



FAST FOCUS | FRIDAY, APRIL 14, 2017 Fasting Instructions

Fasting will begin FRIDAY, APRIL 14, 2017

Beginning at 12:00 am and ending at 12:00 noon

We will observe the fast by abstaining from ALL Food and Beverages except Water

“And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying ‘Eli Eli, lama sabachthani, that is, My God, My God, why has thou forsaken Me?~ Matthew 27:46 (NKJV)

Good Friday is the day we remember and recognize the act of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ dying by crucifixion. Jesus’ suffering, bleeding and dying on the cross was the ultimate sacrifice for your sins and mine. This was a “good” Friday because Jesus saved us from our bad situation. We would have all received damnation if it had not been for this mighty act. Please join me in remembering and thanking Jesus for not only giving His life but also for His suffering.

It is on record that Jesus was traumatized, tormented and tortured for six hours. Our Lord was beaten, provoked, spat on, mocked and teased while hanging on the cross. Our Savior had nails pounded into his hands and feet. Our Lord had a crown of thorns implanted into His skull. Jesus suffered more on that day than many other humans can stand in a lifetime.

The Bible tells us that “about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” That is, “My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me?” (Matthew 27:46) I am certain that many of us have had days when we have asked God the same question. Many of us have been involved in situations that have made us feel as though God has forsaken us. We wonder why we are stricken with illness. We wonder why we experience job loss or layoff. We wonder why we go through divorce and/or have children to go astray. We wonder why we are convicted of crimes we did not commit and have our name slandered. We wonder why we have to face demons of addiction, poverty and suffering. Yes, we have all had our Good Friday moments. We have all felt like the adversities of life were our crucifixion and God has forsaken us.

The good news of Good Friday is that if Good Friday had not occurred, then Resurrection Sunday would not have occurred. If Jesus had not suffered and died, then our world would have been in deep trouble. If Jesus had not suffered and died, then our souls would be lost. If Jesus had not suffered and died, then we would not have received the gift of salvation. If Jesus had not suffered and died, then God’s plan for the world would not have been implemented.

Jesus suffering and dying was not in vain. As Christians, our past or present suffering is not in vain. God did not forsake Jesus and God has not and will not forsake us. I urge you today to remember that behind our pain, suffering and crucifixion is a resurrection! We are grateful that Jesus died and we celebrate the fact that He was resurrected. It is good to know during our time of suffering that our resurrection is coming and our celebration will be greater than our pain. God sees our suffering, but God also sees the celebration that awaits us. As Christians, we should trust that God is always with us and believe the Bible when it tells us that God will never leave us nor forsake us (Deuteronomy 31:8).

Prayer:

God of Grace and Mercy,

Thank You for being God! Thank You for sending Jesus to die on the cross so we could be pardoned of our sins. Thank You for giving Your only begotten Son that we as believers should not perish and would gain everlasting life. Let us learn to trust and depend on You in good times and bad times. Thank You for never leaving us nor forsaking us. Help us to realize that even during our suffering and pain, resurrection and celebration are on the way. Thank You that others will also benefit from our suffering and testimonies. We pray this prayer in Jesus' name.

Amen

Scripture References: Joshua 1:5, Deuteronomy 31:6, Hebrews 13:5, Matthew 28:20, Isaiah 43:2

Submitted by Pastor Chuck Lester