

RUSSELL SANDERS

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DANIEL THE PROPHET – LESSON 8

FASTING FOR A REASON

Fasting has often been a subject about which little is taught. Modern-day “fasts” have many times been nothing more than a period of “austerity” where something in particular is given up for a specific period of time. That is not the true biblical fast. It could be considered a “modified” fast.

Whether you do a biblical fast (nothing but water) or a modified fast, it needs to be in earnest and for a specific reason.

Daniel’s fast was a modified one, but in deep earnest and for a specific reason or answer. His “70-week vision” left him in “mourning” (Daniel 10:2) because it left him with more questions than answers.

Although God sent the angel with the answer on the very first day of the 21-day fast, the angel was delayed by a demon prince. Daniel continued to “pray through” until the answer came.

Do you have a “mountain” in your life that you cannot seem to move? Is there a “stronghold” that has a grip on you? (Helen is teaching a great series in our ministry school on [spiritual warfare and strongholds](#).) Faith unwavering can remove them, but sometimes they just don’t “move.” Fasting may be a key. It increases faith and your ability to “tap into” the fullness of Jesus’ power. Some obstacles, some demons, only are overcome when you “tap into” that greater power through fasting.

This is especially true when a strong demon is involved. (Not all demons are “strong” ones.) You can read in Matthew 17:20-21 and Mark 9:28-29 what Jesus had to say about this. His disciples had attempted to cast out a certain demon. They had often cast out many demons in Jesus’ name, but were unable to cast out this particular one. Jesus cast it out instantly.

The disciples asked Jesus in Matt. 17:19, **“Why could not we cast him out?”** Jesus’ answer was twofold. First, he said in verse 20, **“Because of your unbelief... if you have faith...say... believe...”** In other words, they had faith, but not at the level that was needed for this one task.

Second, Jesus said in Matt. 17:21, **“...this kind (of demon) goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.”** (also seen in Mark 9:29).

In other words, certain of the strongest demons (or mountains or strongholds) require prayer and fasting to bring your faith and authority from Jesus to a strength level to overcome it.

I have personally experienced that. In 1999 I encountered Jezebel in a church. When I recognized it, I was gripped by fear because I knew that I was not equipped to deal with such a

“general” in Satan’s army. I got “whipped” despite having been a minister for years. I left that church.

It set me forth on a path of much fasting and prayer. Over the next several months I was sufficiently strengthened. In 2000 I began to see miracles in my ministry far greater than before. I no longer feared Jezebel. In fact, the next encounter I had, Jezebel actually feared me due to the increased level of faith and power. I had come to a point where I could cast out the strongest of demons. It only came by weeks of prayer and fasting.

Not every believer feels called to fast. That is a matter in which the Holy Spirit must guide you, so do not feel “guilty” if you are never led to fast. But if you do fast, (by Holy Spirit’s leading), do it the Bible way (absolute fast – water only), do it earnestly, and do it for a reason (not just because someone asked you to do it.).

The rewards are immeasurable.