



21 Days of Prayer & Fasting

From the Book of Nehemiah (ESV)

Beginning January 26

Why Prayer & Fasting?

As a church, we are setting aside these 21 days to seek the Lord together through prayer and fasting, asking Him to renew our hearts, strengthen our faith, and rebuild what may be broken in us and among us—just as He did in the days of Nehemiah. Prayer aligns us with God's will, and fasting intensifies that alignment by reminding us that our deepest hunger is not for food, comfort, or distraction, but for God Himself.



John Piper writes in Hunger for God: "**Fasting is the hunger of a homesickness for God.**" Fasting is not about earning God's favor, but about awakening deeper desire for Him. Fasting is not about earning God's favor or proving spiritual strength; it is about creating space for a deeper longing for God to rise within us. When we voluntarily give something up, we are declaring that God is better, more satisfying, and more necessary than what we temporarily lay aside.

You are encouraged to walk through these 21 days individually, but not alone. We are doing this together as a church. God often does His deepest work when His people seek Him together—so we strongly encourage participation within City Groups and Discipleship Groups (Huddles) for prayer, accountability, and encouragement.

Prayer & Worship Night - February 18th at 7PM

As we journey through these 21 days together, we want to fix our eyes on where this season is heading: a powerful time of corporate prayer and worship as a church family. All of this will culminate in a Prayer & Worship Night on Wednesday, February 18th at 7:00pm. Come eager, come expectant, and come ready to pray boldly and worship our King together as we celebrate what God has been stirring in our hearts and among our church.

Fasting Instructions (Biblical & Practical)

Participation in fasting is voluntary and should be guided by wisdom, grace, and health considerations. Throughout Scripture, fasting is consistently connected to abstaining from food, particularly during seasons of repentance, dependence, and renewed devotion.

We encourage the following gradual approach:

Week 1: Fast **one meal**, twice during the week

Week 2: Fast **two meals**, once during the week

Week 3: Fast **one full day** from food

This progression allows space to grow in dependence without unnecessary burden. Fasting is not meant to harm the body, but to humble the heart.

Additional Fasting: Abstaining from Other Distractions

In addition to food fasting, many followers of Jesus choose to abstain from other good but distracting things in order to heighten spiritual attentiveness. These practices are not replacements for food fasting, but helpful additions for those who are able and willing.

You may consider abstaining from:

- Social media or news consumption
- Television or streaming
- Non-essential screen time
- Entertainment or hobbies that easily distract

The goal is not mere abstinence, but attentiveness—using the silence, time, or desire created by fasting to pray, read Scripture, and listen for the Lord’s leading.

As Piper also writes, “***The absence of food can become the occasion for feeding on God.***”

Leader Tools: Shepherding During Prayer & Fasting

City Group and Discipleship Group (Huddle) leaders play a vital role during these 21 days—not by managing outcomes, but by shepherding hearts toward Jesus. Create safe, grace-filled environments where people can share honestly about what fasting and prayer are stirring in them, without fear of comparison or performance.

Encourage fasting together when appropriate—whether that means aligning on the same meal, the same day, or simply praying together during hunger or silence. Gently guide conversations away from *what* people are giving up and toward *what God is revealing*. Close gatherings by praying Scripture from Nehemiah, asking God to rebuild faith, unity, and obedience among us.

Fasting FAQ

Is fasting required to participate?

No. Fasting is voluntary and should be approached with freedom, not pressure or guilt.

Why does fasting focus on food?

Because throughout Scripture, fasting is consistently connected to abstaining from food, especially in seasons of prayer, repentance, and dependence on God. Fasting from food helps create a longing of response in us physically which points us to something that satisfies us much greater spiritually.

What if I have health limitations?

If fasting from food is not wise for you, consider abstaining from other distractions and using that time to seek the Lord.

Should I fast every day for 21 days?

No. We encourage a gradual approach rather than a continuous fast.

What should I do during the time I would normally eat?

Pray, read Scripture, worship, journal, or sit quietly before the Lord, allowing physical hunger to point you toward spiritual hunger.

Can I fast more than what's suggested?

Yes, but wisdom and humility are essential—consider your health, responsibilities, and motivations, and avoid drawing attention to yourself.

How to Use the Daily Guide

Each day includes:

- A key verse from Nehemiah (ESV)
- A short devotional reflection
- A one-sentence prayer focus

We encourage you to read slowly, pray honestly, and discuss what God is revealing within your City Group or Discipleship Group (Huddle).

Additional Resource

If you want to learn more about fasting, we strongly recommend the book *A Hunger for God: Desiring God through Fasting and Prayer* By John Piper
<https://www.amazon.com/Hunger-God-Redesign-Desiring-through/dp/1433537265>

Day 1 – January 26

Nehemiah 1:4

“As soon as I heard these words I sat down and wept and mourned for days, and I continued fasting and praying before the God of heaven.”

Devo: Nehemiah allows the brokenness of God’s people to move him deeply before he ever attempts to fix anything, teaching us that spiritual renewal begins with a heart that feels what God feels and responds with prayerful dependence rather than hurried action.

Prayer: Ask God to soften your heart, give you holy concern for what grieves Him, and teach you to respond through prayer and fasting.

Day 2 – January 27

Nehemiah 1:5

“And I said, ‘O LORD God of heaven, the great and awesome God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments.’”

Devo: Nehemiah begins his prayer by anchoring himself in the character of God, reminding us that worship reorients our perspective and fuels confidence before we ever present our requests.

Prayer: Praise God today for His greatness, faithfulness, and steadfast love, declaring who He is before asking for what you need.

Day 3 – January 28

Nehemiah 1:6

“Let your ear be attentive and your eyes open, to hear the prayer of your servant that I now pray before you day and night for the people of Israel your servants, confessing the sins of the people of Israel, which we have sinned against you.”

Devo: Nehemiah models humility by confessing sin personally and corporately, showing us that honest repentance clears the way for restored relationship and renewed purpose.

Prayer: Confess personal sin and ask God to bring repentance and healing to your church and community.

Day 4 – January 29

Nehemiah 1:8–9

“Remember the word that you commanded your servant Moses, saying, ‘If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the peoples, but if you return to me and keep my commandments and do them... I will gather them.’”

Devo: God's promises assure us that repentance is never wasted, because returning to Him always leads to restoration no matter how far things have fallen.

Prayer: Turn your heart fully back to God and trust Him to restore what has been broken.

Day 5 – January 30

Nehemiah 1:11

“O Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of your servant... and give success to your servant today, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man.”

Devo: Nehemiah boldly asks God for favor, teaching us that faith-filled prayer trusts God to work through real people and real situations for His purposes.

Prayer: Ask God for favor, wisdom, and open doors as you seek to follow His will.

Day 6 – January 31

Nehemiah 2:4

“Then the king said to me, ‘What are you requesting?’ So I prayed to the God of heaven.”

Devo: Nehemiah's quick prayer reveals a life shaped by continual dependence, reminding us that prayer is not only scheduled but instinctive in everyday moments.

Prayer: Ask God to help you remain prayerful and dependent in every decision today.

Day 7 – February 1

Nehemiah 2:8

“And the king granted me what I asked, for the good hand of my God was upon me.”

Devo: Nehemiah clearly recognizes God's hand in his success, reminding us to attribute answered prayer to God's grace rather than our own ability.

Prayer: Thank God specifically for the ways He has guided, provided, and shown favor in your life.

Day 8 – February 2

Nehemiah 2:12

“And I arose in the night, I and a few men with me. And I told no one what my God had put into my heart to do for Jerusalem.”

Devo: Nehemiah's restraint shows wisdom, teaching us that God often works in quiet preparation before public action.

Prayer: Ask God for patience and discernment to know when to wait and when to speak.

Day 9 – February 3

Nehemiah 2:18

“And they said, ‘Let us rise up and build.’ So they strengthened their hands for the good work.”

Devo: God's work is accomplished through unified people who respond together in faith and obedience. They were ready to get to work together on something much bigger than themselves.

Prayer: Pray for unity, shared vision, and willing hearts within your church.

Day 10 – February 4

Nehemiah 4:9

“And we prayed to our God and set a guard as a protection against them day and night.”

Devo: Nehemiah teaches us that trusting God does not eliminate responsibility, but calls us to pray faithfully while remaining alert and obedient. It teaches us to continue to work for God even amidst opposition.

Prayer: Ask God to help you combine faith-filled prayer with wise action. Pray that God will help you stay faithful even when you face obstacles in your walk with Christ.

Day 11 – February 5

Nehemiah 4:14

“Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your homes.”

Devo: Courage grows when God's greatness fills our vision more than the threats before us.

Prayer: Ask God to strengthen your faith and help you stand firm for those He has entrusted to you.

Day 12 – February 6

Nehemiah 6:3

“And I sent messengers to them, saying, ‘I am doing a great work and I cannot come down.’”

Devo: Nehemiah’s resolve reminds us that faithfulness often requires saying no to distractions that pull us away from God’s calling. Distractions will always be there. The question is will we allow them to pull us away from God’s work and His mission.

Prayer: Ask God for focus and perseverance to finish the work He has given you.

Day 13 – February 7

Nehemiah 6:9

“For they all wanted to frighten us... But now, O God, strengthen my hands.”

Devo: In the face of opposition, Nehemiah turns immediately to God, showing us that divine strength sustains faithful obedience. There is a real enemy at work. That is why it’s so important to put on the full armor of God (Ephesian 6).

Prayer: Ask God to strengthen you where you feel weary or opposed. Ask Him to fill you with His Spirit.

Day 14 – February 8

Nehemiah 6:16

“And when all our enemies heard of it... they perceived that this work had been accomplished with the help of our God.”

Devo: When God completes His work, even skeptics are forced to recognize His power and presence. When God does the work, He gets the glory!

Prayer: Pray that God’s work in and through your life would clearly bring Him glory.

Day 15 – February 9

Nehemiah 8:1

“And all the people gathered as one man into the square... and they told Ezra the scribe to bring the Book of the Law of Moses.”

Devo: Spiritual renewal is sustained by a hunger for God’s Word, which shapes hearts and restores obedience. The Word of God must be central to our lives and our church.

Prayer: Ask God to deepen your love for Scripture and your desire to obey it.

Day 16 – February 10

Nehemiah 8:6

“And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God, and all the people answered, ‘Amen, Amen,’ lifting up their hands.”

Devo: Reverent worship flows naturally from encountering God through His Word. They lifted their hands to give praise to the LORD. Our posture of worship matters.

Prayer: Commit to worshiping God today with humility, joy, and reverence.

Day 17 – February 11

Nehemiah 8:10

“Do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.”

Devo: God’s joy provides deep spiritual strength that sustains us beyond circumstances. Joy is something that can be experienced regardless of our situation. It’s the buoyancy of the soul.

Prayer: Ask God to fill you with His joy and renew your strength in Him.

Day 18 – February 12

Nehemiah 9:2–3

“And the Israelites... stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their fathers.”

Devo: Extended confession and worship realign God’s people with His faithfulness and purposes.

Prayer: Spend time remembering God’s faithfulness and responding with repentance and worship.

Day 19 – February 13

Nehemiah 9:17

“But you are a God ready to forgive, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.”

Devo: God’s mercy remains constant even when His people fail, offering hope and restoration through grace. God is always ready to forgive - to cast our sin as far as the east is from the west, when you repent and turn back to Him. He is a God of rebuilding and restoration.

Prayer: Thank God for His patience, mercy, and steadfast love.

Day 20 – February 14

Nehemiah 10:39

“We will not neglect the house of our God.”

Devo: Renewal leads to renewed commitment, as grateful hearts respond to God with faithful obedience. Neglecting God’s house and His people lead to disconnection and hindered fellowship with God and others.

Prayer: Ask God to help you live faithfully committed to His church and His work.

Day 21 – February 15

Nehemiah 12:43

“And they offered great sacrifices that day and rejoiced, for God had made them rejoice with great joy.”

Devo: The rebuilding of God’s people culminates in joyful worship that overflows beyond the walls of the city.

Prayer: Celebrate what God has done and trust Him with joyful expectation for what lies ahead.

“Our God will fight for us.” — Nehemiah 4:20 (ESV)

Reminder: Prayer & Worship Night on Wednesday, February 18th at 7:00pm.

