

The Power of Fasting



Declaring God's Word (Day 54)
by Derek Prince

> "In fact, in the day of your fast you find pleasure, and exploit all your laborers. Indeed, you fast for strife and debate, and to strike with the fist of wickedness... Is it a fast that I have chosen, a day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head like a bulrush?" (Isaiah 58:3–5)

For the people here described, fasting was merely an accepted part of religious ritual, the kind of fasting practiced by the Pharisees in Jesus' day. Instead of real repentance or self-humbling, they continued with normal secular affairs and retained evil attitudes of greed, selfishness, pride, and oppression.

The kind of fast that is well pleasing to God, on the other hand, springs from totally different motives and attitudes:

> "To loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, to let the oppressed go free, and that you break every yoke" (verse 6)

Scripture and experience alike confirm that there are many bonds that cannot be loosed, burdens that cannot be undone, yokes that cannot be broken, and many oppressed who will never go free until God's people — and especially their leaders — obey God's call to true fasting and prayer.

Isaiah continues to describe our proper attitudes toward the needy and oppressed:

> "To share your bread with the hungry, and that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out; when you see the naked, that you cover him, and not hide yourself from your own flesh" (verse 7)

Fasting must be united with sincere and practical charity in our dealings with those around us —particularly, those who need our help in material and financial matters.

Devotional

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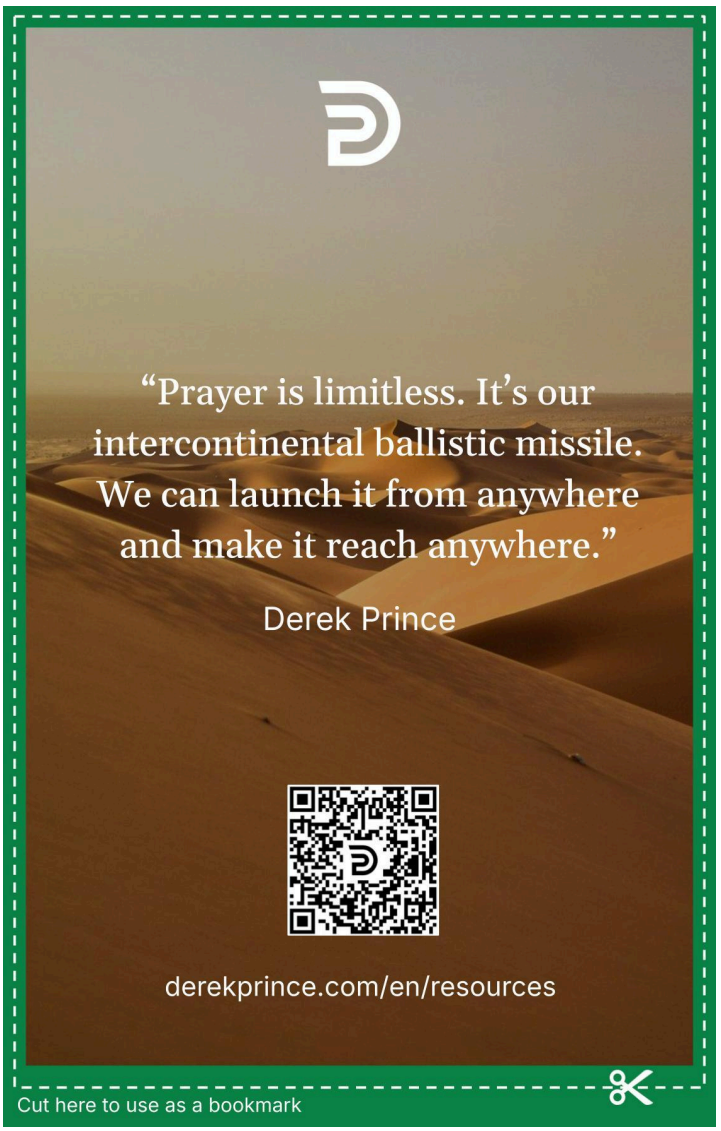
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