept for the child. Jehovah did not heal the child, but He did a mighty work in David’s life.

In Joel 2:12-15 Jehovah commands sinful Israel “Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and mourning.” Fasting, confession, mourning and weeping run together. Mourning in Hebrew is **תִּפְאַת**. This noun with its verb appears in Zechariah 12:10. It is in the context of the moment the Jewish Remnant will look upon Him whom they pierced. As Joseph revealed himself to his brethren in Egypt, so shall The Messiah Yeshua reveal Himself to the Jewish Remnant left after the Battle of Armageddon. “And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.” Mourning is to feel sorrow or regret over a person who has died, or something lost, or a misfortune. In Joel 2:12 the Jews were to be sorrowful about their sins. When Yeshua The Messiah reveals Himself to His people, the Jews shall realize the sin of their forefathers who rejected Yeshua as the Messiah. The son of the Jewish people is the Son of God, The Messiah. “To undo the heavy burdens.” A literal translation of ‘burdens’ **תִּלְגָעַת**—agudot is yoke. The word ‘heavy’ can be related to the heavy piece of wood that was used years ago for the yoke on the oxen. Fasting can help to solve problems, and to invite the Holy Spirit’s aid in lifting loads and overcoming barriers that keep us and our loved ones from walking joyfully with the Lord. (Elmer Towns) Let us be burden bearers for others. Galatians 6:2 “Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” Your fasting and praying can lift burdens. If you are overburdened, fast for release. Are you fearful? Then fast for yourself in order to be free and fearless, wholly trusting Christ. During the Coronavirus pandemic in 2020, many were fearful, myself included. “To let the oppressed go free.” The word ‘oppressed’ can refer to those persons unjustly and forcibly oppressed even with cruelty, as the human traffickers who oppress their

victims. It can refer to those oppressed by sin, virtual prisoners of evil, and of themselves.

Fasting for persecuted Christians is strategic.

ISIS has slaughtered Christians in the Syrian conflict from 2011 to 2016. News in January 2016 said 10,000 or more children who were registered in a country after fleeing the Middle East disappeared. By the end of March 2016 President Bashar Assad started to defeat ISIS, with the help of Russia, USA, and France. The refugee problem during this time was a serious matter for prayer and action. In June 2020 it is still a massive undertaking. I try during my fasts to remember abortion. Proverbs 24:11-12 “If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; If thou sayest , Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his works?” In 2019-20 I prayed for President Donald Trump’s efforts to limit abortion in USA.

1 Samuel 7:6 “And they gathered together to Mizpeh, and drew water, and poured it out before the LORD, and fasted on that day, and said there, We have sinned against the LORD. And Samuel judged the children of Israel in Mizpeh.” Samuel used fasting to help the repenting Jews to come back to Jehovah. In the book of Joel it is recorded that the LORD called sinning Israel back to Himself, and He told them to fast. Fasting would help them to repent. Joel 2:12-17 “Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning” verse 12 “turn ye”, שׁבו – shuvu is a command as “sanctify ye a fast” קדשו צום – kadshu tzom in verse 15 is also a command. In Daniel 9:1-3 Daniel fasted to understand what Jeremiah wrote concerning Jerusalem. After Daniel started fasting he was led to confession. His confession is in verses 3-20! Israel needed

deliverance from their sins. In 1 Samuel 7:6 Israel had a repentant attitude at this time, so they naturally began fasting and confessing, endeavoring to return to Jehovah. Elmer L. Towns calls the fast of 1 Samuel 7:6, "the Samuel Fast". Samuel as their leader, the prophet-priest I assume led them to fast. February to December 2020 the world was threatened by the Coronavirus, COVID-19. That was a strategic time to fast and pray. There are so many who are oppressed and therefore are prisoners. Their suffering can be indescribable. How much better for them to be free! For this, God has given fasting to the church of Jesus Christ. In Isaiah 14:17 it is said of Satan "opened not the house of his prisoners." Satan does not want his prisoners set free. Fasting will help believers to set free some of Satan's prisoners.

Will we take advantage of this spiritual tool of deliverance? This source of unlimited power? May Jesus Christ help us, He who fasted 40 days and nights. Matthew 4:1-11 "But rejoice, in as much as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy" (1 Peter 4:13). I count fasting as part of Christ's sufferings. There are hindrances to a person being able to fast, diabetes is an example. Those who are on medicine also face a problem. A German born again Christian doctor, Dr. Fois, who I met around 2013, and who has several patients of his who fast, said I should take my medicine when I fast. I did not take my medicine when I fast. Fortunately, I am on only three medicines, one for blood thinning and two for blood pressure as of December 12, 2023. In a seven day fast with a Mioveni, Romania church, I had trouble with my blood pressure. I took my medicine during the fast in February 2020, and after this I have been taking my medicine during the fast.

The command to the faster:

“that ye break every yoke...Isaiah 58:4” From this statement I got the title of this message, Break Every Yoke. You can do it by fasting. We are encouraged by the word ‘every.’ God is able to help anybody, no matter to what extent they have entered into sin. That is if they have not sinned away their day of grace (Romans 1:24). 1 John 5:16 “there is a sin unto death”. We are the link between them and Christ and their freedom. We can have a part in their deliverance. In Christian rehabilitation homes there is success as the work is Bible based and because the work is based around the work of Christ in an individual’s life. I would encourage those working with drug addicts or alcoholics or prostitutes to use fasting in their ministry with the addicts. This is the fast that God has chosen, the fast in which He finds pleasure. “And it shall come to pass in that day, that his burden shall be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck, and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing” (Isaiah 10:27).

The Hebrew word for yoke in (verse 27) is not the same as in Isaiah 58:6. There are believers who are given a unique anointing for the ministry of deliverance. However, all believers who are spiritually right, can help in delivering. Deliverance is a delicate, dangerous ministry. My roommate Horatio Guy in Bible School (1960s) was from the Philippines, and he had experience in dealing with demons. He said when you deal with demons you should be fasting. Isaiah 58:6 promises the faster help for deliverance. Fasting was used in the Old Testament for the grief produced by the death of someone close. The men of Jabesh-gilead fasted for seven days after the death of Saul. 1 Samuel 31:13 David and his men fasted until sundown when they heard Saul died, and David fasted until sundown for Abner as well (2 Samuel 1:12, 2 Samuel 3:35).

Here in verse six we see one of the main purposes for fasting: to break the evil yoke that binds people. When a believer breaks

the evil yoke from people God is pleased and this is one of the purposes of fasting and one of the purposes of believers and it is God's pleasure to set prisoners free. "He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and break their bands in sunder" (Psalm 107:14). The Hebrew verb for break in this verse is the same as in Isaiah 58:6 "that ye break every yoke". God (Elohim) "he bringeth out those which are bound...." Psalm 68:6. The Hebrew word for bound is different than Isaiah 58:6. It seems evident to me that I received a calling to fasting. I was saved in 1960, at the age of 18, and by 1963 I was fasting. Lester Roloff came to my Bible School, Tennessee Temple University, in Chattanooga, Tennessee, and encouraged us to fast one day a week. I soon began to go beyond one day fasts, to three days, then a week, then 15 days. I did not have friends that I can recall that practiced fasting as I did. The call came from within me. As I recall in 1966, I did 27 days. I do not remember exactly the number of days. I was a fulltime student in Tennessee Temple University, and I had a fulltime job. I returned to the long fasts in 1988, when I fasted 30 days and nights, with only water on the Island of Crete, Greece

In January 1990, in Lakeland, Florida, I conducted the first of three 40 day and night fasts with only water, no food. I did many fasts of 30 and 35 days and nights. In 2001 I tried 40 days for the fourth time but stopped after the 37th day as I recall. That was the only fast I had in which I had physical problems. In my long fasts to the best of my knowledge I never had a headache. I have experienced headaches on short fasts. In the beginning of my fasting, I found if I ate something the headache went away. I soon stopped eating during a fast. I have found in my life that fasting is necessary. Wickedness is in me, and it comes out very easily and far too often. Remnants of the old nature seek to surface to tempt me. The believers' enemies are the world, the flesh, and the devil. In 1 John 2:16 the world is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. I believe fasting helps me to control my thoughts and actions. A weekly one day fast is helpful for this problem. "For if ye live

after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" Romans 8:13.

The faster can become the "key person" in deliverance.

Isaiah 58:7

Here are some more questions to reveal some of the purposes of fasting. Fasting is often for others. The faster is fasting for the needs of others. During the fast you do not need to buy food for yourself. But buy some and give it away! I suggest giving food to the needy as a life principle. I learned it from Mal Rabern (died 2014) and Glenn Fogel while in the Tennessee Temple University in the 1960's. In November 1991, on the Island of Crete, I sought a secluded place where I could be alone to fast for 40 days and nights, drinking only water. I stayed near Lefkogia on or near PisoMoni Preveil, Greek Monastery land. I had agreed to speak in a church in Iraklio, about 75 kilometers (50 miles) away for one meeting during the fast. That was my only scheduled event. Outside of that trip I did not want to see anybody during those 40 days. I was sleeping in a Volkswagon Passat station wagon. It was winter. The first morning a man came walking by about 7 AM. After seeing him two mornings or so I finally said hello. He stopped. He is Enzo from France. Many times Enzo stopped to talk. We drove together in the car more than once during the fast. Enzo said he found peace when he sat in my car during the fast. Early in the fast came a Greek woman to ask my help. She was living in a cave about 100 meters from me! She was living off the land. She said there were many living in the wild in this area and they are poor. I did not know it was Monastery Land. I later learned the proper thing to do is to ask the owner of the property if you can stay on his land. She had friends, who had orange groves, who offered her all the oranges she wanted. She did not have a car and because I did she came to me for help. I said I was on a 40 day and night fast and I did not want to see food. She begged me to help. I said I would pray about

it and tomorrow I will give the answer. I read Isaiah 58:7 “Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry?” I understood that I must help this woman. I met those living in the area and it was for the furtherance of the gospel (Philippians 1:12). Later when I went into Heraklion to speak I bought food in the market and took it to some of them. I found myself going to another city, Rethimno, which is closer than Heraklion to buy for them. I went there also to buy for breaking the fast. I drove during my long fasts though I do not recommend it. I believe the long fast is for praying and not traveling around. J. Harold Smith kept active during his fasts. He did a 40 day and night fast drinking only water before he started evangelism. Brother Smith kept up his evangelistic meetings and his radio ministry during his fasts. He said his best meetings were when he fasted from the time he got on the plane to go to the meeting until he got back on the plane to return home. The faster is also taking risks by driving while on a long fast. I remember an Israeli believer, Yoram, originally from Libya, was staying at my house on the Mount of Olives, around 1973 or 1974. He was fasting and we just climbed Tel Beit Shean in the Jezreel Valley. It is a steep climb. We went from there to a gas station. He collapsed in the station.

Pastor Sotiris and Mary Karalis

The door on left was my room.



George Siskos Roma (Gypsy)
Evangelist To the right

During the long fasts I often stayed at the home (*see image above*) of Sotiris Karalis and drove out of the city to be alone in the hills and vineyards amongst the many olive groves. Precious times never to be forgotten by Jehovah, as long as they

were done in the Holy Spirit. There are joys unspeakable and full of glory to be had in fasting fellowship with Christ. “Fullness of joy” found in Psalm 16:11. In Hebrew the expression is “seven joys-sheva smachot” – שבע שמחות. Fasting is a heavy price to pay, but the blessings are worth it. Fasting is one of the means that God has to accomplish His work on earth. “O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him” Psalm 34:8. Once God’s grace, His presence and power are experienced, the believer has been charged-up and ready to serve, ready to give.

I have noticed that some Christian missions that are involved in humanitarian efforts use the verses 7-11 as encouragement to distribute to the needy. That is what these verses teach. But I like to point out that these acts of compassion are a result of fasting done under the leadership of the Holy Spirit. I am not saying you have to fast in order to give, but I am trying to keep tract of the context in which verses 7-11 were given. “And that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house?” Willie Mullan was from Ireland. I guess he was born in 1911 (he died in 1980). Missionary Miss Olwen Jones (died 2011) from Wales knew him. I heard his testimony on a tape he made. He was the youngest of 17 children. By fifteen he was an alcoholic. He was his mother’s favorite. Every night she lined up all the children in order of their age and prayed for them. Each night when she came to the last one she prayed for Willie that he would be a preacher. When Willie was 16 or 17 she died. Willie had become an alcoholic by this time. The father was already dead. Not one of the 15 boys or the one girl would take him in. He never slept in a house from that night on for three and a half years. It does get cold in the winter in North Ireland! He was saved in his early 20’s. Before he was saved a friend of his mother’s let him stay in a house. His drinking buddies came to live with him there. They were thieves. Willie would often draw the plans of the robbery. When Willie got saved he asked all his drinking buddies to leave the house. They respectfully left. One of his buddies on the way out of the house said to

Willie that he had made the right decision. Another testimony is from the USA. There was a black youth living underneath a bridge in Jacksonville, Florida, my hometown. A white Christian saw him and took him into his house. He raised him, got him through high school and sent him to university. He was sent to theological training. I heard the brother speak by way of a tape. He gave his testimony and a wonderful message on Jesus Christ. A Christian should have an open house. While a student in Tennessee Temple University in Chattanooga I was eating with a married couple, also students. The year is not clear to me. Probably early near the beginning of my studies, perhaps 1964-65. Some food item was needed for the meal, so I offered to go to a grocery store nearby run by a Jew. While in the store there was a poor man there. I asked to use the store phone and called the family to ask if he could eat with us. They agreed. The poor man had an epileptic fit while eating. Some months later I went into a Jewish store to offer a tract. The Jew said I will take the tract because I believe in a religion that helps others. He said to me, I was in the store when you invited the poor man to supper. I recall during Bible school days in 1960's I was working and a man from work asked for money. As I recall it was for a family need. I gave him some and soon he was back drunk! It was obvious he used the money to buy alcohol. We need the Holy Spirit's guidance as to whom we should help and how much, and for how long. "When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him." When fasting the hunger pains that many experience in this world are experienced by the faster. It helps the faster to better understand how a large portion of this world lives, going to bed hungry with hunger pangs. On December 12, 2016, the news said there are many children in Israel who have one meal a day. A believer is to have compassion for others. I have been providing clothes for others for many years. During the 1990's I took many clothes to Romania. I went to Romania the summer of 2012 and I bought many new clothes and shoes in France for Romania and Ukraine. I bought clothes again in January 2018. I buy when there are sales. Sister Irmgard of Germany for many years gives

me new clothes and food she has bought to distribute in Romania, Ukraine, and Bulgaria. She gave in 2019, but I did not go in 2020 because of Coronavirus. Sometimes I was given clothes in Romania and in Bulgaria to distribute. For many years I have bought potatoes mainly from a Christian farmer in Romania and distributed them to Christians in Romania. I distributed 1000 kilograms (2204.62 lbs.) in the summer of 2015 and again 2016 and 2017. In several winters I distributed more than 1000 kilograms in Romania. "And that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh." The family of the Jew is found in Genesis 29:14. (Laban to Jacob) "Surely thou art my bone and my flesh." We are all sons of Adam. A believer is not better than other believers or than non-believers. Philippians 2:4 says, "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." A Christian is to have a genuine concern for others even for his enemies. That is a Christian characteristic. Fast for the needy. Who is your neighbor? Luke 10:27-37 says "And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself" (verse 27).

Isaiah 58:8

The 1st Promise - Isaiah 58:8 "Then (וְ-az) shall thy light break forth as the morning," This follows the true fast and after the one who has fasted cares for the needy. The obedient Christian shines. I have slept many times in my car or utility van in the cold, sometimes in below freezing temperatures. I looked forward to the morning sun to warm me up. When the morning light breaks forth it is time to begin the day. During the years 1979 and 1988 I had a Peugeot 504 station wagon in Israel. The spark plugs were at the end of a cylinder that was long. When there was dew I would sometimes wait until the sun was hot to dry up the water that accumulated on the spark plugs. I remember that sometimes Jesus arose before daylight. In Luke 1:35 we see Jesus up a great while before day to pray. The disciples followed Him. Shaving in the

morning is difficult in freezing weather. An electric shaver will not work, and the water is too cold to shave with a blade razor. Once in Austria in the dead of winter I was distributing tracts, and I came to a building that was open. I found a rest room and there I was able to shave with warm water. Distributing tracts in cold weather is also difficult, especially for the hands. For a few years I flew from Paris to Israel with Czech Airlines (CSA) and it was permitted to stop in Prague for some days. I would stay three days in Czech Republic (formerly Czechoslovakia). But when I did it on my way back to France that meant it would be in January and it was cold distributing tracts for my hands. I then started to visit Czech Republic on my way to Israel in October. I am thankful for the contact with Jewish people in Prague, mostly tourists from Israel. Proverbs 4:18 “But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.” Matthew 5:16 “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works , and glorify your father which is in heaven.” When a believer fasts the grace of God is imparted to the faster, and afterwards as he or she serves Christ, Christ continues to work grace in his or her life. Christ shines in the life of a ministering Christian. “Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” Hebrews 4:16 Christ shines in and through us. Let us shine for Jesus Christ. When others see our good works done by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit they give glory to God, especially fellow believers in Christ. In September 2016, in Slovenia, I witnessed to a man who was heavy into Indian Hindu ideas. But at the end he was impressed, and he gave me 20 euros. Earlier in the summer of 2016 while distributing literature people in Bucharest, Romania would give me money. One woman after reading the tract retuned to give me money. That evening at a Bible study Theophil Smilovitch said the amount of money I received that day was equal to a day's salary in Romania! Distributing in Bucharest in early March 2020 a woman read my tract, and she returned with a March 1st flower lapel pin for me. On the card of the pin was written, “Have a nice Spring.”

In France on March first the muguet flower is given. In English it is the lily of the valley, and sometimes called snow drops, convallaria majalis. They come in early spring and sometimes are seen in the melting snow. God reaches out to those to whom we minister and for whom we fast. Our fast and prayer and service is a means by which God administers grace to others and to the faster.

The 2nd Promise - Isaiah 58:8 “And thine health shall spring forth speedily.” I am convinced fasting is good for the health. It cleans out your body. One day is helpful, but more days are needed to clean it fully. As I write this sentence I have been 13 days and 14 nights without food, drinking only water. There is still a deep yellow in my urine. I assume by this that the body is still cleaning itself. There are toxic poisons stored by the body that need to be eliminated by the body. The body eliminates best when it does not have to digest food. I have heard from David Olsen that it takes three consecutive twenty four hour days of fasting to clean the blood. That is 72 hours without food. David Olsen lived some years in Israel having a fasting schedule of eating one day and fasting the next, and this was while he was working a job. He would fast three days a week. At age 79 in 2017 living in Finland he was fasting three days a week though not consecutive days. Proper fasting draws the believer closer to Christ. When we are close to Christ, serving Him, in His will, then we are blessed. K&D point out that in the origin of the word for health there is the idea of restoration וארצתך-vearuchatcah. The word is used in Jeremiah 8:22 “the health.” God is ready to restore the backslider to spiritual health. Those in bad health can look to Christ for healing. God can, through His love, bring a man from darkness and lead him into light and thereby give him spiritual health. Most drug addicts or alcoholics who come to Christ and succeed to change their lifestyle stop using drugs and stop excessive drinking or some stop drinking alcohol altogether. This is good for their health. Two years after I got saved I quit drinking alcohol and smoking, which was in 1963. I was saved

in the winter of 1960. From the verb for “spring forth” comes the noun for plant. תְּצִמָּחַ - titzmach = spring forth - Tzemach תְּצִמָּח = plant. There can be a speedy restoration to health or there may be a gradual caring for and improving of one’s health. All sickness in believers will not be healed, but some will be healed. All believers must die. Those believers left alive at the rapture of the body of Christ will be transformed into a heavenly body. They will be “caught up together” with the believers who have already died. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 says, “The dead in Christ shall rise first.” The terrestrial body will become celestial (1 Corinthians 15:40-54). But faith in Jesus Christ gives hope, comfort, assurance, and can give healing. During a fast I pray for the sick. My list for October 2020 was 10 typed pages long. I take their names off when they die. I believe our prayers for the sick will help them. God can give healing, but He can also give comfort, courage, and grace. He can send help such as a doctor and provide needed finances. I often prayed for finances during my fasts. The people of Israel in the wilderness wanderings mocking God asked: “Can God furnish a table in the wilderness?” Psalm 78:19 Jehovah did provide for them in spite of their sin and rebellion. God can provide what we need in all circumstances, as He did for the Jews in the wilderness wanderings. The fasting prayer helps to obtain that which God is willing, able and ready to give. “But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:19). I note that in the preceding verses, 13-18, Paul spoke of their financial support of his ministry.

The 3rd Promise - Isaiah 58:8 “...and thy righteousness shall go before thee;” is now given. This is a result of conforming to the principles found in this chapter. You do not gain righteousness simply by doing what God asks. These Jews were following acts that Jehovah expected and required, but Jehovah rejected their religious exercises, not because He did not require them but because their heart attitude was wrong. Their body actions that were in conformance to accepted and required acts were rejected. Isaiah chapter 1 brings this out very

clearly. The Jews were observing religious actions which Jehovah required, but all their services to Jehovah were rejected. He wanted none of their actions (See Isaiah 1:12-15). Their blood sacrifices given according to the law of Moses were rejected by Jehovah, even though Jehovah required the Jews to offer them.

Your dedication, consecration, sanctification, service and seriousness toward God and His work and ways and word will be seen by God and man. Matthew 5:16 says, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” God will see our works that are done in the right spirit. Matthew 6:18 says, “That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.”



Pastor Dimitris and Crisanti-Asi Torakis friends from the church in Garipa, Crete.

Pastor Dimitris and Crisanti-Asi Torakis friends from the church in Garipa, Crete. Through the years, 1988 to 2007, I have seen in Crete that the Greek Orthodox Christians are deeply impressed when they realize a Christian is fasting. One said to me that I (me) hear from God during the fast and then I share what He has given me to the people. I shared God's word and spoke of fasting to Nicos in Katerini, Germany in August 2016. He was encouraged by our conversation. In March 2017 again in Crete I sensed the Greeks' appreciation for a fasting Christian.

For the good, the grace, the power, and the wisdom that the Holy Spirit produces in our lives, we must give the glory to Jesus Christ alone. God shares His glory with no man. Do not touch the glory of God (Isaiah 42:8, Daniel 4:30-37, 5:20). This phrase "And thy righteousness shall go before thee" I saw written in Hebrew on a wall of the synagogue at the large Jewish cemetery in Chernovtsy, Ukraine. כבוד יהוה יaspers – kavod yehovah yaasphekah. This cemetery is no longer normally used, though in 2017 I saw new tombs. I suspect what they were saying "And thy righteousness shall go before thee" was that the good you have done will help you in the judgment.

Salvation is based on faith, not on works, in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. I have just pointed out that the religious acts of the fasting Jews were not recognized as good works by Jehovah. A person is saved by the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, not by his proper works of righteousness. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9). The believer's righteous acts will be remembered in the Judgment Seat of Christ (1 Corinthians 3:12-15, 2 Corinthians 5:10). "...the glory of the LORD shall be thy rereward..." (Isaiah 58:8). God's glory shall be upon the one who fasts, and it shall be the faster's protection and blessing. Christ will go before the faster and behind. As in the wilderness wanderings when the cloud guided the Jews by day and the pillar of fire by night (Exodus 13:22, 14:19-20, Deuteronomy 1:33). Isaiah 52:12 "For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight: for the LORD will go before you; and the God of Israel [will be] your rereward". Jesus Christ will not forsake those who know Him (Hebrews 13:5).

In Exodus 33:18-23 Moses asks to see the glory of God. All Moses was permitted to see was God's back parts. Moses, after fasting 40 days and nights without food or water, glowed. In Exodus 24:18 Moses goes to the Mount Sinai for 40 days and nights. The time on Mount Sinai is picked up again in Exodus

34:27-30. This is the second time Moses fasted 40 days and nights. After the 40 day and night fast the skin of Moses' face shone (verses 29-30). Aaron and the people were afraid to come near to Moses. His face shone because Moses met face to face with God. God talked to Moses during the fast. In Exodus 34:33 Moses put a vail on his face. In 2 Corinthians 3:13-18 Paul speaks of this vail (verse 13) "And not as Moses, which put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished." Dear Christian friend, the vail is taken away in Christ and He is waiting for you to come to Him, and if you can, come to Him in fasting fellowship. When you come to Him, He will talk to you, bless you, anoint you, and sup with you (Revelation 3:20). Halleluiah!

Isaiah 58:9

The 4th promise - Isaiah 58:9 "Then shalt thou call, and the LORD will answer" is found here. What an encouragement to fasting, praying and an accompanying Biblical lifestyle. In the 15 day and night fast of September 2006 I was praying for a digital projector for my Power Point Presentations. They cost about \$1000. On the last two days of the fast \$980 was given! God hears prayer offered in the name of His Son Jesus Christ. I got one for \$900. Fasting will greatly enhance your prayers. In May 2016 I had been two years without a digital projector. I was praying regularly for one. In May 2016 I finally was able to buy one. How we need to strengthen our prayers. In Luke 17 Jesus taught on faith. "And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith. And the Lord said if ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamore tree, be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you" Luke 17:5-6 "Thou shalt cry" (עושה - teshava) and he shall say, Here I am." The Hebrew word for "Here I am" is hineni - הineni. The connotation is "Behold, here I am, what do you want?!" What a privilege to be in such a close responsive relationship with the Almighty. For a moment meditate on the lifestyle of Anna as

described in Luke 2:36-38. She for many years “served God with fastings and prayers night and day.” She had this lifestyle perhaps since she became a widow. When she saw the baby Jesus, The Lord’s Christ, she recognized Him. Simeon also recognized Him (Luke 2:25-35). Fasting will help us to be in such a relationship with Jesus Christ that when we call God will respond “Here I am.” Let us pray, let us fast, let us live in the fullness of the Holy Spirit, in honesty, and righteousness in harmony with God’s will for our lives. For those who can fast, let us fast and be encouraged by the testimony of Anna. There are conditions that God honors, and attitudes as well. After she saw Jesus Christ “And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of Him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem” (Luke 2:38). Anna knew those in Jerusalem who were seeking redemption. “Birds of a feather flock together.” Being filled with the Holy Spirit will lead to witnessing (Acts 4:29-31). While witnessing you will meet some who are searching for God or who already know God through Jesus Christ. In Acts, Peter and John had healed the lame man before the temple in Jerusalem. Then Peter preached to the crowd that gathered. In Acts 4, Peter and John were arrested then in the morning were called to come to the religious leaders. They were forbidden to preach in Jesus’ name. When Peter and John returned to the believers and reported to them what happened the believers prayed for boldness to proclaim God’s word. The building was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness (verse 31). The Holy spirit will lead believers to those who are looking for redemption. Jesus after His 40 day and night fast was ready to begin His public ministry. Luke tells us the Spirit led Jesus to fast and after the fast the Holy Spirit led Him into Galilee (Luke 4:1-14).

These hypocritical Jews in Isaiah 58 had wrong attitudes. God through the prophet Isaiah is trying to point them out. Fasting is designed to break every yoke, as written in verse 6. The Hebrew word here for yoke is the same as in verse six where it

appears twice: *mota* – מָוֹת, “to undo the heavy burdens” and “and that ye break every yoke.” Believers have yokes that are choking them. Non-believers have yokes that are enslaving them. The believer who is fasting is in a very serious time and he should not speak vanities. Believers should always be careful of speaking vanities. I am reminded of the seriousness of the Nazarite vow. Samson was to be a Nazarite from his birth (Judges 13:5). Numbers 6 describes the Nazarite vow. He or she was to drink no wine, not cut the hair and touch no dead body. It was normally for a set period, but Samson was from his birth. Samson was not careful with this vow. The one fasting should be careful what he or she does during the fast. Jesus Christ came to set men free through His Word and the power of the Holy Spirit. John 8:32 says “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” In Daniel 9 as Daniel began to fast for understanding of Jeremiah’s discussion of 70 years for the desolations of Jerusalem, Daniel was first led to confess his sins and the sins of Israel (Daniel 9:1-21). Fasting will help the faster to realize his sins and to confess them. Probably in 2009 I sensed I needed to go to Israel, but I was so busy I did not see how I could possibly take the time to go to Israel. For some weeks I would not surrender to God’s will and call. On a regular Monday fast-prayer day in the midst of prayer I received the faith, the grace to submit to God’s will. I said yes to His call to visit Israel. I had a blessed visit in Israel, and I returned to France to prepare for my ministry in East Europe just after.

I wish to note Jesus’ meeting and healing in (Matthew 15:29-39). The multitude was with Him three days and they had eaten nothing. Matthew 15:32 “Then Jesus called his disciples [unto him], and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way” *fasting-neisteis* in Greek. The KJV translates the Greek word as fasting, Delitsch translated it in his Hebrew translation hungry. The English Revised Standard version translated it as

hungry. The Greek word has the sense hungry because you have eaten nothing. It comes from the same Greek root word for fast. Jesus had healed many and I imagine that He taught them as well. Jesus miraculously fed 4,000 men and there were women and children with them. During the three days of ministry there was no time for eating. Here is a fast because of a real interest in being with Jesus. I call this fast “The Fast of Intense Ministry.”

During my summer camp in Romania in 2016 with Mioveni church I considered these three days of meeting with no food. I taught Isaiah 58 that summer. I asked the church leadership if they wanted a conference of three days with no food in February 2017. They said yes. It happened and God blessed those three days without food and after it they asked for seven days without food in February 2018. That was a blessed time as well. “If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity.”

The hypocritical Jews were pointing the finger at others in criticism, or mockery or superiority. Proverbs 6:12-13 “A naughty person, a wicked man, walketh with a froward mouth. He winketh with his eyes, he speaketh with his feet, he teacheth with his fingers.” Let us be careful what we say with our body expressions, our body language. Let us speak the truth in love not lies or vain things. We need to put a guard on our mouth (and mind, and body). It is even better to nip it in the bud by getting it in the thinking before it comes out of the mouth or is expressed by the body or in writing or some other action. It was said of Samuel “And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground” (1 Samuel 3:19). May we be challenged by Samuel’s testimony of his care of his speech.

Isaiah 58:10

And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry.” The original meaning of the verb ‘draw out’ is to distribute. The verb

for ‘draw out’ used with soul gives a sense of being bowed down. (וְפָתַח - vetahfeek) The bowed down soul delivers to the hungry. The soul is bowed down because of proper fasting, with the fruits of the Holy Spirit flowing through the believer that fasted. In a proper spiritual fast as the body weakens the soul strengthens. The false claim of verse 3 “we afflicted our souls” can now be attained. Jehovah’s door to manifold blessings can now be opened. The faster is free to enter “come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Hebrews 4:16).

David said, “My knees are weak through fasting; and my flesh faileth of fatness” Psalm 109:24. I have experienced in long fasts my knees are weak and sometimes while walking my knees buckle. The fat disappears from my arms and fanny and when I rest my arm I feel the bone, or when I sit I feel the bone through my buttocks. The verb is found in Psalm 140:8 in the sense used here, “Grant not, O LORD, the desires of the wicked: further (וְתַחַת – tefek) not his wicked device; lest they exalt themselves. Selah.” ‘Further’ is the verb. Psalm 35:13 has already been mentioned in explanation of verse 3 showing that David humbled his soul with fasting. 2 Corinthians 12:8-10 “...And he (Jesus) said unto me my grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. (Paul) Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. ...for when I am weak, then am I strong .” The believer living under the power of the Holy Spirit wants to give himself to a needy person in order to help him and to minister spiritually to him. Fasting will help you to have this compassion and power. Those who fasted in verses 2 to 5 did not have this compassion or spiritual anointing. Compassion is a fruit of the Spirit that will be evident after the accepted fast. Fasting imparts power which is helpful in ministry especially in deliverance, sanctification, and in the face of temptation. Hebrews 4:16 tells us prayer stores up grace for the time of need. When one is weak from fasting, he is better able to have compassion on others who are in trouble, and are suffering and

they are weak. Many people in this world go to bed hungry and the faster experiences the hunger pangs, day and night. The verb is also found in Psalm 144:13 “That our garners may be full, affording (מְפִיקִים – mefikim) all manner of store: that our sheep may bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our streets:” ‘Affording’ is the verb. The Christian who is faithful will have what is needed to offer to others. In Acts 3 Peter and John at the entrance to the Temple had compassion on a lame man who was born lame. “Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk” Acts 3:6. Fasting will help the believer to reach the state of spirituality he needs, and there will also be grace to stay there. He that is of a contrite and humble spirit can minister to others (Isaiah 57:15). The principal is to get spiritually right with God before going out to minister. I use fasting as a time to check my spiritual state. I confess my sins and I ask God to search me and know my heart, to try me and to know my thoughts. Is there some wicked way in me, and may God lead me in the way everlasting (Psalm 139:23-24). Isaiah 58:10 says, “and satisfy the afflicted soul”. The humble believer can bring satisfaction and comfort to the suffering. A believer does not have to fast to satisfy the afflicted soul, but it helps. Though we may not be able to relieve the pain through healing, or through answered prayer, we can give comfort, courage, grace, and hope. Our prayers for the sick avail much (James 5:16). On March 29, 2020, in the evening by phone I tried to give comfort to a brother in Christ who has excruciating constant pain. I prayed for his healing quietly in my heart and gave him spiritual thoughts to comfort him. I pray for the miraculous healing of sick people. We can and should pray for those to whom we minister, especially efficacious is praying for them while you are fasting. Then the ministering believer shall shine. “Then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday.” “And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever” (Daniel 12:3). I recall I think in 2002 visiting in Russe, Bulgaria

Israelis who were in a serious car accident. A brother, Juli from Russe, Bulgaria, came with me. At the end of the visit I asked if I could pray. They permitted me to pray. I later visited them in Israel. One of the women who was there in the hospital room said she remembered my visit and she believed the prayer helped. I saw Juli in 2015. He was deep into yoga before his salvation. The Hebrew word in this verse for ‘afflicted’ – עננה - naanah is from the verb often used with fasting in the Old Testament (ענָה - anah) It is found in (Isaiah 58:3, 5,10, Psalm 35:13, Ezra 8:21, Leviticus 16:29-31, Daniel 10:12). In Ezra 8:21 to afflict and Daniel 10:12 - to chasten it is להתעננות – lehitinanot; [It is reflexive]. The faster has the promise that obscure things will become clear. Darkness is caused by trouble in one’s life but the faster has the promise that his darkness will become as the noonday. The noun here for noonday (בצָהָרִים -ka tzohoraim) is from the verb to shine (צָהָר - tzohar). The noun as in this verse is literally double light, which is most splendid light. Midday is when the sun is most high in the day. Fasting will help you to have a double light, a double shining! My practice has been “Never doubt in the dark what God has shown you in the Light.” I consider fasting as a time of light. I have tried through the years to accomplish the guidance Christ showed me during a fast.

Isaiah 58:11

And the LORD shall guide thee continually.” The faster receives guidance from God continually. Ezra turned to fasting for guidance (Ezra 8:21-23). “So we fasted and besought our God for this: and he was intreated of us” verse 23. Daniel did not understand the 70 years in the desolation of Jerusalem spoken by Jeremiah (Daniel 9:1-3, note verse 2, in 2 Chronicles 36:21, and Jeremiah 25:1-11 note verse 11 Jeremiah 29:1-10, especially verse 10, and Zechariah 7:5). Therefore he fasted and what an understanding he received (Daniel 9:24-27)!

For many of my trips especially those into Eastern Europe during the years 1988 to 2008 I fasted seeking God’s guidance

as to where, when, and why and for how long I should go to each place, and for His blessing on the work I would do. The faster's soul will be satisfied. The satisfaction experience makes it worth the discomfort. Verse 11b "...and satisfy thy soul in drought," Satisfy - השביע hisbiah. Today this Hebrew verb is used to express the satisfaction one has after eating a meal' בצתחוּ betzachtzachot' - in drought. With the use of this statement I sense that something very special is about to be introduced. The faster's soul shall be satisfied, it will not be in want. The climax comes in verse 14. The faster is about to enter into the heavenlies, the presence of Jehovah. It begins with "Then..." in verse 14. The faster will find satisfaction in his soul in times of drought. In difficult times there will be encouragement. The faster loses weight, but the faster's bones shall be made fat. J. Darby translated as "and strengthen thy bones," and he offered also "make agile."

I do not know exactly what is meant but it sure sounds good. My bones are big. In the 1957-58 football season I broke my leg in preseason practice time. The doctor said my bones were unusually large for my age. I am for helping my bones. As it was true in Old Testament times that the faster's bones shall be fat, so I believe it is true in New Testament times. Perhaps it is literal, and the bones are helped by fasting. And now the water flows to the garden. KJV has "watered garden." The word for 'watered' (רוה - raveh) is used in Psalm 23:5 translated 'runneth over', "my cup runneth over.." What a phrase: "and thou shalt be as a watered garden, and like a spring of water whose waters fail not." I think the year was 1965, probably January as the college semester was about to end with its examinations, that I went seven days and nights without food or water because of the immediate need of finances to pay my school bill. If I did not pay ahead of time I could not take the exams and I would lose the whole semester of study. I told Jesus Christ on Sunday night one week before the exams that I would not eat or drink until He gives me the money or until the bill is paid. I drank from verse 11 many times during the seven

day fast as the thirst was great, and my lips were cracked. I would read the verse often upon my knees and grace would be imparted and I was enabled to continue the day's activities. I wondered if my lips would heal. On the seventh day I taught Sunday school but could only speak for about 20 minutes as my throat was too dry. God did answer that fasting prayer for finances and then I broke the fast Sunday late afternoon or evening. Halleluiah! I sense I had a similar experience to David in 2 Samuel 12. After David's son from Bathsheba died, David broke his seven day and night fast for the life of his son. He returned to his house and cleaned himself, changed clothes then went into the temple to worship. Only after the worship did he return to his house for food. When I got the receipt that my bill had been paid, it was late Sunday. My first thought was to get alone with Christ and rejoice in His provision and grace to me. Only after worship did I seek water and food. After the bill was paid I was then permitted to take the exams. I never did that again and I never advised a Christian to try this. In most of my many fasts I have prayed for the supply of finances. In the eight day and night fast of October 2015 with the Mioveni church it was so. At the time of this fast \$4,000 of dental work was much needed. The dental work was supplied and completed January 2018 by a church in Israel. A much needed answer to this prayer.

Do you or someone you know, or some organization, have a financial need? Tell it to Jesus. Men as George Muller, Hudson Taylor, WEC (Worldwide Evangelization for Christ) Mission, Rees Howells of Swansea Bible College in Wales, Great Britain, and Cameron Thompson from USA who was founder of Pan American Testament League, trusted God alone to supply their needs. Cameron Thompson's widow Dell was still alive in 2015 and she continued the work of distributing gospels, New Testament and Bibles by faith. By 2017 Dell had passed away. Cameron T. wrote, "Master Secrets of Prayer." I heard a WEC missionary speak in Romania in 2013 (?) and he said WEC still has the practice of not sharing financial needs.

Fast for your needs and the needs of others. You may not have the money to help someone else, but you can fast and pray for the need, and Christ may give you money to give toward the project, and He can lead others to support the project. A believer in Jesus Christ should be very, very careful about sharing a financial need to other believers or churches or organizations. I am reminded of Jesus' instructions about inviting friends to your house for a meal (Luke 14:13-14). Invite those who cannot recompense thee. It has been my practice since 1964 not to tell of my financial needs to anyone but God. I learned that from Operation Mobilization (OM) in 1964 and have never forgotten this teaching and have endeavored to practice it ever since, up to now, October 2020. On occasion I do as George Muller did and I tell after God has supplied the need. He also did not share financial needs to others, even to the children in his orphanages. Lillian Thrasher an American missionary had an orphanage in Asyut, Egypt. She was born in Jacksonville, Florida, in 1887. She died in Asyut in December 1961. I was born in Jacksonville, Florida in 1942. She started her orphanage in 1911. She was famed as the "Nile Mother" of Egypt. Her orphanage was the first American orphanage in Egypt. When there was a financial need she stopped the school and told the girls the need and they all prayed and as I remember from her book, they all fasted. There is a recent book of 2020 "Nile Mother: the Story of Lillian Thrasher" by Lucindda Yong.

Hudson Taylor of China Inland Mission practiced the same principle, not sharing financial needs. George Muller sent donations to Hudson Taylor. George Muller had orphanages. When he needed finances, he did not tell the children there was no money nor did he tell anybody else. The address on my prayer card is where the finances can be sent. On November 29, 2011, I was in Tiberius, Israel at the end of my weekly fast day I cried out to Christ for finances. By 10 AM I was given \$108 and found \$162 in my room on my bed which I do not know where it came from.



Plymouth Brethren Assembly - Mioveni, RO

A fast of seven days was called by the Mioveni, Romania church in 2020 as we started the meetings. Not all fast, but some do. A brother from a sister church attended with his family. He did not eat or drink during the seven days and nights. "In that last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, if any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake he of the Holy Spirit...." (John 7:37-39). I like to compare this living water spoken of in John 7 with "and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not." This source will fail not.

The choice is yours and mine. "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 5:18-20). We are getting closer to the reality and splendor of verse 14.

Isaiah 58:12

And they that be of thee shall build the old waste places:." Grace will be given to the faster and he shall be able to rebuild the work of God which has fallen down. The faster is the builder. And those whom you the faster train shall also rebuild. "Thou shalt raise up the foundations of many

generations;.” This can be the work of restoration. For many generations, the gospel ministry has deteriorated. There is less Bible and more emotion and more men’s ideas. Prosperity and health are overemphasized. The emphasis on the Word of God in Evangelical churches is in decline. Surveys show that a large percentage of evangelicals in USA do not believe that Jesus is God. Some spiritual leaders are idolized. Paul in Galatians 3:1 said the Galatians believers were bewitched, and they did not obey the truth. There exists always the need to return to the fundamentals of the Biblical Christian faith. Those who are properly trained will carry on the right work of God which will last for generations. The fasting of the Jews mentioned in Isaiah 58 was rejected by Jehovah. Isaiah preached and taught to create a change in the religious Jew’s attitude. There needed to be a change in their hypocritical approach to Jehovah. The faster is the raiser up of foundations. I note the Protestant Reformation. Men like Calvin 1509-1564 who fled France for Switzerland because of Catholic persecution. Calvin was invited by William Farel to pastor the city church of Geneva. Ulrich Zwingli a leader of the reformation in Switzerland 1484-1531, Martin Luther of Germany 1483-1546, Jan (John) Hus in Prague, Czechoslovakia, excommunicated in 1410 by the Roman Catholic Church and burned in Council of Constance in July of 1415. Hus’ partner, Jerome of Prague, was a theologian from Prague. He heard John Wycliff in London in 1402. Jerome was burned alive in Constance in May of 1416. There is a bronze statue of these two in Prague, Czechoslovakia. Also, John Knox 1513-1572 in Scotland, Charles Wesley, and his brother John Wesley, 1703-1791, in England turned many to Jesus Christ and the Bible. In John Wesley’s journal he tells of his fasting. In his journal of August 1739, he advocated Friday fasting for the Methodist. Friday fasting was the discipline of the Anglicans. Wesley required that all ministers ordained to the Methodist ministry were required to fast Wednesday and Friday.

A contemporary of John Wesley was George Whitfield (1714-1770). He was an Anglican, but had no church and began his ministry of Evangelism in the open air. Whitfield turned his ministry over to John Wesley when he left England and went to the American Colonies. Brother Whitfield was part of The Great Awakening in the American colonies. Whitfield first came to the colonies in 1734. Johnathan Edwards began the revival and George Whitfield came from England to further the Revival. Jonathan Edwards fasted. His famous sermon ‘Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God’ was preached on the third day of a fast. His contemporary David Brainerd who labored among the American Indians in his journal recorded his fast days. Most of the people of New England, the American Colonies, heard him or heard of George Whitfield. There were then three million in the Colonies. John Knox, (1514-1572) of Scotland, met with Calvin. John Knox organized the Presbyterian Church of Scotland. The Christian involved in repairing shall be called the repairer of the breech (פֶּרֶץ גָּדֵר goder peretz). There is a hole in the wall, and it must be repaired. Nehemiah heard of the walls of Jerusalem were fallen down. “And it came to pass when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God (Elohei hashamayim) of heaven” (Nehemiah 1:4). In Nehemiah 4:6 we learn that they built the wall because the people had a mind to work. After the wall was rebuilt and the Law was read by Ezra the scribe in chapter 8 the Jews there in Jerusalem were convicted of their sin and they fasted in their repentance. Nehemiah 9:1. The Feast of Tabernacles was restored. “restorer (משׁוֹבֵב - meshoveiv) of paths (נְתִיבוֹת – Netivot-paths) to dwell in.” There is a town in Southwest Israel called Netivot, near the Gaza Strip. Restore in the Oxford dictionary, “attempt to bring back to original state by rebuilding, repairing....”

“My Christian friend, be a restorer.”

I was saved in 1960 and received my Christian education in the 1960's at Trinity Baptist Church in Jacksonville, Florida, and at Tennessee Temple Schools in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Tennessee Temple University was an Independent Baptist school. I believe that training was good, and it gave me a foundation upon which I could build my beliefs. Many Christians have strayed away from the fundamentals of the faith. They need prayer, teaching, to see a good example, and repentance. I believe fasting would help them to be restored. They need to return to the Bible and to the God of the Bible. In Psalm 50:21 Jehovah says that the Jews had made a god that was like themselves. The believer in Jesus Christ is to know the God of the Bible, not some other Christ who is not the Christ of the Bible. The repairer of the breach must live a good example, have a good testimony and pray for restoration for those in error. Fasting will also help if the believer is willing and able. The foundation is Biblical principles and teachings and to these we must return and remain true. **עולם חרבות** (- charvot olam -"old waste places") Those are the works of God which have fallen from Biblical principles and practices and these works need to be restored. One example is Replacement Theology. Israel has not been replaced by the Church. The Church of Jesus Christ does not replace the Jews. For a time, the Jews have been set aside that Gentiles might come into the Family of God (Luke 21:24, Romans 11:13-36). Romans 11:25 is similar to Luke 21:24. Individual Jews have been saved from the beginning of the church in the first century. The salvation of individual Jews continues. God will keep His promises that He made to the Jews. Many of these promises to the Jews will be fulfilled during the 1000-year reign of Jesus Christ on the earth. Christ's center and throne will be in Jerusalem where He will be with His people the Jews for a thousand years. Romans 11:18 "Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast , thou bearest not the root, but the root thee." The natural branches are the Jews, the Gentile believers are a wild olive tree grafted into the natural olive tree which is Israel (Romans 11:15-25). The 1000-year reign of Jesus Christ will come to this earth (

Revelation 20:1-7). He will reign in Jerusalem, and the Jewish people according to their tribes will be in Israel with Him in peace and unity and faith and action (Zechariah 14:16-17). [See Zechariah 14:11 for peace in Jerusalem]. Ezekiel 48 gives the division of the land of Israel according to the tribes during the 1000-year reign of the Messiah Yeshua (Jesus). The prophecies of Israel's future restoration and glory will be fulfilled during the 1000-year reign of Jesus Christ. Daniel 9:24 describes their future redemption.

John F. Walvood, Louis Sperry Shaefer, Charles C. Ryrie-his book on Dispensationalism, Tim Lahaye, and Renald Showers taught this. They are often called Premillennialists. After them came Amir Tzarfati of Israel, also J. D. Farag of Calvary Chapel, Barry Stagner and Jack Hibbs of Calvary Chapel, Dr. David Jeremiah founder of Turning Point Radio and TV Ministries. They believe Jesus Christ will return first to take His church in the Rapture, after which will be the seven year Tribulation before the Millennium. Jesus Christ upon His return to the earth will judge the nations gathered in Israel (Zechariah 12:4-9, Joel 3:2) and judge Israel (Ezekiel 20:31-44) then to reign on earth for a 1000-years. In Daniel 9:24-27 The future of the Jewish people in their land Israel is given. The prophecy is given in 70 weeks of years. There is a break between the 69th week and the 70th week. The world has been in this in between time period since the finished work of redemption of Jesus Christ. The 70th week is called in Jeremiah "the time of Jacob's trouble, and he shall be saved out of it." (Jeremiah 30:7).

In the New Testament it is called the Tribulation. The last three and a half years of the Tribulation are called the Great Tribulation (Matthew 24:21-24, Revelation 7:14). The Tribulation has been designed with the Nation of Israel, the Jew, in mind. For this reason it is called the time of Jacob's trouble. Daniel got this understanding from Daniel 9:24-27 while fasting (Daniel 9:1-3). The New Testament informs the

believers of the troublesome times before the Rapture of the true believers before the beginning of the 70th week. In 2020 there are troubles-Coronavirus, delusion-good is evil, earthquakes-Turkey in October, wars-still in Syria then Azerbaijan and Armenia and rumors of wars, and many signs of the coming antichrist. The USA elections in November were also troublesome. It is now an important, strategic time for believers to pray-any time is strategic to pray. Praying with fasting is needed today. In Daniel 9:24 the Jews' final restoration including the Holy City Jerusalem, and pardon of their sins and the anointing of their temple is prophesied. The preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is to all, Jews included. Jews and Gentiles are saved in the same way. Revival from God will greatly help to rebuild the old waste places in our present time. Many revivals were preceded by fasting and praying. The foundations of many generations need to be raised and restored. Many Christians need to return to the true Biblical paths to dwell in. The religious Jews are following the precepts of men (Isaiah 29:13-14, also Psalm 50:21). Many Christians are following traditions and not the Bible. How I need God's help to read the Bible. Reading and studying the Bible is helpful to bring on revival and needed change. Am I a builder, a raiser up, a repairer of the breach, a restorer of paths to dwell in? Or am I a breaker down of the wall? In May of 2020 as The National Day of Prayer for USA was as always the first Thursday of May, I found this verse, Isaiah 58:12 helpful in my prayer and fasting for USA on May 7, 2020.

Isaiah 58:13

Isaiah is Old Testament, and the Sabbath was still in that context when Isaiah wrote. God blessed those Jews who kept it holy in the Biblical sense of the word holy. Those who were abusing it needed to change. The first two statements of this verse are negative uses of the Sabbath. We are at the end of Jehovah's plea to the fasting Jews. In spite of their sinful use of their fasting Jehovah gives them the opportunity to change and be blessed. If their attitude towards the Sabbath is right

then their attitude towards fasting will also be right. “If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day;” The Sabbath is Jehovah’s holy day, and He expected His people the Jews to observe it accordingly. If a Jew sought his own pleasure, not the pleasure of Jehovah, he was turning his foot away from the sabbath. Verse 3 already presented the Jews’ wrong attitude toward the fast day. “Behold. in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours.”

The exile to Babylon for 70 years was because the Sabbath was not observed by the Jews. God intended that His Land would rest one day in a week with the Jews resting with the Land (2 Chronicles 36:20-21, Leviticus 26:32-39). Jehovah called for a 70-year expulsion of the Jews from their and His Land so the Land could enjoy its Sabbaths. It was the one day in the week when God’s pleasure was kept not the believer’s personal preference and weekly activities. If the Shabbat keeping Jew was in a spiritual attitude, the Sabbath was a joy to him or her. The pressing need to work on the Land was to be put aside for 1 day. The observant Jew was to be careful about what he or she did or said on the Sabbath. In Amos 8:5 the Jews were wanting the sabbath to be finished so they could sell. In their selling they cheated on the weight of the product and increased the price. There was also the Sabbatical year when the Land of Israel was not to be farmed for a year, every seventh year. Jehovah’s thoughts were on the Land, as well as upon the people of the Land of Israel, both belonging to Him. The seventh year was also for the poor and the strangers to eat, and animals were to eat what the poor and strangers left. This reminds me of verse seven. The fast is for giving your bread to the hungry, and bringing the poor into your house, and to clothe the naked and to help your own flesh, your fellow mankind. If the Land rested then the people, the Hebrews, in the Land would also rest. Leviticus 25:2-7, (verse 4) “sabbath of rest” - שבת שבעת שבעות, (verse 5) shenat shabaton – “ – שבעת שבעות – year of rest”. It is also mentioned about the Sabbatical year in (Exodus 23:10-

12). In Exodus 23:11 we see the verb from which is taken the Hebrew name for the Sabbatical Year, the year of Smitah, tishmetena- שִׁמְתָּנָה. In verse 11

Jehovah wants the Land to rest and lie still. וְנִשְׁתַּתְהָ -venetashta. -lie still, abandoned. And He wants His People to be still. “Be still and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth” (Psalm 46:10). The earth refers to Israel. These verses about the Sabbath show the mercy of God on His Land and His People, the poor and the strangers and animals in the Land.

May we Christians be mindful of the need of rest for man, beast, and land, and what we do during a fast. The principle is to be applied to the whole life of followers of Jesus Christ. Believers are to enter into this rest. Hebrews chapter four speaks of the Sabbath Rest. Jehovah finished His creation in six days and on the seventh the Sabbath He rested (verse 4). The Jews in the wilderness wanderings did not enter into Jehovah’s rest: because they had not faith verse two. They were in unbelief (verse 6). The believer is to cease from his own proper works as Jehovah did from His (verses 9-10). Believers are to enter into this rest. The distance they were allowed to walk was limited. In Exodus 16:29 the Jews were told to stay at home for the Sabbath. In Acts 1:12 a Sabbath day’s journey is mentioned. The disciples walked from the Mount of Olives to Jerusalem after seeing Jesus depart to return to heaven. The Scofield note says about 4854 feet = 1,480 meters. Under rabbinic law it was permitted to walk 2000 cubits (2/3 of a mile). The 2000 cubits may come from Numbers 35:5. This was the 2000 cubits allotted to the Levitical cities of refuge. This was 2000 cubits on each of the four sides of the city, space for the suburbs. Jehovah did not want his people to be busy on the Sabbath, but to rest and be refreshed Exodus 31:17. The faster should be mindful how far he travels on a fast day. It is better to concentrate on the reason for the fast rather than concentrating on traveling on the fast day. On the seventh day

Jehovah rested and was refreshed, and He sanctified the Sabbath (Genesis 2:3). Even necessities were waivered for the sanctity of the day. No fires were permitted (Exodus 35:3). I want to insert here God's concern for His Land Israel. In Joel 3:2, in some Bibles it is 4:2, as it is in the Hebrew text, God says He will gather all nations to the Valley of Jehoshaphat (Jehovah judges) to judge them because of their treatment of His People the Jew and His Land which is Israel. The Valley of Jehoshaphat is considered by some as the Valley of Jezreel where is located the Hill Megiddo. From Har (Hill) Megido comes Armageddon. Some believe the Valley of Jehoshaphat is the Kidron Valley in between the Temple Mount and the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. Atif Himadeh who pastored the First Bible Baptist church in East Jerusalem for over 50 years believed this. Pastor Himadeh passed away in 2019. Those to be judged scattered the Jews and divided up His Land. When Jews are persecuted some escape by fleeing. This was their sin, those who scattered the Jews. On November 29, 1947, the United Nations proposed the Partition Plan for Palestine. In June and July, 2020, the United Nations and Europe was against the annexation of the Jordan Valley and parts of Samaria by Israel. The Land of Israel is for the Jews only. This fact is true of all time, not only limited to the Old Testament. The Land of Israel was promised by Jehovah to the Jews before the Law received by Moses (Genesis 15:18-21). Today as in the Old Testament time and as the past 2000 years since Jesus Christ came God is still judging those who scatter the Jews and divide His Land Israel (Genesis 12:1-3). God judges the Jews and the non-Jews the Gentiles for their dealing with the Land of Israel. This is a national judgment mentioned in Joel 3:2. Individuals are also judged according to their treatment toward the Jewish people and their Land Israel. The Sabbath was to be a delight. **vvv** – oneg [pleasant] On Friday night as the evening service finishes the Jews have a fellowship called 'Oneg Sabbath'. Zechariah speaks of joy and gladness in fasting. "Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the fast of the fourth month, and the fast of the fifth, and the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth, shall

be to the house of Judah joy and gladness, and cheerful feasts; therefore love the truth and peace" (Zechariah 8:19). Oneg is not used here in Zechariah. Feasts in this verse refers to the days chosen to remember significant events. What are the fasts mentioned in Zechariah 8:19?

From the internet: Unlike the divinely appointed Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), the fasts mentioned in this verse were of human origin. They were instituted to serve as reminders of four sorrowful events that befell the Jewish nation during the days of Jeremiah and Ezekiel. The "fast of the fourth month," observed during the month of Tammuz, commemorated the time the city of Jerusalem was broken up (Jeremiah 52:5-7). The "fast of the fifth" was observed on the tenth of Ab, when the Temple and the houses were burned (Jeremiah 52: 12-13). The "fast of the seventh" refers to the third of Tishri, when Gedaliah was slain by Ishmael. Jeremiah 40:8, 41:1-3, 15-18 The "fast of the tenth" was kept on the tenth of Tebeth, when the king of Babylon turned against Jerusalem (Ezekiel 24:1-2). This information can be verified in the Jewish Talmud. As this verse shows, Zechariah 8:19 these humanly appointed fasts will be turned into feasts or occasions of gladness when Jehovah restores all Israel to His way of life. At last, the people will seek Jehovah and will be greatly blessed. They will no longer wish to perpetuate the memory of tragic events (Daniel 9:24).

I understand verses 13 and 14 of Isaiah 58 as part of Isaiah's discussion on fasting. May our Christian life and service and worship and fasting be a delight. Another occasion of fasting leading to joy and gladness is in Esther's three day fast. She called the fast in Esther 3:16 to save the lives of the Jews of her day from India to Ethiopia. Jehovah responded to her fasting prayer and delivered the Jews from the hands of Haman the Agagite. In Esther 9:18-19 the Jews chose the 13 and 14 of Adar for the holyday called Purim which would be for feasting and gladness. The sin dealt with here in this verse 13 of Isaiah

58 is the wrong practices and attitudes done on the Sabbath. The Sabbath was to be kept holy and to be honored. (– וְכִבְדָתּוּ vekibadto) The KJV translates it by "and shalt honour him". It is not clear to me who the 'him' is., The sabbath or Jehovah. Sabbath is feminine, this is masculine. In Isaiah 56:2 "that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it" the "it" is masculine. K&D see the "him" as referring to the Sabbath. This is called a masculine personification of the Sabbath. God was to be honored, and the Jew who honored Jehovah also honored the Sabbath. It would have been natural. Honoring the Sabbath was honoring God if it was done in the right spirit. It was not a time for doing one's own ways or own pleasures nor speaking one's own words, nor doing one's business. "speaking thine own words" uses devar- **דְבָר** twice. A similar use is found in Hosea 10:4. "They have spoken words, swearing falsely in making a covenant: thus judgment springeth up as hemlock in the furrows of the field." - **דְבָרָו דְבָרִים** - dibru devarim, "They have spoken words". **דְבָר** – devar is again used twice. Hemlock is a poisonous plant. (K&D) speak of words of vain useless character and needless multitude. It was God's Holy Day.

This is a guiding principle for every moment of a believer's life. Each day is holy for the believer in the New Testament. Every act, word and thought will be judged. I have been troubled through all my years of fasting about the things I do on a fast day. I try to be careful about correspondence such as email, letters, phone calls, and traveling. There are times when I must do things and there are times when I am involved in evangelism during a fast. I tend to emphasize prayer over Bible reading and evangelism in a fast. I seek the Holy Spirit's guidance for each fast. I do more praying when I walk with the pages of my Israel list outside of my apartment. I get too distracted when I stay in my apartment. It became worse after my two strokes in 2008. I sometimes sing songs from a hymnbook during a fast. Fasting is for praying. The faster is to be careful about what he does and says during the fast. This teaching is also good for the whole lifetime of a believer, which I believe is the New Testament attitude and fulfillment. Every moment of a

Christian's life is observed by God and should be consecrated to Him. The life of the believer will be judged at the judgment seat of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:9-10). May Jesus Christ's will for us become our will. Amen. Believers in Jesus Christ who live in a country where Sunday is a holiday I would encourage them to go to church on Sunday. In Israel, the Israeli churches meet on the Sabbath as Sunday is a normal workday and school day. We should find joy in giving Jesus Christ one day of the week. And let us go further, give every day to Jesus Christ. May every day of the believer's life be consecrated to Jesus Christ. Amen. Believers are admonished to gather together (Hebrews 10:25). A believer is to be fully persuaded about his decisions (Romans 14:4-5, 10-14, 23). Isaiah 58:13 ends with instruction about what we speak. I often make jokes or funny comments flowing out of a conversation. My father did and so I do. Before we tell a joke or make a comment during a conversation turning it into a joke we as Christians should be mindful of what we are about to say. I sometimes catch myself before I give my joke thinking I should not say it. This is especially true if the comment is in the area of the Bible and faith in the God of the Bible.

I find it interesting that the attitude for the Sabbath is dealt with in this Fasting Chapter. I sense Jehovah wants the same carefulness exercised during the fast as during the Sabbath. Obviously, I am not referring to restrictions as making a fire or a certain distance to walk. I am not advising Christians to keep the Jewish Sabbath. During a fast the faster would not normally prepare meals. A mother who is fasting may have to prepare meals for her family. The rule of Jehovah that there are to be no fires would prevent food from being prepared by fire.

Isaiah 58:14

Then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD...." Obedience to the Holy Spirit's leading brings delight in the Lord. "Then"- az-־vv refers to once being obedient to what Isaiah 58 teaches, then the benedictions of verse 14 will be experienced.

‘Delight’ is from the verb ‘oneg - עָגֵג’ seen in verse 13, “and call the Sabbath a delight”. Full surrender brings joy. Assurance brings delight. It may lead to trouble and difficulty, but the joy and delight will be there. “and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth.” There are high places of fellowship and blessing that are given to those who wholly follow Christ. “He maketh my feet like hind’s feet, and setteth me upon my high places” (Psalm 18:33). “My high places” is the same Hebrew letters as in (Isaiah 58:14). In Isaiah 58:14 there are no vowel points on the Hebrew word, but in Psalm 18:34 there are. In Isaiah 58:14 the high places are in construct with the next word earth. David had his own high places, and so could we!

Now to the last verse of Habakkuk 3:19 “The LORD God (Jehovah Adonai) is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds’ feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places. To the chief singer on my stringed instruments.” “mine high places” is as Psalm 18:33. In Hebrew it is verse 4. Those of the Jewish remnant of the Old Testament could reach these heights and born-again believers of the New Testament can reach these heights. These are high places, and the normal Christian does not reach such heights. One is transported by Christ Himself through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Christ will feed with Biblical truth those who follow Him. It is worth surrendering to have Christ’s blessing. Fasting will help you to reach these high places, though fasting is not necessary in order to reach them. The context of the chapter is fasting, and this is the state that can be reached as a result of the proper, accepted fast. I am reminded of a testimony by Tom Williams who was my pastor in 1964. He was reading the Bible and was so blessed that he had to stop reading and take a walk. Psalm 84:11 "For the Lord is a sun and a shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." Brother Tom said God gives light, here the sun, but also protects when it is too glorious with His shield. “And feed thee with the heritage of Jacob, thy father:” Here in the Old Testament it is

the heritage of Jacob, for those in the New Testament there is the heritage of Messiah Yeshua. From Jacob came the 12 tribes. David came from Judah and so did Jesus Christ. And from the 12 tribes came Moses and the prophets and through them the Old Testament was written. This was a great heritage. New Testament believers share in the heritage of the Old Testament. The Jews also wrote the New Testament. Psalm 91:1 Tells us of dwelling in the secret place of the Most High. The Hebrews word used here is elyon- עליון. In Genesis 14:18-19 el elyon is mentioned twice. El is God, elyon is Most High. Melchizedek was the priest of the Most High God. He said Abram was of the Most High God. We of the New Testament can dwell in the Heights of the Most High God. In the New Testament we have the heritage of Christ, and that heritage will take you all the way to heaven for eternity. In 1 Peter 1:3-4 we are told that God the Father of our LORD Jesus Christ has begotten us through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead "To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us." In Ephesians 1:13-14 after believing we were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise "Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." Christians should be eating and drinking and living in high places. We are invited to sup with Jesus Christ (Revelation 3:20). Have a taste of 1 Corinthians 2:9 "But as it is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." This verse is from Isaiah 64:4. The next verse, 1 Corinthians 2:10 tells us these things are revealed unto us by the Spirit. Also "O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in Him" (Psalm 34:8). This is riding upon the high places of the earth. While a believer is still on the earth he or she can experience the reality and nature of The God and Savior Jesus Christ. In Ephesians 1:3 "heavenly places" are mentioned, these are the heavenlies. The word 'places' was added in the KJV. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.”

The Scofield Bible note on Ephesians 1:3 “The believer’s place as a member of the body of Christ, vitally united to Him by the baptism with the Holy Spirit.” (1 Corinthians 12:12-13) The baptism of the Holy Spirit is received at moment of salvation.

1. “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.
2. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.
3. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.
4. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

Colossians 3:1-4 These high places are a spiritual state of the soul. All believers are positioned or seated in the heavenlies. The born-again believer is to accept this, believe it and live in that exalted state. Isaiah 58 has shown us that fasting will get you to the higher places. Fasting will help you to enter into the courts of the Lord. Psalm 84:1-2 “How amiable are thy tabernacles, O LORD of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.” What a joy and privilege to be in His presence. “...praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; though now you see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory” (1 Peter 1:7-8). Fasting is not the only way to have such blessings, but God has given us this lesson on fasting.

During the fast, not only are there precious times of fellowship with Christ and great pleasure in being with Christ in the heavenlies, but there is great power to accomplish the work of

God, especially through prayer. You will be able to break the yoke of sin, for the true fast breaks the yoke of sin. That is the message of (verse 6). Fasting is for restoring the old waste places. Fasting can help you to understand difficult verses in the Bible. Daniel was troubled by Jeremiah's 70 years. He fasted to get the understanding (Daniel 9:2-4). See the understanding Daniel got in verses 24-27.

In this study I have not dealt much with praying for the sick in body and mind. Fasting is an excellent time to pray for the sick. I have endeavored in all my fasts to pray for the sick. Fasting proves love. Do you love those who are bound by sin or mental strife, or those who are sick or those who have financial needs or those in serious situations like marital problems? Then fast for them if your body permits fasting. Fasting is to God, for fellowship with God and for people in need, and for needs in general. The chapter ends "for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it." What more do you want or need to be convinced that fasting is for today and for you? On May 15, 2012, in Saone, France I woke up in the morning thinking of where is the power of God, that is, the power of God upon us. His power is in the Holy Spirit. To have the power of God you must be filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 4:23-34). In verse 29 and 30 the persecuted believers asked, "and grant unto Thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak Thy word." In verse 30 they asked for the visible manifestation of the power of God. In verse 31 they were filled with the Holy Spirit, and then they spoke the word of God with boldness. They had been filled with the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and there was a necessity of another filling. I think the power comes from: first reading and studying and memorizing the Bible, second praying, third a consistent testimony, with living in the will of God, coupled with evangelism, fourth ministering the word of God and fifth fasting which is helpful though not necessary. In the area of a consistent testimony I include Christian service. A believer should be ministering to others, which we saw in Isaiah 58:7-11. The Christian needs the power of the Holy Spirit to minister

especially in witnessing, but also in praying, and in teaching or preaching or sharing the Word of God, counseling and putting into practice his faith. The power of the Holy Spirit helps in overcoming sin in a believer's life. The power can be gained by the first four, but I believe fasting will advance and facilitate the process of being filled with the Holy Spirit. I believe it was so in my life. Due to health reasons there are believers who cannot fast. Jesus Christ understands that. Jesus Christ found fasting necessary and He taught on fasting when He lived on the earth. I wonder why He needed to fast? Perhaps because He was a man, a human being. He left us an example of what a man needed to do to approach God. Matthew 4 and Luke 4 tell us the Holy Spirit led Him to the wilderness for a 40 day and night fast. If Jesus Christ needed to fast, I believe His followers need to fast as well, if they are physically able and if the Holy Spirit leads. Prayer and fasting had an important, strategic part in the most difficult USA Presidential election in November 2020. “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” (Ephesians 6:12). “And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast.” (Matthew 9:15). When Jesus was at Jacob’s well in Samaria talking to the Samaritan woman, His disciples went to find food. When they returned and offered food to Him He said: “But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of” (John 4:32). “...that He might make thee know that man does not live by bread only, but by every word that proceeded out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live” (Deuteronomy 8:3b).

Pastor Lee Picket was pastor for many years in Thompson, Manitoba, Canada at my supporting church, Burntwood Baptist Church. He now pastors in Watertown, NY at Fellowship Baptist Church.



He has heard my teaching on fasting for years. The roof on the church was damaged by a storm. The insurance will not pay. Pastor Picket told his board and church he does not want to go to a bank for a loan. They instituted a Church Wide Fast three times per year. It is widely untaught and unpracticed. I really believe that when we instituted a fast for what we cannot do ourselves the Lord immediately provided a portion. He said we will believe Jesus Christ will supply. He set up 3 fasts for a year. One fast in spring, one in the summer and one in the winter. The spring fast would be in 5 weeks. This fast will be for the \$110,000 for the roof. People started giving and in 3 weeks they had \$110,000! Therefore, the spring fast will be for thanksgiving of Christ's provision!

Ghimbav, Romania, farmer and Pastor, John Dragushin where I have preached many times and taught fasting. Delivery of 1,000 pounds of potatoes to families and churches over my 30 years of ministry in Romania.



Mioveni, Romania - Church Camp



Living Hope Independent Baptist Church



Independent Baptist Church Beius, Romania

In 2023 IBCB bought land to build a church building. They have not yet started the building.



The pastor is Peter Beltechi with his wife Gabriela. I have taught fasting in his church several times. A sister church is Living Hope Independent Baptist Church in Hunedoara, RO. Peter heard the messages on fasting I gave in 2023 in IBCH. IBCB has set aside Wednesday for fasting.

References

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Exod. 34:28 Moses' first period of forty days on Sinai
Lev. 16:29,31 On the Day of Atonement
Lev. 23:14 Until the sheaf of the wave offering was offered
Lev. 23:27,32 On the Day of Atonement
Num. 6:3-4 The law of the Nazirite
Num. 29:7 On the Day of Atonement
Deut. 9:9, 18 Moses' two periods of forty days on Sinai
Judg. 20:26 By Israel after their defeat by Benjamin
1 Sam. 1: 7-8 Hannah's prayer for a child
1 Sam. 7:6 At Mizpah under Samuel
1 Sam. 14:24-30 Saul's curse uttered in battle
1 Sam. 20:34 Jonathan grieved at Saul's hatred of David
1 Sam. 30:11-12 Egyptian servant David found in the field
1 Sam. 31:13 By those that buried Saul and his sons
2 Sam. 1:12 By David and his men at news of Saul's death
2 Sam. 3:35 By David at Abner's death
2 Sam. 11:11 Uriah's self-discipline in time of battle
2 Sam. 12:16-23 By David for the child of Bathsheba
1 Kings 13:8-24 By prophet who cried against altar at Bethel
1 Kings 17:6, 14-16 Elijah's restricted diet at Cherith and Zarephath
1 Kings 19:8 By Elijah on his journey to Horeb
1 Kings 21:4-5 By Ahab after Naboth's refusal
1 Kings 21:9,12 Naboth was set on high at Jezebel's Instigation
1 Kings 21:27 By Ahab in self-humiliation
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2 Chron. 20:3 Proclaimed by Jehoshaphat before battle
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Ezra 9:5 Ezra mourning for the faithlessness of the exiles
Ezra 10:6 Ezra mourning for the faithlessness of the exiles
Neh. 1:4 By Nehemiah for the restoration of Jerusalem
Neh. 9:1 By people of Jerusalem, confessing their sins
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Esther 4:16 Called by Esther before audience with the king
Esther 9:31 In connection with the feast of Purim
Job 33:19-20 As a result of pain or sickness
Ps. 35:13 David on behalf of others who were sick
Ps. 42:3 When the Psalmist's tears became his food
Ps. 69:10 The cause of David being reproached

Ps. 102:4 The Psalmist forgets food in his affliction
Ps. 107:17,18 As a result of sickness
Ps. 109:24 The cause of David's physical weakness
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Dan. 6:18 Darius when Daniel was in the lions' den
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Joel 2:12 When returning to God with all the heart
Joel 2:15 Proclaimed by blowing a trumpet in Zion
Jon. 3:5-9 Proclaimed by the people and king of Nineveh
Zech. 7:3-5 With mourning in the fifth and seventh months
Zech. 8:19 Kept in the fourth, fifth, seventh and tenth months
Matt. 4:2 By our Lord for forty days
Matt. 6:16-18 Not to be practiced as the hypocrites do
Matt. 9:14-15 By John's disciples and the Pharisees
Matt. 9:15 By the guests when the bridegroom has departed
Matt. 11:18 The abstemious character of John the Baptist,
Matt. 15:32 State of the four thousand before our Lord fed them
Matt. 17:21 This kind can only come forth by it
Mark 2:18 By John's disciples and the Pharisees
Mark 2:19-20 By the guests when the bridegroom has departed
Mark 8:3 State of the four thousand when our Lord fed them
Mark 9:29 This kind can only come forth by it
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Luke 4:2 By our Lord for forty days
Luke 5:33 By John's disciples and the Pharisees
Luke 5:34-35, Luke 7:33 The abstemious character of John the Baptist
Luke 18:12 By the boastful Pharisee, twice a week
Acts 9:9 Saul of Tarsus after his encounter with Christ
Acts 10:30 By Cornelius when an angel appeared to him
Acts 13:2-3 By prophets and teachers in Antioch
Acts 14:23 At the appointment of elders in the churches
Acts 23:12-21 By Jews under an oath to kill Paul
Acts 27:9 Allusion to the annual Day of Atonement
Acts 27:21,33 By those with Paul before the shipwreck
Rom. 14:21 Abstaining for the sake of a weaker brother

- 1 Cor. 7:5 In the marriage relationship
- 1 Cor. 8:13 Abstaining for the sake of a weaker brother
- 2 Cor. 6:5 An ingredient of the apostolic ministry
- 2 Cor. 11:27 In the list of Paul's sufferings
- 1 Tim. 4:3 False teachers commanding abstinence

God's Chosen Fast – Author Wallis
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Bibliography

1. In the first centuries of the Christian church Wednesdays and Fridays were fast days. (The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, vol IV, pg. 283.) The Pharisees fasted 2 days a week, Mondays and Thursdays. Luke 18:12. Fasting in the early church fell into many abuses. (J. Harold Smith, *Fast Your Way to Health*, Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1979. pg. 85.) In the early church the practice was fasting before feasting. There were fasts before Christmas, Epiphany, Easter, and Pentecost.
2. In Leviticus 16 for the Day of Atonement the Jews were to afflict their souls. John Wesley said from this: “Christians who take heed unto their ways, and desire to walk humbly and closely with God, will find frequent occasion for private seasons of afflicting their souls before their Father which is in secret.” (David R. Smith, *Fasting, A Neglected Discipline-DRS*) Wesley was a fervent faster. Throughout his lifetime he preached in favor of fasting. In a crisis on Feb. 6, 1756, J. Wesley called for a fast. He had a famous message on fasting. (Arthur Wallis, *God’s Chosen Fast*. pg. 34-35. Available from CLC Fort Washington, PA)
3. Reformers as Martin Luther (1482-1546) of Germany, Calvin (1509-1564) of France and later Switzerland and John Knox (1514-1572) of Scotland fasted. Luther fasted as he translated the German Bible. He encouraged the restoration of proper fasting. Calvin encouraged fasting. The Westminster Confession says that “solemn fastings” are “in their times and seasons” to be used in a holy and religious manner.
4. Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) an American Colonist preached his sermon ‘Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God’ while he was weak from fasting for 3 days. From a biographical sketch of Jonathan Edwards: ‘Mr. Edwards was in the habit of setting apart special days for prayer, self-examination, and fasting. His fasting at such times was not spiritual, but literal, and he “considered literal abstinence from food, either entire or partial, according to the state of his health and other circumstance, as essentially included in his duty.”
5. David Brainerd 1718-1747 missionary to the American Indians fasted. His ministry was in the 1740’s. From his diary: April 20, 1743 “Set apart this day for fasting and prayer, to bow my soul before God

for the bestowment of divine grace; especially that all my spiritual afflictions, and inward distresses, might be sanctified to my soul. And endeavored also to remember the goodness of God to me the year past, this day being my birthday.” David Brainard was a friend of Jonathan Edwards.

6. Charles Finney, 1792-1875 fasted. He was an evangelist who had a part in the Second Great Awakening or Revival in USA. It was from 1790 to 1840. Finney had a keen sense of the Holy Spirit’s fullness. When he lost that fullness, he stopped eating until it came back. John Wesley said when he felt his power diminishing and a coldness coming over his heart, he fasted and prayed a few days and God heard and answered. I heard that John and Charles Wesley fasted each Thursday and Friday until teatime.

7. J. Harold Smith an American who was born in 1910 and died in 2001 practiced fasting. After leaving the pastorate he entered evangelism. He soon found that he did not have the power to win the lost in his meetings. He understood that he would have to fast 40 days and nights to get that power. He drank only water, eating no food for those 40 days and received the power to win the lost. He wrote a book on fasting. He said his best evangelistic meetings were those in which he fasted from the time he got on the airplane to go to the meeting, to the time he got back on the plane to return home. Br. Smith in his book gives suggested food to eat when breaking a long fast. His book is out of print. I have found it on Amazon. ‘Fasting Your Way to Health J H Smith founded Radio Bible Hour which still existed in 2015 celebrating its 80th year on the radio.

8. Lester Roloff encouraged fasting. He encouraged the students at Tennessee Temple Schools in the 1960’s to fast one day a week. I first heard him in 1963 or 1964. I have followed the practice of one fast day a week since the 1960s. It is still my practice in 2022. Br. Roloff wrote a booklet on fasting. It is titled ‘Food, Fasting and Faith’ He spoke of the value of a juice fast. In a fast with no food, he encouraged drinking much water. A complete fast is going without any sort of food or liquid. I understand Bill Bright suggested a juice fast as well. Bill Bright of Campus Crusade for Christ wrote a book on fasting.

9. Christian Literature Crusade-CLC in Fort Washington, PA 19034, sells at least 2 books on fasting. One is 'GOD'S CHOSEN FAST' by Arthur Wallis. The other is 'FASTING. A NEGLECTED DISCIPLINE' by David R. Smith. CLC prints these 2 books. CLC P O Box 1449 FORT WASHINGTON, PA 19034 USA. CLC INTERNATIONAL (UK) Unit 5. Glendale Avenue Sandycroft, Flinshane, CH5 2QP UNITED KINGDOM. www.clcusa.org

a. Fasting: A Neglected Discipline has a good bibliography.
b. God's Chosen Fast has an exhaustive list of fasting in the Bible in his Biblical Index. This INDEX is included in this booklet. This book also gives Herbert McGolfin Shelton, Fasting Can Save Your Life. It has been reprinted. Shelton also wrote The Science and Fine Art of Fasting

10 . Paul E. Freed of TWR (Trans World Radio) His book 'Towers to Eternity' written in 1968, page 35 "One of my happiest memories of childhood has to do with Mother and Father's belief in prayer and fasting. Friday, late afternoon and evening, was set aside in their week for this purpose. But I suppose the thing that impressed me most as a child was that Ruth and I never felt we had to fast with them. In fact, Mother would go out of her way on pray-and fast night to prepare for us the most wonderful meal of all. She often let us decide what we would like most for Friday supper. It must have been a real temptation for her as she prepared hot breads or cinnamon rice, and as the kitchen was filled with delicious smells on the evenings when she ate nothing. This is evidence of love, plus their allowing us rather than forcing us to do as they did, stimulated our growth in grace, our desire to learn to walk with the One whom our parents followed closely. To this day I associate prayer and fasting with an unforgettable time of enjoyment."

11. Website Bible.org has an extensive article Chapter 3: Fasting Through The Patristic Era.

12. After Matthew 9:14-15 Gentle Reformation in THE EXPECTATION OF FASTING wrote: The Lord wants you to experience communion with him in a way only prayer and fasting can bring. Fasting is not presented by him as something to bind you up in legalism, like the Pharisees practiced it. Rather, Jesus encouraged

what John Piper captures simply with the title of his book on this subject - Hunger for God. In another of his writings, Piper quotes Jonathan Edwards who wrote, Our hungering's and thirsting's after God and Jesus Christ and after holiness can't be too great for the value of these things, for they are things of infinite value... [Therefore] endeavor to promote spiritual appetites by laying yourself in the way of allurement... There is no such thing as excess in our taking of this spiritual food. There is no such virtue as temperance in spiritual feasting." (John Piper, What Jesus Demands from the World, p. 90).

In **THE EXPECTATION OF FASTING**. But listen to this. If you fast and pray for him, Jesus will come to you. As God has said, "You will seek me and find me when you search for me with all your heart" (Jer. 29:13). Jesus told his church, "Behold, I stand and the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come into him and eat with him, and he with me" (Rev. 3:20). That's a promise! Fasting puts the heart and hunger needed in our praying. After giving advice for beginning fasting in **THE EXPECTATION OF FASTING** the article said: Finally, expect God's visitation! As stated above, if you fast as Jesus instructs, your Father will see and reward you with the great gift of his fuller presence through the Holy Spirit who dwells in you. The experience of others can encourage us in this regard.

David Brainerd was a missionary to the Native Americans in New Jersey during the first half of the eighteenth century. His short life (he lived to be only 29) has inspired many other missionaries, for he persevered despite great illness and discouragement. He was a man who sought after God. He wrote the following in his journal. Monday April 19, 1742. I set apart this day for fasting and prayer to God for His grace... In the forenoon, I felt the power of intercession for precious, immortal souls; for the advancement of the kingdom of my dear Lord and Saviour in the word; and withal, a most sweet resignation, and even consolation and joy in the thoughts of suffering hardships, distresses, and even death itself... I enjoyed great sweetness in communion with my dear Saviour. I think I never in my life felt such an entire weanedness from this world, and so much resigned to God in everything. O that I may always live to and upon my blessed God! Amen, Amen. You see, as Brainerd makes clear, the expectation of fasting goes both ways. Jesus expects you to do it. And you can expect Him to visit with you when you do.

How to KNOW I will go to Heaven

Here is what the Bible says:

RECOGNIZE – The First R

Romans 3:10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: Romans 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Romans 5:8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

REPENT – The Second R

Acts 3:19 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; Acts 17:30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:

RECEIVE – The Third R

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Romans 10:13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. 1 John 5:13 These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

Recognize – do you?

Repent – will you?

Receive – Heaven or Hell?

Repent of your sin, and Receive Jesus Christ as your God and Savior. By faith speak to God, Repent of your sin, and ask Him to forgive you and Receive His Son Jesus Christ as your only way to Heaven.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Ask God to forgive you, Confess your sin. Trust Christ as your Saviour.

On my website there is teaching on fasting.
michaeldbentley7@gmail.com
www.To-The-Jew-First.org