



**FASTING:**

GETTING  
STARTED

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?**

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

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# 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?"

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We want to encourage you to target your prayers during the fast. Two specific areas we will be focusing on together are leadership and finances. The Bible instructs us to continually pray for our leaders (1 Timothy 2:1-2). When we lift up our leaders, here 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)!

# 7 things

we are believing  
God for on this fast

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# FASTING TYPES

There are several types of fasting. The one you choose is between you and God. He will honor your best sacrifice.

## FULL FAST

Drink only liquids (you establish the number of days).

## THE DANIEL FAST

Eat no meat, no sweets and no bread. Drink water and juice. Eat fruits and vegetables.

## PARTIAL FAST

A partial fast is from 6:00 am to 3:00 pm or from sun up to sundown. You can select from three types of fasting — a Full Fast, Daniel Fast or give up at least one item of food.

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SCRIPTURE REFERENCES	RELATION TO PRAYER AND	CORPORATE FASTING:
<b>FOR FASTING:</b> Matthew 6:16-18, Matthew 9:14-15, Luke 18:9-14	<b>READING OF THE WORD:</b> 1 Samuel 1:6-8, 17-18, Nehemiah 1:4, Daniel 9:3, 20, Joel 2:12, Luke 2:37, Acts 10:30, Acts 13:2	1 Samuel 7:5-6, Ezra 8:21-23, Nehemiah 9:1-3, Joel 2:15-16, Jonah 3:5-10, Acts 27:33-37

Remember that it is the attitude of a heart sincerely seeking Him to which God responds with a blessing (Isaiah 58, Jeremiah 14:12, 1 Corinthians 8:8). May God greatly bless you as you fast!

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# FASTING TIPS

## HOW TO BEGIN

Start with a clear goal. Be specific. Why are you fasting? Do you need direction, healing, restoration of marriage or family issues? Are you facing financial difficulties? Ask the Holy Spirit for guidance. Pray daily and read the Bible.

## PREPARING SPIRITUALLY

Confess your sins to God. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal areas of weakness. Forgive all who have offended you and ask forgiveness from those you may have offended (Mark 11:25; Luke 11:4; 17:3-4). Surrender your life fully to Jesus Christ and reject the worldly desires that try to hinder you (Romans 12:1-2).

## DECIDING WHAT TO FAST

The type of fasting you choose is up to you. You could go on a full fast in which you only drink liquids, or you may desire to fast like Daniel, who abstained from sweets and meats, and the only liquid he drank was water. Remember to replace that time with prayer and Bible study.

## DECIDING HOW LONG

You may fast as long as you like. Most can easily fast from one to three days, but you may feel the grace to go longer, even as much as 21 to 40 days. Use wisdom and pray for guidance. Beginners are advised to start slow.

## WHAT TO EXPECT

When you fast your body detoxifies, eliminating toxins from your system. This can cause mild discomfort such as headaches and irritability during withdrawal from caffeine and sugars. And naturally, you will have hunger pains. Limit your activity and exercise moderately. Take time to rest. Fasting brings about miraculous results. You are following Jesus' example when you fast. Spend time listening to praise and worship. Pray as often as you can throughout the day. Get away from the normal distractions as much as possible and keep your heart and mind set on seeking God's face.

## HOW TO END

Don't overeat when the time comes to end your fast. Begin eating solid food gradually; eat small portions or snacks.

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# DANIEL FAST

## STEP 1: BE SPECIFIC

Daniel was not vague in his objection to the Babylonian diet. He defined the problem immediately.

- The king's food was against dietary laws.
- Daniel and his friends had vowed against wine.
- 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:

- Your food choices.
- The level of your spiritual commitment as reflected in constant prayer during the fast.
- 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.
- 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 medicine for healing, symbolic of the Holy Spirit, or 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).

*My thoughts*

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## JOEL 2:12-13

“Now, therefore”, says the Lord, “Turn to Me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning” So rend your heart and not your garments: Return to the Lord your God. For He is gracious and merciful. Slow to anger, and of great kindness, and He relents from doing harm.

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Prayer and fasting is consecration to God. As we begin to prepare our heart, mind and body in a posture of humility, repentance and gratitude towards God; believe He is faithful to His promises for us and that there is nothing that is impossible for Him to do. Carve out some alone time with Him and wait in His presence, listen for that still small voice **(1 Kings 19:12b)**.

God has a plan and purpose for your life. Sometimes, this involves perseverance. It takes time for the vision to come to fruition. The vision God has for our life may look different than what we expect. Don't give up. Don't cave in. If we wait for it, it will come to pass, better than we could ever imagine!

## Habakkuk 2:2-3

Then the Lord answered me and said:

“Write the vision and make it plain on tablets,

That he may run who reads it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time; But at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; Because it will surely come, It will not tarry.

*My thoughts*

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**What can fasting do for me?** Maybe we are questioning what's the purpose of this? Why fast at all? Prayer along with fasting, moves the hand of God. Maybe you have a mountain in front of you, this may be a financial need, the kids are not in a right standing with God, your marriage is taking a turn for the worst, a health crisis or your addiction is out of control. Nothing is impossible with God. He shows up in the very midst of it (life) with us. Physical obedience, brings spiritual release (Pastor Matt Jones).

## **MATTHEW 17: 14-20**

...So Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. However, ***this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.***"

In this account, we see that a father brought to the disciples, his demonic possessed son to be healed. They could not heal him so he went to Jesus. Jesus told the disciples, that this kind can only come through prayer and fasting. Certain situations at times require us to prayer and fast, but you must have faith. Jesus said, a mustard seed (smallest) faith. When we do this, nothing is too difficult for God to do. The father was filled with so much love for his helpless son and could no longer bear to see him like that, so he brought him to Jesus. Do the same, today. Bring it to Jesus. He said to cast your burdens on Him, he cares for you, **(1 Peter 5:7)**. That means, all of your worries, fears, anxieties and concerns. Bring them to the foot of the cross, and watch God work.

## **Psalms 46:1**

Today, as you draw nearer to God, call on Him, and feel the embrace of His love for you. He is our very present help in time of trouble.

*My thoughts*

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## MATTHEW 7:7-8

Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

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Many may take this out of context and think that God will grant our every wish. That He is our genie in a bottle. This is far from the truth. God wants us to have everything we need, according to His will for us.

### 1 John 5:14

This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.

God has good plans for us; however, the criteria is that we obey His Word. Just as an earthly father will want to give good things to his children, so does God. However, if an earthly father knows that what the child is asking for, will lead to his demise; he will not give it to him. God operates the same way. When He says “NO”, often times we rebel. God knows what’s best for us and we must trust Him. He empowers us with His Holy Spirit to guide us, so we must trust that where He is leading will be rewarding to us. When we fast, pray and surrender to Him, old attitudes and habits break off, and we begin to see his will for our lives. Sometimes, this may not look like anything we’ve envisioned, but, God’s thoughts are not like ours, and His ways are certainly different, (Isaiah 55:8-9). **Trust the process.**

## Jeremiah 29:11-12

For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you.

*My thoughts*

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## MARK 2:4

Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus by digging through it and then lowered the mat the man was lying on.

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What an amazing miracle to witness! This account gives us the details of a sick, paralytic man that was carried by his friends. They tried to get him to Jesus, but the Bible tells us that the crowd was too much for them. Instead, they went up to the roof of the house and tore it up, and lowered him to Jesus. When I think of this, I am in awe! His friends were determined for him to meet Jesus. They carried him all the way up to the rooftop. We need friends like those. Friends that would give all they have, just to get us to Jesus. Jesus saw their faith and acted on it.

Are you in need of healing today? I invite you to meet Jesus. He's waiting, ready and willing. There's no crowd to break through, no houses to climb. Just a simple prayer, **Jesus, I need you! Forgive me of my sins and heal me! I surrender it all to you.**

Jesus said to the paralytic, Arise! He was healed. He can do the same for you. There's healing at the cross. Whether it's healing mentally or physically, He can do it. The enemy will try to keep us from getting to Jesus. The man's friends could have given up, but they didn't, they found a way to the cross. The prognosis from the doctors may not look good, but I urge you to get to Jesus. He is the God that heals you, **(Exodus 15:26)**. Declare and receive your healing. It's only a prayer away.

## Jeremiah 30:17(a)

*But I will restore you to health and heal your wounds,*  
declares the Lord.

*My thoughts*

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## PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; ***and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.***

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Just pray about it, don't worry. We've heard this many times. It's not that simple for some of us. We worry about everything, our finances, the kids, the bills and so on. Ever thought about why God would include this scripture? He knew that we will worry. It's almost like an innate character. His Word assures us that the peace of God will guard us from these things. This peace is a conscious choice we make to keep our eyes focused on Jesus, our hearts trusting in Him and our minds constantly renewed by spending time in His Word. When we become anxious and fearful, we remove our focus from Jesus and on to our situation. Be reminded of the account of Jesus in the boat with his disciples when the storm came. Jesus was in the boat with them. The very epitome of peace was in their situation, but they focused on the storm. Jesus simply, got up and rebuked the storm. Peace, be still! **(Mark 4:35-41).**

### **Matthew 6:26**

Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?

You are precious to God. He sent His Son, from Heaven to come to us and die on a cross so that we could be reconciled to Him. That, my friends, is priceless, that is Love. Keep your eyes fixed on Jesus. Your situation may seem grim, but remember that Peace is in the boat with you and live life to the fullest! **(John 10:10).**

*My thoughts*

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## LEVITICUS 19:2

“... Be holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy”.

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What a powerful scripture. It takes your breath away. God is a Holy God, and He requires that of us. From the very beginning, man was created in the image of God. Holy and sacred. When man fell to sin, it corrupted the very essence of who he was. We needed a Savior to redeem us back to the state that God had intended. When we accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior, the Holy Spirit is poured out in us and begins the work of transformation and renewing back to the image of God. We are once again reconciled to Him.

### **1 Corinthians 6:19-20**

Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.

In Old Testament times, to the Israelites, the temple was a sacred meeting place with God. They worshipped and made their requests to God there. When Paul describes our body as the temple of God, he wanted believers to understand how important this was. A place where God dwells and communicates with us. When we pray and fast, we purge our bodies from what is not of God and get back in right standing with Him. Let us remember that we are to live holy before God and not be drawn into the deceits of the world, like the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes and the pride of life **(1 John 2:15-17)**.

### **Romans 12:2**

... Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind ...

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## HEBREWS 12:29

for our “God is a consuming fire.”

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God's Holiness will not tolerate sin. He burns up anything that is unholy. Especially idolatry. This is the worship or longing of anything other than God, **(Luke 16:13)**. What have we made an idol in our lives? Are we allowing other things to take precedence over the things of God? Idolatry can look like the love of power, money, recognition, pleasure and much more. The enemy blinds us or deceives us into thinking it's just a part of life. **(1 Peter 5:8)**.

In the account of **(1 Kings 18)**, Israel had endured three years of drought because of their worshipping of the idol, Baal. The Prophet Elijah challenged these false prophets to make a sacrifice to their god. They gathered on Mount Carmel to do just that. They called out to their god for hours, to no avail. Then Elijah offered his sacrifice to the Lord, God. Fire from heaven came and consumed the offering and even the water that were around the trenches. It was then the people of Israel realized who their God was and bowed down and worshipped Him.

Let us examine our hearts today. Search and see if there is anything that is hindering us from completely surrendering to God. Repent and be restored.

Fasting creates an atmosphere of humility. When we reverently seek after God and the things of God, we allow His presence to fill our hearts and minds. We are consumed in His love for us and this ignites a fire to share all that He is, with others.

## Psalm 139:23-24

Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

*My thoughts*

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## JOHN 15:5-7

I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.

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Most likely this narrative spoke about a vineyard and its wine branches. The more they were nurtured, the better and bigger the harvest. It was a precious commodity. This is what Jesus is to us, LIFE. He is the cord that connects us to the Father. Without Him, we are cut off. When we receive Salvation and accept Jesus as Lord of our lives, we become connected to Him and ultimately to God, through His redeeming Blood. As we dwell in His presence, and are fed by His Word, we flourish. In turn, we have the mind of Christ in us (**Philippians 2:5**) and the very character of Christ shines through.

### **Galations 5:22-23**

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

**John 15** continues to say that we can ask what we desire. As we follow after Him our desire for worldly things would change. We should be determined to have more of His wisdom and understanding, more of His love for others, and more forgiveness and mercy towards one another. He is our inheritance.

### **Psalms 16:5**

The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup.

*My thoughts*

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## PROVERBS 3:5-6

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.

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It's in our nature to do things our own way. We rely on our own strength and wisdom; and often times, it fails. How do we trust God when we don't understand why things are going wrong? Many times we can't see the light at the end of the tunnel. I want to reassure you today, that, Jesus is the Light, and as you focus on Him, our vision is enlightened (**1 Corinthians 13:12**). The journey becomes easier when we put our confidence in Him. We don't need all the answers, we just need to know WHO is the answer.

### **Matthew 11:28**

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

When we sit and wait in His presence and allow Him to do the work, the peace of God would wash over us.

Submission is never easy. It's a journey that we take as we commit our lives to Jesus. Gradually, we let go of the obstacles and focus on Him. When we do this, He allows the Holy Spirit to lead and direct us. Quiet confidence in the Lord, brings total freedom. When we walk in obedience to His will, insurmountable blessings will follow.

### **Proverbs 10:22**

The blessing of the Lord makes one rich and He adds no sorrow to it.

*My thoughts*

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## JOSHUA 1:9

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”

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Fear often grips our hearts and stops us in our tracks. It can be paralyzing at times. How can we be courageous when we face heartache, emotional turmoil or depression. During these times, we must obey God’s Word. Take courage, because the hand of the Lord is upon you (**Ezra 7:28**).

In this account, Moses had died and Joshua was chosen by God to lead the people of Israel to the promised land. This was a huge undertaking. Clearly, Joshua had concerns. However, God reminded him to not be discouraged by what was ahead. That if he would keep His commandments, he would establish him wherever he went. Joshua obeyed and the victory was sealed.

Fear, is a false reality. This strategy of the enemy keep us bound and blinds us to the victory we have in Christ. We must remember that **Satan was defeated at the cross**. Jesus paid the price for our sins and we are reconciled to God through His blood. When we walk in this freedom, chains are broken and the enemy flees (**James 4:7**).

Gideon was also afraid to go to battle with the Midianites, but He trusted God’s direction, and got the victory in a most extraordinary way. God is with you, wherever you go. That’s His promise to us!

## Judges 6:14

The Lord turned to him and said, “Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian’s hand. Am I not sending you?”

*My thoughts*

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## ROMANS 5:5

Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

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Hope is believing that our God is faithful to all that He has promised us. It's an unshakeable foundation of trust in the One who can do all things - Jesus. Hope is our assurance that when we stand in faith, without doubt, miracles happen. God's love for us is infinite (has no end). Ideally, the very character of God is Love (**1 John 4:8**).

**John 11, (please read chapter)**, demonstrates an example of the depth of love Jesus has for us. His friend Lazarus was sick, and though this news came to Him, He waited. Finally, Jesus went to visit the family. Martha said something extraordinary to Him in verse 21, *that even now I know that whatever You ask of God, He will give it*. What a powerful statement! She believed, she hoped, more importantly, she trusted in a God that can do the miraculous. Our perception of Martha is that she was always busy entertaining others. However, don't miss this profound statement she made to Jesus. Even though she didn't understand the reason for His delay, her confidence was in Jesus, the Son of God. The account continues to say that Jesus wept. His compassion for us is so great He feels our pain, sorrows, and grief. Then He did the unimaginable. He raised Lazarus from the dead. Can you even conceptualize this? Mary, Martha, Lazarus, the crowd - what were they thinking?? I am constantly in awe of the wonders of God. Today, as we continue to pray and fast, look to Jesus, the Hope of our salvation (**Romans 8:24-30**).

## Romans 15:13

Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

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## HEBREWS 12:1

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.

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We are reminded of those that walked before us in faith, trusting God every step of the way. Think about Abraham, Moses, Noah, and countless others. The scripture continues that we are to throw off everything that keeps us from following God. That includes sin. Prayerfully seek God as we examine our hearts.

**Matthew 13:1-23** (please read) relates the account of a Sower, who planted seeds that fell on different surfaces - by the wayside, on stony ground, among thorns, and on good ground. The seed represents the Word of God that is freely given to us. The surfaces represent our potential to sustain the Word in our lives. Many will receive His Word but may lack understanding and never take the opportunity to grow and learn. To some, it is a “feel good” message that never takes root and cannot be supported long term. Yet, there are some of us that will receive Christ as Savior but not as Lord. There is no commitment or submission to His will. The glimmers of the world continuously pull us away from the Truth of God’s Word. However, there are those that bind the Word of God in their hearts and live for Christ regardless of the situations they face. The enemy cannot ensnare them because they have completely trusted in Jesus as Lord of their lives.

Let us endure the race that is before us and be planted by the rivers of water, so in due season, we will bear fruit. Live each day with purpose and share the Good News with joy.

## 2 Timothy 4:7

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

*My thoughts*

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## PSALM 46:10

Be still and know that I am God...

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Quiet reflections in God's Word intensifies our relationship with Him. As we wait in His presence, and listen for that still small voice to speak in our hearts, we are compelled to rely, not on what we know, but on WHO we know. It starts and finishes with God. Therefore, rest in Him and believe that all things will work together for good (**Romans 8:28**).

**Exodus 14:13-14**, is memorable. It tells of Moses' obedience to God to free the people of Israel from the bondage of the Egyptians through unique and exciting miracles. After they fled Egypt, they were trapped by the Red Sea. They were disheartened, some, even angry. God had showed up and done incredible things to demonstrate His power and commitment to set them free, yet, when a setback arose they were disgruntled. Moses told the people to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord today. He stretched out the rod in his hand, the waters were divided, and the people of Israel walked on dry land. Think on this. Even the ground they walked on was dry, with a wall of water on both sides. So God! When we act in faith and trust God, in turn, we experience God's miraculous hand at work. Don't get troubled by what you see in the natural, or even with things that are beyond our control. Our Supernatural God is working in unexpected ways on our behalf. Wait patiently and be filled with a song of praise and a heart of gratitude to the Holy One.

## Psalm 40:3

He has put a new song in my mouth, Praise to our God...

*My thoughts*

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## JOHN 14:3

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

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Such an amazing hope we have in Jesus. One, that not only allows us a place to live, but to be with Him in the Father's House, for eternity! Jesus constantly reminded his disciples that the things of this world are temporary; that we are to store up treasures in heaven, not on earth (**Matthew 6:19-21**).

**Matthew 19:16-22** (please read account), is of paramount importance to our Christian walk. It explains the deceitfulness of holding on to riches or worldly treasures. This young ruler came to Jesus to inquire how he can gain eternal life. Jesus told him to follow the commandments. He admitted that he had done that since he was a youth. Jesus gave further instructions to sell all he had and give to the poor, and follow Him. The young ruler left disheartened. This account is life-changing. Admittedly he obeyed the laws, but failed to let-go of all his possessions and follow Jesus. Are we willing to do what it takes to follow Jesus? Many times we put our faith and trust in material things, like our money and accomplishments, and believe that they will bring us comfort. True peace and joy comes in Jesus.

Jesus wants us to live life to the fullest, but that means to be generous, kind, and caring. When we exercise these traits, the Light of Christ shines through us and more will be saved.

## Proverbs 30:8-9

First, help me never to tell a lie.

Second, give me neither poverty nor riches!

Give me just enough to satisfy my needs.

For if I grow rich, I may deny you and say, "Who is the Lord?"

*My thoughts*

DAY  
15

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## JOHN 10:9 (read 7-16)

I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.

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Jesus is the only way to Salvation. For us to be saved we must accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior. It is the only way for us to be reconciled to God.

The account also states that He is the door of the sheep. Jesus compared himself to a shepherd. They took great care of their sheep. They would actually guard the door at night to prevent predators getting in and the sheep getting out. We are the sheep and Jesus is our Good Shepherd. He gave His life for us so that we can be one with the Father. Often times, we stray or get lost, in worldly pleasures and desires. The enemy tries to snatch our focus away from Jesus by dangling a glamorous life before us, material assets and embellishments to get our attention. Many times we become his victims.

The account of the prodigal son is just like this (**Luke 15:11-32**). The son demanded his inheritance from his father. He went far away and spent all he had living an ungodly lifestyle. Friends soon left when all the money had gone. The Bible says when he was in a pig pen, at his lowest state in life, he recognized the need for the father. He longed for the embrace and love of his father. He found his way back. God, the Father is waiting patiently for us to return to Him. As you continue to fast and pray, persevere and trust that He loves you and wants what's best for you! Enter His courts with thanksgiving!

## John 14:6

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

*My thoughts*

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## MATTHEW 15:28

Then Jesus answered and said to her, “O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire.”

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**Matthew 15:21-28** illustrates a Canaanite woman, whose daughter was demon possessed, going to Jesus and pleading with Him to heal her. His answers were strange at first; He said that He came to give “bread” to the lost sheep of Israel and continued to say that He could not take the bread and give it to the dogs. During these times, Jews did not care much for those that were non Jews (Gentiles). They were treated like second class citizens. Also, the region was very paganistic (idol worshipping) in nature. Yet Jesus was walking through this area. This woman would have heard of Jesus’s teachings and healing so she came to Him. At first she called Him Son of David which makes it clear that she believed He was the Messiah. As she persisted, she called Him, Lord. This was a clear indication that she not only believed He was the Lord, but that He would be able to heal her daughter. When we take a posture of humility, we get God’s attention.

Jesus is the bread of life that came from heaven. He came to be our life sustaining source here on earth. Yes, He came first to the Jews, but He extended His grace and mercy by including us, (Gentiles). This woman wasn’t Jewish; she was of a different culture and background (**John1:11-13**). Think about her heart at this time. She would do anything for her child, and face embarrassment. By accepting even the crumbs of what Jesus offered, would be enough. She believed that the smallest part of Jesus was a great reward. That is faith! A crumb with great faith in Jesus, has huge potential.

We may have a need that is so great, its perplexing to see any good outcome. A little, sprinkled with faith, moves the hand of God.

## Matthew 17:20

...If you have faith as small as a mustard seed...nothing will be impossible for you...

*My thoughts*

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## LUKE 19:10

for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

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The Son of God came for us - sinners that were lost and needed guidance. He paid a price for us with His blood that our minds cannot behold.

**Luke 10:1-9** mentioned a chief tax collector named Zacchaeus. Jesus communed with him at his house. Tax collectors at that time were disdained because they cheated people on their taxes. Just being in Jesus's presence was enough to convert Zacchaeus. He repented and gave back four times more than what he had stolen. He was small in stature, but he had a huge generous heart. Jesus said to all there that Salvation had come to the house.

When we receive Salvation, Jesus's atoning blood causes us to be joined to Him. We become heirs to the Kingdom of God. His grace and mercy was given to all of us at the cross. There is no distinction between us, we are one in Christ.

### **Matthew 9:12-13**

When Jesus heard that, He said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice.’ For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.”

We must first recognize that we need a Savior, because we are spiritually demoralized. Jesus does not turn up His nose on us, instead He embraces us with His love. We must remember that there is nothing that will separate us from the love Jesus has for us. Regardless of where you are in life, turn to Him, repent and be saved.

**Romans 8:38-39** (please read)

*My thoughts*

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## PHILIPPIANS 4:19

And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

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The Old Testament account in **Genesis (chapters 37-50) 42:1-2**, tells of a great famine in the land, and of Jacob sending his sons to buy grain in Egypt. Little did they know that this trajectory of events would change their lives forever. The backdrop to this account is that they had sold one of their brothers, Joseph, into slavery, having called him a dreamer and being envious of him. This entire story hinges on God's provision for and preservation of his people. While different things occurred during this time, God's hand was always in control. He skillfully planned everything out to perfection. While it appeared that Joseph being sold was harsh, he would be the one to save his people. God orchestrates our lives in such a way, to bring Glory to Himself and to show us that He will never leave us. Through a series of events, Joseph became second in command to Pharaoh, King of Egypt. His encounter with his brothers when they came to buy grain, was filled with longing, anticipation, and joy. God used Joseph in such a unique way that would ultimately preserve the inheritance of His people.

### **Genesis 50:20**

But as for you, you meant evil against me; *but* God meant it for good

Understandably it's difficult for us to grapple with the idea that God allowed Joseph to endure so many things. Yet, He never left Joseph. His favor was always on him.

Your heart may be heavy and burdened. You may be asking, how can God provide now? He is the same God that provided then, and He will now. You are loved by Him. It may seem impossible to you, but not to God. Trust Him!

### **Psalms 34:6**

This poor man cried out, and the Lord heard *him*,  
And saved him out of all his troubles.

*My thoughts*

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# 1 SAMUEL 1:11

Then she made a vow and said, “O Lord of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me...

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This account draws on a woman, Hannah, who longed for a child. She was devoted to God and her husband. But her heart was grieved. Each year they would go to the Temple and pray, but her disappointment and sorrow grew. On this particular occasion, she prayed to God and wept. The Bible says, “...she was in bitterness of the soul...” Her yearning and desire for a child was so great that she made a vow to God that the child would grow up in the Temple.

God remembered her. She had a son, Samuel, who became a prominent Prophet in Israel. Samuel would go on to anoint the first King of Israel, Saul. He would then go on to anoint David as King, the very lineage of our Lord Jesus. Samuel’s purpose was great. Ultimately, God blessed Hannah in a way that she could not have imagined!

Many times, we feel like our prayers and requests to God go unanswered. It seems like an eternity - waiting, trusting, longing. It may feel as though God has turned His back on you. Take heart. Your God wants to bless you in every way. His eyes are upon the righteous (**Psalm 34:15**). He has good plans for us (**Jeremiah 29:11**). Don’t give up. It may appear as though He’s not working on your behalf and everyone else is being blessed and not you. Don’t give in to the enemy’s strategies. Stand on God’s Word and believe that He is faithful. (**Psalm 145:13**).

## Psalm 27:14

Wait on the Lord;  
Be of good courage,  
And He shall strengthen your heart;  
Wait, I say, on the Lord!

*My thoughts*

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## MATTHEW 18:21-22

Then Peter came to Him and said, “Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?” Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.

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Jesus continues in **Matthew 18** to illustrate the story of a King whom was owed a lot of money. As he went through his records, he discovered a servant that owed him a vast amount. This servant begged him to be patient and promised to pay it back. The Bible says the King was moved with compassion for the man and forgave him all the debt. Later, this same servant found another that had owed him substantially less than he had owed the King, and he confronted him. Even though his friend asked for mercy, the man lacked compassion, and threw him in prison. This news came back to the King who was perturbed by this. He gave this unmerciful servant to the torturers until his debt was paid. This parable teaches us the importance of forgiveness and mercy toward others. Peter thought by suggesting seven times was more than enough, however, Jesus urged that we are to continue forgiving one another without limits.

When we forgive, we release hurt, anger, and resentment that we have towards another and the healing process begins. There are times, forgiving someone is too difficult because the pain of the circumstance cannot be forgotten. Ask Jesus to walk through this process with you and allow Him to heal your heart. God wants to make us whole and complete in Him - body, soul, and spirit.

## Psalm 23:3

He restores my soul;  
He leads me in the paths of righteousness  
For His name's sake.

*My thoughts*

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## ISAIAH 53:5

But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.

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For us to interpret the depth of this text in Isaiah, we must first understand its context.

### Luke 2:11

For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came to earth as our Savior. He was born, so He could die on a cross for us. The punishment that we deserved was passed on to Him. One that was sinless, became sin for us (2 Corinthians 5:21).

John the Baptist describes Him as The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29). Jesus is described as a lamb because He was the final sacrifice that would pay the price for the sins of the world. He was the final passover sacrifice.

Before the Israelites left Egypt, God asked them to sacrifice a lamb and smear the blood on the door posts so that the Angel of Death would pass over them. They were covered by this blood. It protected them. Each year, this had to be done in order to be forgiven for their sins. The priests would make sacrifices on behalf of the people. Forgiveness of sins could only come from the blood of an unblemished lamb. Jesus was our unblemished Lamb. He went to the cross willingly and paid a price that we can never understand. His atoning blood reconciles us to God, the Father. At the cross, He said "It is finished." Simultaneously, the shofar was blown because the priests were sacrificing a lamb (animal). They didn't recognize the Lamb on the cross that was sacrificed for all of us. On the third day, **Jesus rose triumphantly and ushered in a new church, The Bride of Christ. We have victory in Him. Satan is defeated! We are saved and set free! TO GOD BE THE GLORY, FOREVER! AMEN!**

# Heavenly

in the name of your precious Son, Jesus Christ, we humbly come before you. With a heart of thanksgiving and gratitude towards the Holy One. Take heed to our prayers, dear Lord, incline your ears to our needs. We surrender all that we are to you and we trust where you lead. Your ways are higher than our ways, and your thoughts are better than our thoughts. Teach us to be still in your presence, as we wait patiently for you.

Allow your peace to fill our hearts and release us from all fear. For you didn't give us a spirit of fear but of power, love, and a sound mind. The battle around us is great but you, Oh Lord, will fight for us. Open our spiritual eyes to see that those that are for us are greater than those that are against us.

May the Light of your Love penetrate every cell in my body and allow the warmth of your healing balm to refresh my spirit. When my heart is overwhelmed Lord, lead me to your hiding place. Let the rivers of living waters flow through me and give me a peace that surpasses all understanding.

# y Father

I pray that every stronghold, every snare, that the enemy has set up against me, my children, my family and my friends, are broken off completely. Give me mental clarity and stability. I claim that victory is sealed. The enemy was defeated at the cross. He can no longer harm me. For I stand on the authority that Christ has given me to crush his head.

Lead me in the way everlasting, dear Lord. Cover me as I walk through places that are treacherous. Set your angels around me and keep me from all harm. Guard my heart and mind from every demonic activity and lead me in the paths of righteousness.

May the truth of your Word dwell in my heart, and a song of praise flow in my mouth, that your name will be glorified in heaven and on earth..

Thank you Lord. In Jesus name. Amen.