

A Simple Guide to Biblical Fasting

What Is Biblical fasting?

- Voluntarily giving up food (and sometimes drink) for a set amount of time.
- It is done to humble yourself, seek God more deeply, depend fully on Him, and release Heaven on Earth!
- Not a diet or a hunger strike — it's a spiritual discipline paired with prayer

A dive into the Bible:

12 Revelations and Lessons from Jesus's fast in Matthew 4

1. Jesus heard just these words from his Father: *"This is my son, whom I love, with him I am well pleased."*
2. Jesus didn't earn his acceptance and love through a fast - he already had it before!
3. Jesus was fully accepted and loved, yet he chose to fast.
4. Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit into a fast.
5. Jesus removed all distractions (the desert) to be with the Father (conversations with the Father/prayer).
6. Jesus stayed close to the Word of God through his fast.
7. Jesus made the Word of God His weapon of warfare.
8. Jesus made the Word of God His daily food.
9. Jesus did not test God.
10. Jesus did not exalt Himself .
11. Jesus worshipped and chose to serve God only.
12. Jesus enjoyed the presence of angels in His fast.

There are "REWARDS" from Heaven in every season of fasting.

Matthew 6:17–18

"But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, 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."

10 Biblical Purposes for Fasting

1. To strengthen prayer and seek God's guidance
2. To repent and turn from sin
3. To express grief or mourning
4. To humble yourself before God
5. To prepare for ministry or a new season
6. To overcome temptation
7. To intercede for others or the nation
8. To worship and draw closer to God
9. To hear God more clearly
10. Give strength to the Holy Spirit by reigning the flesh

Old Testament Examples & Lessons

- **Moses – Exodus 34:28 (NIV)** *“Moses was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights without eating bread or drinking water...”*

Lesson: God can supernaturally sustain you in extended fasts for His purpose.

- **David – 2 Samuel 12:16 (NIV)** *“David pleaded with God for the child. He fasted and spent the nights lying in sackcloth on the ground.”*

Lesson: Fasting expresses humility and our desperate need for God.

- **Esther – Esther 4:16 (NIV)** *“Go, gather together all the Jews... and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day...”*

Lesson: Corporate fasting has so much power it can bring national deliverance.

- **Daniel – Daniel 10:2-3 (NIV)** *“I, Daniel, mourned for three weeks. I ate no choice food; no meat or wine touched my lips...”*

Lesson: Fasting can open up heaven for spiritual breakthrough and revelation.

New Testament Examples & Lessons

- **Jesus – 40-day water-only fast – Matthew 4:1-2 (NIV)** *“Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness... After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.”*

Lesson: Fasting prepares you to overcome temptation and war more effectively against deceptive demons.

- **Jesus’ teaching on fasting - Matthew 6:16-18 (NIV)** *“When you fast, do not look somber... put oil on your head and wash your face... your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.”*

Lesson: Fasting is not to show others your holiness, nor to earn God's approval.

- **Early church – fasting for direction & commissioning - Acts 13:2-3 (NIV)** *“While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul...’ So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them...”*

Lesson: Fasting helps hear God clearly and release God's will on earth.

Biblical Durations

- 1 day (sunrise to sunset or until evening) – most common
- 3 days – urgent crises (Esther, Paul after Damascus road)
- 7 days – mourning or repentance
- **21 days – seeking revelation (Daniel)**
- 40 days – major preparation (Moses, Elijah, Jesus)

Practical Suggestions

- Stay well hydrated
- Drink electrolytes

- Avoid sugary drinks, a lot of caffeine, or heavy exercise
- Pray every time you feel hungry or at normal meal times — turn hunger into prayer
- Read Scripture, worship, journal what God shows you

Heart preparation tips

- Focus on God, not rules — fasting is about your heart, not perfection.
- Fasting without prayer is just a diet.
- The Holy Spirit is your personal helper, have faith in him.
- The goal is to know Jesus more, not to earn anything.
- Expect spiritual attack, distraction and opposition. Persevere!
- If you make a mistake, ask for forgiveness and start again.

Breaking the Fast Wisely

- Start small: broth, soup, fruit, yogurt
- Eat slowly; avoid large or heavy meals
- Give thanks and reflect on what God did

LETS GET VERY PRACTICAL

Choose what type of fast

1. 21 days - Water/clear liquid only (soup/broth)
2. 21 days - Any liquid/no solid chewable foods (smoothies/protein shakes)
3. 21 days - Daniel's Fast (basically vegetarian)
4. 21 days - Partial/one or two meals a day replaced with water/any liquid.

***If you choose a digital fast, I suggest that you make it supplemental to one of the options above.

Pre-fast check list

- ☐ I have read through this entire document!
- ☐ I have asked Jesus to align my heart with His during this fast.
- ☐ I have decided that I am not doing this for show or to earn God's love. Instead, I am doing this to obey His Word, to know Jesus more deeply, and to release Heaven on Earth.
- ☐ I understand now that seeking Jesus through prayer and His Word is the most important thing that I do during this fast. Therefore, I am committing to praying and reading more than ever, since I will have more time to do so.
- ☐ I am choosing to journal daily and I have one ready!
- ☐ I have decided to stay focused on His grace. I might not do this perfectly, but I will finish well, even through bumps and bruises. **2 Corinthians 12:9-11** *"But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong."*
- ☐ I have decided which type of fast I am doing - Water only? Any Liquid? Daniel's? Partial?
- ☐ I am adding a supplemental social media fast so that I have more time to pray.
- ☐ I have stocked up on what I need, including electrolytes.

- ☐ I have a prayer plan for the entire fast (from my church and/or personally).
- ☐ I have been coupled with a "SOS Fasting Friend"

Name _____ Phone _____

During-fast check list

- ☐ I want a "Word" for the year from the Holy Spirit.
- ☐ I want to hear from Jesus and know Him better.
- ☐ I want accountability from my SOS friend.
- ☐ I want to hold my SOS Friend accountable.
- ☐ I want to saturate my life with prayer.
- ☐ I want to bless Jesus's bride, The Church, my church.
- ☐ I want my city to be blessed.

Post-fast check list

- ☐ I am aware that we will break our fast together as a church on Sunday, January 25th at 6 pm.
- ☐ I won't fall into the sin of overindulgence of food after the 25th.
- ☐ I will be ready to share my Word for the year.
- ☐ I will be ready to share 1 testimony from my fast.
- ☐ I will be ready to share 1 thing I have learned about Jesus through the fast.