

# *A guide to* **PRAYER & FASTING**

*"I beseech you therefore; brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service." Romans 12:1*

Jesus said there are some breakthroughs that will never happen and some prayers that will never be answered without fasting, and when the whole church fasts, great things happen. If you have never fasted, or if you often fast, here are some guidelines to help you understand the wisdom and power found in fasting and instructions for maximizing our corporate prayer and fasting

## **FASTING GUIDELINES**

*"Biblical references to the spiritual discipline of fasting describe a practice of abstaining from food for a specified period of time.*

*Fasting is a time of bringing the body under the control of the Holy Spirit on a consistent basis. Instead of receiving the physical gratification of food and various other activities, we become very aware of the substance and power of the Holy Spirit. When we pray in this manner, it is not to get God's attention, to impress Him or to change Him. Instead, our purpose is to focus our attention on Him as the only Source of all of our needs." - Elmer Towns*

Fasting is one of the most powerful weapons God has given us for our daily lives. Through fasting, you can experience spiritual renewal, supernatural healing, a release from the bondage of sin, restoration in your relationships, financial blessings, and so much more!

During this time of corporate fasting, we will take the time to empty ourselves so that God can fill us with His Spirit, His presence, His power, and His anointing. Pray that the Lord will give us fresh insight and revelation for our lives, our families, friends, and our church.

We believe that as we pray, seek God and give Him our best at the beginning of the year, He will bless our ENTIRE year (Matthew 6:33)!

## BENEFITS OF FASTING

1. Improves your ability to hear from God (*Ezra 8:21*)
2. Builds you up spiritually (*Matthew 4:2, 23, 24*)
3. Lifts oppression and breaks evil powers (*Mark 9:29, Isaiah 58:6-8*)
4. Leads you into a time of humility and repentance (*Psalms 109:22-26*)
5. Causes health to spring forth speedily (*Isaiah 58:8*)

## CORPORATE FASTING

Psalms 133:1-3 tells us that when we come together in unity, *there the Lord has commanded His blessing*. Corporate prayer was practiced throughout the Bible. In Acts 13:1-3 as they ministered to the Lord and fasted corporately, the Holy Spirit gave specific directions.

In 2 Chronicles 20, Jehoshaphat, overwhelmed by an invasion, called the people to fast and pray. This corporate prayer and fasting resulted in Judah's victory over their enemy – without a fight!

In Ezra, 8:21-23, Ezra called a time of corporate prayer and fasting to seek God's wisdom and protection. *"Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river of Ahava, that we might fast before our God to seek of Him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance...so we fasted and besought our God for this: and He was entreated of us."*

## TYPES OF FASTS

- Complete – water and juice only, abstaining from all solid foods.
- Partial – abstaining from certain foods for a specific period of time.
- Specific Fast – described in the book of Daniel, a partial fast consisting of vegetables, fruits, and 100% natural juices only.

## BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Pray and seek God for direction regarding the type of fast you should choose. Ask the Lord to show you areas to target during your time of prayer and fasting. Do you need direction, healing, restoration of marriage, peace, etc.? Seek God's guidance and His Word regarding these situations.

- **Prepare Spiritually.** Confess your sins to God. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal areas of weakness. Forgive all who have offended you and ask forgiveness from those you may have offended (*Mark 11:25; Luke 11:4; 17:3*). Surrender your life fully to Jesus Christ and refuse to obey your worldly nature (*Romans 12:1-2*). Do not underestimate spiritual opposition. Satan sometimes intensifies the natural battle between body and spirit (*Galatians 5:16,17*).
- **Prepare Physically.** Although fasting is primarily a spiritual discipline, it begins in the physical realm and requires preparation. Physical preparation makes the change in your eating routine a little easier so you can turn your full attention to the Lord in prayer. Do not rush into your fast. Prepare your body. Eat smaller meals before starting a fast and

avoid high-fat and sugary foods. Eat raw fruit and vegetables for two days before starting a fast.

Consult your physician before fasting, particularly if you are taking medications or have a chronic ailment. Do not forget to take prescribed medications. Some people should not fast without professional supervision. They include:

- women who are pregnant or nursing;
- individuals who take insulin, or who suffer from any other blood sugar condition such as hypoglycemia;
- persons who have tumors, bleeding ulcers, cancer, blood diseases, heart disease, etc.
- Do not attempt to be a "super faster." Our fasting is not to impress God or others.

**What to Expect** When you fast your body detoxifies, eliminating toxins from your system. This can cause mild discomfort such as headaches and irritability, particularly during withdrawal from caffeine and sugars. Naturally, you will have hunger pains. You should limit your physical activity and exercise during your fast.

**In Addition, Participants Should:**

- Seek forgiveness from all whom you have offended, and forgive all who have hurt you. (Mark 11:25, Luke 11:4, 17:3-4). Be in
  - Schedule a time to pray and read the Bible every day.
  - Spend time every day in praise and worship.
- Get away from normal distractions as much as possible and keep your heart and mind set on seeking God.
  - Pray in faith, expect results!
- Remember it is the attitude of a heart sincerely seeking God to which God responds with a blessing (Isaiah 58, Jeremiah 14:12, 1 Corinthians 8:8).

**Remember:** We are under Grace not Law. If at any point you feel you need to break the fast, be released to do so. Fasting is to meet with God, not to damage our bodies or create condemnation.

May God richly bless you as you fast!

Adapted from *Fasting for Spiritual Breakthroughs* by Elmer Towns, Jentzen Franklin Ministries, and Lakewood Church.

Start 2020 with this 21-day Bible plan of prayer and fasting!  
Use this reading guide or go to [tinyurl.com/AwakeningDevo](https://tinyurl.com/AwakeningDevo)  
to join the plan on the Bible App.

- DAY 1 | January 6  
*Romans 12:11-12*
- DAY 2 | January 7  
*Matthew 6:16*
- DAY 3 | January 8  
*Galatians 5:1*
- DAY 4 | January 9  
*1 Corinthians 6:19*
- DAY 5 | January 10  
*Ephesians 2:10*
- DAY 6 | January 11  
*Luke 4:42*
- DAY 7 | January 12  
*John 10:10*
- DAY 8 | January 13  
*Matthew 16:24*
- DAY 9 | January 14  
*Ephesians 5:18*
- DAY 10 | January 15  
*Psalms 100*
- DAY 11 | January 16  
*Ephesians 2:8-9*

- DAY 12 | January 17  
*1 John 4:19*
- DAY 13 | January 18  
*Matthew 6:9-13*
- DAY 14 | January 19  
*Matthew 6:33*
- DAY 15 | January 20  
*Matthew 6:3-4*  
*Matthew 6:6*  
*Matthew 6:17-18*
- DAY 16 | January 21  
*Luke 4:42*
- DAY 17 | January 22  
*Romans 8:1*
- DAY 18 | January 23  
*John 16:23-24*
- DAY 19 | January 24  
*John 15:7*
- DAY 20 | January 25  
*1 Corinthians 10:31*
- DAY 21 | January 26  
*Romans 12:11*



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