

All Rights Reserved By HDM For This Digital Publication
Copyright 1993 -- 2002 Holiness Data Ministry

Duplication of this CD by any means is forbidden, and
copies of individual files must be made in accordance with
the restrictions stated in the B4UCopy.txt file on this CD.

THE STEWARDSHIP OF FASTING

By Joseph Grant Morrison

* * * * *

Digital Edition 04/11/2002
By Holiness Data Ministry

* * * * *

CONTENTS

- 01 -- Introduction
- 02 -- An Appeal To The Old Testament
- 03 -- An Appeal To The New Testament
- 04 -- An Appeal To Church History

* * * * *

01 -- INTRODUCTION

Stewardship means that we owe somebody something. The very word "steward" from ancient times till now, has possessed the significance, first that something has been accorded for which that person designated as a steward is responsible, and second, that such a responsible person must some day give an account to the one who made him a steward for the things over which he exercised control and responsibility.

A steward of goods, properties or money, must primarily care for them, protect them, invest them, keeping a careful record, and then some day give an account to the one who made him a steward, for the trust reposed in him.

But money, property and goods are not the only things that have been entrusted to God's people. He has entrusted to us opportunities, talents, enablements, and empowerments of various kinds. Over these He has made us stewards. For the use and investment of these we are also responsible. And for the faithful discharge of this stewardship we are one day to give an account. We owe it to God to invest every one of these bestowments, and the Scriptures plainly teach that for such investments we must give a solemn account at the judgment. (See Matt. 12:36 and Rom. 14:12.)

As an illustration, notice what a marvelous bestowment is one's ability to pray. The Scripture has declared that its influence is without knowable limits. Read statements like these:

"Again I say unto you that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 18:19).

"And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son; if ye shall ask anything in my name I will do it." (John 14:13-14).

"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you" (John 15:7).

Does this not bestow upon every one of God's genuine children a stewardship of prayer for the investment and use of which we are held responsible, and for which we must some day give an account? Such an accountability must cover not only what we actually did bring to pass through prayer, but it must also include an accounting for what we might have accomplished as well.

In a similar way we desire to set forth in this tract, the stewardship of fasting. It is our contention that God has bestowed upon us the ability, the opportunity, the privilege and the duty of fasting. That this is an obligation for which we are responsible, and for which some day we must give an account. That when God's people sincerely fast, it enables God to do what otherwise He cannot do. That it places something in His hands that enables Him to release power that otherwise He cannot release.

That when we sincerely fast it enables God to do for us, personally, something that He otherwise cannot do. That it enables God to do for the local church of which we are members, what otherwise He cannot do. That it enables God to do for the community of which we are a part, what otherwise He cannot do. That when we fast it enables God to do for the nation, and for the age, what otherwise He cannot do. That consequently WE OWE IT TO GOD TO FAST, and to do it sincerely, faithfully and regularly. That God's people are responsible for all the divine power that He is able to release because we fast. That for this responsibility and its dynamic possibilities we must some day give an account personally to Jesus our Lord.

* * * * *

02 -- AN APPEAL TO THE OLD TESTAMENT

Our contention is that whenever God's people sincerely fasted before the Lord that it enabled Him to do, what otherwise He was unable to do. Our first appeal, then, is to the Old Testament. In this history of God's dealings with the human race, we note that fasting was one of the constant means by which His people approached God. That it always was intended to denote the deep sincerity of the one who fasted, and also the great need. Indeed, humbly and sincerely to fast was to qualify before the Almighty so as to do God's work in God's way, that, when sincerely done in the Spirit, it never failed to move God and enabled Him to accomplish what otherwise He was unable to bring to pass.

In the ninth chapter of Deuteronomy we have a most notable instance of fasting. Here is recorded how Moses fasted a second forty days and nights. The first occasion of his lengthy fast was when he was in the mount with God, at the end of which he received the two tables of the law. In the case to which we call especial attention, here, however, he had come down from the mount with the tables of the law, and discovered Israel's sinful worship of the golden calf; he had destroyed that idol, and was now pleading with the Lord Jehovah to spare the lives of sinful Israel, which He had declared He was about to destroy. Moses had no promise here to plead, on the contrary he had a distinct prohibition against asking for the remission of the decree of destruction. "Leave me alone," declared Jehovah. This was evidently a reply to the importunities of Moses, who for forty days with unappeased appetite pressed his case. God finally granted his prayer. Note, then, the chief method by which this remarkable man of God secured his petition. FASTING. The very thing that millions of professed Christians today refuse to employ. As a result of his prayers, his faith, but chiefly because of another forty days of fasting, God hearkened unto him, spared all the people, turned them back into the wilderness again, and ultimately led them across Jordan into the Canaan land. This is one of the greatest instances recorded in Scripture of humanity winning out with Deity. How did he do it? By employing a method we generally disdain.

Who can tell what could happen in the way of revivals, conviction on the unsaved, the sanctification of believers, and the upbuilding of the kingdom of God, if a goodly number of His people would undertake sincerely to do God's work in God's way, and by faithful fasting would release the pent up power of an omnipotent God?

In the eighth chapter of Ezra we have another instance of how promptly the ancient people of God resorted to fasting as the means of releasing God's omnipotent hand. Ezra, the divinely chosen man to lead in the return of captive Israel from Babylon to their ancient home in Jerusalem, had gathered up some forty thousand men, women and children. The king of Babylon had bestowed much wealth upon them, in order to enable them to rebuild the city of Jerusalem. With great joy they marched through the king's domains till they came to its boundaries. There they faced the unbroken wilderness, infested with bandits and robbers. They themselves were wholly unarmed. What should they do? They immediately resorted to the methods their fathers had frequently employed with such signal success. They called for a period of lasting. The very thing that is so universally tabooed among Christians today. Read it in the Word:

"Then I proclaimed a fast there at the river of Ahava, that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance. 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. So we fasted and besought our God for this; and he was entreated of us... Then we departed from the river of Ahava, on the twelfth day of the first month, to go unto Jerusalem; and the hand of our God was upon us, and he delivered us from the hand of the enemy, and of such as lay in wait by the way. And we came to Jerusalem" (Ezra 8:21-23, 31-32).

Examine this picture a moment. Here were thousands of men, women and children wholly unarmed. They were loaded with unusual treasure and spoil. A helpless company loaded with rich booty for bandits and robbers. They sincerely fasted and God's power was released upon them.

They were able to travel in safety to their destination. They used the very means for securing His favor, and releasing His power that is now, generally speaking, so discarded. Is not the God of today the same as He who guided and protected the Israelites when they were traveling to build again their fallen capital? Who, then, can tell the wondrous revivals that would take place, the individual conversions that would occur, and the releasement of God's power that could be had in these days, if His people would more faithfully practice this ancient method of carrying on His work?

In the first chapter of Nehemiah, we have an instance where that man of God was praying and lasting over the, as yet, unbuilt walls of his people's capital city. As a result of his prayers and fastings, God moved upon the heart of the king, whom Nehemiah served as a cupbearer, to send him to Jerusalem, there to supervise the re-erection of the ruined walls of the city. Here again, this man also secured the answer to his prayer by means of lasting.

In the Book of Esther we are told that the king without knowing that she was a Jewess, had chosen this beautiful young woman as the queen of his realm. At the same time the wicked Haman, who hated the Israelites, had conspired with success to secure a decree from the king for the concerted destruction of all the Jews in the kingdom. Mordecai, Esther's relative and guardian, congratulated her upon being chosen as queen, for that would, he declared, enable her to importune the king for the remission of the fatal decree that called for the death of all the Jews. She sent back word that until the king officially sent for her it was fatal for her to attempt to interview him, and that she dared not force herself upon him. To this Mordecai answered that she would die anyhow, for when the fatal day fixed by the decree should dawn, the executioners would learn that she was a Jewess, and consequently she would be included in the massacre.

Upon receiving this statement, the queen replied: "Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day; I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so I will go in unto the king, which is not according to the law, and if I perish, I perish" (Esther 4:16).

The result of this general fast on the part of the Jews, was that God touched the heart of the king, gave Esther favor with him, induced him to remember the good offices of Mordecai which had been rendered to the realm on a previous occasion, and caused him to fall out with Haman, the instigator of the plot. Whereupon the king sent Haman to the gallows which Haman himself had erected for the expected execution of Mordecai whom he peculiarly hated. The Jews were all freed from the diabolical decree. How did it happen? Fasting!

In the 58th chapter of Isaiah, the 6th verse seems to convey the idea that God longs to have His people fast in order that He may be enabled to "unloose the bands of wickedness, undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke." All of which sounds to us like "the goings in the mulberry trees" of a mighty revival. Added emphasis is given to this in the 8th verse, where the prophet declares, "Then shall thy light break forth," etc. When? Why evidently when one fasts, as suggested in the sixth verse. The 9th verse continues, "Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer," etc. And in the 10th still greater emphasis is given this by the statement, "Then shall thy light rise in obscurity and thy darkness be as the noon day," etc. Despite the fact that feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and keeping the Sabbath are also included here

as pre-requisite qualifications to this revival, nevertheless, fasting is there, and seems to be given the center of the stage. If all these results can be obtained when God's people fulfill these requirements, and among them the chief one is that of fasting, then it seems to us that we are neglecting too much one of the great spiritual exercises that God has declared He will invariably bless.

In Daniel we are told that the prophet for three weeks tasted no pleasant food, or allowed any pleasing liquids to pass his lips. During this period of partial abstinence he was in great prayer concerning the future of his people. In answer God sent an angel to reveal many things to him. Please note, three weeks of partial abstinence brought the visit of an angel. For the most part modern Christians make God's weekly day of worship more of a day of feasting than of abstinence or plain living. If there is to be a big meal served in a Christian family any time during the week, it is usually reserved for God's day, when God's cause is chiefly at stake. Could we not more profitably devote the Christian Sabbath to plain living and deep devotion, even though we did not practice the omission of one whole meal? And could we not devote a bit more time to intercession for the church, the family, the lost about us, and for the mission fields? Particularly ought we not to be impressed along this line, when we read in the New Testament that one of the peculiar signs of the closing days of this age is to be "they were eating and drinking" (Matt. 24:37-39), and then notice how generally some form of "refreshments" is today characteristic of some religious meetings?

In Joel the prophet states that when the times are desperate God himself exhorts His people to seek aid from Him, and suggests how to come. "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" (Joel 2:12-13). Would not many of the perilous times faced by God's people in the past few years, have ended in a joyous and flaming revival, if this recipe had been followed? In another place the prophet calls upon the people to announce a time of fasting, and for every one to come even to the newlyweds and the children: "Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify [i. e., set apart] a fast, call a solemn assembly." This teaches that it is proper all to agree upon a day, and fast unitedly. Some folks believe in fasting "when the Lord puts it onto them," as they say. But they do not do other things that way. Who waits for a divine urge before going to church, or arising in the morning, or paying the rent, or preparing meals for the household? And speaking of a divine urge to fast: if the Scriptures that we are here quoting and calling attention to, are not to be considered the voice of the Lord, then we are too far gone to heed anything quoted from the Bible. "If they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

In the Prophet Jonah's day, the king and the people of Nineveh, alarmed on account of his preaching, could think of no better way to secure the intervention of God in their behalf, and the answer to their prayers than to fast. "Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock taste anything; let them not feed nor drink water... who can tell if God will turn and repent... And God saw their works that they turned from their evil way, and God repented of the evil that he had said that he would do unto them and he did it not" (Jonah 3:7-10). If, therefore, God would heed the prayers, fasting and cries of a city full of unregenerate Ninevites, would He not heed and answer the intercession of a group of sanctified Nazarenes, if they sincerely fasted as they prayed?

* * * * *

03 -- AN APPEAL TO THE NEW TESTAMENT

Our Lord himself, at the dawn of His ministry, set His seal of approval to the great truth of fasting, by spending forty days without food, and during that time was subjected to the fiercest assaults of the enemy. He either equaled or exceeded the best that any spiritual leader in the past or present, had done in this respect.

Among His early admonitions was one on fasting; stating that when men fasted they were not to disfigure their faces so as to appear unto men to fast. But they were to anoint their heads and wash their faces, that is, look happy and pleasant as though they were delighted in their worship of the Lord. Jesus our Lord prefaces this statement with the words, "But thou, when thou lastest..." Evidently He expected that His people would fast. Have they faithfully done it?

A short time after this He was asked why His disciples failed to fast, while the Pharisees and John's disciples fasted often. His answer was: "Can the children of the bridechamber mourn as long as the Bridegroom is with them, but the days will come when the Bridegroom shall be taken from them, then shall they fast."

That is, the disciples were in the process of learning about Him, during the three years of His earthly ministry, and there was little opportunity to practice intercession. Besides He was there with them, and answered their petitions, and gave them power for the situations that they confronted. So that ability to make a strong pull on the skies was not yet needed, nor were they, in their beginning stage, able to undertake it. "But," said He, "the days Will come when I shall be taken away from them;" when they will seem to be alone; when they will be confronted with a thousand opponents; when they will have to live on their knees fighting for their spiritual lives, and occasionally, for their physical existence. "Then," said He, "shall they last." That is, when the battle waxed hot; when the need was great; when tremendous issues were at stake; then shall they last. That word "shall," it seems to us, carries a bit more Significance than merely the demand and pressure predicted of future events. Is there not also in it the element of Jesus' own wish in the matter? Perhaps, without doing too great violence to the syntax, there could be read into it, the element of a divine command.

When were they to begin this spiritual exercise that releases divine power? When He was taken from them -- on that Ascension Day when He was "parted from them and a cloud received Him out of their sight;" after that they were to fast. How long were they to continue to offer to God that channel that He has so conspicuously used and blessed? Till He returned -- over the eastern hills of eternity, on His second advent. Have we done this? Have not most of us rather conspicuously failed?

In Matthew (17:21) it is recorded that He was one day casting out a peculiar kind of demon, which had resisted the efforts of the disciples to eject. When they inquired why they could not cast the demon out, He stated that it was because of their lack of faith, and then added, "Howbeit this kind goeth not out, but by prayer and fasting." He seems to teach here that unusually

importunate efforts are needed to reach the seat of this kind of demoniac possession, and such effort cannot be properly put forth without resort to fasting. Many Christian workers of modern days act as though they would rather leave the demons in possession, than to be compelled to go hungry for a meal or two in order to enable God to eject them.

In Luke 18:12 a Pharisee is represented as enumerating his excellencies to the Lord in prayer. He declares, "I fast twice in the week." The Lord Jesus did not seem to condemn him for the things that he did, but rather for the self-righteous way that he enumerated them to his own advantage. Indeed, He seems to indicate in Matthew 5:20 that we ought to exceed those religious leaders in some of these very things. "I say unto you that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." In the matter of fasting, the question with us is not whether we are exceeding them, or even equaling them, but whether in any considerable numbers, we are attempting to practice this spiritual exercise at all.

It would almost seem, as we study the New Testament, that in those first century days, they literally ran the church with periods of fasting; for in Acts 13:2 we are admitted to one of the ordinary every day activities of a church, that at Antioch, while Paul and Barnabas were there ministering. We find them fasting. Read the following and ask yourself whether it sounds much like one of our modern church groups: "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."

Do we not conduct whole revival campaigns, sometimes lasting for two or three weeks, and never fast once during the time? Do we not attend District Assemblies and never hear the subject mentioned the whole session? Are not references to a fast day rarely heard at the General Assembly? Perhaps it is because the fasting mentioned in the first part of this verse is so sadly neglected that we hear so little also about the Holy Ghost telling us definitely what to do. We wrangle and discuss and vote, and then repeat these creaturely efforts, maybe if we would heed the command to fast and pray, we could hear more of the second, "And the Holy Ghost said..."

In those first century days fasting in connection with their usual services seems to have been a common custom, for in the next verse, we read, as though it were a still later service, some days or weeks afterward: "And when they had fasted and prayed, they laid their hands on them and sent them away. And they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost..."

What blessings are we not missing; what failure to secure releasements of God's power; what deprivation do we not visit upon our outgoing missionaries; what enduements upon the selection of our District and General Superintendents do we not fail to realize because we are loath to do God's work in God's way? Is it going too far to allege this? Is this not correct?

The difficulty of winning men to God these days, is often discussed. The comparative scarcity of believers uniting with us after each revival meeting, is the theme of many ministerial and Christian workers' conventions. We humbly ask, would not the situation be somewhat improved if we all obeyed the evident teaching of Scriptures on fasting? If we all followed the implied command of Jesus frequently to fast till His return? Would we not receive greater degrees

of His blessing if we would sincerely wait before God with unappeased appetites at stated times each week, and thus enable Him to do what otherwise He is unable to accomplish?

* * * * *

04 -- AN APPEAL TO CHURCH HISTORY

According to church history, fasting has been prevalent down through the centuries. It is only in these recent and more modern days that we find it generally abandoned. Every great leader who moved his age mightily for God was a faster.

The first gleam of real spiritual reformation that appeared after the night of the dark ages had set in, occurred in the 12th century, when Francis of Assisi, a young voluptuary, after much prayer and fasting was graciously converted and launched his Franciscan order founded on poverty, chastity and obedience. Eating only such things as were freely given him, and dressing in such garments as were donated, he went joyfully preaching, singing and testifying, with bare feet and head uncovered, up and down Italy. Thousands of people professed conversion, and hundreds of young men joined him. It is stated that he was a frequent, and constant faster, He originated a movement that lasted hundreds of years after his own death.

Another remarkable awakening took place late in the fourteenth century under the preaching of Savonarola in Florence, Italy. In response to his flaming preaching almost all Florence for a while professed conversion to Christ. This great preacher was an inveterate faster. Historians state that he often could keep his place in the pulpit with difficulty so weak was he from abstaining from food. His spiritual movement became so menacing to the papacy that the church authorities turned on him, and finally burned him at the stake in the plaza of the city where his mighty triumphs had taken place.

It is significant that as the fires that took the life of this tremendous preacher were lighting the skies, in Florence, the divine plans were approaching consummation in Germany for the birth of the great Reformation led by Martin Luther. Of this rugged German it is said that he fasted so constantly and so drastically as permanently to injure his health.

We state this merely as a fact and not in commendation. But please consider the religious and spiritual change that was wrought in Europe and America by the activities of this man. Prayer and fasting, in his case, enabled God to do what otherwise He was unable to do, and powerful forces for good were released that swept much of the old country into Protestantism, and ran like a flame in later years in the colonial portions of America. In this great awakening, lasting played a conspicuous part.

Contemporary with Martin Luther and the great Reformation that brought Protestantism into existence, is a group of noted religious reformers, each one leading a wing of the amazing spiritual renaissance. It is very convicting to learn how universally the practice of fasting characterized these leaders, and brought to each most remarkable victory. John Calvin in Geneva was an inveterate faster, and lived to see his prayers answered in the conversion of almost a whole city. It is stated that there was not one house in the city of Geneva that did not have at least one praying

person in it. John Knox in Scotland, fasted and waited on God till intervening Providences drove Mary Queen of Scots into exile in Protestant England and finally to the block. It is a familiar quotation representing the queen as declaring that she "feared John Knox and his prayers more than the armies of Elizabeth" Queen of England. Knox was a noted faster. The leaders of the reformation in England, some of them paying with martyrdom for their part in it, were said to practice fasting as faithfully as they offered prayers. Latimer, Ridley and Cranmer, all martyred for their convictions, are among this number.

John Wesley in his day, set great store by this spiritual exercise. He followed the scriptural custom of fasting twice a week. He is understood to have said that he would as soon think of cursing and swearing, as to omit the weekly custom of fasting. And look at the amazing religious movement that the Spirit generated through his instrumentality. Jonathan Edwards of New England was a colossal colonial figure. He launched a most far-reaching and influential revival in those early days. He is said to have fasted and prayed till he was too weak to stand in the pulpit, but how wonderfully God honored him and his ministry. Charles G. Finney was a confirmed believer in this heaven-blessed exercise. He declares that when he detected a diminution of the Spirit's wonderful presence in and through him, he would fast for three days and three nights, and bears testimony that as a result he was invariably again filled with the marvelous power that caused thousands of professional men, leading society women, merchants and the well-to-do, as well as hundreds of thousands of the common people, to break down with conviction, and yield to God and salvation. Finney set great store by fasting as one of the means of releasing God's amazing power.

It is a great grief to admit that we of this present age are the ones who have most largely left fasting out. The early Methodists in America practiced it faithfully, and church history records the amazing revival victories that characterized the spread of the followers of John Wesley in this country. The people who constituted the early holiness movement also fasted faithfully and the sanctified life was supposed in those days to include a bit of fasting each week. It has been reserved for these modern day holiness folks to abandon it almost entirely, except on the part of a few.

A few years ago the General Superintendents of the Church of the Nazarene launched the Prayer and Fasting League, and during these years of its existence it has enrolled about one-tenth of our people. Are not the needs today as great, or greater than they were in almost any period of the Christian church's history? Hasn't paganism captured Germany and atheism Russia? Is there not over half of the population of the United States which has no connection, of even an outward nature, with the Church of Christ, and no care whatsoever of religion or God? Is this not the hour and the time when we need faithful fasting such as will release God's power upon the all too godless situation that prevails?

God has blessed the Church of the Nazarene with a hundred and thirty thousand members in some thirty-five years. That is, 130,000 people, mostly adults, have declared by uniting with the Church of the Nazarene that they have committed their eternal destiny to the care of its ministry. If they make the heavenly landing it will be under its leadership. This is a fearful responsibility. If we land such a cargo safely upon the shores of eternity, with each person saved and sanctified, it means that we must practice every known religious exercise that precipitates God upon the task, that has ever been used in Old Testament, New Testament, or church history times. Fearful will be

the penalty if we fail. Had we better not practice more fasting, then, inasmuch as God has so signally blessed that in other days? Shall we not do this mighty work of God in God's own way?

Besides 130,000 adults, God has blessed us with at least 100,000 boys and girls in our Sunday schools. Most of these are not yet saved, but they have declared by attending our Sunday schools that if they ever are saved it will be through the ministry of our church. How can we safely land this great host upon the shores of heaven? Can we do it by feasting, and not fasting? Is this task just a hoopla, holiday matter? Is this not burdensome and weighty enough to call for the keenest heroism, the sternest sacrifice, and the most devoted of prayer and fasting that God's people can know? Who will be to blame if this great crowd of young life is not saved and sanctified? Unquestionably it will be the Church of the Nazarene and its ministry.

Let no one think that the Church of the Nazarene is the only denominational holiness movement that has ever been launched down through the ages. Church history declares that every denomination was a holiness movement when it started. What ruined so many of them? That old Adversary, the devil and Satan. Is he dead? Not yet. Is he after the Nazarenes? He is. And more than that, he has taken a great oath to damn us all if he can. With an enemy who has ruined so many holiness movements of the past in hot pursuit of us, is it, then, a time for gaiety, laughter, frolic, and feasting? Is it not rather a time to ask for the old paths, where is the good way and walk therein?

What made the American authorities during the World War strip all the gaudy decks of their transatlantic liners, paint them a dull gray, and, loaded with ten thousand American boys, cause them to steal out of the harbors of this country, with every light out, and proceed as "silent as a passing hearse" to the open seas? Because they knew that there lurked a hundred submarines waiting to sink them. Every known device for outwitting those demons of the sea, was resorted to. Why then should we become so desperately serious and with sacrifice, heroism, intercessory prayer, and faithful lasting endeavor to sail the good ship "Nazarene" over the seas of current history? Because we know that the one that sank a hundred other holiness movements is after us. He will damn us if he can. With a great cry for help, then, we ought to do God's work in God's way, and one of the most effective ways that He has shown us is FASTING.

And what about the stewardship of it? Do we not owe it to God to fast? Will He not require an account of this at the judgment? Not only will He make inquiry about the times we did fast, but will He not also ask about the times that we could have done so, if we had really cared.

Is it not possible that we shall find when we reach the great day of reckoning, that there are souls lost who might have been saved, if we had done our reasonable best, and released God upon the church, the nation and the age, by fasting? God has a way for His people to work, but it is a way of sacrifice, a way of devotion, a way of heroism. When we choose our own indolent, easy, comfortable way, then we prevent Him from accomplishing what otherwise He could bring to pass. But when we choose His way, then He can work at His maximum. Who, then, is willing to DO GOD'S WORK IN GOD'S WAY?

* * * * *

THE END