

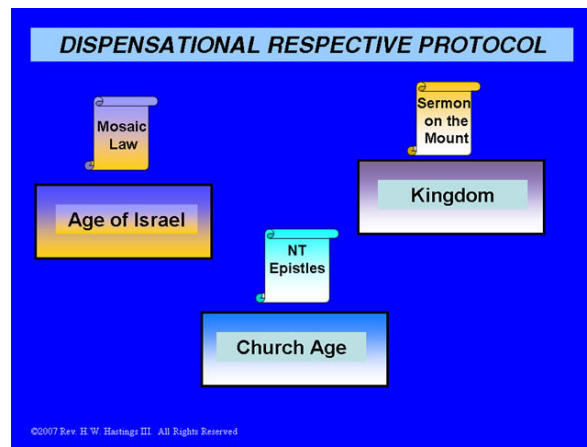
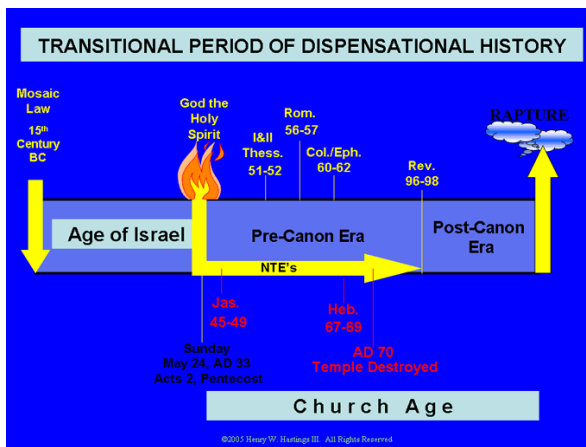
It is important to ensure fellowship with God before the study of the Word.
If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (**1 John 1:9**).

Standing on the Essence of God - -

Psalms 103:19 The LORD has established His throne in the heavens, and His sovereignty rules over all.

Matthew 6:16-18 (review)

“Whenever you fast, do not put on a gloomy face as the hypocrites *do*, for they neglect their appearance so that they will be noticed by men when they are fasting. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. ¹⁷ “But you (*kingdom subject living during the Age of Israel*), when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face ¹⁸ so that your fasting will not be noticed by men, but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees *what is done in secret* will reward you.



This is all under the banner of verse 1 . . .

“Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them;”

FASTING – (review)

- 1. During the Age of Israel (Old Testament)**
- 2. During the Gospels**
- 3. During the New Testament Epistles**

Fasting during the Age of Israel from the Old Testament - -

People fasted as a result of mourning over calamitous circumstances:

- Grief, sorrow, confession of sin, and prayer were things that accompanied fasting.

We also observed from Zechariah 8:1-19 that when the kingdom is established on earth and Christ is ruling from David’s throne, the fasts will become celebratory feasts.

- God’s will is going to be done on earth when Jesus Christ is ruling from the Davidic throne.
 - > Perfect government
 - > Justice

Fasting during the Age of Israel as referenced in the Gospels - -

1. It was the Father's will for the Humanity of Christ to fast during the wilderness testing for 40 days (**Matthew 4:2**).
2. It was appropriate for the Jewish Age Believer to fast (**Matthew 6:16-18; Luke 2:36-37**).
3. It was not appropriate for the disciples to fast during the Age of Israel while the Lord was with them (**Matthew 9:14-15; Mark 2:18-19**).

Matthew 9:14-15

Then the disciples of John came to Him, asking, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?" ¹⁵ And Jesus said to them, "The attendants of the bridegroom. . .

- οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ νυμφῶνος – "Sons of the bridal chamber or wedding hall"
- Reference to "a group of wedding guests who stood closest to the groom and played an essential part in the wedding ceremony" (BAGD).

. . . cannot mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them, can they?

- Jesus Christ = Bridegroom
- Disciples = attendants
- While Jesus Christ is with the disciples, the disciples aren't going to fast because it is a celebratory time as was the ancient wedding feast.
- Remember that fasting in the ancient world is associated with grief, sorrow, and mourning!

vs. 15 (*continued*) - But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast.

4. However, it was appropriate for them to fast once the Lord was taken away from them (**Matthew 9:15; Mark 2:20**) – *Mourning because of the Bridegroom's departure.*
5. Issue of **Matthew 17:21** "*But this kind (a demon) does not go out except by prayer and fasting.*"

Matthew 17:14-20

When they (Jesus & the disciples) came to the crowd, a man came up to Jesus, falling on his knees before Him and saying, ¹⁵ "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is a lunatic and is very ill; for he often falls into the fire and often into the water.

- Symptomatic of demonic possession

¹⁶ "I brought him to Your disciples, and they could not cure him." ¹⁷ And Jesus answered and said, "You unbelieving and perverted generation, how long shall I be with you? Bring him here to Me."

Matthew 16:4 – Evil and adulterous generations seek after signs and wonders – tangible things that they can see because they lack faith!

- Jesus rebukes them for that lack of faith.

¹⁸ And Jesus rebuked him, and the demon came out of him, and the boy was cured at once. (*Followed by a lapse of time.*) ¹⁹ Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not drive it out?" ²⁰ And He said to them, "Because of the littleness of your faith;

- ὀλιγοπιστία a compound
- ὀλίγος + πίστις – **OLIGOS + PISTIS** – "Quantity or degree of measure of faith"
- **Faith** here is an intangible attitude of trust that only the Lord can measure because it's non-corporeal; immaterial like an attitude that is manifested by the Spirit of God.

. . . for truly I say to you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you.

Mark 9:23; 10:27; 11:24 – parallel accounts!

Mark 9:23 - And Jesus said to him, “If You can?’ All things are possible **to him who believes.**”

Mark 10:27 - Looking at them, Jesus said, “With people it is impossible, but not with God; for **all things are possible with God.**”

Mark 11:24 “Therefore I say to you, all things for which you pray and ask, **believe that you have received them,** and they will be *granted* you.”

John 14:13 “Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

The issue in these passages is - -

- **Faith and**
- **Faith in the One who can and will because He has promised!**

How does all this relate to fasting in the Gospels?

Matthew 17:21 [“**But this kind** (*demon*) **does not go out except by prayer and fasting.**”]

vs. 21 is not included in the early manuscripts.

Mark 9:29 - And He said to them, “**This kind cannot come out by anything but prayer.**”

Conclusion - Some religious copyist who did not understand faith added it to the text.

Matthew 17:21 [“**But this kind** (*demon*) **does not go out except by prayer ~~and fasting.~~**”]

All Scriptures quoted are from New American Standard unless otherwise noted.