

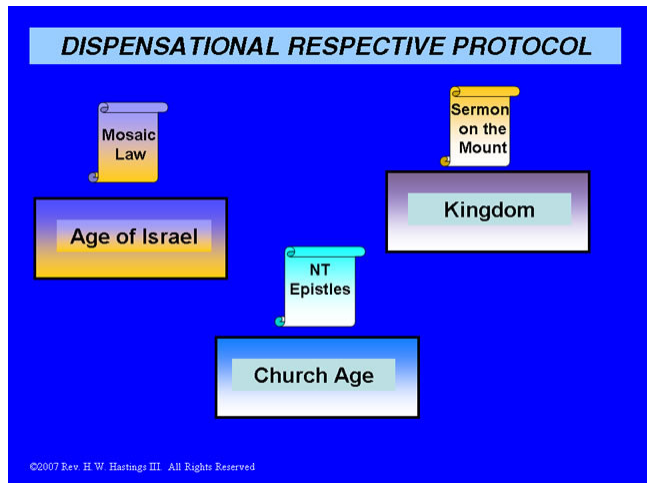
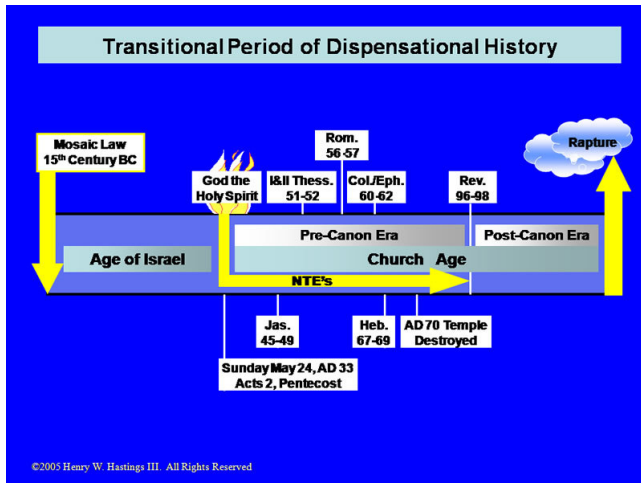
It is important to ensure fellowship with God before the study of the Word.
If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (**1 John 1:9**).

Standing on the Essence of God - -

Psalms 24:1-2 The earth is the LORD'S, and all it contains, the world, and those who dwell in it. For He has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers.

FASTING – (recap)

1. **During the Age of Israel** (Genesis through Malachi)
2. **During the Age of Israel as observed in the Gospels** (Matthew through John)
3. **During the Church Age as revealed in the New Testament Epistles** (Acts through Revelation)



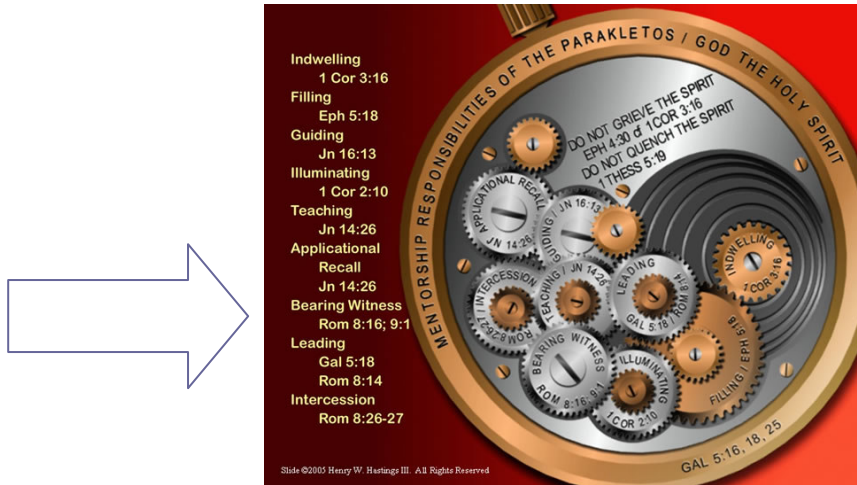
Fasting during the Church Age as revealed in the New Testament Epistles (Acts-Revelation)

1. Fasting was associated in seeking the will of God through prayer in the early Church (**Acts 13:1-4; 14:21-23**).

Acts 13:1-4 Now there were at Antioch, in the church that was there, prophets and teachers: Barnabas, and Simeon who was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. ² While they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." ³ Then, when they had **fasted** and **prayed** and **laid their hands on them**, they sent them away. ⁴ So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia and from there they sailed to Cyprus.

↓
Leading

These men were so intent on *doing the will of God* – in seeking the will of God through prayer - that it resulted in food being placed below the priority of *doing the will of God*.



“Laying on of hands” in the ancient world signified identification with someone.

Acts 14:21-23 After they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, ²² strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying, "Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God." ²³ When they had appointed elders for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

2. Luke recognizes the Day of Atonement on which the Jewish Age believer fasted as he recalled his travels with Paul in **Acts 27:9**.
 - There is no indication that Paul and Luke fasted on that day.
 - Jewish people observing the Day of Atonement would have fasted.
3. There is no command for the Christian to fast in the New Testament Epistles.
4. There is no reference to the believer or church fasting in the New Testament Epistles outside of the book of Acts.
 - Only occurrences where the context is seeking the will of God (**Acts 13:1-3; 14:21-23**).
5. **Fact** - The book of Acts is the inspired history of the early Church in a transitional period of God's economies.
 - From the Age of Israel to the Church Age
 - From the age of Law to the age of Grace
 - This transitional period was a learning process for believers; there were things they had to get over.

This transitional period included dreams, visions, and the sign gifts.

Example is found in **Acts 10:1-16** - The Lord commands Peter to eat food that was previously considered unclean in the Mosaic Law.

This was one way the Lord taught Peter that things had changed!

1 Timothy 4:4-5 For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with gratitude; ⁵ for it is sanctified by means of the word of God and prayer.

6. Therefore, fasting as a spiritual exercise is a form of asceticism which is inappropriate for the Church Age Believer.

We do not FAST to gain God's approval or His forgiveness because they have been freely bestowed at salvation in this *age of grace*.

7. However, fasting may occur as a result of seeking the will of God through prayer.
 - **Fasting** is nothing more than denying the body its natural desires when the believer is occupied with the will of God. When seeking that will, it takes precedence over anything in the believer's life.
 - **Rule of Application** - If a shade of application is stated in the New Testament Epistles (from the Law or the Gospels), then the shade of application applies to the Christian living today.
 - Our only shade is found in the book of Acts which records the transitional history of the early Church.

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