

# **SIMPLY STATED, BIBLICAL FASTING IS**

## **REFRAINING FROM FOOD FOR A SPIRITUAL**

### **PURPOSE.**

According to the Bible, there are three duties of every Christian: give, pray and fast. **Biblical fasting** takes a lot of discipline and strength—strength which you can only receive from God. Your private discipline will bring you rewards in Heaven, says **Matthew 6**.

**When you give God your first through fasting, prayer and giving at the beginning of the year, you set the course for the entire year.**

#### **Why should I fast?**

1. Are you in need of healing or a miracle?
2. Do you need the tender touch of God in your life?
3. Is there a dream inside you that only He can make possible?
4. Are you in need of a fresh encounter?
5. Do you desire a deeper, more intimate and powerful relationship with the Lord?
6. Are you ready to have heightened sensitivity to the desires of God?
7. Do you need to break away from bondages that have been holding you hostage?
8. Is there a friend or loved one that needs Salvation?
9. Do you desire to know God's will for your life?

#### **BIBLICAL FASTING FOCUS**

**1 TIMOTHY 2:1-2** *"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty."*

**ROMANS 12:1** *"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, [which is] your reasonable service."*

**MATTHEW 6:33** *"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."*

**ISAIAH 58:6** *"[Is] not this the fast that I have chosen to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?"*

We want to encourage you to target your prayers during the fast. Three specific areas we

will be focusing on together are the lost, leadership, and finances. Our highest priority is to pray for the lost, as well as a spirit of conviction. The Bible instructs us to continually pray for our leaders (1 Timothy 2:1-2). When we lift up our leaders, here at ALT, in the United States and around the world, we can expect God's peace in our lives and in our nation.

Another great promise, from the book of Isaiah, proclaims that the chosen fast will "undo the heavy burdens and let the oppressed go free." We are living in tough economic times and we know that so many people are under a financial burden. As we come together to fast and pray, we believe that your burdens will be lifted and that financial blessings will be released into your life!

We encourage you to seek the Lord in prayer and let your decisions about your biblical fasting come from Him. Ask the Lord to show you areas to target during your time of fasting and prayer. We believe that, as we pray and seek God and give Him our best at the first of the year, He will bless our ENTIRE year (Matthew 6:33)!

**Step 1: Be Specific** Daniel was not vague in his objection to the Babylonian diet. He defined the problem immediately.

1. The king's food was against dietary laws.
2. Daniel and his friends had vowed against wine.
3. The king's food had been offered up to idols/demons.

**Step 2: Fast as a Spiritual Commitment** *The Daniel Fast* involves a spiritual commitment to God. "Daniel proposed in his heart that he would not defile himself" ([Daniel 1:8](#)).

**Step 3: Reflect Inner Desire by Outer Discipline** Many people have an inner desire for better health, but they can't discipline themselves to avoid junk food, and other foods that are not good for their health. The physical health you seek from God may be more than an answer to prayer. Your physical health can be linked to any of the following factors:

1. Your food choices.
2. The level of your spiritual commitment as reflected in constant prayer during the fast.
3. Your time commitment. If you determine to fast for a certain time, keep it. For example, if you determine to fast 10 days, don't stop on Day 9.
4. Your testimony commitment. Your fast is a statement of faith to God that you want Him to heal your body, and faith is foundational to the Daniel Fast.

**Step 4: Pray to Perceive Sin's Role in Poor Health** Notice [James 5:13-16](#):

- Sin is something related to the cause of sickness.
- Lack of health/healing may be the result of spiritual rebellion.
- Lack of health/healing may be due to sin of wrong intake, i.e. drugs, pornography.

- Repentance is linked to health according to James.
- Elders have a role in healing both spiritual and physical health.
- Sick people must desire to be well
- The anointing oil could mean
  1. Medicine for healing,
  2. Symbolic of the Holy Spirit, or
  3. It could be baptism
- Prayer alone may not gain healing, faith is the major factor.
- In Greek there are several words for "sick". James uses "Kanino", which not only includes disease, but also means weak or weary.
- Attitude is important. James said, "are there any among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms."

**Step 5: Fast as a Statement of Faith to Others** Daniel was making a statement of faith when he asked for only vegetables to eat and water to drink, then dared the overseer to compare the appearance of the four sons of Israel with the young men who ate the king's food.

**Step 6: Learn the Effects of the Food You Eat** Why are some foods good for us, and other foods not? What does certain food do to your body? If we really knew, there would likely be some things we would never eat again.

**Step 7: Yield All Results to God** Daniel said, "as you see fit, deal with your servants" ([Dan. 1:13](#)).

**Following your own conscience:** The precise details of your fast are between you and God. In Romans 14, the apostle Paul describes how we should relate in love to one another in the matter of what we eat or choose not to eat. He says, "Each person is free to follow the convictions of his own conscience" (Romans 14, *The Message*). If you fast often, you may need to turn up your fasting another level during this time. If this is your first fast, you may not be able to endure as many restrictions as someone else who fasts frequently. In the future, live a "fasted lifestyle," increasingly accommodating God and not the flesh.

**Restricting television and entertainment.** It will be difficult for you to consecrate yourself if you feed yourself on television and movies during this time.

**Important exceptions:** Anyone with a medical condition related to eating or under the treatment of a physician must consult their doctor. Children, especially small children, will have special needs that must be considered. Under these conditions, find some sacrifice in the area of food that can be made without endangering health. Also, if you have extreme difficulty with the fast, such as impairment of your ability to work at your job, you will have to make adjustments. This is not a failure of will but is wisdom. Seek the Lord and discuss it with other Christians involved in the fast to find alternatives.

# 2010 FASTING CONTRACT

**MY CAUSE OR REASON FOR FASTING:**

- Lost, Conviction
  - Leadership (ALT, USA, World)
  - Finances
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**I WILL FAST:**

**BEGIN DATE** \_\_\_\_\_  
**END DATE** \_\_\_\_\_

**WHO WILL I ASK TO FAST WITH ME, IF ANYONE?**

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**I BELIEVE THAT 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.**

**GOD BEING MY STRENGTH AND GRACE BEING MY BASIS, I COMMIT MYSELF TO THE ABOVE FAST.**

**SIGNED** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE** \_\_\_\_\_