

νηστεύω - p.1File under: νηστεύω or neesteuō
English: "to-fast"

Consider also the nouns, νηστεία (neesteia), "fast"; and νηστία (neestis), "fasting." These words do not make the subject as clear as one might wish. The pagans fast for one reason, while the Bible gives a different reason. Note the Jewish Encyclopedia.

Encyclopedia Judaica Vol.6 ←

The Purpose and Conception of Fasting. In the ancient Near East, prayer and fasting were advocated as a means to have one's requests fulfilled by the gods (Ahikar, Armenian version, 2:49, from where, it appears, the idea was derived in Tobit, short version, 2:8; cf. also Test. Patr., Ben. 1:4). The Bible emphasizes that the fast is not an end in itself but only a means through which man can humble his heart and repent for his sins: his repentance must manifest itself in his deeds (Joel 2:13; Jonah 3:8). The idea is especially stressed in Isaiah (58:3ff.) where the contrast is made between a fast which is not accompanied by any real repentance, and which is therefore unacceptable to God, and the true fast which leads to God's merciful forgiveness: "Is not this the fast that I have chosen? To loose the fetters of wickedness, To undo the bands of the yoke, and to let the oppressed go free . . . Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him . . . Then shalt thou call, and the Lord will answer."

I. Fasting due to lack of food.

★ MATTHEW 4 CT

- 1 Then the Jesus was-led-up into the wilderness by the Spirit, to-be-tried by the slanderer.
2 And having-fasted forty days and forty nights, he later hungered.

★ MATTHEW 15 CT

- 32 But the Jesus having-called-to-himself his disciples said, I-am-moved-with-compassion over the crowd, because already three days they-are-remaining-near to-me, and they-are not having what they-might-eat; and I-am not willing to-release them fasting, lest-at-any-time they-might-faint in the way.
33 And his disciples are-saying to-him, From-whence for-us in-a-desert these-many loaves so-as to-satisfy this-much crowd?

★ MARK 8 CT

- 2 I-am-moved-with-compassion over the crowd, because already they-are-remaining-near to-me three days and they-are not having something they-might eat;
3 And if I-shall-release them with-reference-to their home fasting, they-will-faint in the way; for some of-them have-been-and-are-still-present from-a-distance.

νηστεύω KJ ★

- Mat. 4: 2. when he had fasted forty days
6:16. Moreover when ye fast, be not,
— may appear unto men to fast.
Mat 6:17. when thou fastest, anoint thine head,
18. appear not unto men to fast,
9:14. Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not?
15. and then shall they fast.
Mar 2:18. the Pharisees used to fast:
— Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not?
19. children of the bridechamber fast,
— bridegroom with them, they cannot fast.
20. and then shall they fast in those days.
Lu. 5:33. Why do the disciples of John fast often,
34. of the bridechamber fast, while the
35. and then shall they fast in those days.
18:12. I fast twice in the week,
Acts 10:30. Four days ago I was fasting until
13: 2. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted,
3. when they had fasted and prayed,

νηστεία KJ ●

- Mat. 17:21. not out but by prayer and fasting.
Mar 9:29. by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.
Lu. 2:37. with fastings and prayers night and day.
Acts 14:23. and had prayed with fasting,
27: 9. because the fast was now already past,
1 Co. 7: 5. give yourselves to fasting and prayer;
2 Co. 6: 5. in watchings, in fastings;
11:27. in fastings often, in cold

νηστία KJ ★

- Mt 15:32. I will not send them away fasting
Mk 8:3. And if I send them away fasting

← Group I shows fasting simply for the reason that there was no food available. In 2 Cor 11:27, "in fasts often", perhaps because Paul couldn't get food or, during times in prison was not given any.

Group I, continued.

● II CORINTHIANS 11 CT

26 I-have-made-and-lived-through a-night-and-day in the deep-sea; passings-of-rivers-in-the-way often, in-perils of-rivers, in-perils of robbers, in-perils out-of kindred, in-perils out-of nations, in-perils in a city, in-perils in a desert, in-perils in sea, in-perils among false-brothers,
27 In labor and hardship, in sleeplessnesses often, in famine and thirst, in fasts often, in cold and nakedness;

● II CORINTHIANS 6 CT

4 BUT in every-thing commending ourselves as ministers of-God, in much perseverance, in tribulations, in necessities, in anguishes, in blows,
5 In guard-houses, in instabilities, in labors, in sleeplessnesses, in fasts,

Group II Fasting, a personal religious discipline.

● LUKE 2 CT

36 And Anna was a prophetess, daughter of Phanuel, out-of the tribe of-Asher, this-one having-been-and-still-advanced in many days, having-lived with a husband seven years from her virginity,
37 And this-one was a widow of approximately eighty-four years, who was not departing from the temple, serving with-fastings and with-petitions night and day:

★ LUKE 18 CT

11 The Pharisee having-been-stood, he-was-praying these-things to himself, The God I-am-giving-thanks to-you that I-am not as-altogether the others of-the MEN, seizers, unjust-ones, adulterers, or even as this tax-collector.

12 I-am-fasting twice of-the sabbath, I-am-taking-tithes-from all-things as-many-things-as I-am-acquiring.

★ ★ ★ ★ MATTHEW 6 CT

16 But at-the-time-that YOU-might-be-fasting, YOU-be not coming-to-be as-altogether the hypocrites, ones-sad-looking; for they-are-vanishing their faces, in-which-case they-might-appear to-the MEN fasting. Amen I-am-saying to-YOU that they-are-having-back their reward.

17 But you, fasting, you-anoint-for-yourselves your head, and you-wash-for-yourself your face,

18 In-which-case you-might not appear to-the MEN fasting, BUT to-your Father namely-the one in the hidden; and your Father, namely-the one looking in the hidden-thing will-give-back to-you in the manifest-thing.

As in the case of Paul's sufferings, other Christians also endure "forced" fasts. (2 Cor. 6:5).

There are no scriptural instructions for the fasts of Group II. In Luke 2:37 Anna, a prophetess fasts. The Pharisee of Luke 18:12, boasting of his righteousness, says he fasts twice a week. (These fasts were normally Monday and Thursday.) In Matt. 6:16, 17, 18 Jesus gives some instruction concerning the religious fasting of the Jews. He does not condemn such fasting, but he does object to using fasting to show how religious they are.

In vs. 16 "vanishing their faces" behind dirt and unkempt beards etc. (See the "control word" ἀφανίζω, aphanidzō)

Group III, p. 3, the passages showing that Jesus' disciples did not fast, while John the Baptist's did. John was preaching a baptism of repentance to Jews. (Mark 1:4) See the Encyclopedia

Judaica article on page 1. Jesus' disciples were set at liberty through trust in him as Messiah. (Luke 4:18-21)

ἡγορεύω-p.3

Group III Jesus' disciples did not fast.

★ ★ ★ MATTHEW 9 CT

14 Then the disciples of-John are-coming-near to-him, saying, Because-of-what are we and the Pharisees fasting much, but your disciples are not fasting?

15 And the Jesus said to-them, Are the sons of-the bridal-chamber being-able to-be-mourning upon as-long-as the bridegroom is with them? But days will-come at-the-time-that the bridegroom might-be-lifted-away from them, and then they-will-fast.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ MARK 2 CT

18 And the disciples of-John and the *ones* of-the Pharisees were fasting; and they-are-coming and they-are-saying to-him, Why are the disciples of-John and the *ones* of-the Pharisees fasting, but thy disciples are not fasting?

19 And the Jesus said to-them, Are the sons of-the bridal-chamber being-able to-be-fasting in which *time* the bridegroom is with them? As-long *a* time as they-are-having the bridegroom with themselves, they-are not being-able to-be-fasting.

20 But days will-come at-the-time-that the bridegroom might-be-lifted-away from them, and then they-will-fast in those days.

★ ★ ★ LUKE 5 CT

33 But the-*ones* said to him, Because-of-what are the disciples of-John fasting frequently and themselves-making petitions, likewise also the-*ones* of-the Pharisees, but the-*ones* with-you are eating and drinking?

34 But the-*one* said to them, Are-YOU-being-able to-make the sons of-the bridal-chamber to-be-fasting in which-*time* the bridegroom is with them?

35 But days will-come and at-the-time-that the bridegroom might-be-lifted-away from them, then they-will-fast in those days.

Group IV Two cases of early Christians fasting.

★ ★ ACTS 13 CT

2 But as they were ministering-publicly for-the Lord and fasting, the Spirit *namely*-the Holy said: Indeed YOU-sever for-me the Barnabas and Saul with-reference-to the work for which I-have-called-and-still-am-calling them for-myself;

3 Then having-fasted and having-prayed and having-placed-on the hands on-them they-released *them*.

● ACTS 14 CT

22 Having-supported the souls of-the disciples, entreating *them* to-be-remaining-in the trust, and that through many tribulations it-is-essential for us to-go-in into the kingdom of-the God.

23 But having-elected-by-show-of-hand for-them elders, according-to an assembly, having-prayed with fasts they-committed them to-the Lord with-reference-to whom they-had-trusted.

↖ In these 3 passages (Matt. 9, Mark 2, Luke 5) Jesus refers to himself as the bridegroom and his disciples as "sons of the bridal-chamber."

Alford's Greek Testament, explains "sons of the bridal-chamber" briefly. (υἱοὶ τοῦ νυμφῶνος)

The υἱοὶ τοῦ νυμφῶνος are more than the mere guests at the wedding: they are the bridegroom's friends who go and fetch the bride.

To whom did Jesus send his disciples? To Jews,

Matthew 10 KJ

NOT
Gentiles.

2 Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother;

3 Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddæus;

4 Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.

5 These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:

6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Israel
being
the
bride.

↖ Group IV. Jesus, in Group III, said that after the bridegroom was lifted-away from them; then (τότε - a definite point of time - see Alford) they will fast. Group IV gives the only examples of fasting in the NT assembly. The rest of the uses of these words are in Group V, page 4.

Group V Miscellaneous

ἡ νηστεία-p.4

★ ACTS 10 CT

30 And the Cornelius was-stating: From a fourth day as-far-as this hour I-was fasting and praying the ninth hour in my home, and behold a man stood in-sight of-me in a brilliant white esthes,

➡ Cornelius a Gentile was fasting and praying. No other mention is made of his fasting; but his prayers and his alms for Israel were "heard" by God. (Acts 10: 4) (See also Acts 10: 31, 35)

● ACTS 27 CT

9 But as considerable time was having-completely-passed, and as the voyage was already being dangerous also because-of the fast already to-have-gone-past, the Paul was advising,

➡ Note, "the fast", probably 10th Tishrei, The Day of Atonement: (Lev. 16: 29; 23: 26)

10 Saying to-them: Men, I-am-observing that the voyage is to-be-being-about to-be with insult and much disadvantage not only of-the burden and of-the vessel BUT also of-our souls.

● I CORINTHIANS 7 CT

5 YOU-be not depriving one-another, if not something out-of agreeing toward a season in-order-that YOU-might-be-unoccupied for-the prayer and YOU-might again be on the same relationship, in-order-that the adversary might not try YOU because-of YOUR no-self-control.

↔ 1 Corinthians 7 KJ

5 *Defraud' ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that ^bSatan tempt you not for your ²incontinency.

6 But I-am-saying this according-to concession, not according-to injunction.

↪ Compare the CT and the KJ. The words ἡ νηστεία (tee neesteia) "the fast" are not in the ABCDFP⁸ manuscripts, nor the ASV 1901.

● MARK 9 CT

25 But the Jesus having-seen that a crowd is-running-together-completely, he-rebuked the spirit namely-the unclean, saying to-it, The spirit namely-the speechless and dull, I myself-am-enjoining you, you-come-out out-of him, and no-longer might-you-go-in into him.

➡ These two passages are similar. Matt. 17: 21 is not in the ASV 1901 at all. The ASV 1901 does not have "fast" in Mark 9: 29. These passages together with 1 Cor. 7: 5 seem to have been tampered with. If "fast" belongs in, we have no reason why, or what kind of fast is needed. The disciples couldn't fast (page 3), and Jesus didn't.

26 And having-cried-out, and having much convulsed him, it-came-out; and he-became as-if dead, so-that many to-be-saying that he-died off.

27 But the Jesus having-retained him of-the hand he-raised him and he-stood-up.

28 And as he was having-gone-in into a home his disciples were-questioning him privately, Because why were-we ourselves not able to-cast it out?

29 And he-said to-them, This kind is-being-able to-go-out with nothing unless with prayer and fast.

● MATTHEW 17 CT

21 [This verse is not in the B and aleph manuscripts, and is not in the American Standard Version 1901]. But this kind is not proceeding-out unless with prayer and fast.

Conclusion: Christians are not given any instructions, in any scripture, to fast. God explains a true fast for Israel in Isaiah 58. Read the article on page 1 again.