

Fasting A Sacrifice of Love

From a biblical and a scientific point of view, fasting is not healthy for the body.

King David says:

“My knees are weak through fasting and my flesh is feeble from lack of fatness.” (Psalm 109:24)

“I humbled myself with fasting.” (Psalm 35:13)

“When I wept and chastened my soul with fasting, that became my reproach.” (Psalm 69:10)

It is known scientifically that fasting food lacks essential Amino acids, which are found in animal protein. Based on this, we see that fasting weakens the health to some degree and we have to be aware of that. However, this fact becomes a nuisance only to corporeal people who view fasting as a physical act, rather than a spiritual undertaking manifested in a physical way.

We fast and we offer our bodies as a sacrifice appearing in the form of enduring of fatigue. The essence of this sacrifice represents the intention to accept death so that we become united privately in the death of Christ, in the sacrifice of his body and blood. Then, we become a pure sacrifice through the sacrifice of Christ. So, how magnificent is it when fasting is concluded with communion, through partaking of the pure body and blood such that our sacrifice becomes perfect and our offering is crowned with this glorified fellowship.

First and foremost, fasting is an act of love and it is an integral part of the experience of the cross, or more accurately, it is tangible introduction to it. How can someone claim his portion in Christ as a redeemer if he holds back on fasting, is bothered by laying himself down, or tries to dodge and evade even by offering other sacrifices as a formality such as a service, money donation, or any other trick to escape from offering and laying down himself by fasting. Jesus redeems from death only those who are willing to accept death for his sake.



The Compassionate Father

(According to the commonly and inaccurate naming of the parable: The Prodigal son)

+ Repentance characterizes the behavior of the striving person throughout the period of fasting. Or rather, it is the way of life of the Christian person through the days of his sojourn on earth. It is the door through which we have to walk to fully comprehend the mysteries of our relationship with God.

+ In the road of repentance we need to be encouraged by the Father's open arms to the repentant sinners and how he accepted them with His love and welcomed them with His loving heart. This is what we experience in the bosom of the compassionate father which is open to the prodigal son ***“And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him.”*** (Luke 15:20)

* In the life of repentance, there are steps. In each level they ascend towards glory, they suppose that they have reached perfection. As they ascend more and become enlightened with more light, they forget their previous step and think that there is the ultimate perfection. [Saint John Saba- of Dalyatha]

* If someone does not have Christ in him and ceased to be of his own, he ought to weep and entreat the Lord until He grants him divine and heavenly garment to cover up his naked self from divine power. It is a shame not to be clothed with the spirit as he is covered with the blemish of despicable desires. [Saint Macarius the Great]

The parable reveals to us these spiritual facts:

1. **The son remains a son regardless of what happens.** To him is the robe, the ring, the sandals, and the bread of the children. All he has to do is to return to the Father to enjoy all of this.
2. **The Father will never run out of love,** and his bounty is endless, regardless of how much we have taken and wasted.
3. **The Father's thoughts are a far cry from ours! His judgment and His views are very different from ours.** Let's draw near to Him through **studying his word** so that we may experience his **thoughts** and **through prayer** so that we may experience his **boundless love**.
4. **Being away from God is death and deception,** for He is the life and He is the way!
5. **All that is God's is ours.** Why should we live poor and without dignity.
6. **There are children who live in the Father's house, but they have yet to experience the taste filiations.**
7. **Some moments of truth with oneself is enough to change a one's life towards God's open doors!**

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