

# FASTING - to abstain from eating food

Fasting is never *commanded*, except 1) in relationship to certain Old Testament Jewish ceremonies, or 2) within a context that *isn't* applicable to all people. Yet it is given as a good example to follow, under the right circumstances. Sometimes fasting has been the precursor to spiritual revival or some other great work of God. There are, however, warnings against hypocritical, insincere fasting.

Below are two verse lists. With either one, you will have to look up the passages and find out what they say. After that, you may wish to put your findings into some type of orderly arrangement.

**VERSE LIST #1** is a *quick overview* of selected passages; **VERSE LIST #2** is a *more detailed examination* of what the Bible says about fasting.

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## **VERSE LIST #1: A Quick Overview of Selected Passages About Fasting**

- Psalm 35:12-14
- Psalm 69:6-13
- Psalm 109:22-26
- Matthew 4:2 (Refers to Jesus)
- Matthew 6:16-18
- Matthew 9:14-15 (Also Mark 2:18-20 & Luke 5:33-35)
- Luke 2:36-37
- Luke 18:9-14
- Acts 13:2-3
- Acts 14:23

## **VERSE LIST #2: A More In-Depth Study About Fasting**

### **EXAMPLES**

These examples include both good and bad instances of fasting. Note that an "example" of fasting is NOT the same as a "command" to fast.

- Judges 20:26
- 1 Samuel 7:6
- 1 Samuel 31:13
- 2 Samuel 1:12
- 2 Samuel 12:16, 21-23
- 1 Kings 21:27
- 1 Chronicles 10:12
- Nehemiah 1:4
- Nehemiah 9:1
- Esther 4:3
- Jeremiah 36:6
- Daniel 9:3
- Zechariah 8:19
- Matthew 4:2
- Matthew 9:14-15
- Mark 2:18-20
- Luke 2:37
- Luke 5:33-35
- Luke 18:12
- Acts 13:2-3
- Acts 14:23
- Acts 27:9

### **COMMAND TO FAST**

Note that each instance is given within a specific context. There is no command among these verses, which is necessarily applicable outside those specific circumstances. Also, in some instances, such as in 1 Kings 21, the fasting was NOT an example of righteous conduct!

- 1 Kings 21:9, 12
- 2 Chronicles 20:3
- Ezra 8:21, 23
- Esther 4:16
- Esther 9:31
- Jeremiah 36:9
- Joel 1:14
- Joel 2:12, 15
- Jonah 3:5 (they abstained from both food and drink)

### **MISC. COMMENTS FROM THE PSALMS**

- Psalm 35:13
- Psalm 69:10
- Psalm 109:24

### **RESTRICTIONS, QUALIFICATIONS, WARNINGS**

In and of itself, fasting is NOT a guarantee of spirituality!

- Isaiah 58:3-6
- Jeremiah 14:12
- Zechariah 7:3, 5
- Matthew 6:16-18
- Matthew 17:21 (some translations)