

A photograph of a sailboat on the ocean during a golden hour sunset or sunrise. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm glow over the water and the boat's rigging. The text 'FASTING GOD'S WAY' is prominently displayed in the upper half of the image.

FASTING GOD'S WAY

MATTHEW 6:16-18

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- ¹⁶ “When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. ¹⁷ But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, ¹⁸ so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

- **Leviticus 16:29**

- New International Version

- ²⁹ “This is to be a lasting ordinance for you: On the tenth day of the seventh month you must **deny** yourselves^[a] and not do any work—whether native-born or a foreigner residing among you—

- **Zechariah 7:5**

- New International Version

- ⁵ “Ask all the people of the land and the priests, ‘When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh months for the past seventy years, **was it really for me that you fasted?**’

FIRST MESSAGE – ZECHARIAH 7:4-7

- **⁴ Then the word of the LORD Almighty came to me: ⁵ “Ask all the people of the land and the priests, ‘When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh months for the past seventy years, was it really for me that you fasted? ⁶ And when you were eating and drinking, were you not just feasting for yourselves? ⁷ Are these not the words the LORD proclaimed through the earlier prophets when Jerusalem and its surrounding towns were at rest and prosperous, and the Negev and the western foothills were settled?’”**

SECOND MESSAGE – ZECHARIAH 7:8-14

- ⁸ And the word of the LORD came again to Zechariah: ⁹ “This is what the LORD Almighty said: ‘Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another. ¹⁰ Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the foreigner or the poor. Do not plot evil against each other.’
- ¹¹ “But they refused to pay attention; stubbornly they turned their backs and covered their ears. ¹² They made their hearts as hard as flint and would not listen to the law or to the words that the LORD Almighty had sent by his Spirit through the earlier prophets. So the LORD Almighty was very angry.
- ¹³ “‘When I called, they did not listen; so when they called, I would not listen,’ says the LORD Almighty. ¹⁴ ‘I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations, where they were strangers. The land they left behind them was so desolate that no one traveled through it. This is how they made the pleasant land desolate.’”

THIRD MESSAGE – ZECHARIAH 8:1-17

- 8 The word of the LORD Almighty came to me.
- 2 This is what the LORD Almighty says: “I am very jealous for Zion; I am burning with jealousy for her.”
- 3 This is what the LORD says: “I will return to Zion and dwell in Jerusalem. Then Jerusalem will be called the Faithful City, and the mountain of the LORD Almighty will be called the Holy Mountain.”
- 4 This is what the LORD Almighty says: “Once again men and women of ripe old age will sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each of them with cane in hand because of their age. 5 The city streets will be filled with boys and girls playing there.”
- 6 This is what the LORD Almighty says: “It may seem marvelous to the remnant of this people at that time, but will it seem marvelous to me?” declares the LORD Almighty.
- 7 This is what the LORD Almighty says: “I will save my people from the countries of the east and the west. 8 I will bring them back to live in Jerusalem; they will be my people, and I will be faithful and righteous to them as their God.”
- 9 This is what the LORD Almighty says: “Now hear these words, ‘Let your hands be strong so that the temple may be built.’ This is also what the prophets said who were present when the foundation was laid for the house of the LORD Almighty. 10 Before that time there were no wages for people or hire for animals. No one could go about their business safely because of their enemies, since I had turned everyone against their neighbor. 11 But now I will not deal with the remnant of this people as I did in the past,” declares the LORD Almighty.
- 12 “The seed will grow well, the vine will yield its fruit, the ground will produce its crops, and the heavens will drop their dew. I will give all these things as an inheritance to the remnant of this people. 13 Just as you, Judah and Israel, have been a curse^[a] among the nations, so I will save you, and you will be a blessing.^[b] Do not be afraid, but let your hands be strong.”
- 14 This is what the LORD Almighty says: “Just as I had determined to bring disaster on you and showed no pity when your ancestors angered me,” says the LORD Almighty, 15 “so now I have determined to do good again to Jerusalem and Judah. Do not be afraid. 16 These are the things you are to do: Speak the truth to each other, and render true and sound judgment in your courts; 17 do not plot evil against each other, and do not love to swear falsely. I hate all this,” declares the LO

FOURTH MESSAGE – ZECHARIAH 8:18-23

- ¹⁸ The word of the LORD Almighty came to me.
- ¹⁹ This is what the LORD Almighty says: “The fasts of the fourth, fifth, seventh and tenth months will become joyful and glad occasions and happy festivals for Judah. Therefore love truth and peace.”
- ²⁰ This is what the LORD Almighty says: “Many peoples and the inhabitants of many cities will yet come, ²¹ and the inhabitants of one city will go to another and say, ‘Let us go at once to entreat the LORD and seek the LORD Almighty. I myself am going.’ ²² And many peoples and powerful nations will come to Jerusalem to seek the LORD Almighty and to entreat him.”
- ²³ This is what the LORD Almighty says: “In those days ten people from all languages and nations will take firm hold of one Jew by the hem of his robe and say, ‘Let us go with you, because we have heard that God is with you.’”

MATTHEW 6:16-18

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LUKE 18:12

- ¹² I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.'

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- [Zechariah 7:4-5, 8-10](#) “Then the word of the Lord Almighty came to me: “Ask all the people of the land and the priests, ‘When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh months for the past seventy years, was it really for me that you fasted? And the word of the Lord came again to Zechariah: “This is what the Lord Almighty said: ‘Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another. Do not oppress the widow of the fatherless, the foreigner or the poor. Do not plot evil against each other.’”

Common Reasons for fasting as seen in Scripture

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- **Matthew 9:15** “How can the guests of the bridegroom **mourn** while he is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; then they will fast.”

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Nehemiah 9:1-3 “On the twenty-fourth day of the same month, the Israelites gathered together, fasting and wearing sackcloth and putting dust on their heads. Those of Israelite descent had separated themselves from all foreigners. They stood in their places and confessed their sins and the sins of their ancestors. They stood where they were and read from the Book of the Law of the Lord their God for a quarter of the day, and spent another quarter in confession and in worshiping the Lord their God.

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Matthew 5:4 “Blessed are those who mourn.....”

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- **1. Fasting is appropriate when mourning over some great pain or loss.**
- **2. Fasting is appropriate when mourning over sin.**
- **3. Fasting is an appropriate means of seeking to conquer sin and temptation.**
- **Isaiah 58:6 “Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?”**

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- **Esther 4:15-16** "Then Esther sent this reply to Mordecai: Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my attendants will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish."

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- **Acts 14:23** "When they had appointed elders for them in the various churches, with **prayer and fasting** they entrusted them to the protection of the Lord in whom they had believed."

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- **1 Cor. 9:27** "Instead I subdue my body and make it my slave, so that after preaching to others I myself will no be disqualified."

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- 5. Fasting is appropriate when seeking wisdom and revelation from God.
- 6. Fasting is appropriate when preparing for some great ministry or task.
- 7. Fasting is appropriate for developing self-control.
- 8. Fasting is appropriate in helping us extend mercy to others.

Isaiah 58:6-7

- ⁶ “Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen:
to loose the chains of injustice
and untie the cords of the yoke,
to set the oppressed free
and break every yoke?
⁷ Is it not to share your food with the hungry
and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter—
when you see the naked, to clothe them,
and not to turn away from your own flesh and
blood?

1 Timothy 6:7

- For we brought nothing into the world and we can take nothing out of it.”

Philippians 3:13-14

- Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.”

John 3:36

- **“Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on them.”**

- Lord God, please forgive me for my sins. I believe that you sent your son Jesus to die on the cross for my sins. I believe that you love me. I believe in my heart who you are. You are the son of God. I confess with my mouth that I am a sinner. I accept you Lord Jesus as my Saviour. Please cleanse me from my sin and create a new and clean heart in me. I do believe that you are my saviour and I now want to live for you as my Lord and my God. I know that I have eternal life in you because of the work you did on Calvary's cross for me. Thank you, God. In Jesus Name. Amen"