

Maranatha Prayer & Fasting Guide

"More than any other discipline, FASTING reveals the things that control us."
Richard Foster

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“Fasting is the willful decision to take action.” Pr. Mike Haseltine

Fasting:

Hebrew: צָוַם **tsúwm**, *tsoom*; a prim. root; to cover over (the mouth), i.e. to fast:— x at all, fast.

Greek: νηστεύω **nēsteúō**, *nace-tyoo´-o*; to abstain from food (relig.):— fast.

Primary Purpose for Fasting: Isaiah 58:1-12

Other Purposes for Fasting:

- #1. A Processing Discipline (Such as grieving, sadness, transitions): 1 Chronicles 10:11-12, Esther 4:1-3
- #2. Commemoration for what God has done: Zechariah 8:19; Esther 9:29-31
- #3. Repenting of and Grieving for disobedience against the LORD (For yourself or another): Judges 20:26-28; Daniel 9:1-10; 2 Samuel 1:11; Joel 2:12
- #4. Expressing Humility: Leviticus 16:29-31
- #5. Seeking Guidance: Esther 4:16; Acts 13:1-3; Matthew 4:1-3a; Acts 14:21-25
- #6. Spiritual Warfare/Deliverance from Bondage: Daniel chapter 9, 10:1-16; Mark 9:24-29; Luke 4:1-13; Ps. 91:11-13; Mark 9:14-29; Isaiah 58:6
- #7. To petition God for revival and special anointing of the Holy Spirit: Joel 1:13-14; 2:12-15; 2:28-31

Worship: Luke 2:37

³⁶ *There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷ and then had been a widow for eighty-four years. ^[a] She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. ³⁸ Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.*

Fasting: A heart motivated action, not just denying oneself a pleasure.

How:

Matthew 6:5-6, 16-18; Mark 2:18-20

⁵ *“And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. ⁶ But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.”*

Matthew 6:16-18

¹⁶ *“When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. ¹⁷ But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, ¹⁸ so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.*

Mark 2:18-20

¹⁸ *Now John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting. Some people came and asked Jesus, “How is it that John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees are fasting, but yours are not?” ¹⁹ Jesus answered, “How can the guests of the bridegroom fast while he is with them? They cannot, so long as they have him with them. ²⁰ But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them, and on that day they will fast.*

“Fasting unclutters us & magnifies Him.” Pr. Orleen Haseltine

Unless it is a publicly declared fast e.g. Jehoshaphat 2 Chron. 20:3

- Beginner Drill—Partial (24 hrs.) from noon to noon with juices and broths at first, then water.
Weekly basis for about two to three weeks.
- Drill #1—24 hrs. with water only. (two meals)
After much success, go 36 hours (three meals)
- Drill #2—After much continued success, now its time to talk to God about whether He would like you to go longer.

Types of Fasting: (Consult your physician first before fasting.)

The Normal Fast: To go without food (water only) for a definite time period. (Acts 27:33; Matthew 4:2)

The Absolute Fast: To go without all food and water for a short time period. (Ezra 10:6; Esther 4:16; Acts 9:9)

The Partial Fast: To omit one meal a day or to omit certain foods for a determined time period. (Daniel 1:12-10:3; Matt. 3:4; Luke 1:15)

The Rotational Fast: To eat food from one food group for a determined period of time.

“Fasting is a willful decision to get God’s attention.” Pr. Mike Haseltine

Putting It Into Practice:

Create your fasting plan.

Reason(s). Length. Type. Goals. Extra rest. Prepping days. The longer your fast, the more prepping you will need.

Do you have health risks?

Heart issues, health risks, eating disorders? You will need to choose another fast than from food.

Understand a personal medical emergency will stop the fast.

Drink water, drink water, drink water.

Two days prior, during, and one day after. At least eight 8oz. glasses.

Prepare your body prior to fasting.

Eat lighter meals 48 hours before you begin. Increase liquids.

Your body will respond: Bad breath, tiredness, headaches.

This means your body is responding to no food in its system. And this is good for an organized period of time.

Dr. Bill Bright & Dr. Julio C. Ruibal list in three days the headaches will stop, hunger will stop in five.

Fasting is a discipline.

Expect to feel like not following through. Stay committed to your original fasting plan. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-17

Prepare yourself spiritually.

Repentance. Forgiveness. Humility.

Keep in mind the importance of ingesting God’s Word during the fast.

Spend extra time reading and meditating on His word. Matthew 4:4; Deut. 8:3

Follow a Prayer schedule.

Plan a regular time of day for extra prayer during the fast.

Keep a journal.

Why am I fasting? What am I expecting God to do? What scriptures am I reading? What is being said to me during my devotions?

Completing the fast.

Keep your diet light and filled with fresh fruit and vegetables for 48 hours after you have ended your fast. Your body needs to be eased back into regular eating. Drink liquids.

Be prepared for warfare before, during, and especially after your fast.

No panicking. Expect interference in the form of schedule changes, irritants, emotional swings. Personally, I have found it best to not respond to any of it. Write your feelings or frustrations or whatever in your journal. Within seven days if it is still an issue, create a plan to resolve it. Keep alert 24 hours after your fast.

Expect results. Isaiah 58:6

“Prayer creates a portal for the supernatural to reach the physical. Fasting magnifies this prayer.” Pr. Orleen Haseltine

Organizing my fast:

Why am I fasting: _____

What am I expecting God to do: _____

What Fast have I chosen to do: _____

Date I will do it: _____

What results have I seen (revisit this question once a week for four weeks after you are done fasting):

Week #1: _____

Week #2: _____

Week #3: _____

Week #4: _____

Results:

- Reveals what controls us: Ps 35:13.
- Reminds us who sustains us: Matthew 4:4; Deuteronomy 8:3.
- Helps us keep our balance in life: 1 Corinthians 6:11-13, 9:25-27.

“Fasting is the willful decision to show God you’re serious.” Pr. Mike Haseltine

The Benefits of Fasting:

- Fasting increases our spiritual authority
- Fasting gives new and fresh Biblical and spiritual insights
- Fasting gives new direction for ministry
- Fasting confirms our ministry
- Fasting increases our desire to pray and spend quality time with God
- Fasting brings victory over the enemy's stronghold in our life and family
- Fasting affirms our personal destiny, purpose and mission
- Fasting increases awareness of God's presence in our lives
- Fasting gives assurance of divine intervention and protection
- Fasting releases new power for spiritual warfare
- Fasting provides answered prayers and restoration of our past
- Fasting renews commitment to the Great Commission and the Great Commandment
- Fasting conquers the enemy's grip on blocking our divine healing
- Fasting brings powerful renewal and revival to our land!
- Fasting gives increased love and concern for people.

9 Biblical Models for Fasting

(Adapted from Dr. Elmer Towns “*Fasting For Spiritual Breakthrough*”)

The Disciple's Fast

Spiritual warfare to break addiction and strongholds

- **Purpose:** "To loose the bonds of wickedness." Isaiah 58:6 --- to free others and ourselves from strongholds (addictions to sin).
- **Key Verse:** "However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting. " Matthew 17:21
- **Background:** Jesus was teaching His disciples that they could have performed the exorcism of the demonic boy if they had been willing to undergo the discipline of fasting.

The Ezra Fast

Protection for our friends and families

- **Purpose:** "To undo the heavy burdens" Isaiah 58:6 --- to solve problems by inviting the Holy Spirit to lift our load and overcoming barriers that keep us and our loved ones from walking joyfully with the Lord.
- **Key Verse:** "So we fasted and entreated our God for this, and He answered our prayer" Ezra 8:23
- **Background:** Ezra the priest was charged with restoring the Law of Moses among the Jews as they rebuilt the city of Jerusalem by permission of the King of Persia where God's people had been held captive. Despite this permission, Israel's enemies opposed them. Instead of asking the King of Persia to protect them, Ezra fasted and prayed for an answer.

The Samuel Fast

Repentance and Forgiveness, Revival for America!

- **Purpose:** "To let the oppressed (physically and spiritually) go free" Isaiah 58:6 --- for revival and soul-winning, to identify with people everywhere enslaved literally or by sin and to pray to be used of God to bring people to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.
- **Key Verse:** "so they gathered together at Mizpah, drew water, and poured it out before the Lord. And they fasted that day, and said there, 'We have sinned against the Lord. "' I Sam. 7:6
- **Background:** Samuel led God's people in a fast to celebrate the return of the Ark of the Covenant from its captivity by the Philistines, and to pray that Israel might be delivered from the sin that allowed the Ark to be captured in the first place.

"Declare a holy fast; call a sacred assembly. Summon the elders and all who live in the land to the house of the Lord your God and cry out to the Lord."

Joel 2:15

The John the Baptist Fast

Empowered to be a greater witness

- **Purpose:** That 'your righteousness shall go before you' Isaiah. 58:8 --- that our testimonies and influence for Jesus will be enhanced before others.
- **Key Verse:** "He shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine or strong drink. " Luke 1:15 KJV
- **Background:** Because John the Baptist was the forerunner of Jesus, he took the 'Nazirite' vow that required him to 'fast' from or avoid wine and strong drink. This was part of John's purposefully adopted lifestyle that designated him as one set apart for a special mission.

The Elijah Fast

Victory over emotional problems

- Purpose: "To break every yoke" Isaiah 58:6 --conquering the mental and emotional problems that would control our lives, and returning the control to the Lord.
- Key Verse: "He went a day's journey into the wilderness ... He arose and ate and drank; and He went in the strength of that food for forty days and forty nights. " I Kings 19:4,8
- Background: Although the Word does not call this a formal 'fast,' Elijah deliberately went without food when he fled from Queen Jezebel's threat to kill him. After this self-imposed deprivation, God sent an angel to minister to Elijah in the wilderness.

The Widow's Fast

Compassion and love for people

- Purpose: "To share our bread with the hungry and to care for the poor" Isaiah 58:7 --- to meet the humanitarian needs of others.
- Key Verse: "The jar of flour was not used up and the jug of oil did not run dry, in keeping with the Word of the Lord spoken by Elijah" I Kings 17:16 NIV
- Background: God sent the prophet Elijah to a poor, starving widow --ironically so she could provide food for him. Just as Elijah's presence resulted in food for the widow of Zarephath, so presenting ourselves before God in prayer and fasting can relieve hunger today.

The Saint Paul Fast

Answers for direction in our lives

- **Purpose:** To allow God's "light to break forth like the morning" Isaiah. 58:8 --- bringing clearer perspective and insight as we make crucial decisions.
- **Key Verse:** "And he (Saul, or Paul) was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank. " Acts 9:9
- **Background:** Saul of Tarsus (Paul) was struck blind by the Lord in the act persecuting Christians. He not only was without sight, but he had no clue what direction his life was to take. After going without food and praying for three days, the Christian Ananias visited Paul, and both his eyesight and vision of the future were restored.

The Daniel Fast

Physical Healing and good health

- **Purpose:** "So thine health shall spring forth." Isaiah. 58:8 KJV --- to gain a healthier life or for healing.
- **Key Verse:** "Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank. " Daniel 1:8
- **Background:** Daniel and his three Hebrew captives demonstrated in Babylonian captivity that keeping themselves from pagan foods God had guided them not to eat made them healthier than the others in the king's court.

The Esther Fast

God's intervention for a major circumstance

- **Purpose:** That 'the glory of the Lord' will protect us from the evil one - Isaiah 58:8
- **Key Verse:** "Fast for me ... and my maids and I will fast ... and / will go to the King ... and she found favor in his sight." Esther 4:16;5:2
- **Background:** Queen Esther, a Jewess in a pagan court, risked her life to save her people from threatened destruction by Ahasuerus (Xerxes) king of Persia. Prior to appearing before the king to petition him to save the Jews, Esther, her attendants and her cousin Mordecai all fasted to appeal to God for His protection.

Outline adapted from "*Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home*" by Richard Foster.

Research sources: Hayford's Bible Handbook, J.W. Hayford. Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Commentary, E.D. Radmacher. Women's Study Bible; Dr. Elmer Towns "*Fasting For Spiritual Breakthrough*"