

Fasting Part 3

How to invite God to fight for you

Fasting carried out for different purposes as the Scripture inform us. Therefore as we read and study the Scripture we will be able to grasp the various purposes of fasting and apply that in our lives. We will pass through the Scriptures that speak about fasting and we will study these Scriptures and pick up from them the reason the people of God fasted and we will apply that in our lives.

Let us now read and study **1 Samuel 7** to find out how God helped His people when they came to Him in prayer and fasting and what they did to please God and to obey Him.

“2 And it came to pass, while the ark abode in Kirjathjearim, that the time was long; for it was twenty years: and all the house of Israel lamented after the LORD. 3 And Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, 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. 4 Then the children of Israel did put away Baalim and Ashtaroth, and served the LORD only. 5 And Samuel said, Gather all Israel to Mizpeh, and I will pray for you unto the LORD. 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. 7 And when the Philistines heard that the children of Israel were gathered together to Mizpeh, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel. And when the children of Israel heard it, they were afraid of the Philistines. 8 And the children of Israel said to Samuel, Cease not to cry unto the LORD our God for us, that he will save us out of the hand of the Philistines. 9 And Samuel took a sucking lamb, and offered it for a burnt offering wholly unto the LORD: and Samuel cried unto the LORD for Israel; and the LORD heard him. 10 And as Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel: but the LORD thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them; and they were smitten before Israel. 11 And the men of Israel went out of Mizpeh, and pursued the Philistines, and smote them, until they came under Bethcar. 12 Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the LORD helped us. 13 So the Philistines were subdued, and they came no more into the coast of Israel: and the hand of the LORD was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel. 14 And the cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron even unto Gath; and the coasts thereof did Israel deliver out of the hands of the Philistines. And there was peace between Israel and the Amorites. 15 And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life. 16 And he went from year to year in circuit to Bethel, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and judged Israel in all those places. 17 And his return was to Ramah; for there was his house; and there he judged Israel; and there he built an altar unto the LORD.” (1 Samuel 7:2-17 KJV)

Life is not easy, and at certain aspects it is becoming so hard and difficult to manage. Therefore, to live, there are in front of us two options. Either you live by your own ways, but you need to fight and struggle without the help of God, or you live according to God's ways and in such a manner you are inviting God to fight for you. It is so far better, more effective and more fruitful the life is, when you trust God and obey Him that He is the Master, the Redeemer and the protector of your life.

God had sent His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ who died on the cross for our sins, who was buried and rose from the dead on the third day to give us eternal life and life to full. As Jesus is the Master over your life, then you can be assured and ensured person from what is surrounding you, both now and forever more. God's favour and His presence will be with you and Himself will deal with the enemy as you obey Him and follow His Word

The good news today for you is that you don't need to fight alone but God can fight for you. As we mentioned, there is two ways to fight, either you go and struggle and fight alone, or you bring God to the battle field. In such a way life will be more easily and with fewer struggles. But this requires absolute obedience toward God and His Word. And it is worthy because God can deal with whatever enemy's size, with whatever threat and in any time; God can reach and strike the enemy that we cannot reach. He can reach places that we cannot penetrate. He can change the equation; He is above mathematics and human calculations. God can turn tables, He can bring our enemies down and He can bring us up. It depend on us how we respond to Him. God is willing to fight the battle for us if we are willing to obey Him and walk in His ways.

We read in **1 Samuel 7** verse ***“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.”*** In this message you will learn how to invite God to fight for you, and as the following:-

1. Give your life and your heart to Jesus and to fully trust God: At the time of judges the people of God they were in bondage because of their sins and that what made them slaves to the Philistines. ** Sin will put you in trouble and will make you slave to Satan.*

As we read in the above Scripture, the Ark of God, that represents the presence of God, was in a house and the people were going there to seek the Lord and His help and aid. ***“2 And it came to pass, while the ark abode in Kirjathjearim, that the time was long; for it was twenty years: and all the house of Israel lamented after the LORD.” (1 Samuel 7:2 KJV)*** In the same way now, the church meeting can be located in a house and we come together seeking God, His help and His guidance. Samuel was the minister there in the house of the Lord and directed the people in the way of the Lord. He put a clear proposal in front of the people: ***“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.” (1 Samuel 7:3 KJV)*** What he was telling them is this: ** If you really returning to the LORD, then show that by throwing all the idols in your life in whatever form; pictures of saints, human figures, animals, etc. And remove idols from your hearts like the idols of pride, greed, or lust.* Those all you may run after and become your gods. *By throwing all these idols you are dedicating your life to serve God wholeheartedly.* ** People or men figure that you are serving, and the labour that you spend on your ambition is of no benefit to you. In the day of the battle when you have a problem they will not be the one to help you, but they will be the one to*

pull you down. The Israelites responded to the message and put down all their idols, ***“4 Then the children of Israel did put away Baalim and Ashtaroah, and served the LORD only.” (1 Samuel 7:4 KJV)***

2. In the same way, we as church obey God and renounce the following idols:-

A. Lust and immorality; having boyfriend and girlfriend, dating, courting, watching pornography, live-in relationship, divorce and remarriage, adultery, multiple marriages and unlawful marriages in marrying non believers.

B. Celebrating feasts of idols; celebrating New Year and Christmas with its Santa Claus, Christmas tree, celebrating birthdays, wedding anniversaries, and death anniversaries, celebrating Father's Day and Mother's Day, Halloween (Harvest), All Saints Day, Valentine's Day, and Pastor's Month. All these celebration should be out of our lives.

C. Pride, boasting and showing off.

D. Greed, covetousness, and love of money.

E. Wasting and spending too much.

F. Gluttony, eating too much, loving food more than God, buying food from restaurants, loving feasts and celebration but refusing to fast.

G. Worldliness; wasting time on TV, U-Tube and facebook.

H. Slander, malice, envy, jealousy, bitterness, having grudges, anger, hatred and unforgiveness, boasting, showing off, laziness, complacency and lack of commitment to God, and serving the worldly things but not willing to serve God.

I. Homosexualities, allowing a relationship between man to man, and woman to woman, condoning transgender and homosexual attitude and actions, and allowing homosexual marriages.

Let us continue further to see how we can invite God to fight for us.

3. Unity in mind and thought: Samuel called the people to assemble and he started to pray for them. ***“5 And Samuel said, Gather all Israel to Mizpeh, and I will pray for you unto the LORD. 6 And they gathered together to Mizpeh ... ” (1 Samuel 7:5-6 KJV)*** ** Unity is important and there is power when we come united with what God had said and promised in His Word. * There is power in prayer when people come together united as Jesus said, “19 Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. 20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” (Matthew 18:19-20)*

4. Pure heart and clean motive: ***“6 And they gathered together to Mizpeh, and drew water, and poured it out before the LORD,” (1 Samuel 7:6 KJV)*** The water is clear and transparent, and God wants us to be like water transparent and our hearts are in pure motive with Him. ** As they pour out the water before the Lord, God wants us to pour our lives for Him like a drink offering. Then in this way we will find Him acting in our behalf. * Put in your mind that purity in heart is essential for the mighty work of The Holy Spirit.*

5. Confessions of sins: ***“9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9 KJV)*** ** Before you expect God would work for your behalf you need to repent from your sins, and acknowledge that your suffering is due to your disobedience to His Word and commands. * You need to confess the Lordship of the Lord Jesus Christ over your life. * As you confess your sins and renounce them you need to make it clear with God that you will not go back to sin again.*

6. Crying to God: ***“7 And when the Philistines heard that the children of Israel were gathered together to Mizpeh, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel. And when the children of Israel heard it, they were afraid of the Philistines. 8 And the children of Israel said to Samuel, Cease not to cry unto the LORD our God for us, that he will save us out of the hand of the Philistines.” (1 Samuel 7:7-8 KJV)*** ** As the enemy coming near to us to attack us we should remember our Father Who is in Heaven, He is waiting for us to pray and to cry to Him to rescue us. * Crying to men will not bring good result, but crying to God will bring us victory because only God can help us.*

7. Surrender your life and your will fully to God: ***“9 And Samuel took a sucking lamb, and offered it for a burnt offering wholly unto the LORD: and Samuel cried unto the LORD for Israel; and the LORD heard him. 10 And as Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel: but the LORD thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them; and they were smitten before Israel.” (1 Samuel 7:9-10 KJV)*** The suckling lamb that Samuel offered to God was a burnt offering; the whole animal after slaughter is burned on the altar for God. The burnt offering in the Old Covenant it means to fully surrender to God. As Samuel was offering the lamb for the burnt offering the Lord thundered and rooted out the enemy. Jesus Christ He is the lamb of God who won the battle for us. He died on the cross for our sins, He was buried and rose from the dead on the third day to give us eternal life, we who believe in Him and follow His steps in our lives. ** In the same way, If you want God to fight for you and take over the battle, and give you the victory then you need to surrender your life and your will fully to God. * If that is your decision then be assured that before your enemy reaching you it will be crushed by the Lord. * God will fight the battle for us and we will have the victory and we will collect the plunder.*

8. Prayer and fasting: As they repented and throw away all their idols and commit themselves to serve the Lord and surrender all their lives and will to God then deliverance started. They came in prayer and fasting and commit their lives fully to God and to serve Him. Their fasting was in according to their repentance and in renouncing their sins and turning back to God.

As truly the people of God repented then fasting is the sorrowful intense and sincere feeling of all the ill effects of their sins that they had done against God, and is their real decision to return back to God and serve Him wholeheartedly. They came to God with sorrowful repented heart

manifested externally with fasting, and that real repentance had moved God to deliver and save His people.

** In the same way, it is not the fasting alone who will move God but your real repentance that what will move God to act on your behalf.*

** It is not the ritual fasting alone that move God but the real repentance that would move God for our behalf. When fasting is an outcome of repentance and renouncing of sins then that what God is waiting for to see in the life of His church and His people and that what will move Him to act on your behalf.*

9. Obeying the spiritual leader that gives you God's instructions using the Word of God with the direction of the Holy Spirit: God was speaking to the Israelites through Samuel that He placed over them. Samuel was speaking to the people the Word of God and God's instructions of how they fight the battle and have the victory. It is right what you may say that you are under God, but God Himself had put people over you to instruct you with the Word of God and you need to listen to them. God's Word teaches us the following: ***"7 Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. 8 Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever. 17 Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."*** (Hebrews 13:7-8, 17) The leader who is chosen by God is the mouth piece of God to the people to direct them to what God wants them to know, to do and to be. We can also tell the following: ** To invite God to fight the battle for you, this will come true when you ask the council of the Lord from those whom God call to instruct you with His Word.* That is why God's Word teaches us the following: ***"12 And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; 13 And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves."*** (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13) Samuel was moving all around the year so he can teach and instruct people of what to do as we can read here: ***"15 And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life. 16 And he went from year to year in circuit to Bethel, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and judged Israel in all those places. 17 And his return was to Ramah; for there was his house; and there he judged Israel; and there he built an altar unto the LORD."*** (1 Samuel 7:15-17 KJV) We who are called to lead others we do the same, moving around to pasture the flock, the people that God entrusts to us to nurture and to lead them in the way of righteousness until Jesus would come and take us together with Him to heaven. ** Therefore, your prayer and fasting will be answered and God will be there with you fighting your enemy when you obey the instructions of God's Word that we give to you.*

As the people of God complied with the instructions of Samuel, God gave them a great victory and a huge amount of plunder and restore to them what the enemy had taken away from them as we can read here: ***"11 And the men of Israel went out of Mizpeh, and pursued the Philistines, and smote them, until they came under Bethcar. 13 So the Philistines were subdued, and they came no more into the coast of Israel: and the hand of the LORD was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel. 14 And the***

cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron even unto Gath; and the coasts thereof did Israel deliver out of the hands of the Philistines. And there was peace between Israel and the Amorites." (1 Samuel 7:11, 13-14 KJV)

10. Be grateful to God: Let us proclaim all what the Lord had given us. Let us do what Samuel did, ***"12 Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the LORD helped us,"*** (1 Samuel 7:12 KJV) We should always mention with a grateful heart what the Lord did for us, ***'Hitherto hath the LORD helped us,'*** and we should give Him thanks and the praise for that in all circumstances. ***"18 In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."*** (1 Thessalonians 5:18 KJV)

My Dear and Beloved: *Have faith in God and trust Him wholeheartedly. Commit your life, body, soul and spirit to Him and walk in His ways. Do not put your trust on people or on any figure; truly they cannot help you. If you have kept anything, like a man figure or material capital as an alliance to help you in times of trouble, then be assured that the thing that you trust in, it will be the very same thing that it will pull you down. Therefore be earnest and repent.*

To let your prayer and fasting to be answered you need to observe the following points that we had discussed:

- 1. Give your life and your heart fully to Jesus and to fully trust in God*
- 2. Obey God and renounce all the idols that we discussed in the message*
- 3. Be in unity, in mind and thought with God, with His Word, and with His church*
- 4. Purify your heart and be with clean motive*
- 5. Repent by confessing and renouncing all your sins*
- 6. Cry to God and trust Him that He will fight for you*
- 7. Surrender your life and your will fully to God*
- 8. Pray and fast trusting God alone for deliverance*
- 9. Obey the spiritual leader of the church that gives you God's instructions from the Word of God with the direction of the Holy Spirit*
- 10. Be grateful to God and be thankful for all what you have received from Him*

After what we had discussed, sit down now with the Lord and allow the Holy Spirit to search your heart, mind and thoughts. Look carefully to what are the things in your life that contradict the Word of God. Turn from your own wrong ways, and repent of your sins and start to live your life to please the Lord. From this day on God called you to obey Him and walk in His ways so your prayer and fasting will be pleasant to the Lord.

My Prayer: Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the cross for my sins to give me eternal life.

Lord I thank you for your Word that showed me clearly your ways and how you wants me to live my life for you.

Confess your sins to God and renounce them.

Renounce all your idols that you are indulging yourself in. Renounce all the human and material figures that you trust more than God.

Lord I confess and renounce all the following sins _____. Lord I repent from them all and from this day on I commit myself to obey your words and walk in your ways so that my prayer and fasting will be acceptable to you.

Lord I commit my life to obey the followings:

To give you my life and my heart fully trusting in you
To surrender my life and my will fully to you
To repent by confessing and renouncing all my sins
To obey you and renounce all idols
To cry out to you and trust you that you will fight for me
To purify my heart and to have a clean motive
To be in unity, in mind and thought with you, your Word, and with your church
To live a life of prayer and fasting
To obey the spiritual leader of Your church that gives me Your Word
To be grateful to you and to be thankful for all what I have received from you

Lord hear my prayer and answer my fasting and deliver me from the following enemy _____.

Lord I pray for my brethren who committed themselves to repent of their sins, to pray and to fast, and to live their lives to serve you, Lord give them good health and the strength to go on and serve you. Lord give them all their needs. Lord give them your Word. Lord fills them and lead them with your Holy Spirit to go on and do your work. Lord protect them from the evil one and provide all their needs.

Lord I pray for us as a church to be doer of your Word and to accomplish the tasks that you had called us to do for you. Lord protect us and deliver us from the evil one and go before us and fight our battles. Lord refill us again with the Holy Spirit and give us the spiritual gifts that we need in our lives. Lord enable us to evangelize and reach new people with the Gospel and the message of Jesus Christ. Lord enable us to plant more Bible studies and new congregations for the church. Lord bless us, enlarge our territory, let your hand be with us, and free us from harm so we will not feel pain. May the grace of the Lord Jesus and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all in Jesus name, Amen.

Dr. Ramiz Khalaf
The Church Overseer
Church of God
United Arab Emirates
Email: thebread1@gmail.com
Mobile Tel #: 00971551902647

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