

## **SOME SCRIPTURES ON FASTING**

### **What is fasting?**

[Luke 4:1-2](#) Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry.

*Fasting can consist of eating no food...*

[Est 4:15-16](#) Then Esther sent this reply to Mordecai: "Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my maids will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish."

*..or it can mean nothing passing the lips.*

### **Is it a command for disciples?**

[Mat 6:16-18](#) "When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to men that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

*Well, Jesus said "When..." not "If..."*

[Act 13:2-3](#) While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

*The early disciples practiced it.*

### **Purpose of fasting**

[Mat 9:14-15](#) Then John's disciples came and asked him, "How is it that we and the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?" Jesus answered, "How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; then they will fast.

[Mat 25:6](#) "At midnight the cry rang out: 'Here's the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!'

*We can use it to be mindful of Jesus, to ask Him for help as we wait in anticipation for Him to come.*

[Luk 2:36-37](#) There was also a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying.

*She did it as part of her worship, do we think of fasting as being worshipful? It is a help to our hearts to consider this whilst fasting. Matt 6, too, emphasizes the importance having the right heart*

*with fasting.*

[2 Ch 20:1-4](#) After this, the Moabites and Ammonites with some of the Meunites came to make war on Jehoshaphat. Some men came and told Jehoshaphat, “A vast army is coming against you from Edom, from the other side of the Sea. It is already in Hazazon Tamar” (that is, En Gedi). Alarmed, Jehoshaphat resolved to inquire of the Lord, and he proclaimed a fast for all Judah. The people of Judah came together to seek help from the Lord; indeed, they came from every town in Judah to seek him.

[Ezr 8:21-3](#) There, by the Ahava Canal, I proclaimed a fast, so that we might humble ourselves before our God and ask him for a safe journey for us and our children, with all our possessions. I was ashamed to ask the king for soldiers and horsemen to protect us from enemies on the road, because we had told the king, “The gracious hand of our God is on everyone who looks to him, but his great anger is against all who forsake him.” So we fasted and petitioned our God about this, and he answered our prayer.

*God's people in Bible used fasting as part of their petitioning of the Lord.*