

It is here narrated that the disciples were unable to cast out a devil, and that Jesus attributes their failure to want of faith, adding, however, that this kind cometh forth only by *prayer* and *fasting*: therefore, if the faith had been there, the prayer and fasting must have been there also. Just as in His teaching He had spoken of prayer and fasting together, so now in practice He associates them together. Why does He do so? Is it not that He means to convey that this miracle could only be worked by a man of such devotion of spirit, of such fervent prayer, with a mind so wrapt in its holy work, that he has, for the time, lost all sense of bodily wants—a man in whom the spirit has for the time completely conquered the flesh. Does not our Lord, in fact, teach by His example and by His words that fasting is the *result* of a holy frame of mind, not the *cause* of it. I can explain this by a simple and well recognised illustration. It is no uncommon thing for persons to be so prostrated and wrapt in grief, either on the death of some loved one, or at the news of some distress, that they loathe the sight of food for days, and it is with the greatest difficulty they can be persuaded to eat. Why is this? Simply that they are so absorbed in their grief that they do not feel the

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andrian about 450. It is worthy of note that in the two oldest versions, according to Alford, this 21st verse "Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting," is entirely omitted, but it is found in the other ancient manuscript versions and Fathers. In Mark ix. 29, the words "and fasting" are not found in the two most ancient MSS—B. H. D.