



The Purpose of Fasting

Esther 4:1,3 NIV: When Mordecai learned of all that had been done, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the city, wailing loudly and bitterly. 3 In every province to which the edict and order of the king came, there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting, weeping and wailing.

Fasting

Tsom: to abstain from food.

Nesteuo: to abstain from eating.

Fasting is a Response to Suffering

Esther 4:3 NIV: ...there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting, weeping and wailing.

1 Sam 31:13 NIV: "Then they took their bones and buried them under the tamarisk tree at Jabesh, and they fasted seven days."

2 Sam 3:35 NIV: "Then all the people came to urge David to eat something while it was still day; but David took an oath, saying, 'May God deal with me, be it ever so severely, if I taste bread or anything else before the sun sets!'"

Fasting is a Response to Suffering

- to Express Grief

Fasting is a Response to Suffering

- to Express Grief

- for God's Intervention

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

Daniel 9:3 NIV: "So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes."

I'm not eating, so you better take me seriously.

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This is so important that I don't care about food.

Psalm 35:13-14 NIV: Yet when they were ill, I put on sackcloth and humbled myself with fasting. When my prayers returned to me unanswered, I went about mourning as though for my friend or brother.

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Fasting is a Response to Blessing

Luke 4:1-2 NIV: Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, 2 where for 40 days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry.

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Luke 3:22 NIV: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."

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

Acts 14:21,23 NIV: They preached the gospel in that city and won a large number of disciples...23 Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust.

All scriptures referenced are from the New International Version (NIV) translation of the Bible unless otherwise indicated.