

Prayer & Fasting

Although I have not lead us specifically during our 40 Days of Breakthrough Prayer to fast, you might want to consider choosing to fast during this season. I'm writing this article in hopes that it will give you a better understanding of Biblical concept of fasting.

There are a variety of fasts. Most often fasting includes going without food for some time and of some kind, in order to pray and deepen your relationship with the Lord. Daniel did a fast in which he refused to eat the kings food and ate just fruits and vegetables. Some might abstain from chocolate, or not watch TV and use the time to focus on the Lord. Although the heart of fasting is more than going without food. Fasting should be done in connection with the

- Confession of sins (Neh 9:1-2; Ps 35:13; Isa 58:3, 5; Dan 9:2-20; 10:2-3; Jonah 3:5; Acts 9:9)
- Laying some special petition before the Lord, sometimes out of anguish, danger, or desperation (Exod 24:18; Judg 20:26; 2Sam 1:12; 2 Chronicles 20:3; Ezra 8:21-23; Esth 4:16; Matt 4:1-2; Acts 13:1-3; 14:23).
- Reading of the scripture (Jer 36:6)
- Prayer (Dan 9:3; Matt 17:21)

No matter the specific reason of a fast, one aspect that all fasts should have in common is humility before God.

- God is not impressed with outward expression of piety.
- God is not impressed with fasting when you have un-dealt with issues with others.
- God is not impressed with our fasting when we don't control our conversation.

What He is moved by, are people who humble themselves, pray and fast in an all out effort to draw near to Him. God is impressed with a heart that is willing to pursue Him at all costs, even the neglect of sustenance. Fasting is not a way to engender God's favor so that He will do something for you. Rather, fasting is an expression of our faith in Him, understanding that all good things come from the Father in Heaven, including hope, joy, love, peace, freedom and BREAKTHROUGH for our lives and those we are praying and fasting for.

Set aside for His purpose,

Pastor Scott

Should you decide to include the powerful discipline of fasting during these 40 days, I've included the following list of different kinds of fasts. These each represent different focuses depending on your particular need for breakthrough. As you seek the Lord, He will direct you.

THE DISCIPLE'S FAST – *...this kind only comes out by prayer and fasting. Matthew 17:21*

Jesus delivered a boy from a demon, which the disciples could not loose. He clarified there are times freedom won't come, apart from prayer and fasting. If you yearn to be set free from besetting sins that have chronically plagued, haunted, and tormented you then, be free in Jesus name, as you embrace this fast.

THE EZRA FAST - *So we fasted and petitioned our God about this, and he answered our prayer, Ezra 8:23*

The challenges were mountainous and filled with difficulty. Ezra faced problems to which God brought solutions. If you are buckled over from problems and desire for God to lift heavy burdens off of you, then march into this fast.

THE ELIJAH FAST - *Strengthened by that food, he traveled forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God. 1 Kings 19:8*

Elijah was a blues traveler as he fled from the vengeful threats of Jezebel. Though mightily victorious now he wanted to die. We ALL face emotional depletion, despondency, and degrees of depression at times in our life. Lift yourself up, ask someone to partner with you and saddle up your horses to ride this fast through to breakthrough!

THE NEHEMIAH FAST - *When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. for some days I mourned , fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven Nehemiah 1:4*

Nehemiah loved his fellow Jews. They were displaced from their homeland. Their distress was his distress. He mourned for them. He also took the initiative to do the best thing for them he could do...he went before God on THEIR BEHALF in fasting and prayer! Are loved ones of yours suffering? Fast and pray.

THE DANIEL FAST - *But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the king's food and wine..., Daniel 1:8*

Daniel forsook the king's table to feast upon God's provision. God has designed our bodies to benefit from periods of abstinence from food (WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT HEALTHY LIVING by Rex Russell, M.D.) Your body could feel and function better if you implement this fast.

THE PAUL FAST – *Paul was without sight for three days and neither ate nor drank, Acts 9:9*

Paul had a radical conversion on the Damascus Road. He was going one direction and Jesus had in mind for him to go another. You may have it in your mind to go a particular direction, but is that God's mind also? If you are weighing important decisions and need clear insight for directional purposes, "see" your way into this fast.