***Beginning of Year Fast***

Theme 2015 – “Our Year Of Service To The King”

EXCELLENCE

Message For 2015 Year Beginning Fast

*By Rev. Fitzgerald Odonkor, General Overseer*

*He gives power to the faint and weary and to him and to him who has no might he increases strength causing it to multiply and making it to abound*

*Even youths shall faint and be weary and selected young men shall feebly stumble and fall exhausted.*

*But those who wait for the Lord (who expect, look for and hope in him) shall change and renew their strength and power, they shall lift their wings and mount up (close to God) a eagles mount up (to the sun) they shall run and not be weary they shall walk and not faint or become tired. Isaiah 40: 29-31 AMP*

Beloved in the Lord as we enter the threshold of a brand new year it is time to call together the people of God and to receive strength and wisdom and direction from our God.

We have not passed this way before and so we need to throw ourselves on the mercies and the altar of him who is both the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end. Time is in his hands and he determines the destinies of men and nations.

When we deliberately deprive ourselves of food for the purpose of prayer and listening to God we give ourselves a unique opportunity to undergo change as we gain insight into the future he has prepared for us.

We also by fasting recognize our total dependency on God for strength, increase and multiplication. Fasting does not change God it must change us to be more like him. In this new year our own strength will fail us and our own wisdom will fail us but when we look to God and make him our expectation and hope in him we will mount over every obstacle and barrier and persevere to victory in every battle situation.

When we fast we also give God the opportunity to reveal our weaknesses to us and to break any bands of wickedness and remove any heavy burdens we may be carrying and to liberate us. We will then be in the position to release others we may be holding by unforgiveness and bitterness and envy and jealousy among others.

Fasting should make us look inside ourselves for the purpose of taking and implementing decisions that will make us position ourselves to serve our King like we have never done before.

May the Lord provide us with both physical and mental strength to focus on the real purpose of waiting on him by fasting and may he through this spiritual exercise raise for himself a people who are fully devoted to him.

Happy 2015!

The Power of Bible Fasting

*by Ernest Angley*

*Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting* (Matthew 17:21). There are many who feel Biblical fasting is unnecessary because Jesus paid for all at Calvary. This, however, is not according to the Word of the Lord. The Bible teaches fasting for all God’s people; never will you have real power with God unless you fast.

In Matthew, the ninth chapter, we read that John’s disciples came to Jesus asking why they fasted while Jesus’ disciples did not. Jesus answered, *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, and then shall they fast.* After Jesus was taken from them, His disciples did fast.

It is recorded in Mark 9 that a father brought his son, who was possessed by a devil, to the disciples. They were not able to deliver the boy, but Jesus was. Later, the disciples wanted to know why they could not cast out the devil. They were told by Jesus that *this kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting* (Mark 9:29). In my services the sick are healed by the numbers, devils are cast out. How is it done? Through fasting, prayer and living in the Word.

They Fasted in Old Testament Days

In Exodus, the thirty-fourth chapter, it is recorded that Moses did not eat for forty days and nights. He was on the mount with God and lived right in His mighty presence. *When Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone* (verse 30). Fasting truly brings one into the glory of the Lord!

Elijah, in I Kings 19:1-8, ran from the enemy and went a day’s journey into the wilderness. Twice an angel served him food, and then he ate nothing for forty days and nights. In the power and strength of the Lord he traveled 150 miles to the mount of God. If you want to reach the mount of God, fasting will help you do it.

We read of Daniel’s fast of twenty-one days in Daniel 10:2,3*: I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth. Then in the twelfth verse we read of an angel saying this about Daniel: from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words.* Daniel’s prayer, backed up by the power of fasting, was answered.

In Esther 4:16, Esther sent word to Mordecai, asking him and all the Jews to fast three days and nights while she and her maidens did likewise. She then went in before the king and won deliverance for her people.

The people of Ninevah fasted and God spared the entire city, saving over 120,000 souls (Jonah 3:5-10).

Christ, Our Example

*And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered* (Luke 4:1,2). True Biblical fasting brings the anointing of God. In verse 18 Jesus cries, *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me*. After fasting forty days, Jesus began to heal the sick, cast out devils and perform many mighty miracles. As the Son of God He did not need to fast, but as the Son of man He fasted to show us how we can have power with God over all devils.

The Early Church Fasted

*They ministered to the Lord, and fasted* (Acts 13:2). Men of God fasted and then carried out the command of the Lord. In Acts 9:9-17, Paul fasted for three days after his conversion; then he not only received his sight but also was filled with the Holy Ghost. Paul, in II Corinthians 11:27, *was…in fastings often*. Paul recommended periods of *fasting and prayer* (I Corinthians 7:5).

When to Fast

God honors any sacrifice we make for Him and He does not set down rigid rules of contacting Him. Fast with a definite purpose. Don’t fast just for the sake of fasting, but fast for the purpose of contacting God about a definite concern. The fast may be short or long: there are things we receive from God on a short fast while other prayers are answered only by a long fast. Your fast should always edify you and glorify God, for when it fails to do so it is not the kind of fast God wants. Use the wisdom God has given you.

How to Fast

*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. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; 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 6:16-18). Don’t appear downcast when you fast or boast about how long the fast has been. Fasting is not for show but to afflict your soul so that your Father in Heaven will answer your prayer.

There are many ways to fast. You can fast by drinking only water or you can fast by drinking water and just enough juice to keep up your strength so that you can do your work. You can fast one meal, two meals, a day, a week or as many days as you want, but never fast over forty days at a time. Jesus fasted forty days, the maximum amount of time you should fast. I have fasted many forty day fasts, but I have never felt I should fast over forty days.

Always drink plenty of water when you are fasting. God never asks us to do anything that will harm our bodies and people have hurt their bodies by not drinking enough water on a fast. Water flushes the poison from your system; many doctors feel that fasting is beneficial so long as you drink plenty of water.

God is concerned about the good health of your body. Spend as much time in prayer, reading the Word and meditation as possible. It is important to draw greatly on the strength of the Lord during your fast.

How to Break a Fast

There are some who can drink juices when breaking a fast. If you cannot take juices on a weak stomach, however, then corn flakes or a cooked cereal with milk and NO sugar will be fine. Gradually you may take a little broth at short intervals with a little cooked rice added. The length of the fast determines how slowly you should get back to solid foods. After a long fast, for a number of days treat yourself as you would a baby because your stomach will have become tender and delicate. NEVER overeat when coming off even a short fast. Do not give vent to your appetite.

Results from Your Fast

Fasting will put self more under subjection to God. Doubts will be dispelled and faith will take their place. Jesus, speaking of faith to remove mountains, said to the disciples, *nothing shall be impossible unto you. Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting* (Matthew 17:20,21).

Prayer Tit-Bits

*Ps. Emmanuel Agbobli*

Prayer is the vital breath of a Christian. In prayer we engage the power of the Holy Ghost because the “*Spirit itself maketh intercession for us*”. A praying church will be vibrant and healthy. As we embark on this journey of fasting and prayer, remember that NOTHING happens here on earth, on earth everything manifest. I will like to encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity to provoke heaven to act on your behalf.

* Choose a prayer partner and pray at agreed times (you may pray from different locations).
* Wake up early in the morning to pray every day of the fast before leaving for work/school.
* Use your lunch break as an opportunity to pray
* There will be corporate prayer times at all branches and households of faith during the fast. Don’t miss out!!!

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| Date | Topics |
| Monday 12 | *2014 has been a challenging year but thank God for sustaining us and for seeing us through to 2015. He deserves our praise. Thank God for His mercies and grace*.Ask The Holy Spirit to shine His light in those areas of your life that He is displeased with. 1 Cor 2:10Repent from every dead work. 1 John 1:9 |
| Tuesday 13 | *Sanctified vessels are more readily usable in the Hands of the Master.*Pray that you will be sanctified in your walk with Christ. 1Thes 4:3-4, Heb10:29, I Cor 6:11, John 17:19Pray that God will keep you unspotted from the world and also from evil. James 1:27c, John 17:10 – 15Pray that in all aspect of life you will be focused on the heavenly calling. Acts 26:19 |
| Wednesday 14 | *The presence of the Islamic fundamentalist, Islamic State (IS) is a major pointer to the return of Christ Jesus*.Pray and stop every threat of Islam against Ghana, UK, Africa and the World.Pray for the Salvation of Islamic States, Iraq, Iran, Syria, Egypt, Libya etc Isa 19:18-22Pray for the salvation of Islamic Extremists eg Boko Haram in Nigeria |
| Thursday 15  | *The work of ministry can be advanced when supported by a strong financial base. Jesus’ ministry was supported financially by the likes Susanna Luke 8:1-3 and Paul’s ministry by the Philippians Phil 1:19 - 21*Pray that Holy Ghost will grant unto leadership and members wealth creation Ideas and the capacity to build sustainable businesses. Deut 8:18Pray that members will acquire and possess landed properties (lands and houses) to enable us support the work of ministry on a larger scale. Acts 4:34;36&37Pray that leadership and members will understand what giving to the course of the kingdom is. 2 Cor 9:6Pray for the grace of God to start and finish building Projects in all our Churches. Neh. 2:20, Zech. 4:9-10 |
| Friday 16 | *We must all be involved in the work of winning the lost for Christ and the work must be done with urgency.* Pray to the Lord of the Harvest to send labourers into the fields to win souls. Luke 10:2Pray that miracles, signs and wonders will characterise the mission work. Mark 16: 17,18; Acts 4:30Pray that we will not be discouraged by obstacles on the field of souls as we advance the Gospel of Jesus. Acts 4:24-31Pray for divine supply: material, financial resources and protection as we do the work of ministry. |
| Saturday 17 | Pray against any wicked spirit assigned from hell against your country eg Ebola to cause sickness and disease. Pray closing the gates of death, sealing up the doors of affliction and torment against God's people in HCI.Pray securing the borders of your country from these wicked spirits.Declare by the anointing of the Holy Spirit that every yoke over your life, your family and every member of HCI is broken in Jesus’ name. Is 10:27 |
| Sunday 18 | *Leadership can be effective only by the grace that God supplies.*Pray that leadership will give themselves wholly to the work of ministry. Acts 6:4, Col 4:17Pray that leadership will not give any occasion of stumbling, that the ministry be not blamed but in everything leadership will commend itself as servants of God. 2 Cor 6: 2 - 10Pray that unction from heaven will be supplied to every level of leadership for the work of ministry.Pray for love, unity, divine protection and provision among leaders and also love for God's flock. Ps. 133:1-3 |
| Monday 19 | *The GO can be effective when there is a constant supply of God’s spirit.*Pray for divine wisdom and guidance for the General Overseer (GO). Hos 12:10Pray that the GO will be bold to declare the full counsel of God and that Christ will be magnified through his ministry. Pray that God will deliver him from wicked spirits sent to contaminate him and compromise his ministry. Act 8:17 – 21Pray for God’s divine provision and protection for his family. Eph. 6: 18-20, 2 Thes 3: 1 -3; 1 Chr 13:1 |
| Tuesday 20 | *The work of ministry can only be accomplished when there is dedication and commitment at all levels – leadership and members.*Pray that every member of HCI will be committed to the work of ministry. John 4:34, 2Cor 9:2Pray that we will be devoted to the course of the Kingdom inspite of opposition. Act 5:27 – 42Pray against any spirit assigned from hell to discourage you from serving the Lord. 2Tim 1:12 - 13 |
| Wednesday 21  | God has been gracious to us, as a people and as a ministry. Indeed we are what we are because of the grace of God. Ps 103:1-5Spend this day to acknowledge the sovereignty of God in your life, your family and HCI.Just minister to him in deep appreciation and worship. Psalm 18 |
| Thursday 22 | *The work of the HP (Camp Meeting) committee can be emotionally and spiritually draining and each member of the committee needs grace to function the way God pleases*Pray that all the members of the HP (Camp Meeting) committee will regard their work as a calling of God and that all their decisions will be borne out of a burden for the work of ministry Prov. 16:1, Neh 1;2;3Pray for a unity of purpose/vision and team spirit among all the planning teams Gen 11:6Pray that HP (Camp Meeting) will be favoured by God to attract financing and support from the right partnersPray taking authority over the spiritual atmosphere and release the tangible manifestation of the Holy Ghost during HP (Camp Meeting) 2015 Gen 28:16-17.Pray that signs and wonders will be done by the name of the Holy Child Jesus.Pray that all the ministering teams will function by the power of the Holy Ghost ie songs, ushering, counseling etcPray committing the preacher into God's hands. Pray that souls shall be released from the grip of the devil through the ministration of God's word.  |
| Friday 23 | *Eligibles and single parents have challenges and need the intervention of God in the circumstances of their lives*Pray that God will help them to live godly lives as single Christians (eligibles and single parents), to be vessels that are sanctified and set aside for the Master’s use. 2Tim 2:20 - 21Pray that God will help them choose godly friends and acquaintances who will encourage them to live for and serve God. 1Cor 15:33Pray that God will keep them away from those who would draw their hearts into idleness and carnality and away from God Jdg 16:15-18Pray that God will give the eligibles Godly spouses.Pray for the spirit of wisdom and counsel to rest on the marriage counsellors in HCI. |
| Saturday 24 | *“Marriages can only succeed when couples are united in their decisions” – Mr & Mrs. Crabbe.*Pray that married couples will be united in all decisions and that couples will pray together. Gen. 2:25Pray pulling down every stronghold of the devil fashioned against marriages in the church. Heb 13:4Pray cancelling any demonic marriage covenant entered for and on behalf of any member of HCI.Pray reversing any negative declaration against child bearing and release all marriages to bear children. |
| Sunday 25 | *The future of the ministry of Christ will be compromised if the foundation of the youth is not strong.* Pray that the foundation of the younger generation will be well rooted in Christ. Ezra 8:21-23, Is 58:12, Deut. 32:5Pray that the youth ministry will be equipped to produce godly leaders who will do the work of ministry. 2Tim 2:15,19-21, Eph. 4:21-14Pray the Youth of HCI will excel in their academics, profession and also in their business endeavours. |
| Monday 26 | Pray that God will deliver the children in HCI from the hands of wicked and unreasonable men who will seek to contaminate them and compromise their destinies.Pray that the children in HCI will know God for themselves and that they will be rooted and grounded in God’s word Declare that they will not embrace strange doctrines and religions. Pray against any attack of sickness and disease targeted at the children in HCIPray that parents would guide their children in the fear of our God Prov 22:6, Deut 4:9, 10 |
| Tuesday 27 | *The pastors working in our rural communities are doing a great job and needs to be encouraged to fulfil God’s mandate for HCI.*Pray that the pastors and members in all our branches will be established in the will, word and ways of God 1 Tim 1:2-4Pray that the pastors will walk in divine protection from hostile forces in their communities eg Occultism, Traditionalists, Islamic Leaders, Secularism etcPray for supernatural provision for all Pastors and their familiesPray that God will deliver every pastor, especially the young ones from immoralities and fleshy desires.Pray that signs and wonders will be done by the hands of the ministers to confirm God's word. |
| Wednesday 28 | Pray for divine wisdom for the Presidents, the Executive, Legislature, the Chief Justice and Judiciary of your country eg Ghana. 1 Tim 2:1-4Pray that God will give us righteous leaders who have the interest of the citizenry at heart and that God will grant them the courage to stand for what is right, in the face of opposition.Pray subverting all anti-Christ activities in high places in your country.Pray for the deliverance of the destiny of your country from the hands of the devil as he seeks to work through those in authorityPrayer for the peace, prosperity and Holy Ghost revival in your country. Ps. 122:6-8, Hab 3:2 |
| Thursday 29 | Pray for the economic empowerment of members of HCI.Pray for business and job opportunities for members of HCI so that through that great financiers will be raised by God for His end time work. Exo 25: 1 - 40Pray for the grace and the ability to discern opportunities that come your way.Pray that God will connect you to your helpers. Ezra 6:1 - 14Declare that you will enjoy the fruits of your labour. Is 65:22 |
| Friday 30 | Destroy any family altars that will work against your life in 2015 and build holy Altars Unto the Lord in your life Judges 6:25-26, Phil 1:2Pray against every negative schemes and whispers assigned from hell against your destiny Psa 35:1 - 7Pray that God will send helpers your way Pray against attacks on your health Psalm 107:20, 1 Pet. 2:24Pray that you and your family will be delivered from the destruction of the enemy. |
| Saturday 31  | Pray committing 2015 into the able hands of God. 2 Tim 1:12Pray that every prophetic declaration made over yourself will come to pass 1 Tim 1:18Pray that God will bless and enlarge the territory of your life, ministry, academic and business pursuits 1 Chron 4:10Pray for divine provision and protection throughout 2015 1 Chron 4:10 |
| Sunday 1 Feb | *What a mighty God we serve. He has brought us through another 21 days of fasting and prayer and answered our prayers.*Thank God for answered prayer.Bless God for his provision, kindness, grace and favour in 2015 |