

# GOD'S PLAN FOR THE IMPOSSIBLE

## Seeking God Message Series Week 3

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January 12, 2020

### 1. What is the biblical basis for fasting?

A. God's people in the Old Testament fasted.

Four examples:

- Jehoshaphat proclaimed a fast throughout all of Judah to seek help from the Lord. (2 Chronicles 20:1-4)
- David fasted when he found out about the death of Saul and Jonathan. (2 Samuel 1:11-12)
- Ezra proclaimed a fast to seek from God a safe journey to Jerusalem. (Ezra 8:21-23)
- Nehemiah fasted for the Jewish people who were in great trouble and shame. (Nehemiah 1:1-4)

B. Jesus fasted. (Matthew 4:1-2)

C. Jesus expected His followers to fast. (Matthew 6:16-18; Mark 2:18-20)

D. The early Church fasted and prayed. (Acts 13:2-3, 14:23)

## 2. Why should we fast?

- A. Fasting is a spiritual discipline that reminds us of the sufficiency of God.

Biblical basis for finding our sufficiency in God:

1. God taught the Israelites in the wilderness they could not live on bread alone. (Deuteronomy 8:3)
  
2. Jeremiah declared, “The Lord is my portion.” (Lamentations 3:21-26)
  
3. Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger.” (John 6:31-35)

Trusting in the sufficiency of God is critical for gaining victory over temptation and persevering through trials, grief, and suffering.

B. Fasting is God's method to accomplish His purposes in the midst of impossible situations. (2 Chronicles 20:1-29; Isaiah 58:6; 2 Corinthians 10:3-5)

Four observations from Jehoshaphat:

- Jehoshaphat faced a situation that was humanly impossible to resolve. (2 Chronicles 20:1-2)
- Jehoshaphat called others to join him in prayer and fasting. (2 Chronicles 20:3-4)
- Jehoshaphat kept his eyes on God. (2 Chronicles 20:12)
- Jehoshaphat trusted the battle was the Lord's. (2 Chronicles 20:15)

"Biblically, it seems that fasting is situationally birthed. Circumstances prompt it...It is a desperate cry for patience and help, guidance and healing. Fasting intensifies the clarity of your plea. It acknowledges our weakness and reliance on God's strength as we wait for him to intervene.

Fasting is harnessing the pain that'll inevitably come as we try to obey God in a fallen world, and leveraging the opportunity to hide in Christ, run to him for strength, and throw ourselves at the foot of his throne."

David Kakish, "Fasting Isn't for the Spiritual Elite. It's for the Hurting."  
*The Gospel Coalition*, Jan. 2020, Path: [thegospelcoalition.org](http://thegospelcoalition.org).

### 3. Tips on fasting:

- A. Pray—seek God’s direction for a fast.
- B. Set aside time for scripture, prayer, worship, reading, journaling, etc.
- C. Walk by faith, not feelings.
- D. It’s OK to ask others to join you in a fast.
- E. Stay surrendered—it’s not a way to manipulate God.  
(Matthew 26:39)

For those God is calling to fast, let’s do it together from Friday, January 17 to Thursday, January 23, 2020.

There will be a Prayer Gathering on Thursday, January 23, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. in the Chapel.

### Resource Suggestions:

1. Read *The Pursuit of God* by A. W. Tozer (\$6)
2. Read *Knowing God* by J. I. Packer (\$10)
3. Read *When I Don’t Desire God* by John Piper (\$12)
4. Read *Experiencing God* by Henry Blackaby (\$8)
5. Read *Prayer: Does it Make a Difference?* by Phillip Yancey