

A Call to Biblical Fasting

A Time of Disciplined Abstinence

In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia, a revelation was given to Daniel (who was called Belteshazzar). Its message was true and it concerned a great war. The understanding of the message came to him in a vision. At that time I, Daniel, mourned for three weeks. 3 I ate no choice food; no meat or wine touched my lips; and I used no lotions at all until the three weeks were over. – Daniel 10:1-2

The purpose of the fast is to humble oneself before God. It is limited in time and duration. It is meant to draw us near to God, so he will draw near to us. It is to purge ourselves of leaven, or ferment that pollutes, poisons, or taints the mind and body. We are calling God's people to give themselves to faithful and fervent prayer for six weeks, which is 42 days. It is not a marathon. To avoid the marathon mentality we deliberately do not fast without food for 40 days lest pride enter our hearts and ruin the God-seeking. We will therefore vary the fast from week to week. Each week fasting from something different and allowing a variety of diets. It needs to be emphasized as well that these fast weeks do not need to be taken consecutively. It is not a marathon.

When Did People Fast?

Three times a year men were to do a pilgrimage and appear before the Lord.

I am suggesting that three times a year everyone of us ought to appear before the Lord in fervent prayer of a broken and contrite heart. Fasting helps us remember the broken, contrite heart.

Exodus 23:14 [Three times](#) you shall keep a feast unto me in the year.

Exodus 23:17 [Three times](#) in the year all your males shall appear before the Lord GOD.

Who Fasted and Why

- * Esther fasted when Mordecai heard the Jews would be exterminated ... (Esther 4:16)
- * David fasted and prayed all night for his dying child (2 Samuel 12:16)
- * Israel (Gibeah in Benjamin committed a horrible act, Israel twice defeated in battle) Judges 20
- * Ezra fasted when raising funds for the rebuilding of the Temple... (Ezra 8)
- * Nehemiah wept fasted to know the mind of God for rebuilding the wall... (Nehemiah)
- * Jehoshaphat declared a fast when the enemy came in like a flood... (2 Chronicles 20:3)
- * Jeremiah when the people did wickedly (Jeremiah)
- * Joel called for the people to fast to avoid God's judgment on the nation (Joel 1:14)
- * Jonah & the people of Ninevah fasted in repentance and brokenness (Jonah 3:5)
- * Daniel fasted to know the vision God sent... (Daniel 9:3 & 10:2)
- * Jesus fasted 40 days before beginning his ministry (Matthew 4)
- * The church fasted and ministered to the Lord before Saul and Barnabas were sent out.. (Acts 13)
- * Jesus said his disciples would fast... (Mark 2:20)

Spiritual Disciplines of a 40-Day Fast

These are only suggestions for disciplines. Choose what you want, leave the rest.

Disciplines	42 Days of Disciplined Prayer
Rise every day an hour earlier than normal. Rise at 6 a.m. to pray	7-Days of Praise & Thanksgiving (5-7 times a day)
Read Bible an 45 minutes daily	7-Days of Solitude and Silence (a week sabbatical)
Read through Psalms	7-Days of Sacrifice (a week of service to others)
Study the Prayers of the Bible	7-Days of Walking Alone with God in Prayer
Memorize Scripture Portions	7-Days of Writing Conclusions & Observations
	7-Days of (Anything you choose)
Keep a Daily Prayer Journal	
Pray for your family	Declared Purposes:
Pray through church family	1. To seek to draw near to God.
Pray each of God's Promises	2. To purify the life of impurities, pollutions of world.
Pray ½ hour each day (15 am + 15 pm)	3. To seek understanding God's vision for the church.
Walk and Pray an hour a day.	4. To wait on God for His word to you.
Read through the New Testament.	5. To seek God for miracles of deliverance(s).
	6. To seek God for revival in others.

A Fast From Normal

A fast is a time to do things differently, to break out of the mold and establish new patterns. Each week of the 42 day fast will be different. They will include an abstinence from such things as entertainment (TV, radio, magazines, novels, etc), caffeine, candy and sweets, covenant with the eyes (Job 31:1) to turn away from lust.

Simple Meals

Meals will be sparse such as a week of soup and crackers, water or juices, soup and salads, fruit and vegetables. Have a no fat week. The purpose being to discipline the soul as a reminder to seek God and not pleasure.

Fasting Does Not Impress God

We do not fast to be seen of men, nor do we do it to impress God. God cannot be enticed to answer our prayers because we fast or practice any self discipline. The discipline is for us. The fast is for us, so that we can return to the priority of putting God in first place in our live.

Fasting Should Not Be Painful

Extreme fasting can be physically dangerous. For people with diabetes or hypoglycemia it can be harmful or fatal. If food fasting is dangerous fast in other ways such as caffeine, sweets, media, entertainment, etc.

Planned Abstinenances of a 40 Day Fast

Abstinenances:

A fast is an abstinence. An abstinence is a deliberate rejection of something good, to seek something else even better. Abstinence or fasting in an of itself has no spiritual value. The value comes when we insert God into the place of something we enjoy, rather than the contrary of filling our lives with enjoyments instead of God.

Each Week's Focus

At least one day in seven give yourself to fasting from some pleasure to seek after God. It can be as simple as rejecting the comfortable or customary prayer position for another, such as kneeling, or bowing before the Lord.

Week	Daily Focus	Diet Restrictions
April 18	<u>Praise</u> & Worship for Who He is. Behold His beauty. Early rising, Scripture reading, hourly prayers, singing to God, thankfulness in everything.	<u>Juice Fast</u> at least one day during the week.
April 25	<u>Thanksgiving</u> for all things and everyone God puts in our lives. Keep a journal of prayers of your thanksgiving prayers to God for every good thing he has given and done.	<u>Caffeine Fast</u> at least one day during the week. Soda pop fast.
May 1	<u>Confession</u> of sin and prayer of forgiveness and renewal of the Holy Spirit. Change from your normal and customary prayer position to one of humility and repentance. Try on your face bowing before His throne.	<u>Full meal Fast</u> at least one day during the week. Cut food intake by half
May 8	<u>Clothe</u> yourself in God's promises and protection. Pray God's word back to Him. Pray and claim all of God's promises for yourself, your family, your church, your nation.	<u>Sweets & Sugar Fast</u> at least one day during the week.
May 15	<u>Cast Your Care</u> . Tell God everything on you heart. Pray frankly, honestly, let it all hang out. Pour out your heart and mind.	<u>Media Fast</u> , no TV, radio, Internet, , at least one day during the week.
May 22	<u>Wait on God</u> . Be still before His throne to hear his voice. Get alone, Be still, in solitude, wait on the Lord with your Bible open and your mouth shut. Listen!	<u>Go away from comfort</u> at least one day during the week. <u>Retreat</u> to God. Withdraw self.

Mark 6:31 And he said unto them, Come apart by yourselves into a desert place, and rest a while:
Finish Sunday, May 29. Forty days of prayer and fasting.

Fervent Corporate Prayers for 40 Days

During this 40 Days or six weeks of prayer

Give yourself to corporate prayer with a friend or group of friends.

1. **WYW Prayers**: (While You Worship) Pray all through a worship service in our prayer room. Pick up our prayer guide to help you pray during worship.
2. **Altar Prayers**: The church will be open for prayer at the altar from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily. Try doing it daily for a week with a prayer partner.
3. **24-Hour Prayer Chain**: 24 hour vigil of prayer - known also as the unbroken chain. Sign up for a half hour period in which you will pray for your church, nation, and world. The 24-Prayer Chain lasts for seven days.
4. **Prayer Shield**: Become a prayer shield for one of you pastors by agreeing to pray for him each day for a week, morning and evening.
5. **Prayer Walking**: Alone or with a friend take a time each day of one week to walk the circumference of our church property praying God's promises, protection, and provisions.
6. **Prayer Concert**: Join us in our final day of this 40 day of prayer adventure for an hour of powerful prayer, praise and celebration.

Tips Faithful Prayer for 40 Days

God has given us great instructions for anointed times of prayer. If we want God's richest blessings then we need to resolve to "get under the spout" by doing things God's way.

1. **Unbreakable Appointment**: Set a time for daily prayer. Consider it an unbreakable commitment. Keep your set appointment every day for one week. For one solid week, let your scheduled prayer time be the centerpiece of your day arrange everything else to fit around it. *"But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen" (Matt. 6:5-6).*
2. **A God Place**: Find a place in your home where you can be alone and undistracted during your prayer time. Keep your Bible, prayer journal, pen, and whatever tools you use in that place so that everything is ready. During your prayer time each day, this is a sacred place. *"Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed" (Luke 5:16).*
3. **First Thing**: Give God the first fruits of your day. For one week, give the very first 30 minutes of your day to prayer. *"Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed" (Mark 1:35).*
4. **Word of God Speak!** Read your Bible with the awareness that you are listening to the words of His mouth. Stop at the first word, phrase, or thought that captures your attention and let the Father speak to you about it and let it shape your prayers. *"O my people, hear my teaching; listen to the words of my mouth" (Ps. 78:1).*
5. **Postures and Positions**: This week, during your prayer time, use different worship postures: kneel, lift your hands, and fall on your face before Him. You may do this outwardly, or inwardly—in the inner sanctuary of your own soul. *"I spread out my hands to you; my soul thirsts for you like a parched land" (Ps. 143:6).*
6. **United Prayer**: Join someone else for agreement in prayer. *"Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them." (Matthew 18: 19-20)*

Scriptural Meditations for 40 Days

Six weeks - Meditate on and Memorize the Scriptures.

Soak in and Meditate on the Word of God, and if possible commit to Memory.

If your not given to much memory work then make it your goal to at least read Psalm 121 twice every day aloud. Or alternate each of these Scriptures. Each day a different Scripture to read aloud once in the morning and once in the evening. Couples can do it together as their devotional time.

Psalms and Psalm Portions

- 1. Psalm 121 - from whence comes my help**
- 2. Psalm 46 - The Lord is our refuge and strength**
- 3. Psalm 37 - Trust in the Lord**
- 4. Psalm 20:1-9 - May the Lord hear and answer you**
- 5. Psalm 91 - The secret place of the Most High**
- 6. Psalm 27 - The Lord is my stronghold**

Psalm 121

"I will lift up my eyes to the hills-
From whence comes my help?
My help comes from the Lord,
Who made heaven and earth.
He will not allow your foot to be moved;
He who keeps you will not slumber.
Behold, He who keeps Israel
Shall neither slumber nor sleep.
The Lord is your keeper;
The Lord is your shade at your right hand.
The sun shall not strike you by day,
Nor the moon by night.
The Lord shall preserve you from all evil;
He shall preserve your soul.
The Lord shall preserve your going out and your coming in
From this time forth, and even forevermore" (Psalm 121).