

FASTING

THAT CHANGED

HIS



TOURY

While fasting is a private discipline that yields many personal benefits, the promises of fasting can also impact your community and your nation. In the Bible, there are two cases in particular where fasting literally changed history!

NINEVEH FINDS FAVOR

According to Scripture, Nineveh was in trouble. This city, which was full of wickedness, was headed for destruction (Jonah 3:4) . . . but they were not without hope. When Jonah took this message of impending destruction to Nineveh, the people took God seriously. Their only hope was to cry out to God through prayer and fasting. And that is exactly what they did.

“So the people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them” (Jonah 3:4).

As a nation they repented before God and fasted. This is what the king of Nineveh decreed, “*Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; do not let them eat, or drink water . . . Who can tell if God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we may not perish?*” (Jonah 3:7,9). And it worked!

“*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*” (Jonah 3:10).

The people of Nineveh actually changed God’s mind through prayer and fasting! This corporate fast released God’s mercy and changed history. Without the fast of repentance, would Nineveh have survived? Absolutely not! We also know that Nineveh was not judged for another 200 years after that.

72 HOURS THAT SAVED THE JEWS

Another time when fasting changed history for a nation is found in the book of Esther. The Jews were on the verge of destruction because of the evil conspiracy of Haman, one of the king’s advisors. Haman was “filled” with wrath against a Jew named Mordecai because he did not “bow or pay him homage” (Esther 3:5). “*Haman sought to destroy all the Jews who were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus — the people of Mordecai*” (Esther 3:6).

Mordecai sought help from Queen Esther, who was his niece. Mordecai’s request meant Esther would have to literally risk her life -

for it was very dangerous for her to approach the king without being summoned first. So, Esther called a fast.

“Go, gather all the Jews who are present in Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will fast likewise. And so I will go to the king, which is against the law, and if I perish, I perish!” (Esther 4:16).

Those 72 hours of fasting changed the history of the world. When Esther approached the king on behalf of her people, they became a nation not of defeat, annihilation, suffering and shame, but a nation of favor. They received honor and promotion . . . all because of three days of fasting and prayer.

You and I can help change the history of our own nation through prayer and fasting. Yes, we have become a world void of morality and truth. But we don't have to accept it! I want to challenge you to make a habit of regular prayer and fasting for our nation. Fast and pray for our leaders. Fast and pray for our religious freedoms. Fast and pray for the multitudes who have been deceived by the enemy.

When the economy is in trouble . . . when we are worried about wars and hostile nations . . . when natural disasters take homes and lives, we are to call a solemn assembly and fast. We are the ambassadors of Christ and we can affect change.

In the book of Joel, God promises a latter day outpouring of His Spirit. *“And it shall come to pass afterward That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your old men shall dream dreams, Your young men shall see visions. And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days” (Joel 2:28-29).*

But this great end time outpouring can only come through prayer and fasting. Joel 1:14 says, *“Consecrate a fast, Call a sacred assembly; Gather the elders And all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the LORD your God, And cry out to the LORD.”* Will you join God's people in crying out for His Spirit? Just like the people of Nineveh and with Esther's people - your fasting and prayers can change history!