



### **FAST: FASTING**

Eating sparingly or abstaining from food altogether, either from necessity or desire. In medical terms, fasting is the “Detoxification” of the body through the restriction of food. Many impurities are broken and flushed when the system fasts.

*Spiritual fasting entails setting aside activities as well as reducing intake of food and replacing these activities with the exercise of prayer and preoccupation with spiritual concerns. The New Testament word which is translated “fast or fasting” literally means: One who has not eaten; one who is EMPTY. (Bakers Encyclopedia of Biblical Facts)*

*Four different types of fasts are generally recognized in the scriptures. For the individual: **NORMAL**—in which there is no intake of food for a prescribed period of time, though there may be an intake of liquids. **PARTIAL**—in which the diet is limited, though some food is allowed; **ABSOLUTE**—in which there is total abstinence from food and liquids in all forms. **WHOLE ASSEMBLY**—where the Elders would call for ALL the people to partake together showing their oneness and unity of heart. Many times in fasting corporately, there is a unity of spirit, soul and body as ALL partake. This is usually directed under the authority of Eldership Rule for the sake of the whole body.*

*In the Old Testament the fast was regarded as an act of self-renunciation designed to mollify (push back, delay, stop) God’s wrath and move HIM to act in gracious disposition. In times of emergency, the people fasted to persuade God to spare them from impending calamity. (Jgs.20:26; I Sam.7:6; I Kgs.21:9; II Chr.20:3 and Jer.36:6,9) Many times individuals fasted in the hope that God would liberate and deliver them from trouble—(II Sam.12:16-20; I Kgs.21:27; Ps.35:13; 69:10) Fasting was regarded as being mixed with prayer to assure that God would answer prayers (Ezr.8:21; Neh.1:4; Jer. 14:12) Throughout the Old Testament, fasting is associated with a mournful attitude of importuning God to aid the supplicant.*

*Regular fasts were usually for one day, morning until evening, with food permitted at night (Jgs.20:26; I Sam.14:24; II Sam.1:12) although there are reports of longer fasts, such as Mordecai’s call for a 3-day fast (night and day specified) Est.4:16 and the 7-day fast at Sauls death (I Sam.31:13; II Sam.3:35). Among other noted fasts—David’s 7-day fast for the life of his son with Bathsheba (II Sam.12:18) Mose’s 40 day fast on Mt. Sinai (Ex. 34:28) and Daniel’s 3—week fast prior to his receiving visions (Dan.9:3; 10:3,12)*





*In general, Old Testament fasting slowly became abused. The heart of the people remained hardened and instead of a sincere act of self-renunciation and submission to God, their fasting became external, ritualistic and an empty ritual. By doing this, a false pretense of piety (holiness) was presented as a public image, one of which Jesus condemned when talking about the New Testament fasting in the presence of the Pharisees and people. From this, the prophets cried out against the callousness and hypocrisy of the people. Jeremiah records the Lord God as saying, "Though they fast, I will not hear their cry" (Jer.14:12; see Isa.58:1-10)*

*The setting for the New Testament fasting now begins. Its understanding lies in the development of the rabbinic tradition that grew out of the period between the Old and New Testaments. During this time, fasting became the distinguishing mark of the pious Jews, even though it was merely ritualistic. It was through this attitude that the Pharisees taught the people that their holiness was an outward act of fasting by appearance and observing of fast days, both public and private, yet condemned by Jesus for being false piety. With the exception of the disciples of John the Baptist, the real prevailing mood of fasting when Jesus appeared on the scene, was one of sadness, an obligatory necessity and a self-imposed requirement to produce discipline to bring about self-denial.*

*Jesus' understanding of fasting is significant in that it represents a shift in the role of fasting. His initial attitude undoubtedly reflected the fact that the true way of fasting in the Kingdom of God, breaks away from all rabbinic tradition. Two accounts of HIS fasting are important. One in the Wilderness (Mt.4:2; Lu.4:2) and HIS teaching on fasting on the Sermon on the Mount (Mt.6:16-18). HIS temptation was born out of struggle. Immediately after his baptism, he was led into the wilderness by the Spirit to face, as the second Adam, the temptation of Satan. In the midst of this, he fasted and prayed, quoting from Deut.8:3 and Ps.91:11-12. His fasting here shows us **TOTAL DEPENDANCY ON GOD.** On the mount, his teaching on fasting as a voluntary approach condemns the fasting which seeks favor with men and others, but instead brings about a robust faith in seeking a genuine relationship with the Father through a pure heart. This true fasting brings brokenness, submission, gratitude, joy and thanksgiving. It allows our self wants and desires to be willfully laid at the feet of the Father where HIS strength, power and grace fulfill our emptiness and shallowness that continually cause our flesh and carnality to rule us. **A Spirit ruled life is to be a fasted life.** One of disciplining the flesh and when mixed with prayer, it allows us to sense and feel the real Spiritual life of the Kingdom. It allows us to be sensitive to HIS voice and grounds our faith to bring a Spiritual growth of maturity.*

*Fasting is mentioned 78 times in the Bible, 32 of which are in the New Testament. Jesus, the disciples, Paul and the church lived a "FASTED" life. Not to get FROM God,*





but to give TO HIM. Jesus did not say "IF" you fast, but "WHEN" you fast. Let the Holy Spirit teach you the beauty of fasting. May your Spiritual eyes be enlightened to the immense and beautiful Spiritual life HE has set before you.

**FAST—FASTING—FASTED**—IS mentioned 78 times in the Bible, 32 of which are in the New Testament. Please enjoy searching out the Word of God in this area and allow the Holy Spirit to help you learn the beautiful life associated with the clean heart in "FASTING" for the Lord—(Jn.16:13-14)

**Fast (24) times Old Testament—6684 Strong's Concordance:**

II Sam.12:21,23 I Kings 21:9,12 II Chr.20:3 Ezra 8:21 Esther 4:16 Isa.58:1-14  
Jer.14:12 36:9 Joel 1:14 2:15 Jonah 3:5 Zec.7:5 8:19

**Fast (17) times New Testament—3522 Strong's Concordance**

Mt. 6:16,18 9:14-15 Mark 2:18-20 Lu.5:33-35 18:12 Acts 27:9, 33

**PLEASE TAKE NOTE:** Always remember to read the scriptures in context, which means to read a little before and after the quoted scriptures. This way you can get a spiritual leading into what is being instructed to us and brings safety in learning the Word of God properly so nothing is taken out of context of which many do today. They take one verse and build a doctrine off of that when if one reads the full picture you will see it in the light it was written.

**Fastest (1) New Testament Mt. 6:17**

**Fasted (12) Old Testament—(3) New Testament**

Jgs.20:26 I Sam. 7:6 31:13 II Sam. 1:12 12:16,22 I Kings 21:27 I Chr.10:12 Ezra8:23  
Neh.1:4 Isa.58:3-----Mt.4:2 Acts 13:2,3

**Fastings (1) Old Testament—(3) New Testament**

Esther 9:31 Lu.2:37 II Cor.6:5 11:27

**Fasting (9) Old Testament—(8) New Testament**

Ne.9:1 Est.4:3 Ps.35:16 69:10 109:24 Dan.6:18 (2908 Strong's-only here) Dan.9:3  
Joel 2:12 Jer.36:6-----Mt.15:32 17:21 Mark 8:3 9:29 Acts 10:30 14:23 27:33  
I Cor.7:5 (marriage) Also read I Cor.9:27 where Paul talked about keeping his body in subjection to show the flesh who its master was, meaning the Spirit