

Prayer and Fasting Part 5: Fasting and Deliverance (5/11/2019)

The following text is a message from Corner Fringe Ministries that was presented by Daniel Joseph. The original presentation can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-6hIQngBdG4>

***Portions of this document have been edited from the video message to better present a comprehensive, written document. Special attention was given to preserve the original context, but this document is not verbatim. Scripture verses are in the red text with other quotes in blue. Therefore, it is recommended that this document is printed in color. The Hebrew words are generally accompanied by the transliterate, English word. In most cases, the Hebrew is to be read from right to left.**

I want to open up today with a little bit of insight from Charles Spurgeon—*My own soul's conviction is that prayer is the grandest power in the entire universe, that it has a more omnipotent force than electricity, attraction, gravitation, or any other of those secret forces which men have called by name, but which they do not understand.* In other words, Spurgeon is saying there is no other force or power in existence that even compares to prayer. There is nothing like it. It is the most powerful force in existence.

That is a true statement and it's really interesting to me how we see men laboring diligently to harness the power of electricity and all the things we go through to make it happen because we recognize the benefits and power of electricity for us personally. Yet today the Christian church is not willing to access the greatest power the world has ever known, which is the power of prayer. It goes completely abandoned.

We are in a generation that is spending more time looking at our phones, more time in front of the television, and more hours scrolling through our phones playing senseless games than in prayer. All that stuff is pure worthlessness. Could you imagine if you spend the same time on prayer and what that would look like, how that would transform you and your family, and how that would affect the church at large? It would be absolutely incredible. Think about how it would impact marriages for the kingdom, but today we simply don't value it.

We don't value prayer the way the Apostles valued it in the first century. That's why when I read the book of Acts, and I look at the church we read about and things they had spoken of and they were doing, and I read about the power being unleashed, and I notice we don't see that today. Today's church looks very different than the church I read about in the book of Acts.

So today what we're going to do is to continue to talk about prayer and fasting, but we're going to do something very important today. It's a little bit different. We're not just going to talk about prayer. We are going to bring the element of fasting, and we're going to lock prayer up with fasting because when you go to the word of God and you start looking at all the times where these two things, prayer and fasting were linked up, I'm going to tell you it is end-of-the-world type of stuff.

These are specific moments in time when righteous men and women of God were being presented with situations that were impossible, until they link prayer with fasting. It was then the impossible becomes very possible. These are life altering, defining moments. Go through your word and you'll see it.

Now, I say these things because you need a fire lit under you. You need to desire these things. You can do a little audit of how you spend your day. I'm going to tell you right now you are primarily doing what you want to do. You will fill your day with things you value. If you value spending time with your spouse, you will do that. If you value your TV, you will do that. If you value looking at Facebook for hours at a time, you will do that. Whatever you value, I will know, because that's where you're spending your time. We need to start valuing prayer and fasting because of the generation we're living in. More than anything, prayer is relationship with Yeshua. This has to take precedence over everything. Amen?

Before we get into today's message, I want you to have an image in your mind. It's an image to help you understand the relationship that exists between prayer and fasting because there is a very beautiful, important relationship between them.

The way I want to explain this is this way. Look at this diagram. We're all familiar with the Sun and the earth. I've labeled the Sun fasting and the Earth prayer. The Earth drinks in the heat of the Sun; the Earth absorbs the Sun's light. In that process, we have all these plants on Earth that grab that light and through the process of photosynthesis they literally turn that sunlight into energy. It turns it into power. The byproduct of that whole process is producing oxygen. It is producing life sustaining products.



This is amazing because this is what fasting does to prayer. It gives it power, and the byproduct will be life. So as the Sun compliments the Earth, so fasting compliments prayer.

With that said, I want to open up today by going back in history. In my opinion, one of the most important documents we have today is known as the Muratorian Fragment. It is an ancient Christian document dating back to the second century. Hands down it is as important as the Didache. If you have been going through the book of Hebrews study with us, you know how important the Didache is.

What makes the Muratorian Fragment so priceless is not just its antiquity, but what it contains. It is actually one of the earliest recordations of a canonical list of Epistles. This is where the early fathers look at these epistles and determined which epistles were profitable and good for doctrine. It is priceless. Almost all the books we have today in the New Testament are actually listed there, but there are a few exceptions. It's incredible, but it gets better.

This Muratorian Fragment contains commentary on these various Epistles. I want to show you one example, and this comes from that ancient Latin document known as the Muratorian Fragment. [The fourth gospel is by John, one of the disciples. When his fellow-disciples and bishops encouraged him, John said, 'Fast along with me three days from today, and whatever may be revealed to each, let us relate it one to another](#) (emphasis added).

This is an amazing thing! The first thing you need to recognize is when the Apostles wanted supernatural revelation from God, the answer was fasting. It was fasting!

Let me take this a step further. It goes on and says—[The same night it was revealed to Andrew, one of the apostles, that John in his own name should write down everything and that they should all revise it.](#)

Do you understand what was just said? The book of John that is in our Bibles was a product of fasting. Think about the importance of fasting. Think about the fruit it produces and the life it gives not to one generation but to generation after generation. We are almost 2000 years after the marker of this. That is incredible!

That is just one example of the power of prayer and fasting. Let me give you another from the book of Jonah. We looked at the story of Jonah last week; however, we are going to look at it in a little different light today. Reading from Jonah 3:1-4—¹ Now the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time, saying, ² "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach to it the message that I tell you." ³ So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, a three-day journey in extent. ⁴ And Jonah began to enter the city on the first day's walk. Then he cried out and said, "**Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!**" (Emphasis added).

One of the most critical pieces to this entire story is right here. In fact, you will not appreciate this story the way it ought to be appreciated if you don't understand what was just said. Notice what it doesn't say. It doesn't say, "I might. I'm thinking about it. It could be, it might take place. I might destroy, but I haven't decided yet." No! What it says is the LORD has declared He is coming to kill you. The LORD has resulted in His heart, and He has spoken it. This is the word of the LORD, "You are going to die. You will be destroyed."

I want you to think about that. This is a statement. This is a declaration. This is not a possibility. God had declared the people of Nineveh were going to die. What we find interesting as we continue to read is how the people of Nineveh responded. Well, we read in Jonah 3:5—**So the people of Nineveh believed God** (emphasis added).

I want you to think about something. The proclamation Jonah made was not his own. He is simply conveying exactly what the LORD told him and declaring judgment. What I want you to understand is as Jonah is declaring the word of the LORD, the people of Nineveh have two options. You either believe the word of the LORD, or you reject the word of the LORD. There's no middle ground here. You either believe it or discount it.

Do you remember the story of Lot's son-in-law's from the story of Sodom and Gomorrah? Lot went and told them God was about to bring judgment. His son-in-law's thought he was joking. They didn't take him seriously. They didn't believe what Lot told them. What was the outcome? They were killed. They didn't believe the word of God, and they were destroyed. What I'm telling you right now as you look at this word of God from Genesis to Revelation, you have two options. You either believe it, or you reject it.

Let's continue in the story of Jonah and see the benefits. The first thing I want to make note of is how they responded when they believed God. How did they respond? Faith! We call this faith. What does faith look like? **So the people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast** (emphasis added, Jonah 3:5). That is what faith looks like.

Continuing in Jonah 3:5-8—⁵ **So the people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them.** ⁶ **Then word came to the king of Nineveh; and he arose**

from his throne and laid aside his robe, covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes. ⁷ And he caused it to be proclaimed and published throughout Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; do not let them eat, or drink water. ⁸ But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and **cry mightily to God**; yes, let **everyone turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands** (emphasis added).

It's amazing! They believed and they moved in faith. What did they start doing? They started fasting. What does it mean when they—**cry mightily to God**? It means they started praying. This was the answer to God's certain judgment. This was a declared judgment; it was not a maybe. This is the way they moved, and they turned from their wicked ways.

So this fasting and prayer included the right heart. It was a heart of humbleness. It was a penitent heart saying, "I'm no longer going to continue in these sins. It's not okay."

Continuing in Jonah 3:9-10—⁹ **Who can tell if God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we may not perish?** ¹⁰ **Then God saw their works.** He saw the fruit of their works, and there's no more tangible expression to repentance than that of praying and fasting. It is tangible.

Continuing in Jonah 3:10—**Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it** (emphasis added). Do you want to know the power of prayer and fasting? It actually staved off, it held back, the hand of God. It held back judgment. It actually changed the heart of the LORD. The LORD was resolved in His heart that He was coming to destroy Nineveh, but because of what they did in that they went to prayer, fasting, and turned from their wicked ways, God changed His plan. That is ultimate power! This is the power of praying and fasting!

So in your own life, how do you think this could apply when you know you haven't been walking with the LORD? How can you apply this when you have been rebelling against Him, and you know you are more in relationship with the world than you are with Yeshua? The way to come home is right there in those verses. That is how we can assure we're going to avoid judgment. Follow these principles right here.

Prayer and fasting is something God demands as you return to Him. I only say this because this is what the Prophets say. This is what we read in Joel 2:12—¹² **Now, therefore," says the LORD, "Turn to Me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning** (emphasis added). The Prophets are crying out because it is the word of the LORD. What does the LORD want? Do you ever wonder why your flesh fights you so hard? Because your flesh is the antithesis to the Spirit. It fights against the Spirit every step of the way. It wants nothing to do with obedience to God, God's heart, or God's desire. So there's a good chance if you don't want to do something, it might be God speaking to you. However, keep in mind we test all things with Scripture. Amen?

So Joel makes the point—**Turn to Me with fasting, with weeping** then He goes on in Joel 2:13—**So rend your heart, and not your garments** (emphasis added). The word rend in Hebrew is קָרַע (*qara*). It means tear. Tear your heart, not your garments. Now, you can go through the Tanakh, the Hebrew Bible, and what you'll see is time after time righteous men of God were tearing their garments in accordance with great sorrow, great mourning, and great pain. It was even affiliated with fasting. You have to put this into context by going back to biblical times. One of the most important things any person possessed was their garment. It was a massive sacrifice to tear the garment because you're

rendering it useless. So when you tear your garment, you have destroyed what you value most. So it is interesting that God tells us not to do that. Instead, He wants our hearts. He wants inside of our hearts. He wants us to love Him. He wants us to seek Him. It's not your cloak where you house all your idols. It is in your heart you house these idols.

Joel goes on in Joel 2:13—**Return to the LORD your God, for He is gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, and of great kindness; and He relents from doing harm** (emphasis added). The term relent is used because He was resolved in His heart to come for you and take you out. He was going to judge you, but He is merciful and compassionate, and His heart can be changed depending on your actions. It depends on whether or not you go to Him in praying and fasting and have a repentant heart. It depends on whether or not you want to abandon your idols and all the things of the world.

This is absolutely critical. He is gracious and merciful. He's a merciful loving Father. He wants to love us, but He's also a righteous God.

Deuteronomy 9:18 is a verse we have already looked at; however, we are going to look at it differently today. **And I fell down before the LORD, as at the first, forty days and forty nights; I neither ate bread nor drank water.** This is Moses speaking. He is fasting. Why is he doing that? The text tells us as we continue in Deuteronomy 9:18—**because of all your sin which you committed in doing wickedly in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger** (emphasis added).

There is a perfect example of beautiful intercession by the most humble man on the face of the Earth. We know this for a fact because of what it says in Numbers 12. He goes to intercede on behalf of Israel. They had sinned, and God had resolved in His heart to wipe them out. Why did Moses pray and fast? To hold off judgment, which is the very thing these men of Nineveh did. Both Moses and these men prayed and fasted to hold off judgment. This is power to hold off judgment! If you are honest with yourselves, many of you know how immersed you are in sin. What a fantastic avenue to get out of sin. This is protocol.

I want to take you to 2 Chronicles. This is one of my favorite stories and for multiple reasons. This story encompasses the totality of this entire series of looking at the principles of prayer and fasting and applying them. 2 Chronicles 20:1-3—**¹It happened after this that the people of Moab with the people of Ammon, and others with them besides the Ammonites, came to battle against Jehoshaphat. ²Then some came and told Jehoshaphat, saying, "A great multitude is coming against you from beyond the sea, from Syria; and they are in Hazazon Tamar" (which is En Gedi). ³And Jehoshaphat feared** (emphasis added).

I want you to understand something. Jehoshaphat saw this army and knew what was coming. He knew there was no chance of survival. In the physical realm, this is an impossible situation. He cannot come out on top of this thing. Now he's blanketed in fear. He's staring death straight in the face.

Now I know all of you, to some degree, can absolutely relate to this story. You have your own version of this story. Some trial or tribulation has come into your life, and you are literally suffocating with fear. You've been gripped with fear because you're looking at the situation thinking it is impossible. There's no way out of this. It might be you are in such a financial mess you have no idea what to do. It could be health. It could be your doctor has said, "I'm sorry. You have cancer and there is no cure. We can't do anything for you." You know how many times a day that happens to people? Even little baby Israel, from our community, is in the hospital and the doctors are baffled. They're not sure what's going on.

So you are looking at this, and men are telling you the situation is hopeless. We don't have an answer for the problem. I've talked to a gentleman who was literally sent home with six weeks to live. The doctor says there's nothing more they can do for him. I understand each of you have your version of Jehoshaphat. This is why you want to pay attention to this story, because this is where power comes in.

So how does Jehoshaphat respond to the situation? 2 Chronicles 20:3 **...set himself to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah** (emphasis added). Prayer and fasting is protocol for life and death situations. Pray and fast; seek the LORD with all your heart. This is where we need to be.

Jehoshaphat needs a miracle. How many of you need a miracle? How many people do you know need miracles? Every hand should be up. We all know someone who is sick. This is tangible because this entire country is riddled sick with disease.

Continuing on in 2 Chronicles 20:4-6—**⁴So Judah gathered together to ask help from the LORD; and from all the cities of Judah they came to seek the LORD. ⁵Then Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the LORD, before the new court, ⁶and said: "O LORD God of our fathers, are You not God in heaven?** (Emphasis added).

Isn't that interesting? This is the beginning of Jehoshaphat's prayer. Does this sound familiar? **Our Father Who art in Heaven....** Jehoshaphat opens his prayer by asking—**are you not God in heaven?** Listen to what he says as he continues in 2 Chronicles 20:6—**do You not rule over all the kingdoms of the nations?** This is the same as the LORD's Prayer—**Your kingdom come, Your will be done.**

What is being conveyed to us in the LORD's prayer is there is no other kingdom that is greater than the LORD's Kingdom—**Your Kingdom come, and Your will be done.** All the other kingdoms will fall.

This is Jehoshaphat exalting the LORD. He is reminding the LORD of what he believes in, that the LORD has ultimate power. He is not limited in any way.

Continuing in 2 Chronicle 20:6-9—**and in Your hand is there not power and might, so that no one is able to withstand You? ⁷Are You not our God, who drove out the inhabitants of this land before Your people Israel, and gave it to the descendants of Abraham Your friend forever? ⁸And they dwell in it, and have built You a sanctuary in it for Your name, saying, ⁹'If disaster comes upon us--sword, judgment, pestilence, or famine--we will stand before this temple and in Your presence (for Your name is in this temple), and cry out to You in our affliction, and You will hear and save.'** (Emphasis added).

You have to appreciate this on a deeper level. Do you know what Jehoshaphat just did? He literally just quoted Scripture. When you look at 1 Kings, chapter 8, Jehoshaphat's great-great-grandfather Solomon had an experience with the LORD where Solomon prostrated himself and said a prayer of dedication. In that prayer dedication, he went through all these various scenarios of what could befall Israel. Solomon prays a pray that states, "If Israel turns back to You, including in a time of war, and they turn to this Temple, and they call upon your name, then please hear in heaven." So the prayer Solomon prayed to the LORD has been recorded in the word of God. Jehoshaphat is calling upon that word. At the end of that prayer Solomon prayed, the LORD says— **שמעו** (*shama*'), which means, I have heard and I agree (1 Kings 9:3).

That is powerful because again it is teaching us how to pray. It is teaching us how to fast. In other words, we need to start praying the LORD's word and remind Him, "Have you not said, LORD?" You stand on those promises in faith. This is where we have to be, and we do not doubt. We cannot be double-minded. Amen?

Going to 2 Chronicles 20:10—¹⁰ And now, here are the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir--whom You would not let Israel invade when they came out of the land of Egypt, but they turned from them and did not destroy them-- ¹¹ here they are, rewarding us by coming to throw us out of Your possession which You have given us to inherit. ¹² O our God, will You not judge them? **For we have no power against this great multitude that is coming against us** (emphasis added).

How many situations have you been when you have been thinking, "I don't have a chance. I have no power. I can't fix this. There's nothing I can do"?

In his prayer, Jehoshaphat reminds the LORD that he, Jehoshaphat, can't do it, but he knows who can. What is interesting is in addition to this statement he goes on in his statement by saying—**nor do we know what to do** (2 Chronicles 21:12). You want to talk about total despair? He has no idea how to handle this. He doesn't have a clue, and then he says—**but our eyes are upon You**.

This guy doesn't move. He knows these people are coming to kill him, but he doesn't let the fear control him or his actions to the point he responds in fear rather than responding in faith and trusting in God. He humbles himself. He waits upon the LORD.

Continuing in 2 Chronicles 20:13-15—¹³ Now all Judah, with their little ones, their wives, and their children, stood before the LORD. ¹⁴ Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, in the midst of the assembly. ¹⁵ And he said, "Listen, all you of Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem, and you, King Jehoshaphat! Thus says the LORD to you: 'Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, **for the battle is not yours, but God's**' (emphasis added).

Can you imagine being in the midst of an impossible situation where you're basically condemned to death and hear the words—**the battle is not yours, but God's**? Why do you want to hear that? Because God can't lose, no matter what. Whatever battle He fights He comes out on top. He will win; He cannot lose.

So this is what he says in 2 Chronicles 20:17—**You will not need to fight in this battle. Position yourselves, stand still and see the salvation [Yeshua in Hebrew] of the LORD, who is with you, O Judah and Jerusalem!** Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them, for the LORD is with you." (Emphasis added).

What an amazing insight? If the LORD is with us, who can be against us? Nothing can stand against us if the LORD is with us.

2 Chronicles 20:18—**So they rose early in the morning and went out into the Wilderness of Tekoa; and as they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Hear me, O Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem: Believe in the LORD your God, and you shall be established; believe His prophets, and you shall prosper."** (Emphasis added).

What does it mean when it says—**believe in His prophets**? It means, believe in His word. This is telling us how to prosper. We either believe it or we don't. We cannot prosper unless we believe. You need to believe the Word has become flesh and has dwelt among us. You believe the written word of God is truth, wisdom, more powerful, and sharper than a two-edged sword. Amen? That's what it is.

Moving on to 2 Chronicles 20:21—**And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed those who should sing to the LORD, and who should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army and were saying: "Praise the LORD, for His mercy endures forever."** (Emphasis added).

Now you have to appreciate the context, and you have to get into the historical context of literally watching this happen. It is like Jehoshaphat is saying, "Hey, guys, I have a great idea. We're going to go to war against the army. We don't stand a chance. They're going to slaughter us, but I have a great idea. Let's put singers out in front." Could you imagine the American armies today, the Marines, going forth and putting a bunch of boy bands in front of them and saying, "Hey, we're going to war against whomever, whether it's Russia or China, and we are going to put all these boy bands in front of us"? "This is a great idea, and you guys go first singing. This is how we're going to fight this war." If we did this, we would be the laughing stock of the world. We'd look absurd.

In this situation with Jehoshaphat, they put the singers first because what they declared gave them victory. It gave them the battle because they were not to fight the battle. The battle is the LORDS.

So these guys go out declaring— **Praise the LORD, for His mercy endures forever**. In the Hebrew it is יְדָה עוֹלָם הַסֵּד יְהוָה. Do you want to see how powerful this is? Do you want to see how powerful that statement is? It is so much deeper than what we see.

I want to point this out. So it says, יְדָה יְהוָה הַסֵּד עוֹלָם — **Praise the LORD, for His mercy endures forever** (emphasis added). In other words, His grace and loving kindness. What do we know about Yeshua? Go to the New Testament and you will find this unbelievable revelation in places like Titus 2:11—**For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men**.

Think about that. All the Apostles and these righteous men in the New Testament saw something. They said they had actually seen and know who the mercy of God is. They knew the grace of God. He actually became tangible and dwelt among us. His name is Yeshua.

So back to 2 Chronicles. The army put the singers first, and they're declaring the Son of the Living God—**Praise the LORD, for His mercy endures forever** (2 Chronicles 20:21). They were basically saying, "Praise the LORD because of His Mercy; because of His Son; because of Yeshua. This is what wins the battle.

This gets better at the end. Again, notice what it says—**His mercy endures forever**. That is an aspect you need to understand. I'm going to tell you right now, you will not read the Tanakh the same way again because we see—**His mercy endures forever**—throughout the Hebrew Bible, especially in the Psalms.

I want to take you to Revelation to show you something that ties in here unbelievably. Rev. 1:17-18—**...Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. ¹⁸ I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore** (emphasis added). Compare that to 2 Chronicles 20:21—**His mercy endures forever**.

This is what Jehoshaphat is saying; Yeshua lives forever. He's forevermore. He has no limitations. You will not stop Him. He has total victory. This is what we're seeing in this battle.

So we have all these amazing elements pertaining to how to gain victory. Do you remember what we talked about in John 14:13? John records Yeshua saying—**And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.** All these elements of success pertaining to prayer and fasting are in this story.

Moving on to 2 Chronicles 20:22—**Now when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushes against the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; and they were defeated.** This impossible situation now becomes possible, and it all started with praying and fasting.

It is through a humble heart and faith in His mercy. Yeshua lives forever. It will never end. That's our guarantee. The power is in the resurrection. Amen?

I'm going to close by going to the gospel of Mark to show you how powerful praying and fasting really are. ¹⁷ Then one of the crowd answered and said, "Teacher, I brought You my son, who has a mute spirit. ¹⁸ And wherever it seizes him, it throws him down; he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth, and becomes rigid. So I spoke to Your disciples, that they should cast it out, but they could not." ¹⁹ He answered him and said, "O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him to Me" (Mark 9:17-19).

So the story goes on with Yeshua casting out the demon. What is interesting is the disciples, who had been casting out demons and doing ministry, are completely perplexed. They want to know what is going on. So we pick the story up in Mark 9:28—²⁸ **And when He had come into the house, His disciples asked Him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?"** ²⁹ So He said to them, "This kind can come out by **nothing but prayer and fasting**" (emphasis added).

Do you understand when you are confronted with the most extreme situations and come up against the strongest demons of hell, you are going to need hell shaking prayer and fasting? This is how we overcome these things. Do you understand how important prayer and fasting is? It should make you desire it. Your flesh is going to flip out, and it's going to hate you. That is an indication you are walking the walk; you are walking in the Spirit when your flesh is doing that to you.