

Zeal, But Not According To Knowledge

Fasting in the Scriptures

Part 4a

“Lest we hinder the gospel of Christ”

Jeremiah 14:11-12 (NKJV) 11 Then the LORD said to me, “Do not pray for this people, for their good. 12 When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt offering and grain offering, I will not accept them. But I will consume them by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence.”

Unfortunately some fasting is hindered. In this session we look at what the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy say on this important topic. All quotations come from the writings of Ellen White.

1 Self

2 “There is a cause for the great weakness in our churches, and that cause
3 is hard to remove; for it is self. Trouble does not arise because men have
4 too much will, but because they have too much self-will. The will should
5 be wholly sanctified to God. The professed followers of Christ need to
6 fall on the Rock and be broken; for in every one who enters the gates of
7 the city of God, self must be crucified. This fierce spirit which rises up
8 in the hearts of some in the church when everything does not go to
9 please them, must be subdued; for it is not the Spirit of Christ. It is fully
10 time that we return to our first love, and be at peace among ourselves.
11 We must make it manifest that we are not only Bible readers, but Bible
12 believers. If we are united to Christ, we shall be united to one another.”
13 {RH December 6, 1892, par. 4}

14 Criticism

15 “Prayer and fasting, that laborers may be sent into the harvest-field, will
16 avail nothing, while the spirit of evil surmising and criticism exists in
17 the hearts of those to whom laborers are to be sent. We are to be doers of
18 the words of Christ; then our fasts and prayers will be effectual in bring-
19 ing upon the church the Holy Spirit.” {RH October 31, 1893, par. 5}

20 Differences

21 “When you put away your differences, when you feel that by appealing
22 to outside parties to decide questions for you, you have deserved the dis-
23 pleasure of God, the Lord will be able to help you.” {Ms75-1898.}

24 Contrition

25 “You may well fast now, but without contrition of heart all the fasting
26 will do no good to your souls. You must humble your hearts before the
27 Lord, and crucify self.” {Ms75-1898.}

28 “The outward signs of fasting and prayer, without a broken and contrite
29 spirit, are of no value in God’s sight. ... He will graciously receive those
30 who will humble their hearts before Him.” {Ms 33, 1903, par. 10}

31 Selfishness

32 “Why God’s people are not more spiritually-minded, and have no more
33 faith, I have been shown, is because they are narrowed up with selfish-
34 ness. ... It is not the abundance of your meetings that God accepts. It is
35 not the numerous prayers, but the right-doing.” {T15 25.2}

36 Reformation in Our Institutions

37 “My guide has shown me that fasting and the prayers will not come up
38 before God in acceptance and receive His favor until things are set in or-
39 der in institutions and in our churches. {Lt 52, 1891, par. 33} ... There is
40 something to do in setting things in order, something to do beside fasting
41 and praying. Were Christ Jesus in person to address us, He would pre-
42 scribe just such a work to be done as is found in this chapter as de-
43 scribed by Isaiah. The health of our institutions demand a revolution in

44 principles which are now buried up under the rubbish of false ideas and
45 selfish principles that have no connection with God.” {Lt 52, 1891, par.
46 35}

47 Spirit of Self-Justifying.

48 “Fasting or prayer that is actuated by a self-justifying spirit is an abom-
49 ination in the sight of God.” {DA 280.2}

50 Withholding Tithe

51 “Let the sin of pride be put away, let all superfluities of dress be over-
52 come, and repentance toward God be exercised for the highhanded rob-
53 bery toward Him which has withheld money which should flow into the
54 treasury to sustain the work of God in its mission fields. Let the work of
55 reformation, of true conversion, be set before and urged upon the people.
56 ... Let us humble our souls before God by humiliation, fasting and
57 prayer, repentance of sin and putting it away.” {2SM 379.2}

58 Estranged Heart

59 “Fasting and prayer will accomplish nothing while the heart is estranged
60 from God by a wrong course of action.” {2T 146.1}

61 Oppression

62 “There are sins of this same character among us today [oppression and
63 lack of love and caring], and they bring the rebuke of God upon His
64 church. Wherever such sins are found, seasons of fasting and prayer are
65 indeed necessary; but they must be accompanied with sincere repentance
66 and decided reformation. Without such contrition of soul, these seasons
67 only increase the guilt of the wrong-doer.” {4BC 1150.1}

68 Lack of Belief in the Testimonies of God

69 “I was instructed to say that our people are losing in spirituality, for they
70 do not believe many of the messages of truth for this time and the testi-
71 monies of the Spirit of God.” {Lt 264, 1902, par. 12}

72 Mercy and Love For God Lacking.

73 “The message given by Isaiah was to impress the self-righteous who
74 were trusting in their fasts and their prayers, that there was a work ne-
75 glected which was mercy and love for God, and love for their fellow
76 men.” {Ms 76, 1893, par. 39}

77 Fasts Were For Outward Show.

78 “These fasts are only outward show, mere pretense, a mockery of humil-
79 ity. These worshipers, while mourning and lamenting, retain all their ob-
80 jectionable traits of character. Their hearts are not humbled, nor cleansed
81 from spiritual defilement. They have not received the softening showers
82 of the grace of God. They are destitute of the Holy Spirit, destitute of the
83 sweetness of the heavenly influence. They manifest no repentance, nor
84 faith that works by love and purifies the soul. They are unjust and selfish
85 in their dealings, mercilessly oppressing those whom they regard as their
86 inferiors. Yet they charge God with a neglect to manifest His power to
87 them and exalt them above others because of their righteousness. The
88 Lord sends them a message of positive reproof, showing why they are
89 not visited by His grace.” Ms 48, 1900, par. 3

90 Lack of Restitution

91 “There are many who will not be blessed till they make restitution of the
92 tithe which they have withheld.” Review and Herald, December 10,
93 1901

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96 *Phoenix, AZ, by Dan Augsburger of Path2Prayer Ministries. Find more*
97 *resources on fasting and other subjects at discipleheart.com. Contact*
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