PRAYER & FASTING: WEAPONS OF MASS INSTRUCTION

Part II

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The Hebrew word for fasting  "Tsuwm" (tsoom) – "To cover the mouth."

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The Greek word for fasting is "Nesteuo" – (Nace-tyoo-o) "To abstain from food."

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TOTAL FAST - Water and/or other forms of liquids only.

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LIMITED FAST - Example: Sunrise to sunset; abstaining from certain foods.

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DANIEL FAST - No meat, no sweets, no bread; primarily consisting of fruits, vegetables, beans and only natural/unprocessed foods.

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II Corinthians 10:1-4

*1 I, Paul, myself entreat you, by the meekness and gentleness of Christ-I who am humble when face to face with you, but bold toward you when I am away!-*

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*2 I beg of you that when I am present I may not have to show boldness with such confidence as I count on showing against some who suspect us of walking according to the flesh.*

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*3 For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh.*

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*4 For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds (ESV)*

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The Greek word for "weapons" is "hop-lon" DEFINITION: "a tool, an implement or an instrument of war; an instrument to make war."

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Fasting as an act of submission to the Lordship of Christ

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Galatians 5:24-25

*24 And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.*

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*25 if we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.*

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Fasting to be less focused on self and more focused on God and others

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Isaiah 58

*1 Cry aloud; do not hold back; lift up your voice like a trumpet; declare to my people their transgression, to the house of Jacob their sins.*

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*2 Yet they seek me daily and delight (not a God-honoring delight) to know my ways, as if they were a nation that did righteousness and did not forsake the judgment of their God; they ask of me righteous judgments; they delight to draw near to God.*

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*3 'Why have we fasted, and you see it not? Why have we humbled ourselves, and you take no knowledge of it?' Behold, in the day of your fast you seek your own pleasure, and oppress all your workers.*

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*4 Behold, you fast only to quarrel and to fight and to hit with a wicked fist. Fasting like yours this day will not make your voice to be heard on high.*

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*5 Is such the fast that I choose, a day for a person to humble himself? Is it to bow down his head like a reed, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Will you call this a fast, and a day acceptable to the LORD?*

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*6 "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?*

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*7 Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?*

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*8 Then shall your light break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up speedily; your righteousness shall go before you; the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.*

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*9 Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer; you shall cry, and he will say, 'Here I am.' If you take away the yoke from your midst, the pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness,*

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*10 if you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday.*

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*11 And the LORD will guide you continually and satisfy your desire in scorched places and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail.*

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*12 And your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to dwell in.*

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*13 "If you turn back your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight and the holy day of the LORD honorable; if you honor it, not going your own ways, or seeking your own pleasure, or talking idly;*

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*14 then you shall take delight in the LORD, and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth; I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken." (ESV)*

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Fasting for Repentance and Deliverance

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Joel 2:12-17

*12 "Yet even now," declares the LORD, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;*

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*13 and rend your hearts and not your garments." Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster.*

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*14 Who knows whether he will not turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind him, a grain offering and a drink offering for the LORD your God?*

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*15 Blow the trumpet in Zion; consecrate a fast; call a solemn assembly;*

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*16 gather the people. Consecrate the congregation; assemble the elders; gather the children, even nursing infants. Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her chamber.*

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*17 Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep and say, "Spare your people, O LORD, and make not your heritage a reproach, a byword among the nations. Why should they say among the peoples, 'Where is their God?'" (ESV)*

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Fasting in preparation for spiritual warfare

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Matthew 4:1-4

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

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

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

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*4 But he answered, "It is written, "'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" (ESV)*

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Fasting for guidance in spiritual decisions

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Acts 14:19-23

*19 But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium, and having persuaded the crowds, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead.*

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*20 But when the disciples gathered about him, he rose up and entered the city, and on the next day he went on with Barnabas to Derbe.*

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*21 When they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch,*

*--*

*22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.*

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*23 And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed." (ESV)*

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Fasting as an act of humility and to overcome fear

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Ezra 8:21-23

*21 Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river Ahava, that we might humble ourselves before our God, to seek from him a safe journey for ourselves, our children, and all our goods.*

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*22 For I was ashamed to ask the king for a band of soldiers and horsemen to protect us against the enemy on our way, since we had told the king, "The hand of our God is for good on all who seek him, and the power of his wrath is against all who forsake him."*

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*23 So we fasted and implored our God for this, and he listened to our entreaty.*

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Fasting and praying for a new ministry assignment

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Acts 13:1-3

*1 Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a lifelong friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.*

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*2 While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting (corporate fasting), the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."*

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*3 Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off."*

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"The purpose of fasting isn't primarily to get something from God; its to bring us into alignment with Him and His purposes and to enhance our ability to hear His voice."

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"Fasting is a tangible manifestation that our hunger to feed our spirit is greater than our physical cravings."

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Daniel 6:16-18

*16 Then the king commanded, and Daniel was brought and cast into the den of lions. The king declared to Daniel, "May your God, whom you serve continually, deliver you!"*

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*17 And a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet and with the signet of his lords, that nothing might be changed concerning Daniel.*

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*18 Then the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; no diversions were brought to him, and sleep fled from him.*

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Fasting in the midst of fear or uncertainty

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Chronicles 20:1-3

*1 After this the Moabites and Ammonites, and with them some of the Meunites, came against Jehoshaphat for battle.*

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*2 Some men came and told Jehoshaphat, "A great multitude is coming against you from Edom, from beyond the sea; and, behold, they are in Hazazon-tamar" (that is, Engedi).*

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*3 Then Jehoshaphat was afraid and set his face to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah.*

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*4 And Judah assembled to seek help from the LORD; from all the cities of Judah they came to seek the LORD. (ESV)*

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1. Brokenness (humility) and repentance (to give and receive forgiveness).

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2. Spiritual hunger and thirst (holiness) among our New Life family.

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3. Increased faith.

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4. Clarity (the ability to hear God's voice) and obedience.

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5. Fruitfulness in reaching the lost with the gospel.