



Fasting, Weeping, and Mourning

1. “When Lord Palmerston, premier of England, was petitioned by the Scottish clergy to appoint a day of fasting and prayer to avert the cholera, he replied, “Cleanse and disinfect your streets and houses, promote cleanliness and health among the poor, and see that they are plentifully supplied with good food and raiment, and employ right sanitary measures generally, and you will have no occasion to fast and pray. Nor will the Lord hear your prayers while these, his preventives, remain unheeded” (CTBH 106.1).
2. “Thus saith the LORD unto this people, Thus have they loved to wander, they have not refrained their feet, therefore the LORD doth not accept them; he will now remember their iniquity, and visit their sins. ¹¹ Then said the LORD unto me, Pray not for this people for their good. ¹² When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt offering and an oblation, I will not accept them: but I will consume them by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence” (Jeremiah 14:10-12).
3. “Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil” (Joel 2:12, 13).
4. “Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly” (Joel 2:15).
5. “God would have all the bearings and positions of truth thoroughly and perseveringly searched, with prayer and fasting. Believers are not to rest in suppositions and ill-defined ideas of what constitutes truth. Their faith must be firmly founded upon the word of God, so that when the testing time shall come, and they are brought before councils to answer for their faith, they may be able to give a reason for the hope that is in them, with meekness and fear” (GW 299.2).
6. “And they said unto me, ‘The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire.’ ⁴ And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven” (Nehemiah 1:3).
7. “Speak unto all the people of the land, and to the priests, saying, When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh month, even those seventy years, did ye at all fast unto me, even to me? ⁶ And when ye did eat, and when ye did drink, did not ye eat for yourselves, and drink for yourselves?” (Zechariah 7:5, 6).
8. “When I proclaimed a fast there, at the river of Ahava, that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance. ²² For I was ashamed to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy in the way: because we had spoken unto the king, saying, The hand of our God is upon all them

for good that seek him; but his power and his wrath is against all them that forsake him. ²³ So we fasted and besought our God for this: and he was intreated of us” (Ezra 8:21-23).

9. “And Samuel said, Gather all Israel to Mizpeh, and I will pray for you unto the LORD. ⁶ And they gathered together to Mizpeh, and drew water, and poured it out before the LORD, and fasted on that day, and said there, We have sinned against the LORD. And Samuel judged the children of Israel in Mizpeh” (1 Samuel 6:5, 6).
10. “So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them” (Jonah 3:5).
11. “Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. ² And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred” (Matthew 4:2, 3).
12. “Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward” (Matthew 6:16).
13. “That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly” (Matthew 6:18).
14. “Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? ²⁰ And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. ²¹ Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting” (Matthew 17:19-21).
15. “And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day” (Luke 2:37).
16. “In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings” (2 Corinthians 6:5).
17. “In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness” (2 Corinthians 11:27).
18. “In order to succeed in such a conflict they must come to the work in a different spirit. Their faith must be strengthened by fervent prayer and fasting, and humiliation of heart. They must be emptied of self, and be filled with the Spirit and power of God. Earnest, persevering supplication to God in faith--faith that leads to entire dependence upon God, and unreserved consecration to His work--can alone avail to bring men the Holy Spirit's aid in the battle against principalities and powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world, and wicked spirits in high places” (DA 431.2).
19. “And Cornelius said, Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and, behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, ³¹ And said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God” (Acts 10:30, 31).
20. “As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. ³ And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away” (Acts 13:2, 3).

21. "And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed" (Acts 14:23).
22. "The death of James caused great grief and consternation among the believers. When Peter also was imprisoned, the entire church engaged in fasting and prayer" (AA 144.2).
23. "While the Lord encouraged His servant, Paul's enemies were eagerly plotting his destruction. "And when it was day, certain of the Jews banded together, and bound themselves under a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul. And they were more than forty which had made this conspiracy." Here was a fast such as the Lord through Isaiah had condemned--a fast "for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness." Isaiah 58:4" (AA 413.3).
24. "The Pharisees sought to exalt themselves by their rigorous observance of forms, while their hearts were filled with envy and strife. "Behold," says the Scripture, "ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high. Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord?" Isaiah 58:4, 5" (DA 278.1).
25. "Though making high professions, they were not sincerely seeking to understand the plain "Thus saith the Lord." The Lord condescends to open before them the errors and deceptions which they were cherishing, while professing to be his worshipers. He says: "Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labors. Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness; ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high. Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord?" "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifice upon me? . . . bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; . . . and when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear; your hands are full of blood." How much lifting and spreading forth of the hands in self-righteousness and self-importance there is, while at heart many of the professed workers for God are transgressing the principles of the law of God in their daily practices" (ST, February 26, 1894 par. 2).
26. "I saw that these national fasts [to end the Civil War] were an insult to Jehovah. He accepts of no such fasts. The recording angel writes in regard to them: "Ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness." I was shown how our leading men have treated the poor slaves who have come to them for protection. Angels have recorded it. Instead of breaking their yoke and letting the oppressed go free, these men have made the yoke more galling for them than when in the service of their tyrannical masters. Love of liberty leads the poor slaves to leave their masters and risk their lives to obtain liberty. They would never venture to leave their masters and expose themselves to the difficulties and horrors attending their recapture if they had not as strong a love for liberty as any of us. The escaped slaves have endured untold hardships and dangers to obtain their freedom, and as their last hope, with the love of liberty burning in their breasts, they apply to our Government for protection; but their confidence has been treated with the utmost contempt. Many of them have been cruelly treated because they committed so great a crime as to dare to make an effort to obtain their freedom. Great men, professing to have human hearts, have seen the slaves almost naked and starving, and have abused them, and sent them back to their cruel masters and hopeless bondage, to suffer inhuman cruelty for daring to seek their liberty. Some of this wretched class they thrust into unwholesome dungeons, to live or die, they

cared not which. They have deprived them of the liberty and free air which heaven has never denied them, and then left them to suffer for food and clothing. In view of all this, a national fast is proclaimed! Oh, what an insult to Jehovah! The Lord saith by the mouth of Isaiah: "Yet they seek Me daily, and delight to know My ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God" (1T 257.1).

27. "Every moment that could be spared from his daily duties he [Luther] employed in study, robbing himself of sleep, and grudging even the time spent at his scanty meals. Above everything else he delighted in the study of God's Word. He had found a Bible chained to the convent wall, and to this he often repaired. As his convictions of sin deepened, he sought by his own works to obtain pardon and peace. He led a most rigorous life, endeavoring, by fasting, vigils, and scourgings, to subdue the evils of his nature, from which the monastic life had brought no release. He shrank from no sacrifice by which he might attain to that purity of heart which would enable him to stand approved before God. 'I was indeed a pious monk,' he afterward said, 'and followed the rules of my order more strictly than I can express. If ever monk could attain Heaven by his monkish works, I should certainly have been entitled to it. If I had continued much longer, I should have carried my mortifications even to death.' As the result of this painful discipline, he lost strength, and suffered from fainting spasms, from the effects of which he never fully recovered. But with all his efforts, his burdened soul found no relief. He was at last driven to the verge of despair.

"When it appeared to Luther that all was lost, God raised up a friend and helper for him. The pious Staupitz opened the Word of God to Luther's mind, and bade him look away from himself, cease the contemplation of infinite punishment for the violation of God's law, and look to Jesus, his sin-pardoning Saviour. 'Instead of torturing yourself on account of your sins, cast yourself into the arms of your Redeemer. Trust in him,—in the righteousness of his life, in the atonement of his death. Listen to the Son of God. He became man to give you the assurance of divine favor.' 'Love him who has first loved you.' Thus spoke this messenger of mercy. His words made a deep impression upon Luther's mind. After many a struggle with long-cherished errors, he was enabled to grasp the truth, and peace came to his troubled soul" (GC88 123.1, 2).

28. "With fasting and earnest prayer, with deep heart searching, stern self-examination, lay bare the soul; let no act escape your critical examination. Then, with self dead and your life hid with Christ in God, offer your humble petitions. If you regard iniquity in your heart, the Lord will not hear you. If He had heard your prayers, you would have been exalted. Satan has stood by, prepared to make the most of the advantage he has gained" (2T 157.2).
29. "The work of a united, converted church, with prayer and fasting for the Holy Spirit of God to be revealed, will bring the angelic agencies very near. As the disciples "ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." God will work just as much in our day, if we will individually cooperate with him" (AU Gleaner, January 8, 1902 par. 4).
30. "Let there be much praying done, and even with fasting, that not one shall move in darkness, but move in the light as God is in the light. We may look for anything now to break forth outside and within our ranks; and there are minds undisciplined by the grace of the Holy Spirit, that have not practised the words of Christ, and who do not understand the movings of the Spirit of God, who will follow a wrong course of action because they do not follow Jesus fully" (PH048 36.3).