

# INTRODUCTION TO FASTING

## HOW TO BEGIN FASTING

- (1) Ask God to lead you in your fast. Jesus describes fasting in the context of the Lord's Prayer – Matt. 6:9-15. "When ye fast, be not . . . of a sad countenance . . . but anoint thy head, and wash thy face, that thou appear not unto men to fast." – Matt. 6:16-18
- (2) Private for a personal request
- (3) Joint for a group project
  
- (4) Write out your purpose, plan and length.
  
- (5) Begin with a one day fast, i.e., the (Yom Kippur) Day of Atonement Fast. "On the tenth day of the seventh month of each year, you must go without eating to show sorrow for your sins." – Lev. 16:29, CEV. The Yom Kippur Fast is from sundown to sundown (Jewish day).
  
- (6) Eat a light snack before sundown (English high tea).
  
- (7) Dedicate time for meals to prayer.
  
- (8) Bring Bible, books, notes, etc., (see specific fast).

*The purpose of all worship, including fasting is to change the worshipper in ways that have social and interpersonal impact. We worship not just to gratify ourselves, but also to become empowered to change the world. –Dr. Elmer Towns*

**Satisfaction and self-gratification has a way of stifling spiritual sensitivity.**

### **Deuteronomy 8**

"Make sure that when you eat and are satisfied, build pleasant houses and settle in, see your herds and flocks flourish and more and more money come in, watch your standard of living going up and up-make sure you don't become so full of yourself and your things that you forget God, your God..

"No, this is the kind of fasting I want: Free those who are wrongly imprisoned: lighten the burden of those who work for you. Let the oppressed go free, and remove the chains that bind people. Share your food with the hungry, and give shelter to the homeless. Give clothes to those who need them, and do not hide from relatives who need your help. Then your salvation will come like the dawn and your wounds will quickly heal. Your godliness will lead you forward, and the glory of the Lord will protect you from behind. Isaiah 58:6-7

According to Isaiah God promotes fasting that:

1. Loosen bonds (usually of sin)
2. Lighten burdens
3. Let's oppressed to free
4. Break chains (addictions etc.)
5. Serve the needs of others (social justice)
6. Search for light (wisdom/discernment)
7. Promote Health (Physical, Emotional, Spiritual)
8. Serve as spiritual witness to others
9. Spiritual protection.

- |  |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
| 1. The Disciple's Fast: To Break Sin's Addiction           | <b>Matt 17:21</b>       |
| 2. The Ezra Fast: To Solve a Problem                       | <b>Ezra 8:23</b>        |
| 3. The Samuel Fast: For Revival and Soul winning           | <b>1 Sam 7:6</b>        |
| 4. The Elijah Fast: To Break Depression and Discouragement | <b>1 Kings 19:4;8</b>   |
| 5. The Widow's Fast: To Minister to the Needy              | <b>1 Kings 17:16</b>    |
| 6. The Saint Paul's Fast: For Wisdom and Decision-Making   | <b>Acts 9:9</b>         |
| 7. The Daniel Fast: For Physical Health                    | <b>Dan 1:8</b>          |
| 8. The John the Baptist Fast: For Spiritual Testimony      | <b>Luke 1:15</b>        |
| 9. The Esther Fast: For Spiritual Protection               | <b>Esther 4:16; 5:2</b> |

## **KINDS OF FASTS**

1. Normal fast is going without solid food for a certain period of time, drinking only liquid (water and/or juice).
2. Absolute fast, no water or food at all. Should be short.
3. Partial/Daniel Fast fast, omitting certain foods on a schedule of limited eating, i.e., only one meal a day, only vegetables, etc.
4. The Wesley fast is eating only bread (whole grain) and water.
5. Rotation fast is eating or omitting certain families of food for a designated time. One family of food is eaten every day. The Mayo Clinic fast is eating only one food group a day, omitting the other food groups, used as medical research to determine reaction (allergies) to a particular food group.
6. Supernatural-40 days without food and water. Moses

## **THE SAMUEL FAST**

### **For Revival and Soul Winning**

**Purpose:** "To let the oppressed (physically and spiritually) go free" Isa 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 out of the kingdom of darkness and into God's marvelous light.

**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'"  
**(1 Samuel 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.

**Further Study:** Read 1 Samuel 7:1-14

## **THE JOHN THE BAPTIST FAST**

### **For Spiritual Testimony**

**Purpose:** That "your righteousness shall go before you" (Isa 58:8)-that our testimonies and influence for Jesus will be enhanced before others.

**Key verse:** "...he will be great in the eyes of the Lord. He must never touch wine or other alcoholic drinks. He will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before his birth. And he will turn many Israelites to the Lord their God. He will be a man with the spirit and power of Elijah. He will prepare the people for the coming of the Lord. He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and he will cause those who are rebellious to accept the wisdom of the Godly."  
**(Luke 1:15-17)**

**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 a part of John's purposefully adopted lifestyle that designated him as one set apart for a special mission.

**Further Study:** Read about the life and ministry of John the Baptist

**Purpose:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Fast:** What you will withhold \_\_\_\_\_

**Begin:** Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

**End:** Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

**Vow:** I believe God is the only answer to my request and that prayer without fasting is not enough to get an answer to my need. Therefore, by faith I am fasting because I need God to work in this matter.

**Bible Basis:** My Bible promise \_\_\_\_\_

**Resources:** What I need during this fast \_\_\_\_\_

God being my strength and grace being my basis, I commit myself to the above fast.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date