

# When You Fast?

- *"Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. 17 But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, 18 so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. Mt. 6:16-18*
- Do you fast?                      What is fasting?
- Can Christians fast?              Will God reward openly?

# What is Fasting?

- Fasting begins without being identified or given a formal name.
- On the day of atonement, God commanded them to “*afflict their souls*” but He did not reveal at that time how they were to afflict their soul.
- We later learn how they afflicted their soul.
- *But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth: **I afflicted my soul with fasting**; Ps. 35:13*

# Day of Atonement and Afflicting the Soul

- *26 And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 27 "Also **the tenth day of this seventh month shall be the Day of Atonement**. It shall be a holy convocation for you; **you shall afflict your souls**, and offer an offering made by fire to the Lord. 28 And you shall do no work on that same day, for it is the Day of Atonement, to make atonement for you before the Lord your God. 29 For **any person who is not afflicted in soul on that same day shall be cut off from his people**. ... 32 It shall be to you a sabbath of solemn rest, and **you shall afflict your souls; on the ninth day of the month at evening, from evening to evening, you shall celebrate your sabbath** Lev 23:26-32*

# The Day of Atonement

- One day a year high priest enters most holy place.
- At sunset (the beginning of the 10<sup>th</sup> day) they start their fast.
- When the sun rises on the 10<sup>th</sup> day they are hungry
- Each time they remember their hunger they remember it is the day of atonement – Can't eat.
- If they eat they are cut off from Israel.
- As the HP is killing the bull and the goat, entering the most holy place with the blood and confessing the sins of the people over the scape goat the people are afflicting their souls through fasting.

# Afflicting the Soul Through Fasting

- As the hunger grew more and more acute, the truly holy and faithful ones used this hunger to afflict the soul.
- The hunger strengthened their feelings of importunity.
- Giving godly sorrow, repentance, humility, and true remorse over their own sins that were being confessed that day a chance to grow.

# First Example (Jdg. 20:12-46).

- *26 Then all the children of Israel, that is, all the people, went up and came to the house of God and wept. They sat there before the Lord and fasted that day until evening; and they offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the Lord. Jdg 20:26-27*

# Samuel

- 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." And Samuel judged the children of Israel at Mizpah. 1 Sam 7:5-6



# Jehoshaphat

- *2 Then some came and told Jehoshaphat, saying, "A great multitude is coming against you from beyond the sea, from Syria; and they are in Hazazon Tamar" (which is En Gedi). 3 And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. 4 So Judah gathered together to ask help from the Lord; and from all the cities of Judah they came to seek the Lord. 2 Chron 20:2-4*



# Joel

- *Consecrate a fast, Call a sacred assembly; Gather the elders And all the inhabitants of the land Into the house of the Lord your God, And cry out to the Lord. 15 Alas for the day! For the day of the Lord is at hand; It shall come as destruction from the Almighty. Joel 1:14-15*

# Joel

- *"Now, therefore," says the Lord, "Turn to Me with all your heart, With fasting, with weeping, and with mourning." 13 So rend your heart, and not your garments; Return to the Lord your God,*
- *For He is gracious and merciful, Joel 2:12-13*
- *Blow the trumpet in Zion, Consecrate a fast, Call a sacred assembly; 16 Gather the people, Sanctify the congregation, Assemble the elders, Joel 2:15-16*

# Ezra

- *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. Ezra 8:21-23*

# Nehemiah and Esther

- *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.*
- *Neh 1:4*
- *15 Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai: 16 "Go, gather all the Jews who are present in Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will fast likewise. And so I will go to the king, which is against the law; and if I perish, I perish!" 17 So Mordecai went his way and did according to all that Esther commanded him. Est 4:15-17*