



PRAY & FASTING GUIDELINES

Fasting Guidelines:

These guidelines are to be used as a guide only. Please consult your Doctor (GP) before participating in a fast if you have been diagnosed with an illness or are taking any prescribed medication.

What is Fasting?

As Christians, fasting means to abstain from physical nourishment (food). We do this in order to concentrate on the Lord or to obtain a response to a particular matter. Biblical fasting involves confession of sins, weeping and mourning in the process of prayer whilst making our request known onto God. In Matthew 6:16-18, Jesus himself gives clear instructions to believers regarding fasting. In Matthew 4:2, we see that Jesus, Himself, fasted. According to 1 Corinthians 6:4-6, fasting must be part of the lifestyle of practicing Christians.

Why should we fast?

In Leviticus 16:29-30, we learn that fasting was originated by God as a commandment for man. Fasting was to be a designated time when man would not work but seek God with a repentant heart and ask for forgiveness for his/her sins. It was only after God granted him/her forgiveness then he/she could go to God with a personal request.

How to fast?

It is very important to ensure that when you fast that God is your focus. We will start fasting from Sunrise to Sunset. A guide for prayer times throughout your fast could be 6am, 10.30am, 1.30pm, and 4.30pm. Remember the bible instructs us that we should pray without ceasing. Please keep hydrated by drinking water during these days of fasting.

If Feeling Sick

* If you feel sick throughout the fasting days drink herbal teas or if necessary stop the fast and consult your GP.

Alongside the days of fasting there is a scripture program, if you so wish, can be divided into the following parts:

Prayer, confessions of sins – Nehemiah 9:1-3 and Daniel 9:3

Prayer, making your request/s to God – 2 Chronicles 20:2-3, Psalms 35:13, Joel 2:12, Matthew 17:21 and Luke 2:37

Separation from worldly activities (This does not include your work or domestic responsibilities required of you) – Isaiah 58:3, Joel 1:14 and Joel 2:15.

It is appreciated that not everyone will be able to abstain from food because of health/other personal reasons. However, there are alternatives which you can commit to as a part of your fast for example a media fast, refusal to watch TV, Videos, DVDS to listen to the radio or to use the internet (unless work related).

Remember fasting takes determination. Daniel 1:8 and Daniel 9:3

The Physical Results of Fasting:

Your body will respond to the fact that you are eating less in terms of salt, sugar, carbohydrates and proteins. You are likely to feel weak, hungry nauseous and irritable.

You may find it difficult to absorb information mentally, this is all part of the internal processing of your body as it breaks up toxins. These toxins will possibly be released from the body via sweating; there may be an increase in body odour. Urine may become darker; the tongue may become darker as well. You may experience bad breath, spotty skin, and an increase in mucus from the nose. You may get cold hands or feet. Also you may become constipated, however drinking prune juice/herbal teas is helpful, if constipation happens or remains throughout the fast. All of the above are normal bodily reactions to fasting.

The Spiritual Results of Fasting:

Scripture shows that fasting humbles the soul (Psalm 35:13) chastens the soul (Psalm 69:10), loosens the bands of wickedness (Isaiah 58 v 6). Individuals fast for many reasons:

- The needs of others – Acts 13:3
- Mercy for the approaching death of a loved one – 2 Samuel 12:15-16
- Deliverance from the enemy – Esther 4:16

- Revelation to understand scripture – Daniel 9:2-3

Fasting also brings:

- Answers to prayers – Deuteronomy 9:9
- Destruction of enemies – Judges 20: 26 and 28
- Personal encouragement – 2 Chronicles 20:3 and 15–18, Acts 27: 23, 24 and 33
- Spiritual guidance - 2 Chronicles 20: 3 and 15, Acts 13:2
- Revelation of God's will – Ezra 8:21 and 23
- Healing – 1 Samuel 30:11 and 12, Isaiah 58:6 and 8
- Outpouring of the Holy Spirit – Joel 1:14, Jonah 3:5 and 10, Acts 9:9 and 17 and Acts 10:30 and 45.

Suggested actions for breaking your fast each day:

Pray first and thank God for giving you the strength throughout the day.

- Drink plenty of water and herbal teas
- Fruit Juices e.g. apple, orange and cranberry etc.
- Green bananas, yam, Sweet potato (small portions)
- Fish, white meat, i.e. chicken (optional) with excess fat removed

Try to avoid/abstain from

- Tea or coffee
- Any dairy products i.e. milk, cheese, eggs, yoghurt, condensed milk, and Nutriment/ Nourishment
- Chocolate bars, chips, burgers or any kind of junk food