**Jesus and Fasting**

***"But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly"*** (Matt. 6:17-18)

Beloved, We went ahead and learn about fasting today. Powerful weapon is that Satan does not want you to know and put into practice. I call your attention and a humble heart so that you understand the purpose of fasting for you. **Pray before you start so that the Lord guide you.**

**What is fasting?***Fasting is a spiritual exercise established by God that brings freedom which breaks the yokes and chains of injustice and oppression, both on an individual as a nation.* dive into the field:

**1. - THE IMPORTANCE OF FASTING .**

**A). - Fasting is a principle established by God .** The first thing to understand is that fasting is not a matter of whether you want it or not, but a principle established by the Lord to his people. Jesus commanded and we must do to achieve spiritual maturity. Fasting brings reward according to the purpose for which is fast. The Lord says: ***"But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, not unto men to fast,but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret, will reward you in public "***(Mat.6 :17-18)

**B). - Jesus was asked about fasting.** In the Gospel (Matthew 9:14) tells us that the disciples of John the Baptist came to Jesus and asked him why his disciples did not fast. ***"Jesus said: does Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? But days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away, and then they will fast*** " (Mat.9: 15)

Note well that while Jesus was with the disciples in person ***they did not fast*** , but he told them that when he was removed ***would fast*** . Here it was established that his people would have to fast. This we find in the early church as normal, they fasted and prayed in important decisions. He says: ***"When they had appointed elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting , they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed "*** . (Hech.14: 23)

**C). - Fasting is for people converted** . Explaining the disciples of John because his disciples did not fast, Christ said: ***"No one piece of new cloth on an old garment, for the patch tears away from the garment, and a worse tear"*** (Mat.9: 16) The dress old means old sinful nature of man, the new cloth symbolizes the new life in Christ. Jesus showed that fasting was for the new creature heart for people converted to it. Fasting is not for the unconverted nor carnal people.

**Two. - THE PURPOSE OF FASTING.** The purpose of fasting are many and varied but all bring a special blessing for both the fasting, for what or for whom fasting.

**A). - Fasting breaks the bonds of oppression.** This implies that by fasting breaking satanic bondage. The word of God says: ***"Is it not rather the fast that I choose, loose the bands of wickedness, dropthe heavy burdens, and vacate the broken, and that ye breakevery yoke? "*** (Isa.58: 6 ). precisely Jesus commanded us to break these bonds of oppression in the lives of people. He says ***: "And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give. "*** (Mt.10 :7-8). It's easy to read that Christ did this and that, but when it comes to him we send it, we see it as impossible and far. **But how have the power to do?**

**B) Practicing regularly fasting.** Fasting is a powerful weapon if accompanied by prayer and reading the word of God. Battles are won by prayer and fasting. ***"For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds"*** (2 nd. Cor.10: 4)

**Consider these 4 points:**

**1)**   **The pastors and churches** to fast break for this purpose Devil obstacles in their ministries. And God gives spiritual congregations.

**2)** **The evangelists** who fast dramatically for people have more fruit in his campaigns, converted, and no miracles and healings.

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**3)**   **Christians** who pray and fast for any problem or need that break are victorious in Jesus name all oppression of the devil.

**4)**   **With proper fasting** break the bonds of the devil that tie to your loved ones and they come to Christ and be saved. With the fast grow spiritually and acquire authority to preach freely to Christ.       ***And of course the devil's plan is to stop you you fast !***

**Three. - EXAMPLE OF MEN AND WOMEN IN THE BIBLE fasted.**Moses fasted 40 days 2 times when he went to Mount Sinai. Daniel 21 days. Jesus 40 days. Briefly present four cases varied only in the Bible, where the fast served its purpose in a powerful way.

**A). - The fast of the Lord Jesus .** After the Lord Jesus was baptized and before beginning his ministry went into the desert and fasted for 40 days. the Bible says: ***"Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And he ate nothing in those days, after which he was hungry "*** (Lk.4 :1-2) In the fast that the Lord made ​​the devil tempted Him three times, but Jesus won with the word.

**The Bible says: *"Jesus answered and said unto him, It is said, You shall not tempt the Lord thy God. And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a while. "*** (Lk.4 :12-13) From there, the Lord Jesus Christ began a powerful ministry of preaching the kingdom, with healings, deliverance, and great miracles that the Gospels tell us.

**B). - The fast of Queen Esther** . Queen Esther realized that Haman had plotted against the Jewish people because he hated. Haman had taken to King Ahasuerus irrevocable edict to kill all the Jews. Then Queen Esther summon three days of fasting. The Bible says: ***"Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me, and neither eat nor drink anything for three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise, and then come in to see the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish. So Mordecai went and did according to all that Esther commanded him "***(Esther 4:16-17) ***And God gave them the victory,*** This brought a stunning release for the Jewish people, Haman was hanged and all the enemies of Israel destroyed .

**C.**  **Nehemiah Fasting.** Babylonian When Nehemiah heard that the walls of Jerusalem are in ruins, laments, fast and pray. The Bible says ***: "And they said to me, The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates are burned with fire. When I heard these words I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven "*** (Neh.1 :3-4). If you read the book of Nehemiah will realize that God blessed and restored the gates and the walls of Jerusalem, and again the service instituted in the temple of the Lord.

**D.**  **The fast of Nineveh.** God had decreed judgment on Nineveh through Jonah. And God sent Jonah to tell the city to repent. **The Bible says.*"And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and preached, saying, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown. So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth from the greatest to the least of them*** . (Jonah 3:4-5)

**And not only that, but when the king knew the Bible says** : ***"For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, took off his royal robes, covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes . And he made ​​a proclamation in Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Men and beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing: let them not feed, nor drink water "*** (Jonah 3:6-7)

**And God's answer to his repentance was** : ***"And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way, God repented of the evil which he said it would do, and he did."*** (Jonah 3:10)

**April. - WHAT DOES sackcloth and ashes?** On the previous points out that when fasted dressed in sackcloth and ashes. **What was this?**

**1. - The sackcloth:** It was coarsely woven linen fabric and dark hair usually goat or camel. It was a rough garment wore the mourners or in an attitude of repentance for sin. It was quite uncomfortable, itchy body and bring it represented a humiliation.

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 **Two. - Ash:** We know that ash residues are burned things that no longer serve any purpose. In symbolic terms the ashes represent:

* **Vanity** , ***"feeds on ashes, a deceived heart has turned him aside, that his soul .."*** (Isa.44: 20a)
* **The filth** , " ***He hath cast me into the mire, and I am become like dust and ashes. "*** (Job.30: 19)
* **Misfortune** , ***"Therefore I have eaten ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with tears*** (Ps.102: 9)
* **The humiliation before God** , ***"Therefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes"*** (Job.42: 6)
* **Repentance *"And I turned to God in prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes".*** (Dan.9: 3)

Sitting in ashes dust was telling God I am and I'm useless. We no longer use in our days in sackcloth and ashes but had a deeper meaning God in repentance and I take very seriously. But this, does not excuse us humble our hearts not to the uttermost. In us there is also vanity and foulness.When you fast heart and repent of all your sins Confess to God.

**May. - DIFFERENT TYPES OF FASTING.** Several types of fasts and different days, 1, 3, 7, 14, 21 or 40 days. With varied purposes as we have seen. In addition, some proposed water and some without water.

**A). - A day of total fasting .**

Biblical fasting day starts at six in the evening and get up at six in the evening of the next day. And it is a total fast without water. It was a time of humiliation and reflection that God required his people.

**B). - partial fasts or fasts media** . These are not complete because only abstain from food, usually presented from six in the evening and get up at three in the afternoon the next day. Some fast breakfast, other food or dinner.

**C). - congregational fasts . -** These are fasting with a purpose called the congregation. They meet in the church or in some secluded place for this purpose. Here, no repentance, and intercession cry deep in unity.

**D). - And when you fast .** When you fast and feel strengthened, watch your ego swell with pride not super spiritual feeling. Many have allowed the devil to deceive turning rebels hold and do not want to belittle their pastors. The Lord has called you to be a humble servant heart.

**June. - WHEN TO FAST?** Once you have a pressing need. When our life is in danger. To grow spiritually. When it comes to minister the word.When we need a miracle from God. When we pray for a demoniac.

For example: In the Gospel of Mark 9:14-29 shows us that the disciples could not cast out a demon from an epileptic child. Christ appeared and rebuked the demon and the boy was cured.

The Bible says: ***"When he entered the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out ? And he said: This kind can come out only by prayer and fasting "****Remember when we said that the disciples did not fast?* Now what do you think? Think you need to fast?