

# (March) Genuine Fasting 1a – Christ on Fasting

## Matthew 4

### *The Temptation of Jesus*

- 1 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.
- 2 After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.
- 3 The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."
- 4 Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"
- 5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple.
- 6 "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: *'He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'*"
- 7 Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"
- 8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor.
- 9 "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me."
- 10 Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"
- 11 Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

## Matthew 6

- 16 **When** you fast, don't make yourselves look sad like the hypocrites. They put a look of suffering on their faces so that people will see they are fasting.
- 17 The truth is, that's all the reward they will get.
- 18 So, **when** you fast, wash your face and make yourself look nice. Then no one will know you are fasting, except your Father, who is with you even in private. He can see what is done in private, and he will reward you.

## Matthew 9

- 14 Then John's disciples came and asked him, "How is it that we and the Pharisees fast often, but your disciples do not fast?"
- 15 Jesus answered, "How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; **then they will fast.**"

## Matthew 17

### *A Boy Is Healed*

- 14 And when they had come to the multitude, a man came to Him, kneeling down to Him and saying,
- 15 "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and suffers severely; for he often falls into the fire and often into the water.
- 16 So I brought him to Your disciples, but they could not cure him."
- 17 Then Jesus answered and said, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him here to Me."
- 18 And Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour.
- 19 Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?"
- 20 So Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you.
- 21 **However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.**"

# (March) Genuine Fasting 1b – Biblical Fasts

Reference	Logistics	Scripture	Reason / Details
<b>Exodus 34:28</b> (Deut. 9)	Moses: 40 Days Dry	And he was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water.	<b>Meeting with God</b> / birth of a covenant with God
<b>Leviticus 23:26-32</b>	Israel: 25 Hours Dry	The Lord said to Moses: "The tenth day of this seventh month is the <b>Day of Atonement</b> . Hold a sacred assembly and deny yourselves." [.....]	The only fast written as directly prescribed by God / repentance
<b>Judges 20:26</b>	Israel: Sunrise to Sunset	Then all the children of Israel, and all the people, went up, and came unto the house of God, and wept, and sat there before the Lord, and fasted that day until even.	Seeking direction from the Lord
<b>1 Samuel 7:6</b>	Israel: Repentance	When they had assembled at Mizpah, they drew water and poured it out before the Lord. On that day they fasted and there they confessed, "We have sinned against the Lord."	Repentance
<b>1 Samuel 31:13</b>	Valiant Men: 7 Days	And they took their bones, and buried them under a tree at Jabesh, and fasted seven days.	Mourning the death of Saul and his sons
<b>1 Kings 19:8</b>	Elijah: 40 Days Dry	So, he arose, and ate and drank; and he went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights as far as Horeb, the mountain of God.	A journey to the mountain of God and <b>a meeting with Him there</b>
<b>1 Kings 21:8-13</b>	<b>Jezebel &amp; Her Evil Priests</b>	And she wrote letters in Ahab's name, sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters to the elders and the nobles who were dwelling in the city with Naboth. She wrote in the letters, saying, Proclaim a fast [.....]	<b>The kingdom of darkness fasts too because fasting evokes spiritual power – good or bad</b>
<b>2 Chronicles 20:3</b>	Judah	And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah.	Conquering fear / seeking God / going out in battle
<b>Jonah 3:7-8</b>	Nineveh	[.....] Do not let people or animals, herds or flocks, taste anything; do not let them eat or drink. But let people and animals be covered with sackcloth. Let everyone call urgently on God. Let them give up their evil ways and their violence.	Life or death repentance
<b>Ezra 8:21</b>	Israel	Then I proclaimed a fast there at the river of Ahava, that we might humble ourselves before our God, to seek from Him the right way for us and our little ones and all our possessions.	Seeking God / help against the enemy
<b>Nehemiah 1:4</b>	Nehemiah: "Many Days"	So it was, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned for many days; I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven.	Bloodline Repentance
<b>Esther 4:16</b>	Israel: 3 Days Dry	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.	Miraculous salvation

**NB: 'Fasts' to Note**

**Jonah 1:17 & Acts 9:9 (Divine Consequence) || Acts 27:21 (Necessity)**  
**1 King's 17:9-16 (Giving) || Daniel 1:5-21 (Abstinence from Idolatry) || Daniel 10:3 (Mourning)**

# (March) Genuine Fasting 2a – Isaiah 58

## Isaiah 58

### True Fasting

**3** 'Why have we fasted,' they say,  
'and you have not seen it?  
Why have we humbled ourselves,  
and you have not noticed?'  
"Yet on the day of your fasting, **you do as you please**  
and **exploit all your workers**.

**4** Your fasting ends in **quarreling and strife**,  
and in **striking each other** with wicked fists.  
You cannot fast as you do today  
and expect your voice to be heard on high.

**5** Is this the kind of fast I have chosen,  
**only a day** for people to humble themselves?  
Is it only for bowing one's head like a reed  
and for lying in sackcloth and ashes?  
Is that what you call a fast,  
a day acceptable to the Lord?

**6** "Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen:  
**to loose the chains of injustice**  
and **untie the cords of the yoke**,  
to **set the oppressed free**  
and **break every yoke**?

**7** Is it not to **share your food with the hungry**  
and to **provide the poor wanderer with shelter**—  
when you see **the naked, to clothe them**,  
and **not to turn away from your own flesh and blood**?

**8** Then **your light will break forth like the dawn**,  
and **your healing will quickly appear**;  
then your **righteousness will go before you**,  
and **the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard**.

**9** Then **you will call, and the Lord will answer**;  
**you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I**.  
"If you do away with the **yoke of oppression**,  
with the **pointing finger and malicious talk**,

**10** and **if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry**  
and **satisfy the needs of the oppressed**,  
then **your light will rise in the darkness**,  
and **your night will become like the noonday**.

### FASTING WRONG

**Doing as you please /  
(not doing the things  
in the fasting right  
column)**

**Exploiting others /  
Yokes of oppression**

**Quarreling and strife  
/ Striking each other**

**Pointing fingers /  
Malicious talk (incl.  
gossip)**

**[ ... only a day ... ]**

### FASTING RIGHT

**Loose chains of  
injustice / Untie the  
cords of the yoke /  
Break every yoke**

**Share your food with  
the hungry / Spend  
yourselves on behalf  
of the hungry**

**Clothe the naked /  
Provide the poor  
wanderer with shelter**

**Help your own flesh  
and blood**

**Set the oppressed  
free / Satisfy the  
needs of the  
oppressed**

### EFFECTS

**Your light will break  
forth like the dawn /  
Your light will rise in  
the darkness**

**Your night will  
become like the  
noonday**

**Righteousness will go  
before you / Your  
healing will quickly  
appear**

**The glory of the Lord  
will be your rear  
guard**

**You will call, and the  
Lord will answer /  
You will cry for help,  
and he will say: Here  
am I**

# (March) Genuine Fasting 2b – Focusing on God

## Nehemiah 9

### *The Israelites Confess Their Sins*

- 1** 'On the twenty-fourth day of the same month, the Israelites gathered together, fasting and wearing sackcloth and putting dust on their heads.
- 2** Those of Israelite descent had separated themselves from all foreigners. They stood in their places and confessed their sins and the sins of their ancestors.
- 3** They stood where they were and **read from the Book of the Law** of the Lord their God **for a quarter of the day, and spent another quarter** in **confession** and in **worshiping the Lord** their God.

## Leviticus 23

### *The Day of Atonement*

- 26** The Lord said to Moses
- 27** "The tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. Hold a sacred assembly and deny yourselves, and present a food offering to the Lord.
- 28** Do not do any work on that day, because it is the Day of Atonement, when atonement is made for you before the Lord your God.
- 29** Those who do not deny themselves on that day must be cut off from their people.
- 30** I will destroy from among their people anyone who does any work on that day.
- 31** You shall do no work at all. This is to be a lasting ordinance for the generations to come, wherever you live.
- 32** It is a day of sabbath rest for you, and you must deny yourselves. From the evening of the ninth day of the month until the following evening you are to observe your sabbath."

## REPLACING FOOD WITH PRAYER & THE WORD

**Deuteronomy 8:3** > He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your ancestors had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.

**Jeremiah 15:16** > When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart's delight, for I bear your name, Lord God Almighty.

**Matthew 4:4** > "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

**Matthew 5:6** > "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

**John 4:32 & 34** > But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you know nothing about." [...] Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work.

**John 6:27** > Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal."

**John 6:48** > I am the bread of life.

**John 6:55-59** > For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like the bread the fathers ate, and died. Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever." Jesus said these things in the synagogue, as he taught at Capernaum.



# (March) Genuine Fasting 3a – The Heart Posture

## Isaiah 58

### True Fasting



- 3 'Why have we fasted,' they say, 'and you have not seen it? Why have we humbled ourselves, and you have not noticed?' "Yet on the day of your fasting, **you do as you please** and **exploit all your workers.**
- 4 Your fasting ends in **quarreling and strife**, and in **striking each other** with wicked fists. You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high.
- 9 Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I. "If you do away with the **yoke of oppression**, with the **pointing finger and malicious talk.**

## A RIGHT HEART

## Ezra 8

### Fasting and Prayer for Protection



- 21 Then I proclaimed a fast there at the river of Ahava, **that we might humble ourselves before our God, to seek from Him the right way for us and our little ones and all our possessions.**
- 22 For I was ashamed to request of the king an escort of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy on the road, because we had spoken to the king, saying, "The hand of our God is upon all those for good who seek Him, but His power and His wrath are against all those who forsake Him."
- 23 So we fasted and **entreated our God** for this, and He answered our prayer.

## Jonah 3

### The People of Nineveh Believe



- 6 When Jonah's warning reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, took off his royal robes, covered himself with sackcloth and sat down in the dust.
- 7 [...] "By the decree of the king and his nobles: Do not let people or animals, herds or flocks, taste anything; do not let them eat or drink.
- 8 But let people and animals be covered with sackcloth. Let everyone call urgently on God. **Let them give up their evil ways and their violence.**
- 10 When God saw what they did **and how they turned from their evil ways**, he relented and did not bring on them the destruction he had threatened.

## Acts 10

### Peter Meets Cornelius



- 22 And they said, "Cornelius the centurion, a just man, one who fears God and has a good reputation among all the nation of the Jews, was divinely instructed by a holy angel to summon you to his house, and to hear words from you."
- 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,
- 31 and said, 'Cornelius, **your prayer** has been heard, and **your alms** are remembered in the sight of God.
- [See Acts 13 and 14]

## 1 Samuel 7

### Samuel Judges Israel



- 3 Then Samuel spoke to all the house of Israel, saying, "If **you return to the Lord with all your hearts, then put away the foreign gods and the Ashtoreths from among you, and prepare your hearts for the Lord, and serve Him only**; and He will deliver you from the hand of the Philistines.
- 4 So the children of Israel **put away the Baals and the Ashtoreths, and served the Lord only.**
- 5 And Samuel said, "Gather all Israel to Mizpah, and I will pray to the Lord for you."
- 6 So they gathered together at Mizpah, drew water, and poured it out before the Lord. **And they fasted that day, and said there, "We have sinned against the Lord."**

## REPENTANCE

## Daniel 9

### Daniel's Prayer for the People



- 3 Then I **set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications**, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.
- 4 And **I prayed to the Lord my God, and made confession**, and said, "O Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, and with those who keep His commandments.
- 5 We have sinned and committed iniquity, we have done wickedly and rebelled, even by departing from Your precepts and Your judgments.

# (March) Genuine Fasting 3b – A Spiritual Principle

## 1 Kings 21

### *Naboth Is Murdered for His Vineyard*

1 And it came to pass after these things that Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard which was in Jezreel, next to the palace of Ahab king of Samaria.

2 So Ahab spoke to Naboth, saying, "Give me your vineyard, that I may have it for a vegetable garden, because it is near, next to my house; and for it I will give you a vineyard better than it. Or, if it seems good to you, I will give you its worth in money."

3 But Naboth said to Ahab, "The Lord forbid that I should give the inheritance of my fathers to you!"

4 So Ahab went into his house sullen and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him; for he had said, "I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers." And he lay down on his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no food.

5 But Jezebel his wife came to him, and said to him, "Why is your spirit so sullen that you eat no food?"

6 He said to her, "Because I spoke to Naboth the Jezreelite, and said to him, 'Give me your vineyard for money; or else, if it pleases you, I will give you another vineyard for it.' And he answered, 'I will not give you my vineyard.' "

7 Then Jezebel his wife said to him, "You now exercise authority over Israel! Arise, eat food, and let your heart be cheerful; I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite."

8 And **she wrote letters in Ahab's name, sealed them with his seal**, and sent the letters to the elders and the nobles who were dwelling in the city with Naboth.

9 She wrote in the letters, saying, **Proclaim a fast, and seat Naboth with high honor among the people;**

10 and seat two men, scoundrels, before him to bear witness against him, saying, "You have blasphemed God and the king." Then take him out, and stone him, that he may die.

11 So the men of his city, the elders and nobles who were inhabitants of his city, did as Jezebel had sent to them, as it was written in the letters which she had sent to them.

12 **They proclaimed a fast, and seated Naboth with high honor among the people.**

13 And two men, scoundrels, came in and sat before him; and the scoundrels witnessed against him, against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, "Naboth has blasphemed God and the king!" Then they took him outside the city and stoned him with stones, **so that he died.**

14 Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, **"Naboth has been stoned and is dead."**

15 And it came to pass, when Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned and was dead, that Jezebel said to Ahab, "Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give you for money; for Naboth is not alive, but dead."

16 So it was, when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab got up and went down to take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.

## Acts 23

### *The Plot Against Paul*

11 But the following night the Lord stood by him and said, "Be of good cheer, Paul; for as you have testified for Me in Jerusalem, so you must also bear witness at Rome."

12 And when it was day, some of the Jews banded together and bound themselves under an oath, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul.

13 Now there were more than forty who had formed this conspiracy.

14 They came to the chief priests and elders, and said, **"We have bound ourselves under a great oath that we will eat nothing until we have killed Paul."**

15 Now you, therefore, together with the council, suggest to the commander that he be brought down to you tomorrow, as though you were going to make further inquiries concerning him; but we are ready to kill him before he comes near."

16 So when Paul's sister's son heard of their ambush, he went and entered the barracks and told Paul.

17 Then Paul called one of the centurions to him and said, "Take this young man to the commander, for he has something to tell him."

18 So he took him and brought him to the commander and said, "Paul the prisoner called me to him and asked me to bring this young man to you. He has something to say to you."

19 Then the commander took him by the hand, went aside, and asked privately, "What is it that you have to tell me?"

20 And he said, "The Jews have agreed to ask that you bring Paul down to the council tomorrow, as though they were going to inquire more fully about him."

21 **But do not yield to them, for more than forty of them lie in wait for him, men who have bound themselves by an oath that they will neither eat nor drink till they have killed him;** and now they are ready, waiting for the promise from you."

22 So the commander let the young man depart, and commanded him, "Tell no one that you have revealed these things to me."

23 And he called for two centurions, saying, **"Prepare two hundred soldiers, seventy horsemen, and two hundred spearmen** to go to Caesarea at the third hour of the night;

24 and provide mounts to set Paul on, and **bring him safely** to Felix the governor."

# (March) Genuine Fasting 4a – What To Expect

1

## TEMPTATION TO ABANDON THE FAST OR TO NULLIFY THE FAST



### Matthew 4

*The Temptation of Jesus*

**1 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.**

**2** After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.

**3** The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."

**4** Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

**5** Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple.

**6** "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: "'He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'"

**7** Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

**8** Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor.

**9** "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me."

**10** Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"

**11 Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.**

2

## THE BREAKTHROUGH AS DETERMINED BY GOD

REFERENCE	FAST	RESULT OF A <u>GENUINE</u> FAST
<b>Exodus 34:28</b> <i>Moses: 40 Days Dry</i>	<i>When Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tablets of the covenant law in his hands, he was not aware that his face was radiant because he had spoken with the Lord. 30 When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, his face was radiant, and they were afraid to come near him.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Speaking with The Lord</li><li>• Evidence of God's Presence on you</li><li>• Birthing a Covenant with God</li></ul>
<b>Judges 20:27-28</b> <i>All Israel</i>	<i>And the Israelites inquired of the Lord. (In those days the ark of the covenant of God was there with Phinehas son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, ministering before it.) They asked, "Shall we go up again to fight against the Benjamites, our fellow Israelites, or not?" The Lord responded, "Go, for tomorrow I will give them into your hands."</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Direction from the Lord</li><li>• Victory in battle</li></ul>
<b>Jonah 3:10</b> <i>Nineveh</i>	<i>When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he relented and did not bring on them the destruction he had threatened.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Salvation from pending destruction that would have been a result of your sin</li></ul>

*Etc... (note all breakthroughs by revisiting the fasts in lesson 1)*

# (March) Genuine Fasting 4b – Loose The Bonds

**Isaiah 58:6-7** > "Is not this the fast that I choose: **to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke?**

## **Matthew 17**

*A Boy Is Healed*

**14** And when they had come to the multitude, a man came to Him, kneeling down to Him and saying,  
**15** "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and suffers severely; for he often falls into the fire and often into the water.

**16** So I brought him to Your disciples, but they could not cure him."

**17** Then Jesus answered and said, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him here to Me."

**18** And Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour.

**19** Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?"

**20** So Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you.

**21** However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."

## **Esther 4**

**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."

## **Esther 8**

**11** *The king's edict granted the Jews in every city the right to assemble and protect themselves; to destroy, kill and annihilate the armed men of any nationality or province who might attack them and their women and children, and to plunder the property of their enemies.*

## **Esther 9: 5-10**

**5** *The Jews struck down all their enemies with the sword, killing and destroying them, and they did what they pleased to those who hated them. 6 In the citadel of Susa, the Jews killed and destroyed five hundred men. 7 They also killed Parshandatha, Dalphon, Aspatha, 8 Poratha, Adalia, Aridatha, 9 Parmashta, Arisai, Aridai and Vaizatha, 10 the ten sons of Haman son of Hammedatha, the enemy of the Jews. But they did not lay their hands on the plunder.*



**Isaiah 58: 8-9** > Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard. Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I.