

# Fasting

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*A compilation of Scripture*

## OLD TESTAMENT

### Exodus 34:27-28

<sup>27</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, "Write down these words, for in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel." <sup>28</sup> So **he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did not eat bread or drink water.** And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments.

### Judges 20:24-28

<sup>24</sup> Then the sons of Israel came against the sons of Benjamin the second day. <sup>25</sup> And Benjamin went out against them from Gibeah the second day and felled to the ground again 18,000 men of the sons of Israel; all these drew the sword. <sup>26</sup> Then all the sons of Israel and all the people went up and came to Bethel and wept; thus they remained there before the LORD and **fasted that day until evening.** And **they offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD.** <sup>27</sup> And the sons of Israel **inquired of the LORD** (for the ark of the covenant of God was there in those days, <sup>28</sup> and Phinehas the son of Eleazar, Aaron's son, stood before it to *minister* in those days), saying, "Shall I yet again go out to battle against the sons of my brother Benjamin, or shall I cease?" And the LORD said, "Go up, for tomorrow I will deliver them into your hand."

### 1 Samuel 7:3-8

<sup>3</sup> Then Samuel spoke to all the house of Israel, saying, "If you **return to the LORD with all your heart, remove the foreign gods** and the Ashtaroth from among you and **direct your hearts** to the LORD and **serve Him alone**; and He will deliver you from the hand of the Philistines." <sup>4</sup> So the sons of Israel removed the Baals and the Ashtaroth and served the LORD alone. <sup>5</sup> Then Samuel said, "Gather all Israel to Mizpah, **and I will pray to the LORD for you.**" <sup>6</sup> And they gathered to Mizpah, 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 sons of Israel at Mizpah. <sup>7</sup> Now when the Philistines heard that the sons of Israel had gathered to Mizpah, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel. And when the sons of Israel heard it, they were afraid of the Philistines. <sup>8</sup> Then the sons of Israel said to Samuel, "Do not cease to cry to the LORD our God for us, that He may save us from the hand of the Philistines."

### 1 Samuel 31:8-13

<sup>8</sup> And it came about on the next day when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. <sup>9</sup> And they cut off his head, and stripped off his weapons, and sent *them* throughout the land of the Philistines, to carry the good news to the house of their idols and to the people. <sup>10</sup> And they put his weapons in the temple of Ashtaroth, and they fastened his body to the wall of Beth-shan. <sup>11</sup> Now when the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead heard what the Philistines had done to Saul, <sup>12</sup> all the valiant men rose and walked all night, and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Beth-shan, and they came to Jabesh, and burned them there. <sup>13</sup> And they took their bones and buried them under the tamarisk tree at Jabesh, and **fasted seven days.**

## 2 Samuel 1:6-16

<sup>6</sup> And the young man who told him said, "By chance I happened to be on Mount Gilboa, and behold, Saul was leaning on his spear. And behold, the chariots and the horsemen pursued him closely. <sup>7</sup> "And when he looked behind him, he saw me and called to me. And I said, 'Here I am.' <sup>8</sup> "And he said to me, 'Who are you?' And I answered him, 'I am an Amalekite.' <sup>9</sup> "Then he said to me, 'Please stand beside me and kill me; for agony has seized me because my life still lingers in me.' <sup>10</sup> "So I stood beside him and killed him, because I knew that he could not live after he had fallen. And I took the crown which was on his head and the bracelet which was on his arm, and I have brought them here to my lord." <sup>11</sup> Then **David took hold of his clothes and tore them**, and so also *did* all the men who were with him. <sup>12</sup> **And they mourned and wept and fasted until evening** for Saul and his son Jonathan and for the people of the LORD and the house of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword. <sup>13</sup> And David said to the young man who told him, "Where are you from?" And he answered, "I am the son of an alien, an Amalekite." <sup>14</sup> Then David said to him, "How is it you were not afraid to stretch out your hand to destroy the LORD's anointed?" <sup>15</sup> And David called one of the young men and said, "Go, cut him down." So he struck him and he died. <sup>16</sup> And David said to him, "Your blood is on your head, for your mouth has testified against you, saying, 'I have killed the LORD's anointed.'"

## 2 Samuel 12:13-23

<sup>13</sup> Then David said to Nathan, "**I have sinned against the LORD**." And Nathan said to David, "The LORD also has taken away your sin; you shall not die. <sup>14</sup> "However, because by this deed you have given occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born to you shall surely die." <sup>15</sup> So Nathan went to his house. Then the LORD struck the child that Uriah's widow bore to David, so that he was very sick. <sup>16</sup> **David therefore inquired of God for the child; and David fasted and went and lay all night on the ground**. <sup>17</sup> And the elders of his household stood beside him in order to raise him up from the ground, but he was unwilling and **would not eat food with them**. <sup>18</sup> Then it happened on **the seventh day** that the child died. And the servants of David were afraid to tell him that the child was dead, for they said, "Behold, while the child was *still* alive, we spoke to him and he did not listen to our voice. How then can we tell him that the child is dead, since he might do *himself* harm!" <sup>19</sup> But when David saw that his servants were whispering together, David perceived that the child was dead; so David said to his servants, "Is the child dead?" And they said, "He is dead." <sup>20</sup> **So David arose from the ground, washed, anointed himself, and changed his clothes; and he came into the house of the LORD and worshiped**. Then he came to his own house, and when he requested, they set food before him and he ate. <sup>21</sup> Then his servants said to him, "What is this thing that you have done? While the child was alive, you fasted and wept; but when the child died, you arose and ate food." <sup>22</sup> And he said, "While the child was *still* alive, **I fasted and wept**; for I said, '**Who knows, the LORD may be gracious** to me, that the child may live.' <sup>23</sup> "But now he has died; **why should I fast?** Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he will not return to me."

## 1 Kings 19:1-8

Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. <sup>2</sup> Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, "So may the gods do to me and even more, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time." <sup>3</sup> And he was afraid and arose and ran for his life and came to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there. <sup>4</sup> But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree; and he requested for himself that he might die, and said, "It is enough; now, O LORD, take my life, for I am not better than my fathers." <sup>5</sup> And he lay down and slept under a juniper tree; and behold, there was an angel touching him, and he said to him, "Arise, eat." <sup>6</sup> Then he looked and behold, there was at his head a bread cake *baked on* hot stones, and a jar of water. So he ate and drank and lay down again. <sup>7</sup> And the angel of the LORD came again a second time and touched him and said, "Arise, eat, because the journey

is too great for you." <sup>8</sup> **So he arose and ate and drank, and went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb**, the mountain of God.

### 1 Kings 21:25-29

<sup>25</sup> Surely there was no one like Ahab who sold himself to do evil in the sight of the LORD, because Jezebel his wife incited him. <sup>26</sup> And he acted very abominably in following idols, according to all that the Amorites had done, whom the LORD cast out before the sons of Israel. <sup>27</sup> And it came about **when Ahab heard these words, that he tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and fasted, and he lay in sackcloth and went about despondently**. <sup>28</sup> Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, <sup>29</sup> "Do you see **how Ahab has humbled himself before Me**? Because he has humbled himself before Me, I will not bring the evil in his days, *but* I will bring the evil upon his house in his son's days."

### 1 Chronicles 10:12 - 14

<sup>12</sup> all the valiant men arose and took away the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons, and brought them to Jabesh and **buried their bones under the oak in Jabesh, and fasted seven days**. <sup>13</sup> So Saul died for his trespass which he committed against the LORD, because of the word of the LORD which he did not keep; and also because he asked counsel of a medium, making inquiry *of it*, <sup>14</sup> and did not inquire of the LORD. Therefore He killed him, and turned the kingdom to David the son of Jesse.

### 2 Chronicles 20:1-30

Now it came about after this that the sons of Moab and the sons of Ammon, together with some of the Meunites, came to make war against Jehoshaphat. <sup>2</sup> Then some came and reported to Jehoshaphat, saying, "A great multitude is coming against you from beyond the sea, out of Aram and behold, they are in Hazazon-tamar (that is Engedi)." <sup>3</sup> And **Jehoshaphat was afraid and turned his attention to seek the LORD; and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. <sup>4</sup> So Judah gathered together to seek help from the LORD; they even came from all the cities of Judah to seek the LORD.** <sup>5</sup> Then Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the LORD before the new court, <sup>6</sup> and he said, "O LORD, the God of our fathers, art Thou not God in the heavens? And art Thou not ruler over all the kingdoms of the nations? Power and might are in Thy hand so that no one can stand against Thee. <sup>7</sup> "Didst Thou not, O our God, drive out the inhabitants of this land before Thy people Israel, and give it to the descendants of Abraham Thy friend forever? <sup>8</sup> "And they lived in it, and have built Thee a sanctuary there for Thy name, saying, <sup>9</sup> 'Should evil come upon us, the sword, *or* judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we will stand before this house and before Thee (for Thy name is in this house) and cry to Thee in our distress, and Thou wilt hear and deliver *us*.' <sup>10</sup> "And now behold, the sons of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir, whom Thou didst not let Israel invade when they came out of the land of Egypt (they turned aside from them and did not destroy them), <sup>11</sup> behold *how* they are rewarding us, by coming to drive us out from Thy possession which Thou hast given us as an inheritance. <sup>12</sup> **"O our God, wilt Thou not judge them?** For we are powerless before this great multitude who are coming against us; **nor do we know what to do, but our eyes are on Thee.**" <sup>13</sup> And all Judah was standing before the LORD, with their infants, their wives, and their children. <sup>14</sup> Then in the midst of the assembly the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, the Levite of the sons of Asaph; <sup>15</sup> and he said, "Listen, all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and King Jehoshaphat: thus says the LORD to you, 'Do not fear or be dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours but God's. <sup>16</sup> 'Tomorrow go down against them. Behold, they will come up by the ascent of Ziz, and you will find them at the end of the valley in front of the wilderness of Jeruel. <sup>17</sup> 'You *need* not fight in this *battle*; station yourselves, stand and see the salvation of the LORD on your behalf, O Judah and Jerusalem.' Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out to face them, for the LORD is with you." <sup>18</sup> **And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell down before the LORD, worshiping the LORD.** <sup>19</sup> **And the Levites,**

**from the sons of the Kohathites and of the sons of the Korahites, stood up to praise the LORD God of Israel, with a very loud voice.** <sup>20</sup> And they rose early in the morning and went out to the wilderness of Tekoa; and when they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Listen to me, O Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, put your trust in the LORD your God, and you will be established. Put your trust in His prophets and succeed." <sup>21</sup> And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed those who sang to the LORD and those who praised *Him* in holy attire, as they went out before the army and said, "Give thanks to the LORD, for His lovingkindness is everlasting." <sup>22</sup> And when they began singing and praising, the LORD set ambushes against the sons of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; so they were routed. <sup>23</sup> For the sons of Ammon and Moab rose up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir destroying *them* completely, and when they had finished with the inhabitants of Seir, they helped to destroy one another. <sup>24</sup> When Judah came to the lookout of the wilderness, they looked toward the multitude; and behold, they *were* corpses lying on the ground, and no one had escaped. <sup>25</sup> And when Jehoshaphat and his people came to take their spoil, they found much among them, *including* goods, garments, and valuable things which they took for themselves, more than they could carry. And they were three days taking the spoil because there was so much. <sup>26</sup> Then on the fourth day they assembled in the valley of Beracah, for **there they blessed the LORD.** Therefore they have named that place "The Valley of Beracah " until today. <sup>27</sup> And every man of Judah and Jerusalem returned with Jehoshaphat at their head, returning to Jerusalem **with joy,** for the LORD had made them to rejoice over their enemies. <sup>28</sup> And **they came to Jerusalem with harps, lyres, and trumpets to the house of the LORD.** <sup>29</sup> And the dread of God was on all the kingdoms of the lands when they heard that the LORD had fought against the enemies of Israel. <sup>30</sup> So the kingdom of Jehoshaphat was at peace, for his God gave him rest on all sides.

#### **Ezra 8:21-23**

<sup>21</sup> Then **I proclaimed a fast there at the river of Ahava, that we might humble ourselves before our God to seek from Him a safe journey** for us, our little ones, and all our possessions. <sup>22</sup> For I was ashamed to request from the king troops and horsemen to protect us from the enemy on the way, because we had said to the king, "The hand of our God is favorably disposed to all those who seek Him, but His power and His anger are against all those who forsake Him." <sup>23</sup> So **we fasted and sought our God concerning this matter, and He listened to our entreaty.**

#### **Nehemiah 1:1 – 11**

The words of Nehemiah the son of Hacaliah. Now it happened in the month Chislev, *in* the twentieth year, while I was in Susa the capitol, <sup>2</sup> that Hanani, one of my brothers, and some men from Judah came; and I asked them concerning the Jews who had escaped *and* had survived the captivity, and about Jerusalem. <sup>3</sup> And they said to me, "The remnant there in the province who survived the captivity are in great distress and reproach, and the wall of Jerusalem is broken down and its gates are burned with fire." <sup>4</sup> Now it came about **when I heard these words, I sat down and wept and mourned for days; and I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven.** <sup>5</sup> And I said, "I beseech Thee, O LORD God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who preserves the covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments, <sup>6</sup> let Thine ear now be attentive and Thine eyes open to hear the prayer of Thy servant which I am praying before Thee now, day and night, on behalf of the sons of Israel Thy servants, **confessing the sins of the sons of Israel which we have sinned against Thee; I and my father's house have sinned.** <sup>7</sup> "We have acted very corruptly against Thee and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the ordinances which Thou didst command Thy servant Moses. <sup>8</sup> **Remember the word which Thou didst command** Thy servant Moses, saying, 'If you are unfaithful I will scatter you among the peoples; <sup>9</sup> but if you return to Me and keep My commandments and do them, though those of you who have been scattered were in the most remote part of the heavens, I will gather them from there and will bring them to the place where I have chosen to cause My name to dwell.' <sup>10</sup>

"And they are Thy servants and Thy people whom Thou didst redeem by Thy great power and by Thy strong hand. <sup>11</sup> "O Lord, I beseech Thee, **may Thine ear be attentive to the prayer** of Thy servant and the prayer of Thy servants who delight to revere Thy name, and **make Thy servant successful today, and grant him compassion before this man.**" Now I was the cupbearer to the king.

### **Nehemiah 9:1-38**

Now on the twenty-fourth day of this month **the sons of Israel assembled with fasting, in sackcloth, and with dirt upon them.** <sup>2</sup> **And the descendants of Israel separated themselves from all foreigners, and stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their fathers.** <sup>3</sup> While they stood in their place, **they read from the book of the law of the LORD their God for a fourth of the day; and for another fourth they confessed and worshiped the LORD their God.** <sup>4</sup> Now on the Levites' platform stood Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, *and* Chenani, and they cried with a loud voice to the LORD their God. <sup>5</sup> Then the Levites, Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabneiah, Sherebiah, Hodiah, Shebaniah, *and* Pethahiah, said, "**Arise, bless the LORD your God forever and ever!** O may Thy glorious name be blessed And exalted above all blessing and praise! <sup>6</sup> "Thou alone art the LORD. Thou hast made the heavens, The heaven of heavens with all their host, The earth and all that is on it, The seas and all that is in them. Thou dost give life to all of them And the heavenly host bows down before Thee. <sup>7</sup> "Thou art the LORD God, Who chose Abram And brought him out from Ur of the Chaldees, And gave him the name Abraham. <sup>8</sup> "And Thou didst find his heart faithful before Thee, And didst make a covenant with him To give *him* the land of the Canaanite, Of the Hittite and the Amorite, Of the Perizzite, the Jebusite, and the Girgashite-- To give *it* to his descendants. And Thou hast fulfilled Thy promise, For Thou art righteous. <sup>9</sup> "Thou didst see the affliction of our fathers in Egypt, And didst hear their cry by the Red Sea. <sup>10</sup> "Then Thou didst perform signs and wonders against Pharaoh, Against all his servants and all the people of his land; For Thou didst know that they acted arrogantly toward them, And didst make a name for Thyself as *it is* this day. <sup>11</sup> "And Thou didst divide the sea before them, So they passed through the midst of the sea on dry ground; And their pursuers Thou didst hurl into the depths, Like a stone into raging waters. <sup>12</sup> "And with a pillar of cloud Thou didst lead them by day, And with a pillar of fire by night To light for them the way In which they were to go. <sup>13</sup> "Then Thou didst come down on Mount Sinai, And didst speak with them from heaven; Thou didst give to them just ordinances and true laws, Good statutes and commandments. <sup>14</sup> "So Thou didst make known to them Thy holy sabbath, And didst lay down for them commandments, statutes, and law, Through Thy servant Moses. <sup>15</sup> "Thou didst provide bread from heaven for them for their hunger, Thou didst bring forth water from a rock for them for their thirst, And Thou didst tell them to enter in order to possess The land which Thou didst swear to give them. <sup>16</sup> "But they, our fathers, acted arrogantly; They became stubborn and would not listen to Thy commandments. <sup>17</sup> "And they refused to listen, And did not remember Thy wondrous deeds which Thou hadst performed among them; So they became stubborn and appointed a leader to return to their slavery in Egypt. But Thou art a God of forgiveness, Gracious and compassionate, Slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness; And Thou didst not forsake them. <sup>18</sup> "Even when they made for themselves A calf of molten metal And said, 'This is your God Who brought you up from Egypt,' And committed great blasphemies, <sup>19</sup> Thou, in Thy great compassion, Didst not forsake them in the wilderness; The pillar of cloud did not leave them by day, To guide them on their way, Nor the pillar of fire by night, to light for them the way in which they were to go. <sup>20</sup> "And Thou didst give Thy good Spirit to instruct them, Thy manna Thou didst not withhold from their mouth, And Thou didst give them water for their thirst. <sup>21</sup> "Indeed, forty years Thou didst provide for them in the wilderness *and* they were not in want; Their clothes did not wear out, nor did their feet swell. <sup>22</sup> "Thou didst also give them kingdoms and peoples, And Thou didst allot *them* to them as a boundary. And they took possession of the land of Sihon the king of Heshbon, And the land of Og the king of Bashan. <sup>23</sup> "And Thou didst make their sons numerous as the stars of heaven, And Thou didst bring them into the land Which Thou hadst told their fathers to enter and possess. <sup>24</sup> "So their sons entered and possessed the land. And

Thou didst subdue before them the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, And Thou didst give them into their hand, with their kings, and the peoples of the land, To do with them as they desired. <sup>25</sup> "And they captured fortified cities and a fertile land. They took possession of houses full of every good thing, Hewn cisterns, vineyards, olive groves, Fruit trees in abundance. So they ate, were filled, and grew fat, And reveled in Thy great goodness. <sup>26</sup> "But they became disobedient and rebelled against Thee, And cast Thy law behind their backs And killed Thy prophets who had admonished them So that they might return to Thee, And they committed great blasphemies. <sup>27</sup> "Therefore Thou didst deliver them into the hand of their oppressors who oppressed them, But when they cried to Thee in the time of their distress, Thou didst hear from heaven, and according to Thy great compassion Thou didst give them deliverers who delivered them from the hand of their oppressors. <sup>28</sup> "But as soon as they had rest, they did evil again before Thee; Therefore Thou didst abandon them to the hand of their enemies, so that they ruled over them. When they cried again to Thee, Thou didst hear from heaven, And many times Thou didst rescue them according to Thy compassion, <sup>29</sup> And admonished them in order to turn them back to Thy law. Yet they acted arrogantly and did not listen to Thy commandments but sinned against Thine ordinances, By which if a man observes them he shall live. And they turned a stubborn shoulder and stiffened their neck, and would not listen. <sup>30</sup> "However, Thou didst bear with them for many years, And admonished them by Thy Spirit through Thy prophets, Yet they would not give ear. Therefore Thou didst give them into the hand of the peoples of the lands. <sup>31</sup> "Nevertheless, in Thy great compassion Thou didst not make an end of them or forsake them, For Thou art a gracious and compassionate God. <sup>32</sup> "Now therefore, our God, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, who dost keep covenant and lovingkindness, **Do not let all the hardship seem insignificant before Thee**, Which has come upon us, our kings, our princes, our priests, our prophets, our fathers, and on all Thy people, From the days of the kings of Assyria to this day. <sup>33</sup> **"However, Thou art just in all that has come upon us; For Thou hast dealt faithfully, but we have acted wickedly.** <sup>34</sup> "For our kings, our leaders, our priests, and our fathers have not kept Thy law Or paid attention to Thy commandments and Thine admonitions with which Thou hast admonished them. <sup>35</sup> "But they, in their own kingdom, With Thy great goodness which Thou didst give them, With the broad and rich land which Thou didst set before them, Did not serve Thee or turn from their evil deeds. <sup>36</sup> "Behold, we are slaves today, And as to the land which Thou didst give to our fathers to eat of its fruit and its bounty, Behold, we are slaves on it. <sup>37</sup> "And its abundant produce is for the kings Whom Thou hast set over us because of our sins; They also rule over our bodies And over our cattle as they please, So we are in great distress. <sup>38</sup> **Now because of all this We are making an agreement in writing; And on the sealed document are the names of our leaders, our Levites and our priests.**"

#### Esther 4:1-4

When Mordecai learned all that had been done, **he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the midst of the city and wailed loudly and bitterly.** <sup>2</sup> And he went as far as the king's gate, for no one was to enter the king's gate clothed in sackcloth. <sup>3</sup> And in each and every province where the command and decree of the king came, **there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting, weeping, and wailing; and many lay on sackcloth and ashes.** <sup>4</sup> Then Esther's maidens and her eunuchs came and told her, and the queen writhed in great anguish. And she sent garments to clothe Mordecai that he might remove his sackcloth from him, but he did not accept *them*.

#### Esther 4:13-17

<sup>13</sup> Then Mordecai told *them* to reply to Esther, "Do not imagine that you in the king's palace can escape any more than all the Jews. <sup>14</sup> "For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place and you and your father's house will perish. And **who knows whether you have not attained royalty for such a time as this?**" <sup>15</sup> Then Esther told *them* to reply to Mordecai, <sup>16</sup> **"Go, assemble all the Jews who are found in Susa, and fast for me; do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my maidens also will fast in the same way.** And thus I will go in to the king,

which is not according to the law; and if I perish, I perish." <sup>17</sup> So Mordecai went away and did just as Esther had commanded him.

### **Esther 9:26-32**

<sup>26</sup> Therefore they called these days Purim after the name of Pur. And because of the instructions in this letter, both what they had seen in this regard and what had happened to them, <sup>27</sup> the Jews established and made a custom for themselves, and for their descendants, and for all those who allied themselves with them, so that they should not fail to celebrate these two days according to their regulation, and according to their appointed time annually. <sup>28</sup> So these days were to be remembered and celebrated throughout every generation, every family, every province, and every city; and these days of Purim were not to fail from among the Jews, or their memory fade from their descendants. <sup>29</sup> Then Queen Esther, daughter of Abihail, with Mordecai the Jew, wrote with full authority to confirm this second letter about Purim. <sup>30</sup> And he sent letters to all the Jews, to the 127 provinces of the kingdom of Ahasuerus, namely, words of peace and truth, <sup>31</sup> **to establish these days of Purim at their appointed times, just as Mordecai the Jew and Queen Esther had established for them, and just as they had established for themselves and for their descendants with instructions for their times of fasting and their lamentations.** <sup>32</sup> And the command of Esther established these customs for Purim, and it was written in the book.

### **Psalm 35:11-18**

<sup>1</sup> Malicious witnesses rise up; They ask me of things that I do not know. <sup>12</sup> They repay me evil for good, To the bereavement of my soul. <sup>13</sup> **But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth; I humbled my soul with fasting; And my prayer kept returning to my bosom.** <sup>14</sup> **I went about as though it were my friend or brother; I bowed down mourning, as one who sorrows for a mother.** <sup>15</sup> But at my stumbling they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together; The smiters whom I did not know gathered together against me, They slandered me without ceasing. <sup>16</sup> Like godless jesters at a feast, They gnashed at me with their teeth. <sup>17</sup> **Lord, how long wilt Thou look on? Rescue my soul from their ravages, My only life from the lions.** <sup>18</sup> **I will give Thee thanks in the great congregation; I will praise Thee among a mighty throng.**

### **Psalm 69:1-17**

Save me, O God, For the waters have threatened my life. <sup>2</sup> I have sunk in deep mire, and there is no foothold; I have come into deep waters, and a flood overflows me. <sup>3</sup> I am weary with my crying; my throat is parched; My eyes fail while I wait for my God. <sup>4</sup> Those who hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head; Those who would destroy me are powerful, being wrongfully my enemies, What I did not steal, I then have to restore. <sup>5</sup> O God, it is Thou who dost know my folly, And my wrongs are not hidden from Thee. <sup>6</sup> May those who wait for Thee not be ashamed through me, O Lord God of hosts; May those who seek Thee not be dishonored through me, O God of Israel, <sup>7</sup> Because for Thy sake I have borne reproach; Dishonor has covered my face. <sup>8</sup> I have become estranged from my brothers, And an alien to my mother's sons. <sup>9</sup> For **zeal for Thy house has consumed me, And the reproaches of those who reproach Thee have fallen on me.** <sup>10</sup> **When I wept in my soul with fasting, It became my reproach.** <sup>11</sup> **When I made sackcloth my clothing, I became a byword to them.** <sup>12</sup> Those who sit in the gate talk about me, And I *am* the song of the drunkards. <sup>13</sup> **But as for me, my prayer is to Thee, O LORD, at an acceptable time;** O God, in the greatness of Thy lovingkindness, Answer me with Thy saving truth. <sup>14</sup> Deliver me from the mire, and do not let me sink; May I be delivered from my foes, and from the deep waters. <sup>15</sup> May the flood of water not overflow me, And may the deep not swallow me up, And may the pit not shut its mouth on me. <sup>16</sup> Answer me, O LORD, for Thy lovingkindness is good; According to the greatness of Thy compassion, turn to me, <sup>17</sup> And do not hide Thy face from Thy servant, For I am in distress; answer me quickly.

### Psalm 109:24

<sup>24</sup> **My knees are weak from fasting; And my flesh has grown lean, without fatness.**

### Isaiah 58:1 -14

"Cry loudly, do not hold back; Raise your voice like a trumpet, And declare to My people their transgression, And to the house of Jacob their sins. <sup>2</sup> "Yet they seek Me day by day, and delight to know My ways, As a nation that has done righteousness, And has not forsaken the ordinance of their God. They ask Me *for* just decisions, They delight in the nearness of God. <sup>3</sup> 'Why have we fasted and Thou dost not see? *Why* have we humbled ourselves and Thou dost not notice?' Behold, on the day of your fast you find *your* desire, And drive hard all your workers. <sup>4</sup> "Behold, you fast for contention and strife and to strike with a wicked fist. You do not fast like *you do* today to make your voice heard on high. <sup>5</sup> "Is it a fast like this which I choose, a day for a man to humble himself? Is it for bowing one's head like a reed, And for spreading out sackcloth and ashes as a bed? Will you call this a fast, even an acceptable day to the LORD? <sup>6</sup> **Is this not the fast which I choose, To loosen the bonds of wickedness, To undo the bands of the yoke, And to let the oppressed go free, And break every yoke? <sup>7</sup> "Is it not to divide your bread with the hungry, And bring the homeless poor into the house; When you see the naked, to cover him; And not to hide yourself from your own flesh?** <sup>8</sup> "Then your light will break out like the dawn, And your recovery will speedily spring forth; And your righteousness will go before you; The glory of the LORD will be your rear guard. <sup>9</sup> **Then you will call, and the LORD will answer; You will cry, and He will say, 'Here I am.' If you remove the yoke from your midst, The pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness, <sup>10</sup> And if you give yourself to the hungry, And satisfy the desire of the afflicted, Then your light will rise in darkness, And your gloom will become like midday.** <sup>11</sup> "And the LORD will continually guide you, And satisfy your desire in scorched places, And give strength to your bones; And you will be like a watered garden, And like a spring of water whose waters do not fail. <sup>12</sup> "And those from among you will rebuild the ancient ruins; You will raise up the age-old foundations; And you will be called the repairer of the breach, The restorer of the streets in which to dwell. <sup>13</sup> "If because of the sabbath, **you turn your foot From doing your own pleasure on My holy day, And call the sabbath a delight, the holy day of the LORD honorable, And shall honor it, desisting from your own ways, From seeking your own pleasure, And speaking your own word,** <sup>14</sup> Then you will take delight in the LORD, And I will make you ride on the heights of the earth; And I will feed you *with* the heritage of Jacob your father, For the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

### Jeremiah 14:10-12

<sup>10</sup> Thus says the LORD to this people, "Even so they have loved to wander; they have not kept their feet in check. Therefore the LORD does not accept them; now He will remember their iniquity and call their sins to account." <sup>11</sup> So the LORD said to me, "Do not pray for the welfare of this people. <sup>12</sup> **When they fast, I am not going to listen to their cry; and when they offer burnt offering and grain offering, I am not going to accept them.** Rather I am going to make an end of them by the sword, famine and pestilence."

### Jeremiah 36:2-26

<sup>2</sup> "Take a scroll and write on it all the words which I have spoken to you concerning Israel, and concerning Judah, and concerning all the nations, from the day I *first* spoke to you, from the days of Josiah, even to this day. <sup>3</sup> "Perhaps the house of Judah will hear all the calamity which I plan to bring on them, in order that every man will turn from his evil way; then I will forgive their iniquity and their sin." <sup>4</sup> Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son of Neriah, and Baruch wrote at the dictation of Jeremiah all the words of the LORD, which He had spoken to him, on a scroll. <sup>5</sup> And Jeremiah commanded Baruch, saying, "I am restricted; I cannot go into the house of the LORD. <sup>6</sup> "So you go and read from the scroll



which you have written at my dictation the words of the LORD to the people in the LORD's house on a fast day. And also you shall read them to all *the people of Judah* who come from their cities. <sup>7</sup> "Perhaps their supplication will come before the LORD, and everyone will turn from his evil way, for great is the anger and the wrath that the LORD has pronounced against this people." <sup>8</sup> And Baruch the son of Neriah did according to all that Jeremiah the prophet commanded him, reading from the book the words of the LORD in the LORD's house. <sup>9</sup> Now it came about in the fifth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, in the ninth month, that **all the people in Jerusalem and all the people who came from the cities of Judah to Jerusalem proclaimed a fast before the LORD.** <sup>10</sup> **Then Baruch read from the book the words of Jeremiah in the house of the LORD** in the chamber of Gemariah the son of Shaphan the scribe, in the upper court, at the entry of the New Gate of the LORD's house, to all the people. <sup>11</sup> Now when Micaiah the son of Gemariah, the son of Shaphan, had heard all the words of the LORD from the book, <sup>12</sup> he went down to the king's house, into the scribe's chamber. And, behold, all the officials were sitting there-- Elishama the scribe, and Delaiah the son of Shemaiah, and Elnathan the son of Achbor, and Gemariah the son of Shaphan, and Zedekiah the son of Hananiah, and all the *other* officials. <sup>13</sup> And **Micaiah declared to them all the words that he had heard**, when Baruch read from the book to the people. <sup>14</sup> Then all the officials sent Jehudi the son of Nethaniah, the son of Shelemiah, the son of Cushi, to Baruch, saying, "Take in your hand the scroll from which you have read to the people and come." So Baruch the son of Neriah took the scroll in his hand and went to them. <sup>15</sup> And they said to him, "Sit down please, and read it to us." So Baruch read it to them. <sup>16</sup> Now it came about when they had heard all the words, they turned in fear one to another and said to Baruch, "We will surely report all these words to the king." <sup>17</sup> And they asked Baruch, saying, "Tell us please, how did you write all these words? *Was it* at his dictation?" <sup>18</sup> Then Baruch said to them, "He dictated all these words to me, and I wrote them with ink on the book." <sup>19</sup> Then the officials said to Baruch, "Go, hide yourself, you and Jeremiah, and do not let anyone know where you are." <sup>20</sup> So they went to the king in the court, but they had deposited the scroll in the chamber of Elishama the scribe, and they reported all the words to the king. <sup>21</sup> Then the king sent Jehudi to get the scroll, and he took it out of the chamber of Elishama the scribe. And Jehudi read it to the king as well as to all the officials who stood beside the king. <sup>22</sup> Now the king was sitting in the winter house in the ninth month, with *a fire* burning in the brazier before him. <sup>23</sup> And it came about, when Jehudi had read three or four columns, *the king* cut it with a scribe's knife and threw *it* into the fire that was in the brazier, until all the scroll was consumed in the fire that was in the brazier. <sup>24</sup> Yet the king and all his servants who heard all these words were not afraid, nor did they rend their garments. <sup>25</sup> Even though Elnathan and Delaiah and Gemariah entreated the king not to burn the scroll, he would not listen to them. <sup>26</sup> And the king commanded Jerahmeel the king's son, Seraiah the son of Azriel, and Shelemiah the son of Abdeel to seize Baruch the scribe and Jeremiah the prophet, **but the LORD hid them.**

#### **Daniel 6:16-24**

<sup>16</sup> Then the king gave orders, and Daniel was brought in and cast into the lions' den. The king spoke and said to Daniel, "Your God whom you constantly serve will Himself deliver you." <sup>17</sup> And a stone was brought and laid over the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the signet rings of his nobles, so that nothing might be changed in regard to Daniel. <sup>18</sup> **Then the king went off to his palace and spent the night fasting, and no entertainment was brought before him; and his sleep fled from him.** <sup>19</sup> Then the king arose with the dawn, at the break of day, and went in haste to the lions' den. <sup>20</sup> And when he had come near the den to Daniel, he cried out with a troubled voice. The king spoke and said to Daniel, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you constantly serve, been able to deliver you from the lions?" <sup>21</sup> Then Daniel spoke to the king, "O king, live forever! <sup>22</sup> **My God sent His angel** and shut the lions' mouths, and they have not harmed me, inasmuch as I was found innocent before Him; and also toward you, O king, I have committed no crime." <sup>23</sup> Then the king was very pleased and gave orders for Daniel to be taken up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of

the den, **and no injury whatever was found on him, because he had trusted in his God.** <sup>24</sup> The king then gave orders, and they brought those men who had maliciously accused Daniel, and they cast them, their children, and their wives into the lions' den; and they had not reached the bottom of the den before the lions overpowered them and crushed all their bones.

### **Daniel 9:1-22**

In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of Median descent, who was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans-- <sup>2</sup> in the first year of his reign **I, Daniel, observed in the books** the number of the years which was *revealed* as the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, *namely*, seventy years. <sup>3</sup> **So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.** <sup>4</sup> **And I prayed to the LORD my God and confessed** and said, "Alas, O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments, <sup>5</sup> we have sinned, committed iniquity, acted wickedly, and rebelled, even turning aside from Thy commandments and ordinances. <sup>6</sup> "Moreover, we have not listened to Thy servants the prophets, who spoke in Thy name to our kings, our princes, our fathers, and all the people of the land. <sup>7</sup> "Righteousness belongs to Thee, O Lord, but to us open shame, as it is this day-- to the men of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and all Israel, those who are nearby and those who are far away in all the countries to which Thou hast driven them, because of their unfaithful deeds which they have committed against Thee. <sup>8</sup> "Open shame belongs to us, O Lord, to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, because we have sinned against Thee. <sup>9</sup> "To the Lord our God belong compassion and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against Him; <sup>10</sup> nor have we obeyed the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in His teachings which He set before us through His servants the prophets. <sup>11</sup> "Indeed all Israel has transgressed Thy law and turned aside, not obeying Thy voice; so the curse has been poured out on us, along with the oath which is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, for we have sinned against Him. <sup>12</sup> "Thus He has confirmed His words which He had spoken against us and against our rulers who ruled us, to bring on us great calamity; for under the whole heaven there has not been done *anything* like what was done to Jerusalem. <sup>13</sup> "As it is written in the law of Moses, all this calamity has come on us; yet we have not sought the favor of the LORD our God by turning from our iniquity and giving attention to Thy truth. <sup>14</sup> "Therefore, the LORD has kept the calamity in store and brought it on us; for the LORD our God is righteous with respect to all His deeds which He has done, but we have not obeyed His voice. <sup>15</sup> "And now, O Lord our God, who hast brought Thy people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand and hast made a name for Thyself, as it is this day-- we have sinned, we have been wicked. <sup>16</sup> "O Lord, in accordance with all Thy righteous acts, let now Thine anger and Thy wrath turn away from Thy city Jerusalem, Thy holy mountain; for because of our sins and the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Thy people *have become* a reproach to all those around us. <sup>17</sup> "So now, **our God, listen to the prayer of Thy servant and to his supplications, and for Thy sake, O Lord, let Thy face shine on Thy desolate sanctuary.** <sup>18</sup> "O my God, incline Thine ear and hear! Open Thine eyes and see our desolations and the city which is called by Thy name; **for we are not presenting our supplications before Thee on account of any merits of our own, but on account of Thy great compassion.** <sup>19</sup> "O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and take action! For Thine own sake, O my God, do not delay, because Thy city and Thy people are called by Thy name." <sup>20</sup> Now while I was speaking and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God in behalf of the holy mountain of my God, <sup>21</sup> **while I was still speaking in prayer, then the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision previously, came to me in my extreme weariness about the time of the evening offering.** <sup>22</sup> **And he gave me instruction and talked with me,**

**Daniel 10:1-21**

In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a word was revealed to Daniel, who was named Belteshazzar. And the word was true, and it was a great conflict. And he understood the word and had understanding of the vision.

<sup>2</sup> In those days **I, Daniel, was mourning for three weeks. <sup>3</sup> I ate no delicacies, no meat or wine entered my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, for the full three weeks.** <sup>4</sup> On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was standing on the bank of the great river (that is, the Tigris) <sup>5</sup> I lifted up my eyes and looked, and behold, a man clothed in linen, with a belt of fine gold from Uphaz around his waist. <sup>6</sup> His body was like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and the sound of his words like the sound of a multitude. <sup>7</sup> And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men who were with me did not see the vision, but a great trembling fell upon them, and they fled to hide themselves. <sup>8</sup> So I was left alone and saw this great vision, and no strength was left in me. My radiant appearance was fearfully changed, and I retained no strength. <sup>9</sup> Then I heard the sound of his words, and as I heard the sound of his words, I fell on my face in deep sleep with my face to the ground.

<sup>10</sup> And behold, a hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. <sup>11</sup> And he said to me, "**O Daniel, man greatly loved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for now I have been sent to you.**" And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood up trembling. <sup>12</sup> Then he said to me, "**Fear not, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand and humbled yourself before your God, your words have been heard, and I have come because of your words.**" <sup>13</sup> **The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days,** but Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I was left there with the kings of Persia, <sup>14</sup> and came to make you understand what is to happen to your people in the latter days. For the vision is for days yet to come."

<sup>15</sup> When he had spoken to me according to these words, I turned my face toward the ground and was mute. <sup>16</sup> And behold, one in the likeness of the children of man touched my lips. Then I opened my mouth and spoke. I said to him who stood before me, "O my lord, by reason of the vision pains have come upon me, and I retain no strength. <sup>17</sup> How can my lord's servant talk with my lord? For now no strength remains in me, and no breath is left in me."

<sup>18</sup> Again one having the appearance of a man touched me and strengthened me. <sup>19</sup> And he said, "O man greatly loved, fear not, peace be with you; be strong and of good courage." And as he spoke to me, I was strengthened and said, "Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me." <sup>20</sup> Then he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? But **now I will return to fight against the prince of Persia; and when I go out, behold, the prince of Greece will come.** <sup>21</sup> But I will tell you what is inscribed in the book of truth: there is none who contends by my side against these except Michael, your prince. <sup>1</sup>

**Joel 1:13-15**

<sup>13</sup> **Gird yourselves with sackcloth, And lament, O priests; Wail, O ministers of the altar! Come, spend the night in sackcloth, O ministers of my God,** For the grain offering and the libation Are withheld from the house of your God. <sup>14</sup> **Consecrate a fast, Proclaim a solemn assembly; Gather the elders And all the inhabitants of the land To the house of the LORD your God, And cry out to the LORD.** <sup>15</sup> Alas for the day! For the day of the LORD is near, And it will come as destruction from the Almighty.

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<sup>1</sup> [\*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version\*](#). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016. Print.

### Joel 2:10-19

<sup>10</sup> Before them the earth quakes, The heavens tremble, The sun and the moon grow dark, And the stars lose their brightness. <sup>11</sup> And the LORD utters His voice before His army; Surely His camp is very great, For strong is he who carries out His word. The day of the LORD is indeed great and very awesome, And who can endure it? <sup>12</sup> "Yet even now," declares the LORD, "**Return to Me with all your heart, And with fasting, weeping, and mourning; <sup>13</sup> And rend your heart and not your garments.**" Now return to the LORD your God, For He is gracious and compassionate, Slow to anger, abounding in lovingkindness, And relenting of evil. <sup>14</sup> Who knows whether He will *not* turn and relent, And leave a blessing behind Him, **Even a grain offering and a libation** For the LORD your God? <sup>15</sup> **Blow a trumpet in Zion, Consecrate a fast, proclaim a solemn assembly, <sup>16</sup> Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, Assemble the elders, Gather the children and the nursing infants. Let the bridegroom come out of his room And the bride out of her *bridal* chamber. <sup>17</sup> Let the priests, the LORD's ministers, Weep between the porch and the altar,** And let them say, "Spare Thy people, O LORD, And do not make Thine inheritance a reproach, A byword among the nations. Why should they among the peoples say, 'Where is their God?'" <sup>18</sup> Then the LORD will be zealous for His land, And will have pity on His people. <sup>19</sup> And the LORD will answer and say to His people, "Behold, I am going to send you grain, new wine, and oil, And you will be satisfied *in full* with them; And I will never again make you a reproach among the nations.

### Jonah 3:1 – 10

Now the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time, saying, <sup>2</sup> "Arise, go to Nineveh the great city and proclaim to it the proclamation which I am going to tell you." <sup>3</sup> So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, a three days' walk. <sup>4</sup> Then Jonah began to go through the city one day's walk; and he cried out and said, "Yet forty days and Nineveh will be overthrown." <sup>5</sup> **Then the people of Nineveh believed in God; and they called a fast and put on sackcloth from the greatest to the least of them.** <sup>6</sup> When the word reached the king of Nineveh, **he arose from his throne, laid aside his robe from him, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat on the ashes.** <sup>7</sup> And he issued a proclamation and it said, "In Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles: **Do not let man, beast, herd, or flock taste a thing. Do not let them eat or drink water.** <sup>8</sup> **But both man and beast must be covered with sackcloth; and let men call on God earnestly that each may turn from his wicked way and from the violence which is in his hands.** <sup>9</sup> "Who knows, God may turn and relent, and withdraw His burning anger so that we shall not perish?" <sup>10</sup> When **God saw** their deeds, that they turned from their wicked way, then God relented concerning the calamity which He had declared He would bring upon them. And He did not do *it*.

### Zechariah 7:1-14

Then it came about in the fourth year of King Darius, that the word of the LORD came to Zechariah on the fourth *day* of the ninth month, *which is* Chislev. <sup>2</sup> Now *the town of* Bethel had sent Sharezer and Regemmelech and their men to **seek the favor of the LORD,** <sup>3</sup> speaking to the priests who belong to the house of the LORD of hosts, and to the prophets saying, "**Shall I weep in the fifth month and abstain, as I have done these many years?**" <sup>4</sup> Then the word of the LORD of hosts came to me saying, <sup>5</sup> "Say to all the people of the land and to the priests, **'When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh months these seventy years, was it actually for Me that you fasted? <sup>6</sup> And when you eat and drink, do you not eat for yourselves and do you not drink for yourselves? <sup>7</sup> Are not these** the words which the LORD proclaimed by the former prophets, when Jerusalem was inhabited and prosperous with its cities around it, and the Negev and the foothills were inhabited?" <sup>8</sup> Then the word of the LORD came to Zechariah saying, <sup>9</sup> "Thus has the LORD of hosts said, **'Dispense true justice, and practice kindness and compassion each to his brother; <sup>10</sup> and do not oppress the widow or the orphan, the stranger or the poor; and do not devise evil in your hearts against one another.'** <sup>11</sup> "But they refused to pay attention, and turned a stubborn shoulder and stopped their ears from hearing. <sup>12</sup> "And

they made their hearts *like* flint so that they could not hear the law and the words which the LORD of hosts had sent by His Spirit through the former prophets; therefore great wrath came from the LORD of hosts. <sup>13</sup> "And it came about that just as He called and they would not listen, so they called and I would not listen," says the LORD of hosts; <sup>14</sup> "but I scattered them with a storm wind among all the nations whom they have not known. Thus the land is desolated behind them, so that no one went back and forth, for they made the pleasant land desolate."

#### **Zechariah 8:16-23**

<sup>16</sup> **'These are the things which you should do: speak the truth to one another; judge with truth and judgment for peace in your gates.** <sup>17</sup> **'Also let none of you devise evil in your heart against another, and do not love perjury; for all these are what I hate,' declares the LORD.** <sup>18</sup> Then the word of the LORD of hosts came to me saying, <sup>19</sup> "Thus says the LORD of hosts, **'The fast of the fourth, the fast of the fifth, the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth *months* will become joy, gladness, and cheerful feasts for the house of Judah; so love truth and peace.**' <sup>20</sup> "Thus says the LORD of hosts, *'It will yet be* that peoples will come, even the inhabitants of many cities. <sup>21</sup> 'And the inhabitants of one will go to another saying, **"Let us go at once to entreat the favor of the LORD, and to seek the LORD of hosts; I will also go."** <sup>22</sup> 'So many peoples and mighty nations will come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem and to entreat the favor of the LORD.' <sup>23</sup> "Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'In those days ten men from all the nations will grasp the garment of a Jew saying, "Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.'""

## **NEW TESTAMENT**

#### **Matthew 4:1-4**

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. <sup>2</sup> And after **He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry.** <sup>3</sup> And the tempter came and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." <sup>4</sup> But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'"

#### **Matthew 6:16-21**

<sup>16</sup> "And whenever you fast, **do not put on a gloomy face** as the hypocrites *do*, for they neglect their appearance in order to be seen fasting by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. <sup>17</sup> "But you, when you fast, **anoint your head, and wash your face** <sup>18</sup> **so that you may not be seen fasting by men, but by your Father who is in secret;** and your Father who sees in secret will repay you. <sup>19</sup> "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. <sup>20</sup> "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; <sup>21</sup> for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

#### **Matthew 9:14-17**

<sup>14</sup> Then the disciples of John came to Him, saying, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?" <sup>15</sup> And Jesus said to them, "The attendants of the bridegroom cannot mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them, can they? **But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast.** <sup>16</sup> "But no one puts a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; for the patch pulls away from the garment, and a worse tear results. <sup>17</sup> "Nor do *men* put new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the wineskins burst, and the wine pours out, and the wineskins are ruined; but they put new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved."

### Matthew 17:14-21

<sup>14</sup> And when they came to the multitude, a man came up to Him, falling on his knees before Him, and saying, <sup>15</sup> "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is a lunatic, and is very ill; for he often falls into the fire, and often into the water. <sup>16</sup> "And I brought him to Your disciples, and they could not cure him." <sup>17</sup> And Jesus answered and said, "O unbelieving and perverted generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him here to Me." <sup>18</sup> And Jesus rebuked him, and the demon came out of him, and the boy was cured at once. <sup>19</sup> Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?" <sup>20</sup> And He said to them, "Because of the littleness of your **faith**; for truly I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you shall say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it shall move; and nothing shall be impossible to you. <sup>21</sup> **"But this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."**

### Mark 2:18-22

<sup>18</sup> And John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting; and they came and said to Him, "Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?" <sup>19</sup> And Jesus said to them, "While the bridegroom is with them, the attendants of the bridegroom do not fast, do they? So long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. <sup>20</sup> "But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in that day. <sup>21</sup> "No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; otherwise the patch pulls away from it, the new from the old, and a worse tear results. <sup>22</sup> "And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the wine will burst the skins, and the wine is lost, and the skins *as well*; but *one puts* new wine into fresh wineskins."

### Luke 5:33-39

<sup>33</sup> And they said to Him, "The disciples of John often fast and offer prayers; the *disciples* of the Pharisees also do the same; but Yours eat and drink." <sup>34</sup> And Jesus said to them, "You cannot make the attendants of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is with them, can you? <sup>35</sup> "But *the* days will come; and when the bridegroom is taken away from them, then they will fast in those days." <sup>36</sup> And He was also telling them a parable: "No one tears a piece from a new garment and puts it on an old garment; otherwise he will both tear the new, and the piece from the new will not match the old. <sup>37</sup> "And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the new wine will burst the skins, and it will be spilled out, and the skins will be ruined. <sup>38</sup> "But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins. <sup>39</sup> "And no one, after drinking old *wine* wishes for new; for he says, 'The old is good *enough*.'"

### Luke 18:9-14

<sup>9</sup> And He also told this parable to **certain ones who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and viewed others with contempt:** <sup>10</sup> "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee, and the other a tax-gatherer. <sup>11</sup> "The Pharisee stood and was praying thus to himself, 'God, I thank Thee that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax-gatherer. <sup>12</sup> **'I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.'** <sup>13</sup> "But the tax-gatherer, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, the sinner!' <sup>14</sup> "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for **everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, but he who humbles himself shall be exalted.**"

### Acts 13:1-4

Now there were at Antioch, in the church that was *there*, prophets and teachers: Barnabas, and Simeon who was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. <sup>2</sup> And **while they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said,** "Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." <sup>3</sup> Then, **when they had**

**fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.** <sup>4</sup> So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia and from there they sailed to Cyprus.

### **Acts 14:21-23**

<sup>21</sup> And after they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, <sup>22</sup> strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and *saying*, "Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God." <sup>23</sup> And **when they had appointed elders for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.**

### **Acts 27:8-10**

<sup>8</sup> and with difficulty sailing past it we came to a certain place called Fair Havens, near which was the city of Lasea. <sup>9</sup> And when considerable time had passed and the voyage was now dangerous, since even the fast was already over, Paul *began* to admonish them, <sup>10</sup> and said to them, "Men, I perceive that the voyage will certainly be *attended* with damage and great loss, not only of the cargo and the ship, but also of our lives."

(The only mention in the epistles, if any, comes from Paul's mention of being in hunger. Is this fasting? Perhaps. It seems very likely that he would fast. Why would he mention it within his lists of hardships? It could just as easily mean that he was very hungry, and that was hard. However, notice in 2 Cor 11:27-28 how he distinguishes being "in hunger and thirst" from being "often without food." Seems to me to be a reference to the rigors of fasting. It would certainly be in keeping with the historical narrative of Acts 13 and 14. Finally, he chooses the word *nestia*, which is the word used for fasting.)

### **2 Corinthians 6:1-10**

the grace of God in vain-- <sup>2</sup> for He says, "At the acceptable time I listened to you, And on the day of salvation I helped you"; behold, now is "the acceptable time," behold, now is "the day of salvation "-- <sup>3</sup> giving no cause for offense in anything, in order that the ministry be not discredited, <sup>4</sup> but in everything commending ourselves as servants of God, in much endurance, in afflictions, in hardships, in distresses, <sup>5</sup> in beatings, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in sleeplessness, **in hunger**, <sup>6</sup> in purity, in knowledge, in patience, in kindness, in the Holy Spirit, in genuine love, <sup>7</sup> in the word of truth, in the power of God; by the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and the left, <sup>8</sup> by glory and dishonor, by evil report and good report; *regarded* as deceivers and yet true; <sup>9</sup> as unknown yet well-known, as dying yet behold, we live; as punished yet not put to death, <sup>10</sup> as sorrowful yet always rejoicing, as poor yet making many rich, as having nothing yet possessing all things.

### **2 Corinthians 11:14-31**

<sup>14</sup> And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. <sup>15</sup> Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their deeds. <sup>16</sup> Again I say, let no one think me foolish; but if *you do*, receive me even as foolish, that I also may boast a little. <sup>17</sup> That which I am speaking, I am not speaking as the Lord would, but as in foolishness, in this confidence of boasting. <sup>18</sup> Since many boast according to the flesh, I will boast also. <sup>19</sup> For you, being so wise, bear with the foolish gladly. <sup>20</sup> For you bear with anyone if he enslaves you, if he devours you, if he takes advantage of you, if he exalts himself, if he hits you in the face. <sup>21</sup> To *my* shame I *must* say that we have been weak *by comparison*. But in whatever respect anyone *else* is bold (I speak in foolishness), I am just as bold myself. <sup>22</sup> Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I. <sup>23</sup> Are they servants of Christ? (I speak as if insane) I more so; in far more labors, in far more imprisonments, beaten times without number, often in danger of death. <sup>24</sup> Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine *lashes*. <sup>25</sup> Three times I was beaten with rods,

once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep. <sup>26</sup> *I have been* on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from *my* countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren; <sup>27</sup> *I have been* in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, **in hunger and thirst**, often without food, in cold and exposure. <sup>28</sup> Apart from *such* external things, there is the daily pressure upon me *of* concern for all the churches. <sup>29</sup> Who is weak without my being weak? Who is led into sin without my intense concern? <sup>30</sup> If I have to boast, I will boast of what pertains to my weakness. <sup>31</sup> The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, He who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying.

## Questions

1. Why should you fast? What is the purpose?
  
2. Is the emphasis internal or external? Why?
  
3. Who should fast?
  
4. How often should you fast, or is there a definite time? What if you fast more? Less?
  
5. Does fasting make God love you more? Does He hear your prayers if you don't fast?
  
6. Is fasting a commandment of God for the Christian today or is it only a suggested practice?
  
7. What does the book of Acts teach us regarding fasting in times of transition?