Fasting During Lent

Many will fast during Lent. So where does this practice come from? KS Hawai‘i Kahu Kaunaloa Boshard shares his mana‘o about fasting and how to draw closer to God through His word.

The Lenten season is usually described as a time when believers in Christ Jesus focus on several disciplines or practices in order to grow closer to God. Some of the practices observed by Christians include an increased prayer life and fasting.

For me, it is the fasting that is the hardest to accomplish without a muzzle fixed to my mouth. In order to help people like me there are those who prescribe to the idea that fasting from anything that would distract you from connecting with God like unplugging from all electronics, going without certain luxuries or withholding something important is okay just in order to be nearer to God.

However, the Hebrew word for fasting is tsum and it is found in the Old Testament. This specific word refers to abstaining from food. Pronounced ts oom, this simple act of refraining from eating was done in order to deny oneself the satisfaction from a physically nourishing meal, and instead food was replaced with a focus on prayer. Thus, a person who was fasting is really beginning to hunger for God and for God’s spiritual food, God’s word.

2 Timothy 3:16 tells us that all scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. This can be seen as a practice of ‘ike pono or to seek what is right in order to live pono.

No matter if you decide to refrain from food, or from TV or some activity during this season of Lent, it is our God’s constant call for us to be in relationship with Him that calls us into a hunger for the truth that is found in the Baibala Hemolele.

Drawing closer to God through the reading and meditating on scripture will not only bless our heart, mind and soul, but when we share it with others, the blessing is multiplied and more are nourished with eternal food that doesn’t spoil. Let us stir up this kind of hunger!