

# FASTING

FALL 2009

Prayer with fasting is a discipline that has been all but lost in modern Christianity. But prayer with fasting was a regular part of early church life. In his instructions to his disciples, Jesus said, “when you pray,” not “if you pray” (Matthew 6:5). Likewise Jesus said, “when you fast” not “if you fast” (Matt 6:16). Prayer with fasting helps release the power of the Spirit in our lives. It doesn’t necessarily earn more grace from God, but it facilitates the freer flow of the Holy Spirit through us by dissolving and removing all the junk in our lives.

In 2 Chronicles 20:1-26, when Jehoshaphat called his nation to prayer and fasting, The Lord answered and defeated the Moabites and Amorites. The Israelites could do nothing, but when they fasted and prayed, the Lord told them to be still and watch. The next day as they praised the Lord, He defeated their enemies.

**FASTING:** Fasting is found throughout the Bible. It always seems to show up when ordinary people need extraordinary power, provision, and perseverance to overcome impossible odds, enemies, or obstructions.

**CORPORATE FASTING:** God releases an awesome authority to us when several people come together in His name to fast and pray. This authority contains the kind of power that can move mountains! It is a weapon God has given so we can break every satanic curse and stronghold over our lives, our families, our churches, our cities, and our nation! It happens when we choose to join our spiritual dynamic energies together as one “laser beam” of God-given power and concentrated heavenly light.

## **WHEN WE FAST:**

- We are humbling ourselves before God
- We will see life’s priorities more clearly
- We will see balance return to areas of our lives where there is imbalance
- Our selfish ambition and pride will begin to be washed away
- We will be more sensitive to God’s Spirit, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit will work more effectively in our lives
- Our hidden areas of weakness or susceptibility will rise to the surface so that God can deal with them
- God will make us more unselfish

## **DIFFERENT TYPES OF FASTS:**

- The complete fast refers to a total fast in which we eat and drink nothing. The maximum time for this kind of fast is three days and nights.
- The normal fast involves total abstention from food but regular intake of water.
- The Daniel or partial fast is a 21-day fruit, vegetable, and water-only fast. Some may also go without fruit entirely or abstain from the more acidic fruits.
- The group or corporate fast is highly effective in breaking down the enemy’s strongholds.

# PRAYER

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“If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land. Now my eyes will be open and my ears attentive to the prayers offered in this place.” 2 Chronicles 7:14-15 (NIV)

“Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.” Hebrews 4:16 (NIV)

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.” Philippians 4:6 (NIV)

“Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.” Psalm 46:10 (NIV)

## **MEDITATE ON THE LORD’S PRAYER:**

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.

Your Kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours.

Now and for ever. Amen

## **PRAY ACTS (ADORATION, CONFESSION, THANKSGIVING, SUPPLICATION):**

**ADORATION** - Spend time praising the Lord and adoring Him for who he is (Matt. 6:9). Use Scripture to praise Him (see Ps. 103, 145, 150; Rev. 4:8; 5:12-14). Love and cherish His presence and allow Him to work in and through your life (see Matt. 22:32-34). Be still before Him and enjoy His presence (see Ps. 46:10). Use this time to allow God to speak to you through His Word and Spirit (see Ps. 40:1-3; 90:12-17). Praise the Lord by praying scripture or hymns back to Him (see Ps. 84; Rev. 4:8; 5:9-10, 12-13)

**CONFESSION** - Confession should be a part of your continual walk with Christ (see Matt. 6:9-13). Spend time asking Christ to search your heart for areas that displease Him (see Ps. 139:23-24). Allow God to cleanse your heart of any unconfessed sin (see Ps. 51:10-13). Be sure to spend time confessing and repenting of, or turning away from, specific sins (see 1 John 1:9). Accept His forgiveness and cleansing (see Jer. 31:34).

**THANKSGIVING** - Giving thanks for all things should be a part of our everyday lives as God's people (see Phil. 4:6-7). This includes thanking God for specific things such as blessings, people, open doors, guidance, etc. Also give thanks for His salvation and the privilege to serve such a wonderful Savior. Thank Him for his goodness, loving-kindness, and faithfulness (see Ps. 100:4-6).

**SUPPLICATION** - We are called as believers to intercessory prayer (see Matt. 6:9-13; Luke 18:1; Col. 4:2; 1 Tim. 2:1-4). Thus, we are to come before God on behalf of others (see Heb. 10:19-25; Rev. 1:4-6). Spend time praying for specific people, events, states, countries, missionaries, etc. (see Acts 12:5; Rom. 10:1). In addition, spend time praying for personal needs (see Matt. 6:11-13). Make prayer lists for your time of supplication. Be sure to include a place for answers to be recorded. Recorded answers can become items for praise and thanksgiving.

**Prayer Of Praise** Honor God’s Name by lifting up his attributes back to Him (He is Holy, Righteous, Healer...).

**Prayer Of Power** Ask, believe, and expect His Kingdom rule in marriages, family needs, and personal purity. Claim His rule for people to tithe to our church, serve in ministries, and for everyone to ask the question, “*Lord, What would You have me do?*” Anticipate God to empower the staff, the elders, and the potential elders, and to give them soft hearts to follow His lead. Ask That God would reveal the next generation of leaders for Rolling Hills as they prove to be faithful in service. Ask God to reward each ministry in the church in maturity and outreach. Ask our Lord to bring people from the North, South, East and West who are unchurched, that we might reach our Holy Spirit vision of 10,000 people with the Good News of Christ. Expect God to build maturity in the present so they can be salt and light in the marketplace.

**Prayer Of Provision** Ask God to provide for those in our body who need physical healing, jobs, money to pay the rent, health to work, etc.

**Prayer of Pardon** Pray that people will seriously repent of their secret and public sins, and that they would come before the Lord in true brokenness. Pray that people would genuinely forgive those who have hurt them or caused hurt to a loved one or friend. Pray that the family of Rolling Hills would be humble before God and understand that God's strength is made perfect in our weakness.

**Prayer of Protection** Pray that as a body, from Leadership down, we would be protected from the evil one. Pray that we all resist the Devil in our own personal walk with God and that God would deliver us from evil. Pray for our whole church to be surrounded by the power of El Elyon, the Most High God.