

Serve God's Purpose Part 10

Prayer and Fasting

*“24 My knees are weak through fasting; and my flesh faileth of fatness.”
(Psalm 109:24 KJV)*

Fasting is one of the practices that David was characterized with. Why he fasted, how he fasted, and the results of his prayer and fasting are great lesson for us to learn and apply in our lives to fulfill God's purpose in us. We can read about the fasting of David in different occasions:

1. David in *Psalm 35: 11-14* said, *“11 False witnesses did rise up; they laid to my charge things that I knew not. 2 They rewarded me evil for good to the spoiling of my soul. 13 But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth: I humbled my soul with fasting; and my prayer returned into mine own bosom. 14 I behaved myself as though he had been my friend or brother: I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth for his mother.”* In this passage David was fasting for the cruel people around him. He prayed and fasted for the people who later on repaid him evil for the good things he did toward them. *Praying and fasting we do it for God, without thinking what will be the outcome of the people that we are fasting for God to help them and take them out of their troubles. We pray and fast to God and not for people to come and reward us. When we pray and fast we wait upon Him that He will be the one to come and help us and reward us for our fasting, “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.” (Matthew 6:16-18 KJV)*

2. In *Psalm 69:1-36* David's writing showed that he was in great distress but he trusted in God and continued in his prayer and fasting trusting God that He will save him from all his troubles: *“1 Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto my soul. 2 I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me. 3 I am weary of my crying: my throat is dried: mine eyes fail while I wait for my God. 4 They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then I restored that which I took not away. 5 O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee. 6 Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord GOD of hosts, be ashamed for my sake: let not those that seek thee be confounded for my sake, O God of Israel. 7 Because for thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face. 8 I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children. 9 For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me. 10 When I wept, and chastened my soul with fasting, that was to my reproach. 11 I made sackcloth also my garment; and I became a proverb to them. 12 They that sit in the gate speak against me; and I was the song of the drunkards. 13 But as for me, my prayer is unto thee, O LORD, in an acceptable time: O God, in the multitude of thy mercy hear me, in the truth of thy salvation. 14 Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink: let me be delivered from them that hate me, and out of the deep waters. 15 Let not the waterflood overflow me, neither let*

the deep swallow me up, and let not the pit shut her mouth upon me. 16 Hear me, O LORD; for thy lovingkindness is good: turn unto me according to the multitude of thy tender mercies. 17 And hide not thy face from thy servant; for I am in trouble: hear me speedily. 18 Draw nigh unto my soul, and redeem it: deliver me because of mine enemies. 19 Thou hast known my reproach, and my shame, and my dishonour: mine adversaries are all before thee. 20 Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none. 21 They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink. 22 Let their table become a snare before them: and that which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap. 23 Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not; and make their loins continually to shake. 24 Pour out thine indignation upon them, and let thy wrathful anger take hold of them. 25 Let their habitation be desolate; and let none dwell in their tents. 26 For they persecute him whom thou hast smitten; and they talk to the grief of those whom thou hast wounded. 27 Add iniquity unto their iniquity: and let them not come into thy righteousness. 28 Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous. 29 But I am poor and sorrowful: let thy salvation, O God, set me up on high. 30 I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving. 31 This also shall please the LORD better than an ox or bullock that hath horns and hoofs. 32 The humble shall see this, and be glad: and your heart shall live that seek God. 33 For the LORD heareth the poor, and despiseth not his prisoners. 34 Let the heaven and earth praise him, the seas, and every thing that moveth therein. 35 For God will save Zion, and will build the cities of Judah: that they may dwell there, and have it in possession. 36 The seed also of his servants shall inherit it: and they that love his name shall dwell therein.” David was enduring suffering, hardship and insult for the sake of the house of God and the work of God. He was facing side by side pressure from different directions and from people who were opposing him, but he endured that all, he trusted God fully. He humbled himself and continued doing the work of God through prayer and fasting and God continued to grant him grace and mercy and sustained him in all circumstances until the purpose of God was fulfilled in his life. ** Let us take a good example of David in this psalm to trust God fully and draw near to Him through prayer and fasting knowing that He will hear us, sustain us, relief us from all pressures, save us from the evil one and from those wicked people who work with the devil. * Let us trust Him that He will provide for us and lead us to progress continually in our service and ministry unto Him to continue to fulfill His purpose in our lives until the end of our lives on earth or until He will come to take us to Heaven.*

3. David was really diligent in fasting asking God to deliver him for those who were near to him who betrayed him, *“21 But do thou for me, O GOD the Lord, for thy name's sake: because thy mercy is good, deliver thou me. 22 For I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me. 23 I am gone like the shadow when it declineth: I am tossed up and down as the locust. 24 My knees are weak through fasting; and my flesh faileth of fatness. 25 I became also a reproach unto them: when they looked upon me they shook their heads. 26 Help me, O LORD my God: O save me according to thy mercy: 27 That they may know that this is thy hand; that thou, LORD, hast done it. 28 Let them curse, but bless thou: when they arise, let them be ashamed; but let thy servant rejoice. 29 Let mine adversaries be clothed with shame, and let them cover themselves with their own confusion, as with a mantle. 30 I will greatly praise the LORD with my mouth; yea, I will praise him among the multitude. 31 For he shall stand at the right hand of the poor, to save him from those that condemn his soul” (Psalm 109:21-31 KJV)* David did not pray and fast once or twice or only for few days. He never gave up but continuously was coming to the Lord in prayer and fasting

up to the point that his legs and knees were weak to support him, and he became weak of fasting and his body started to loss weight, **“24 My knees are weak through fasting; and my flesh faileth of fatness.” (Psalm 109:24 KJV)**

4. David even fasted when he heard the news of the death of Saul, his enemy. **“1 Now it came to pass after the death of Saul, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Amalekites, and David had abode two days in Ziklag; 2 It came even to pass on the third day, that, behold, a man came out of the camp from Saul with his clothes rent, and earth upon his head: and so it was, when he came to David, that he fell to the earth, and did obeisance. 3 And David said unto him, From whence comest thou? And he said unto him, Out of the camp of Israel am I escaped. 4 And David said unto him, How went the matter? I pray thee, tell me. And he answered, That the people are fled from the battle, and many of the people also are fallen and dead; and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead also. 5 And David said unto the young man that told him, How knowest thou that Saul and Jonathan his son be dead? 6 And the young man that told him said, As I happened by chance upon mount Gilboa, behold, Saul leaned upon his spear; and, lo, the chariots and horsemen followed hard after him. 7 And when he looked behind him, he saw me, and called unto me. And I answered, Here am I. 8 And he said unto me, Who art thou? And I answered him, I am an Amalekite. 9 He said unto me again, Stand, I pray thee, upon me, and slay me: for anguish is come upon me, because my life is yet whole in me. 10 So I stood upon him, and slew him, because I was sure that he could not live after that he was fallen: and I took the crown that was upon his head, and the bracelet that was on his arm, and have brought them hither unto my lord. 11 Then David took hold on his clothes, and rent them; and likewise all the men that were with him: 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.” (2 Samuel 1:1-12 KJV)** David fasted here most likely for the calamity that had come upon Israel, the death of their king Saul, and his son Jonathan his friend, and for the people of God and the defeating of their army and their scattering and many of them were dead. It was an over whelming calamity, most likely he was appealing for God’s mercy to fall on Israel His people to restore them back after this great calamity. David overwhelmed here with great responsibility. Saul was his enemy, but his death did not make him happy, but sad because he saw the size of the defeat of Israel, and mourned for the death of Saul, and his son Jonathan and the rest of the soldiers of Israel’s army. *** In the same way let us take this sense of responsibility to feel and respond to the calamity that affect the people of God and His church and pray and fast even if there are among them people trouble us like Saul, asking for God’s mercy to restore back the great losses, to protect His people and restore them back to what He intended for them to be. * Even when God would judge His church and His people and cause them calamity, God is grieving for the affliction that He caused them, and He wants to see in us a compassionate heart like David, praying and fasting and appealing for the mercy of God. Finally David got rewarded and became a king over Israel. *In the same way we will be rewarded as we persevere in prayer and fasting when we see God disciplining His church and His people and we continue to appeal for His mercy to restore them back after He had disciplined them.**

5. David fasted after the death of Abner the leader of the army of Israel, mourning that he was killed in betrayal. Let us read this event. **“20 So Abner came to David to Hebron, and twenty men with him. And David made Abner and the men that were with him a feast. 21 And Abner said unto David, I will arise and go, and will gather all Israel unto my lord the king, that they may make a league with 6thee, and that thou mayest reign over all that thine heart**

desireth. And David sent Abner away; and he went in peace. 22 And, behold, the servants of David and Joab came from pursuing a troop, and brought in a great spoil with them: but Abner was not with David in Hebron; for he had sent him away, and he was gone in peace. 23 When Joab and all the host that was with him were come, they told Joab, saying, Abner the son of Ner came to the king, and he hath sent him away, and he is gone in peace. 24 Then Joab came to the king, and said, What hast thou done? behold, Abner came unto thee; why is it that thou hast sent him away, and he is quite gone? 25 Thou knowest Abner the son of Ner, that he came to deceive thee, and to know thy going out and thy coming in, and to know all that thou doest. 26 And when Joab was come out from David, he sent messengers after Abner, which brought him again from the well of Sirah: but David knew it not. 27 And when Abner was returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside in the gate to speak with him quietly, and smote him there under the fifth rib, that he died, for the blood of Asahel his brother. 28 And afterward when David heard it, he said, I and my kingdom are guiltless before the LORD for ever from the blood of Abner the son of Ner: 29 Let it rest on the head of Joab, and on all his father's house; and let there not fail from the house of Joab one that hath an issue, or that is a leper, or that leaneth on a staff, or that falleth on the sword, or that lacketh bread. 30 So Joab, and Abishai his brother slew Abner, because he had slain their brother Asahel at Gibeon in the battle. 31 And David said to Joab, and to all the people that were with him, Rend your clothes, and gird you with sackcloth, and mourn before Abner. And king David himself followed the bier. 32 And they buried Abner in Hebron: and the king lifted up his voice, and wept at the grave of Abner; and all the people wept. 33 And the king lamented over Abner, and said, Died Abner as a fool dieth? 34 Thy hands were not bound, nor thy feet put into fetters: as a man falleth before wicked men, so fellest thou. And all the people wept again over him. 35 And when all the people came to cause David to eat meat while it was yet day, David sware, saying, So do God to me, and more also, if I taste bread, or ought else, till the sun be down. 36 And all the people took notice of it, and it pleased them: as whatsoever the king did pleased all the people. 37 For all the people and all Israel understood that day that it was not of the king to slay Abner the son of Ner. 38 And the king said unto his servants, Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel? 39 And I am this day weak, though anointed king; and these men the sons of Zeruiah be too hard for me: the LORD shall reward the doer of evil according to his wickedness.” (2 Samuel 3:20-39 KJV) David was overwhelmed with the death of Abner who came to bless him, grieving what Joab did of betrayal and how a great man and prince like Abner God allowed dying which was a big loss. Therefore David went into mourning of what had happened and fasted for the remaining part of the day until the sunset, appealing for the mercy of God and interceding that He shall take the full control over the situation and that He will lead him and guide him in the way that he need to go and help him to accomplish His will and purpose. **In the same way, when we pass through such situation when evil people jump in the middle like what Joab did and make things mess, we go into prayer and fasting asking God to take full control of the situation, and to guide us of the things that we need to do and accomplish for Him, that His will to be done.**

6. David fasted when he repented from his sin of adultery with Bathsheba. The Lord exposed what David did through Prophet Nathan whom the Lord sent, and truly David repented **“13 And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.” (2 Samuel 12:13 KJV)** And Nathan continued: **“14 Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die. 15 And Nathan departed unto his house. And the LORD struck the child that Uriah's wife**

bare unto David, and it was very sick. 16 David therefore besought God for the child; and David fasted, and went in, and lay all night upon the earth. 17 And the elders of his house arose, and went to him, to raise him up from the earth: but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them. 18 And it came to pass on the seventh day, that the child died. And the servants of David feared to tell him that the child was dead: for they said, Behold, while the child was yet alive, we spake unto him, and he would not hearken unto our voice: how will he then vex himself, if we tell him that the child is dead? 19 But when David saw that his servants whispered, David perceived that the child was dead: therefore David said unto his servants, Is the child dead? And they said, He is dead. 20 Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the LORD, and worshipped: then he came to his own house; and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat.” (2 Samuel 12:14-20 KJV) David confessed his sin and God spared his life. Yet he also begged God through prayer and fasting for the life of his son when the child became very sick. But when the son died David got up without bitterness in his heart. Therefore David’s real repentance was evidently true from his heart because he accepted the Lord’s discipline and the consequences of his sin. The son born to him out of adultery died, but God also rewarded him with another son, Solomon, who was the one who built the temple of God. **In the same way as we repent from our sins and we come to God in prayer and fasting appealing to Him to forgive us and restore us, willing to bear the consequences of our sins and the chastisement of God, then He will have mercy on us and reward us and restore us in His own way and at His perfect time.**

My Dear and Beloved: King David was a man of prayer and fasting. He took all his struggles and hardships to God through prayer and fasting. He fixed his eyes on the Lord and wholeheartedly trusted in God. He forgave his enemies, and he repented when he sinned against God. He humbled himself and the Lord lifted him up.

Let us learn from the life of David, his life full of prayer and fasting. Let us follow his examples and apply them in our life. His practice of prayer and fasting brought up changes in his heart and character. His practice of prayer and fasting drew him nearer and closer to God. David’s great help and support in the ministry came from God alone. The Lord sustained him and fulfilled His promises to him.

My Dear and Beloved: Where does our help come from to serve God’s purpose in our life and generation? Our help comes from the Lord, the maker of Heaven and earth, the One who calls us to serve Him. Therefore, let us always come to Him, draw nearer and closer to God each day.

Therefore, as we are waiting for our Lord Jesus Christ to come and take us with Him to Heaven, let us persevere and continue to fulfill God’s purpose in our life in this generation through prayer and fasting for this is God’s will for us in Christ Jesus. Let us apply what we learned and studied from Scriptures in this message, so that our life will shine and bring forth the fruit that God would like to see in us as we serve Him and serve our generation. Let us serve God’s purpose in accordance to God’s will and God’s Word.

Let us pray

My Prayer: Father God, I come before you in the name of Jesus, who died on the cross for my sins and rose from the dead to give me eternal life. Lord, thank you for your Word in this message that teaches me about prayer and fasting and their importance in the various aspects of my life. Lord thank you for all the corrections, the admonishments and the rebukes that I received from you in this message.

Come now to God and respond to the calling of God in your life to live a life of prayer and fasting. Confess and renounce now all your sins. Confess and renounce your worldliness, and your reluctance to go into fasting because your love for food. Confess your anger, hatred, revenge and unforgiveness in your heart toward your enemies. Confess and renounce your doubts, lack of faith and easily got discouraged during the trials and whenever you passed through struggles. Confess and renounce your lust, greed, immoralities, lies, fights, quarrels, yoked with non believers, and in bondage with the Media, News and games. Confess and renounce your bad stewardship, your bad example and your non willingness to serve God and suffer for Him. Lord forgive me, I repent of the following sins _____.

Lord. I commit myself to come to you in prayer and fasting. Lord, thank you for your Word that teaches me clearly of your ways, and how I walk humbly with you. Lord, I will practice a life of prayer and fasting in my every life’s situation and struggles. Give me, Lord, the strength and the perseverance to do that, this is my prayer in Jesus’ name, Amen.

Lord as I pray and fast I invite you to solve this problem _____, and to deal with this enemy _____.

Lord thank you for my Brothers and Sisters who repented of their sins, and who responded to the teaching of your Word in this message and are willing to adopt fasting as a way to draw near to you, to be filled with the Holy Spirit, to invite you to fight the battles for them and to have full control over the critical situations that they are passing through in their lives. Lord fight for them their battles, sustain them and provide for them in their trials and the struggles and the crisis that they are passing in their lives. Lord help them to reproduce more fruit of the Holy Spirit, love, peace, joy, gentleness, kindness, faith, perseverance, self-control and long suffering. Lord continue to answer their prayers and reward them in their fasting to you. Lord sustain them, protect them, and continue to provide for them so they will continue to serve you. This is my prayer in Jesus name, Amen.

Lord, bless us as your church. Lord we commit ourselves to you to adopt fasting as a way of life and ministry, that we will continue to use to draw near to you, to be filled with the Holy Spirit, to invite you to fight the battles for us, and that you will have the full control over the critical situations that we are passing through in our lives.

Lord as we pray and fast we invite you to fight this battle for us _____, and to deal with this people and enemy _____.

Lord we ask you to refill us with the Holy Spirit and give us the spiritual gifts that we need in order to fulfill your purpose in the life of your church and your people. Lord, lead us to go on and evangelize, and make new disciples and train new workers to go and plant more Bible studies and congregations for the church. Lord fulfill the vision of the church, ‘Multiplication

in peace with implementing the whole will of God.' Lord bless us, enlarge our territory, let your hand be with us and free us from harm so that 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.

Serve God's Purpose Part 10. Prayer and Fasting. Psalm 35: 11-14. Matthew 6:16-18. Psalm 69:1-36. Psalm 109:21-31. 2 Samuel 1:1-12. 2 Samuel 3:20-39. 2 Samuel 12:13-20.

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