

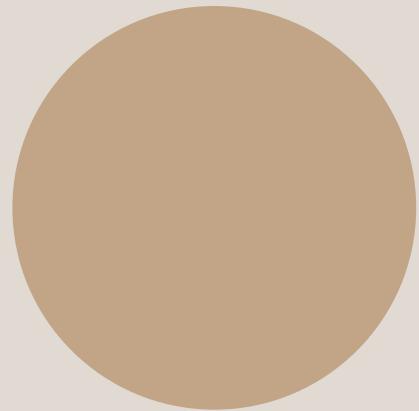
A Series of various articles

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# FOLLOWING HIS FOOTSTEPS UPON THE WATERS

**PSALMS 77:19**

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# PRAYER AND FASTING

WRITTEN BY LOFTY TSHABALALA



*'They had to check their grace  
to endure the hard sayings of  
the Lord.'*

## Leviticus 23 v 27 to 28

Looking at the feasts and their significance to the 21st Century church.

In the calendar of Israel, they celebrated the different feasts in their given seasons. In the beginning of their year, they celebrated the Feast of Passover, unleavened bread and First Fruits.

*"- checking whether your feet  
are fitted with the readiness  
of the gospel."*

## In The First Three Feasts

The elders in Israel examined the lamb to determine whether the meat of the word is anyway contaminated with blemishes. Inspected their bread of yeast - if religious acts void of the power are ruling their lives nor if the doctrine of scripture is muddied by mans ideologies.

Checked their spices. The spices were bitter. They had to check their grace to endure the hard sayings of the Lord. Assessed their apparel- they needed to eat the Passover with belts girded on, which in the book of Ephesians speaks of the belt Truth. With shoes on their feet - checking whether your feet are fitted with the readiness of the gospel.

# **The Second Batch of Feasts**

Celebrated in Sivan

## **Pentecost**

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit

## **First fruit**

Challenges the ability to give your very best to the Lord. And further to give your first, without enjoying it, handing it over to God.

## **Tabernacles and Trumpets.**

In the month of Tishri, Israel will then celebrate the Feast of tabernacles, where they dwelt in booths as a sign to tabernacle with the LORD and **trumpets** which signifies the audible voice of the Lord and therefore the Prophetic.

## **They Will then Celebrate a Day of Atonement.**

Where Israel would go on a fast and afflict their soul. On this day all Israel was to fast food. Yearly they stood before the Lord in Sackcloth.

So Israel held a calendar that was centered around seeking, pursuing and honouring the Lord. Since the old testament was written for our learning. The 21st century Christian should check if the calendar of his/her life speaks to those activities that seeks to honour God. Lets also speak about those activities that causes us to deeply introspect, profoundly pursue and cements our stance of worshiping God.

The High Priest would enter the most holy place once a year on the day of Atonement. The activity to enter the most holy place was accompanied by an act of afflicting the flesh by the High Priest while the whole congregation of Israel was standing in Sackcloth.

The concept of fasting should be embedded in the calendar of a Christian without fail.

*"...a calendar that was centered around seeking, pursuing and honouring the Lord".*

## **Esther 3**

When the decree of the king went out that the Jews should be killed. Mordecai changed his apparel. He wore Sackcloth and covered himself with ashes as a sign of mourning before the LORD.

In every province where the decree was heard there was mourning, fasting, weeping and wailing.

Due to the decree of death, they went to the Lord showing us that when you are faced with danger or life threatening matters. It is wise to seek the Lord.

Esther further declared a fast in the entire region as she prepared to face the system head on.

Fasting can be decided on as we sense the need for it due to the circumstances in our lives. We need not to await the promptings. As we can easily decide on matters that pertains to life without urges, we should be able to decide to beat up the flesh in fasting without struggle

## **1 Samuel 7**

"And it came to pass, while the ark abode in Kirjathjearim, that the time was long; for it was twenty years: and all the house of Israel lamented after the Lord.

After the Philistines captured the Ark, it stayed with them seven months, in which season the gods of the Philistines were frustrated. Dagon, their god, was destroyed in having to stand before the Ark. They then decided to send the Ark back to Israel unto Bethshemesh where the Priests placed it on a great stone.

The ark was then taken up by the men of Kirjatherarim and they gathered together to Mizpeh and drew water and poured it out before the Lord and FASTED, on that day and said they, We have sinned against the Lord."

**"It is also necessary to seek the Lord through fasting and prayer."**

In this season of transition, Israel repented unto Lord through fasting. The Ark in previous times had dwelt in the Tabernacle and Israel desired to see it restored.

After this fast, Israel put away strange gods and a great return of the Lord was experienced. Israel did put away Ashtaroth and Baalim and prepared their hearts to serve God only. In their repentance, Israel experienced the right arm of the Lord as they experienced victory against the armies of the Philistines. Samuel took up a stone and called it Ebenezer saying, thus far the Lord has been with us.

It is also necessary to seek the Lord through fasting and prayer. Where we put away idols and pant for HIM whom our soul loves.

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## **JUDGES 20**

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"Then the children of Israel and the people, went up and came unto the house of GOD and wept and sat there before the Lord and FASTED that day until the even and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the Lord.

And the children of Israel inquired of the Lord (for the ark of the covenant of GOD was there in those days)

And Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, stood before it in those days) saying, shall yet again go out to battle against Benjamin my brother or shall i cease? and the Lord said GO UP, for I will give them into your hand."

A very controversial moment arose were Israel is set against his brother Benjamin. A confusing moment that clearly needed direction from the Lord. It needed eyes that are fixated on the Lord to pursue HIM for wisdom.

**"Fasting helps us discern the choices of the Holy spirit and helps us find confidence in what we are sent out for."**

## **Mathew 6 v 16**

Jesus prescribes a manner in which fasting must be handled. It is a practice he taught the disciples.

It appears explicitly in scripture that the disciples of John and Pharisees fasted.

Jesus said to his disciples that as long as the bridegroom is here there is no need to fast. But when he is taken away then there will be a need to fast.

He himself fasted 40 days and forty nights where he overcame temptation.

## **Acts 13 v 2**

As they ministered to the Lord, and the fasted, the Holy spirit said, separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

And they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

Fasting helps us discern the choices of the Holy spirit and helps us find confidence in what we are sent out for.

## **Acts 14 v 23**

When they had ordained them elders in every church and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord on whom they believed.

# APOSTLE PAUL

## ***1 Corinthians 7 v 5***

States that we should give ourselves into prayer and fasting.

## ***2 Corinthians 6 v 5***

Paul speaks on approving ourselves as ministers of God:  
In stripes, in imprisonment, in tumults, in labours, in  
watching....in FASTINGS (plural)

## ***2 Corinthians 11 v 27***

Paul speaks as he states "as a fool" that HE is more of a minister of Christ than the other false Apostles.

He speaks of the things he suffered for Christ and further the things he has sacrificed.

He speaks on how he was once stoned, thrice suffered shipwreck. He further stated how he stood in watch more often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often...Apostle frequented fasting.



## Conclusion

The old Testament shows how Israel fasted time and again in their journey with the Lord.

In the New Testament, Jesus teaches on this manner of prayer. Paul spoke on how he spoke in tongues more than everyone. He further expressed his prayer life also in fasting.

Christians should consider incorporating this manner of fasting in their lives.

***"...incorporating this manner of fasting..."***