Fasting

**Reading - Matthew 6:16-18**

***Luke 4:2*** ***"did eat nothing."*** Afterwards ***"He was hungered."*** ***Acts 9:9 "neither did eat nor drink."***

***(Ezra 10:6) Then Ezra rose up from before the house of God, and went into the chamber of Jehohanan the son of Eliashib; and when he came there, he ate no bread and drank no water, for he mourned because of the guilt of those from the captivity.***

***(Esther 4:16) "Go, gather all the Jews who are present in Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will fast likewise. And so I will go to the king, which is against the law; and if I perish, I perish!"***

***(Daniel 10:2-3) In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks. {3} I ate no pleasant food, no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled...***

***(Matthew 6:16-18) “Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. {17} "But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, {18} "so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.***

***(Zechariah 7:5) "Say to all the people of the land, and to the priests: 'When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh months during those seventy years, did you really fast for Me; for Me?***

***(Psalms 69:10) When I wept and chastened my soul with fasting, That became my reproach.***

***(Acts 13:2-3) As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." {3} Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away.***

***(1 Corinthians 7:5) Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control***

## I. fasting was an integral part of jewish religion

(Leviticus 16:29-31) "This shall be a statute forever for you: In the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, whether a native of your own country or a stranger who dwells among you. {30} "For on that day the priest shall make atonement for you, to cleanse you, that you may be clean from all your sins before the LORD. {31} "It is a Sabbath of solemn rest for you, and you shall afflict your souls. It is a statute forever...

***(Leviticus 23:27-28) "Also the tenth day of this seventh month shall be the Day of Atonement. It shall be a holy convocation for you; you shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire to the LORD. {28} "And you shall do no work on that same day, for it is the Day of Atonement, to make atonement for you before the LORD your God.***

***(Acts 27:9) Now when much time had been spent, and sailing was now dangerous because the Fast was already over, Paul advised them,***

***(Zechariah 8:19) "Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'The fast of the fourth month, The fast of the fifth, The fast of the seventh, And the fast of the tenth, Shall be joy and gladness and cheerful feasts For the house of Judah. Therefore love truth and peace.'***

## ii. faSting & Prayer

***(Psalms 35:13) But as for me, when they were sick, My clothing was sackcloth; I humbled myself with fasting; And my prayer would return to my own heart.***

***(Matthew 17:21) "However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."***

## iii. our great example

***(Matthew 4:1-11) Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. {2} And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry. {3} Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." {4} But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'"… {11} Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him..***

***(Luke 5:33-35) Then they said to Him, "Why do the disciples of John fast often and make prayers, and likewise those of the Pharisees, but Yours eat and drink?" {34} And He said to them, "Can you make the friends of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is with them? {35} "But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them; then they will fast in those days."***

## iv. Other Examples

Paul

***(2 Corinthians 6:5) in stripes, in imprisonment, in tumults, in labors, in sleeplessness, in fastings;***

***(2 Corinthians 11:27) in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness;***

Cornelius

***(Acts 10:30) So Cornelius said, "Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing,***