

D.O.W.B.I

DOERS OF THE WORD BIBLE INSTITUTE

CERTIFICATE

IN MINISTRY



UNDERSTANDING FASTING

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KAMPALA BIBLE REVELATION CHURCH

DOERS OF THE WORD BIBLE INSTITUTE

KIRUMIRA TOWERS 6TH FLOOR [CITY CAMPUS]

COURSE OUTLINE (3 HOURS)

UNDERSTANDING FASTING



> INTRODUCTION:

Fasting comes from the words, "*Innah Nephesh*" which means to "*afflict soul or self*", i.e. practice self-denial (Psalm 35: 13). Fasting originally was the natural expression of grief. Later it became the customary mode of proving to others the inner emotion of sorrow and it obtained a religious significance.

Fasting was practiced in medicine in ancient times. In the case of many ailments the dieting of the patient which included fasting was an essential part of the remedy.

Moses' (Exodus 34:28) and Elijah's (1 Kings 19:8) 40 days without food is not referred to as fasting in the scriptures.

> > INDIVIDUAL AND PUBLIC FASTS:

- Individual fasts: 1 Samuel 1: 7; 2 Samuel 12: 16
- Public fasts were proclaimed in case of war: Judges 20: 26; 2 chronicles 20: 3; Joel 1: 13, 14; 2: 12; Isaiah 58:3; Zech. 8: 19

>> FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT THE FOLLOWING CAUSED PEOPLE TO FAST:

- great distress – 1 Samuel 1:7; Daniel 6: 18
- violent anger – 1 Samuel 20:34
- grief and sorrow - 2 Samuel 3:35
- heavy displeasure - 1 Kings 21:4, 9.
- hearing of bad news – Esther 4:3
- mourning for the dead – 1 Samuel 31:13

>> FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT THE FOLLOWING CAUSED PEOPLE TO FAST BEFORE GOD

- Mourning for transgressions – Ezra 10:6; Jonah 3: 5
- Seeking God – 1 Samuel 12: 16; Judges 20:26; 2 Chronicles 20:3; Joel 1:13ff;
- Express true sorrow for sin – Isaiah 58:3 – 5; Nehemiah 1:4; Daniel 9:3; 1 Samuel 7: 6; Ezra 10: 6
- During revival times – Nehemiah 9:1ff
- Day of atonement (once in a year) – Exodus 30:10; Acts 27:9

It is clear from the Old Testament that fasting was a practice of self-denial which later became a religious practice.

Old Testament teaching on fasting: Isaiah 58: 6 - 9

>> **FASTING IN THE NEW TESTAMENT:**

The gospels begin with the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- In Luke 2: 37, there was a widow called Anna who served God with fastings and prayers night and day.
- In Mark 2: 18, Luke 18: 12 the disciples of John and of the Pharisees used to fast.
- In Acts 10: 30, there was a Roman Centurion who fasted and prayed.

Jesus' Fasting: (not mentioned in the oldest Gospel of Mark 1:13). It is found in Matthew 4: 1 - 11; Luke 4:1 – 13.

>> **IMPORTANT FACTS ABOUT JESUS' FASTING:**

1. After Jesus had been baptized in water by John the Baptist, He was filled by the Holy Spirit and the anointing.
2. The Father testified that this was His beloved Son.
3. He was led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.
4. After fasting the tempter, Satan came.

>> **JESUS' RESPONSE TO THESE TEMPTATIONS REVEALS THAT:**

1. He relied and depended on the word of God only.
2. He had complete trust in God alone not His own works.
3. He had surrendered all His life to serve God alone and to worship Him

>> **JESUS' TEACHING ON FASTING:**

- Fasting has rewards: Matthew 6:16 – 18;
- Fasting has to have a New Testament expression: Mark 2:18; Luke 5:33
- Jesus taught self denial of the flesh if we will inherit the Kingdom of God: Matt. 16:24

>> **THE EARLY CHURCH AND FASTING:**


- It is mentioned in Acts 13 for the first time.
- God's servants were preparing for ministry: Acts 13: 1ff; Acts 14: 21ff
- Paul mentions fasting in 1 Cor. 7: 5; 2 Cor. 6: 5

>> **MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT FASTING:**

- It touches God's heart and He changes His plan: Jonah 3: 5ff
- It casts out devils: Matt. 17:21; Mark 9: 29
- It empowers prayer: 2 Chronicles 7:14; 2 Samuel 12: 16
- It brings us to God: Acts 10: 30
- It was ordained by God: Isaiah 58: 1 – 9; Joel 1: 13

>> **METHODS OF FASTING:**

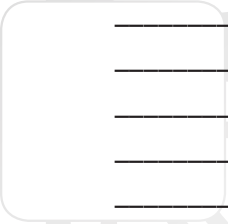
- Partial fasting (it involves abstinence from certain kinds of food; it can go for 21 days) Dan. 10:3
- Partial fasting (it involves abstinence from all that is to be eaten and drunk) and it has to be done for not more than 3 days) Esther 4: 16 – 17

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- Total fasting (it involves abstinence from all that is to be eaten except water; it can go for 14 days)
 - Long fasting (it involves gradual withdraw from hard foods to soft foods and eventually to water only; it can go for 40 days) Matthew 4: 2.

During fasting it is important to study the word and do the things Jesus said we should do in Matthew 6:16 – 18.

>> **BREAKING A FAST:**

- While breaking a fast it depends on the kind of fasting someone is involved in.
- Breaking partial fasting must not be with a heavy meal but a warm drink then eat later.
- Breaking total fasting and long fasting has to be done cautiously. Someone should not hurry to eat solid foods or heavy meals.



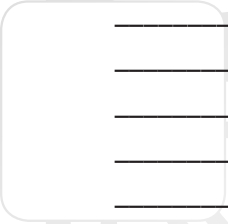
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