

“Cultivate”

Subject: Ash Wednesday and Fasting
March 2nd, 2022

“...you are dust and to dust you shall return.” (Gen. 3:19b)

EXPLORE:

1. What is Ash Wednesday? *Joel 2:1-2, 12-17*

EXPLORE THE WORD: **What do ashes symbolize?**

Gen 3:19- you are dust and to dust you shall return.

Job 42:6- Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes.

Daniel 9:3- Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and supplications with fasting sackcloth and ashes.

EXPLORE: **The Spiritual Disciple of Fasting**

Matthew 6:16-18 (NIV)

¹⁶ “When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. ¹⁷ But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, ¹⁸ so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

What is fasting?

Esther 4:15-16- Then Esther sent this reply to Mordecai: “Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my maids will fast as you do. When this is done, I will do to the King, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish.”

Jonah 3: 6-10 ⁶ When Jonah’s warning reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, took off his royal robes, covered himself with sackcloth and sat down in the dust. ⁷ This is the proclamation he issued in Nineveh:

“By the decree of the king and his nobles:

Do not let people or animals, herds or flocks, taste anything; do not let them eat or drink. ⁸ But let people and animals be covered with sackcloth. Let everyone call urgently on God. Let them give up their evil ways and their violence. ⁹ Who knows? God may yet relent and with compassion turn from his fierce anger so that we will not perish.”

¹⁰ When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he relented and did not bring on them the destruction he had threatened.

Ezra 8:21-22- ²¹ Then I proclaimed a fast there at the river of Ahava, that we might humble ourselves before our God, to seek from Him the right way for us and our little ones and all our possessions. ²² For I was ashamed to request of the king an escort of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy on the road, because we had spoken to the king, saying, “The hand of our God *is* upon all those for good who seek Him, but His power and His wrath *are* against all those who forsake Him.”

Daniel 1: 11-16- ¹¹ Daniel then said to the guard whom the chief official had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, ¹² “Please test your servants for ten days: Give us nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink. ¹³ Then compare our appearance with that of the young men who eat the royal food, and treat your servants in accordance with what you see.” ¹⁴ So he agreed to this and tested them for ten days.

¹⁵ At the end of the ten days they looked healthier and better nourished than any of the young men who ate the royal food. ¹⁶ So the guard took away their choice food and the wine they were to drink and gave them vegetables instead.

Matthew 4:1-2- Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted ^[a] by the devil. ² After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.

What is your intention?

Closing Meditation: “Clean” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yc1ORKAxmo8>

Next Week: Improv Comedy Show on Prayer and Fasting (March 9th @ 6:30pm)