



"So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes." Daniel 9:3 (NIV)

» WHAT IS "FASTING"?

Fasting is a spiritual discipline that is taught in the Bible. Jesus expected His followers to fast, and He said that God rewards fasting. Fasting, according to the Bible, means to voluntarily reduce or eliminate your intake of food for a specific time and purpose.

» WHY FAST?

There are many good reasons, and even health benefits, for fasting. Here are three primary reasons:

- Fasting gives you more time for prayer. You can use the time you'd normally spend eating as time in prayer for what God wants to do. In the Bible, fasting is always connected with prayer.
- Fasting demonstrates the depth of your desire when praying for something. It shows you that you are serious enough about your prayer request to pay a personal price. God honors deep desire and praying in faith.
- Fasting releases God's supernatural power. It is a tool we can use when there is opposition to God's will. Satan would like nothing better than to cause division, discouragement, defeat, depression, and doubt among us. United prayer and fasting has always been used by God to deal a decisive blow to the enemy!

Often in the Bible, God's people fasted immediately before a major victory, miracle, or answer to prayer. It prepared them for a blessing!

That is why the Lord says, "Turn to me now, while there is time! Give me your hearts. Come with fasting, weeping, and mourning. Don't tear your clothing in your grief; instead, tear your hearts." Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful. He is not easily angered. He is filled with kindness and is eager not to punish you. Who knows? Perhaps even yet he will give you a reprieve, sending you a blessing instead of this terrible curse. Perhaps he will give you so much that you will be able to offer grain and wine to the Lord your God as before! Joel 2:12-14 (NLT)

Every fast should have a purpose. Here are some areas or concerns you may want to fast for:

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| • Spiritual Direction / Wisdom / Discernment | • Family / Friends / Church Family |
| • Success / Victory | • Resources/Employment/Finances |
| • Your calling or gifts | • Health and Well-Being |
| • Open or closed doors | • A New Venture |
| • A Personal Struggle or Temptation | • Emotional or Spiritual Conflicts |



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*"So we fasted and prayed about these concerns.
And he listened."
Ezra 8:23 (Msg)*

» HOW TO HAVE THE BEST POSSIBLE EXPERIENCE

BE COMMITTED: Receiving God's best blessing from a fast requires solid commitment. Arranging special time each day with God is absolutely crucial in attaining intimate communion with the Father. You must devote yourself to seeking God's face, even (and especially) during those times in which you feel weak, vulnerable, or irritable. Read His Word and pray during what were mealtimes. Meditate on Him, sing praises to Him whenever you please. Focus on your Heavenly Father and make every act one of praise and worship. God will enable you to experience His command to "pray without ceasing" as you seek His presence.

BE AWARE: As you enter this time of heightened spiritual devotion, be aware that Satan will do everything he can to pull you away from your prayer and Bible reading time. When you feel the enemy trying to discourage you, make prayer your shield. Immediately go to God in prayer and ask Him to strengthen your resolve in the face of difficulties and temptations.

FAST WITH FAMILY: Show your children the power of fasting by leading by example. Make it a family fast where your family not only gives up something together, but also increases some things together such as family conversations and activities or time reading.

STAY HEALTHY: It's important to maintain optimum health during a fast. Limit your physical activity. Rest as much as you can. Stay hydrated. Faith Fellowship advises all members and participants in fasting to consider their personal health needs and limitations prior to starting a fast and seek advice from a medical professional if needed. Fast only if your health allows it at this time. Break your fast gradually and wisely. Consume small portions, avoiding spicy or acidic foods as much as possible.

FELLOWSHIP: In addition to the spiritual strength gained from the Lord during fasting, we also gain strength from being around other believers. Make it a priority to attend church and fellowship with others who are fasting. Being around others who are also fasting and praying will encourage you to keep going. Being unified will strengthen us as a church family.

» TYPES OF FASTS

You are free to fast however the Spirit leads you. Here are some options:

TOTAL FAST

Abstain from solid foods and beverages for 24 hours. Take only water.

PARTIAL FAST

Abstain from solid foods for an extended part of the day. Take only water. You may fast from sunrise to sundown or from breakfast to afternoon tea.

1-MEAL FAST

Sacrifice one full meal a day.

BEVERAGE FAST

Abstain from solid foods for 24 hours. Take only water and liquid foods. Avoid stimulants.

DANIEL FAST

Abstain from meats and other favorite delicacies. Take only small portions of fresh vegetables, fruit and juices.

SOUL FAST

This fast is a great option if you have health issues that prevent you from fasting food, or if you wish to refocus certain areas of your life that are out of balance. Fasting from social media or television are soul fasts.