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Gods Plan For Finances And Fasting  
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The notes for this week are a split teaching beginning with prosperity, what God says about that and then what the benefits of fasting are for a believer.

Gods plan for every believer is that there be no lack of any kind in their lives. In the garden of Eden, Gods plan was to have an abundance until sin came along and then things began to change, God made covenant with man, those that would serve Him through that covenant, were Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and others, until the time of Jesus. Those that served Him this way became extremely blessed with much wealth. Through Jesus we are blessed not only with prosperity but with health and salvation.

Psa 35:27 "Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Let the Lord be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant." KJV

The book of Deuteronomy is known as the book of remembering for the children of Israel, as a way of proving them and what was in their heart. God proves His people by blessing them and the blessings become a way for Him to really find out what is in their hearts. Will they continue to seek and serve God or begin to forget Him and go their own way? This is his purpose and plan for blessing all. Gods plan for us is multiplication, our herds and our gold, everything that we have is multiplied. The downside of all the blessings is that we forget God, forgetting our priorities.

Deut 8:11-18 "Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day: 12 Lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein; 13 And when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; 14 Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage; 15 Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint; 16 Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end; 17 And thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth. 18 But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day." KJV

v. 16 the reminder here is to prove us that He might do us good, He is the one who has brought us out of bondage and set us apart, humbling us and proving us at the later end

v. 17 that we might say we have gotten this wealth by our hands, but

v. 18 it is the Lord who has given us the power to get wealth.

God wants his people to be blessed and He wants the world to look at them and know that God has blessed them.

Proverbs teaches us that we build our businesses first and then build our homes as a result of an

overflow received from our business. To many young people are doing things backwards, building the house and then the business. This is not Gods plan.

Obedying the following scriptures is one way of being blessed, in addition to God giving us divine inspired ideas acted upon that will release wealth that is already here in the earth to come to us.

Mal 3:10 "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." KJV

Faithfulness in handling money brings a blessing; somebody has to be blessed in order to take care of the poor. Jesus teaches this principle in Mark 4 and Matthew 25, the one handling the money, was blessed with a double blessing.

He established a covenant with Abraham and we who are faithful are blessed with that same covenant. We must remember as he blesses us to keep our priorities right and not forget who has blessed us, He will be looking at our hearts. It is wise to seek God when things are not going well.

Gen 13:2 "Now Abram was extremely rich in livestock and in silver and in gold." AMP

During the time of Solomon, he not only had wealth, but had wisdom which God taught him, allowing him to get wealth. God is not against us being prosperous. Prosperity starts with giving.

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What is fasting and what is involved and what does the Bible say about it?

Fasting leaves the idea that it is a time that we should be going without any food, however, it is important to continue with some type of food if our activities we are involved with require strength or manual labor of some kind. Always continue to take reasonable amounts of water, don't go without it, it is important to our bodies. Fasting usually has a length of time involved but can be done as a personal choice.

***Fasting means "us doing without something to discipline our flesh."***

There are different kinds of fasting, no food, like anything that might be considered to be a delicacy or a special treat, it could be time that is spent wasted. Sugar is probably one of the main things that people will fast, it being one of the worst foods that we indulge in. The average American usually consumes about 3# a week.

God would like us to live a disciplined life, not just for a short period of time but a continual fasting in order for us to live an incorruptible life. God is not going to do anything regarding our bodies, we are responsible for bringing our bodies into line.

1 Cor 9:24-27 "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. 25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. 26 I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that

beateth the air: 27 But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." KJV

Gal 5:16-17 "So I say, let the Holy Spirit guide your lives. Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves. 17 The sinful nature wants to do evil, which is just the opposite of what the Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are the opposite of what the sinful nature desires. These two forces are constantly fighting each other, so you are not free to carry out your good intentions." NLT

Fasting is only one way of disciplining the flesh, that we can become more spirit led and spirit conscience. Fasting is not for something that we try to force God to do, but fasting is for the purpose that we become more sensitive spiritually. That we would recognize situations when they arise and where we could do whatever needs to be done, having a growing faith where nothing is impossible for us. God has given us the power to do what needs to be done, regarding evil spirits, sickness and disease, but if we have not been disciplining ourselves, in prayer time or bible reading, we will be lacking in that power.

In Matthew 10, Jesus had given his disciples the power needed to handle the situations that arose around them, but in Matthew 17, he tells them it was because of their unbelief, their lack of discipline that they were unable to minister to the people. We can attend church every day, but unless we spend time with Jesus we will miss the mark.

Dan 1:12-15 "Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink. 13 Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the countenance of the children that eat of the portion of the king's meat: and as thou seest, deal with thy servants. 14 So he consented to them in this matter, and proved them ten days. 15 And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king's meat." KJV

Later in the book of Daniel chapter 10 we find that he fasted for a period of 21 days, but at this time the period set for a fast was just 10 days. Daniel and the three Hebrew children had been taken captive and taken to Babylon, the king was wanting them to have the same diet as the other men had, but Daniel ask that they be given a different kind of diet in order to prove that they would do better than all the others given the kings diet. At the end of 10 days they were checked and found to be in better condition than the others and 10 times wiser than the other men, consequently they were put in charge of many areas of the kingdom. Daniel had decided not to defile himself, but to continue with his way of life, honoring God even though he was held captive.

Fasting is evident in the Old Testament as well as in the New. Kings would call fasts before entering into conflicts or battles with other nations and Paul tells about fasting regarding things happening in the New Testament. Fasting and prayer was always a way that new ministries were sent out, and in making major decisions regarding those ministries.

Pressure from outside sources are constantly competing for our time, however, not many are competing for our spiritual soul. They are trying to draw us away from the spiritual realm of our lives, they can be good things, but can rob of us our time and draw our attention from the spiritual side. If we allow our spiritual man to be drawn away, we will find ourselves following our flesh and then have regrets, not walking in love, keeping our words under control, saying things that cannot be called back.

The length of fast is up to the individual, why you are fasting and what you are going to fast? You are the one who is bringing your flesh into subjection, not God or someone else.

Isa 58:3-12 "Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours. 4 Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high. 5 Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord? 6 Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? 7 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; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? 8 Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward. 9 Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity; 10 And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon day: 11 And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not. 12 And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in." KJV

This scripture under the old covenant speaks of the benefits of fasting and the reason to fast. The priests in the New Testament were fasting to be seen of men, their reason for the fast was to draw attention to themselves. Jesus told them not to be doing this.

In Isaiah we are told that the reasons for fasting were many, the people had chosen to fast regarding things that were evil, but that God had many different kinds of fasts that he had chosen for the people preparing them for things that would benefit them, from verse 6 through 12 we read about Gods fast for them and what the blessing of His fast would bring.

As believers we may be called on to fast for others needs whether it be for physical or financial aid, our attitudes and obedience while being on a fast will determine the blessings we receive. Fasting without prayer and seeking time with the Lord will bring nothing to us except maybe the benefits of being on a diet.

Psa 1:3 "And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." KJV

God is going to use you, bringing hope to people, restoring the truths that have been forgotten, this will be our actions during the fast. Don't get cranky or cantankerous. We are the caretakers of our bodies, God is not, neither are other people. It is good to discipline our bodies in one form or another.