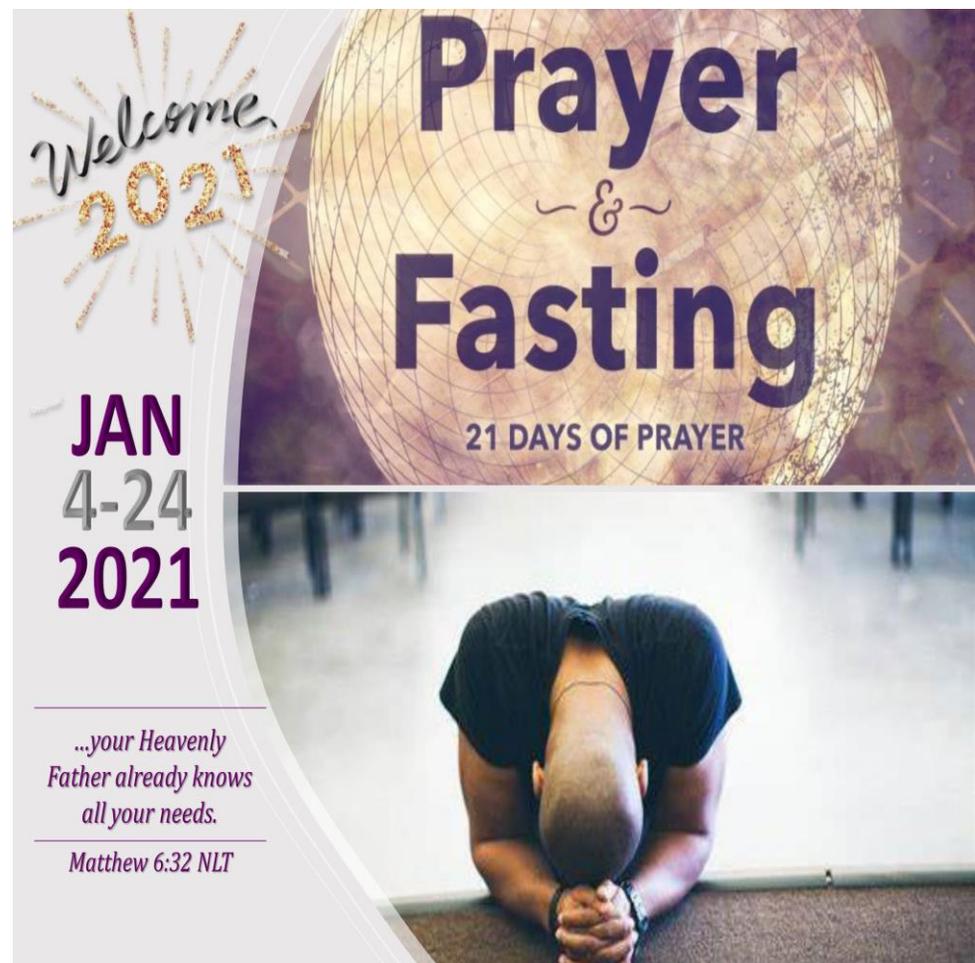


COME G.R.O.W. WITH ME
(God Rewards Our Works)
Prayer & Fasting Guide

*Content provided by
The Deaconess Ministry
for the Board of Christian Education
of Canaan Baptist Church*



Welcome
2021

Prayer & Fasting

21 DAYS OF PRAYER

JAN
4-24
2021

*...your Heavenly
Father already knows
all your needs.*

Matthew 6:32 NLT

PRAYER & FASTING GUIDE

January 4 - 24, 2021

CANAAN BAPTIST CHURCH
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• 20 BLESSINGS FROM A TRUE FAST •
(ISAIAH 58:6-14)

1. Then (after doing the 8 things from verses' 6-7) you shall have light as day (v. 8)
2. Your health will spring forth speedily
3. Your righteousness will go before you
4. God's glory will be your rear guard
5. Then you will call and receive answers to prayer (v.9)
6. You will cry and God will answer
7. (After doing the 6 things of v. 9-10) your light will rise in obscurity
8. Your darkness will be as the noon day
9. The Lord will guard you continually
10. He will satisfy you in drought (v.11)
11. He will make your bones fat
12. You will be like a watered garden
13. You will be like an unfailing spring of water
14. Your waste places will be built (v.12)
15. You will raise up the foundations of many generations
16. You will be called, The repairer of the breach (v.12)
17. You will be called, The restorer of paths to dwell in
18. (After doing the 9 things in v. 13) you will delight yourself in the Lord (v. 14)
19. I will cause you to ride upon the high places of the earth
20. I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father, for I have spoken it. The mouth of the Lord has spoken.

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January 4, 2021

"Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work." Ephesians 4:15-16

Welcome to 2021! Our sincere service to God has brought us thus far and will take us further up in His grace. It is so amazing how fast time goes by when you are doing the work of the Lord. Last year proved that traditions had to be thrown out. Our normal was no longer the normal. We had to adapt to a new normal. Having to deal with the COVID-19 Pandemic, Racial Injustice, and a Presidential Election, we had to change our approach. We moved from gathering together in person for church services to having Virtual Services via Facebook Live and Conference Calls. Although Worship looks different, my focus remains to deliver the true and living word of God. We must remember that God is still in control of everything that happens. As we enter into 2021, let us continue to pray, worship and fellowship together and give God all the glory that he so richly deserves.

I thank God for each of you and pray that He will continue to strengthen us and give us the faith to follow His lead. In 2020, our plan was to move into Stage Five of our G.R.O.W (God Rewards Our Works) development project. However, the COVID-19 pandemic put everything on pause and we were not able to implement Stage Five of the plan which was Utilization. Prayerfully, we will move into the Utilization phase in 2021. How will we move into that phase? I do not know, but one thing for sure we will follow God's instructions and move at the pace that He sets. This will be our key to success.

Canaan family, continue to reach out to each other and to non-church members sharing God's love and concern. We will still be stretching out into our community trying to touch others with His grace and extensive knowledge and love. Let us stay in touch by phone calls, texts, email, letters, cards, and/or any means that allow us to spread the Gospel and G.R.O.W!

Keep the stages of the G.R.O.W. project in your prayers.

- Stage One – Introduction
- Stage Two – Expansion
- Stage Three – Exploration
- Stage Four - Development
- Stage Five – Utilization

We are a church on the Grow. Come G.R.O.W. with me!

In His Service,



Rev. Dr. Larry Owens, Jr., Senior Pastor

• ENDING YOUR FAST •

The way you end your fast is extremely important for your physical and spiritual well-being. When your fast is over, add foods back in gradually. A greasy cheeseburger would not be the best choice to end the Daniel Fast. Because your body is so cleansed and detoxified, you will most likely get sick if you do this.

Begin eating gradually. Suddenly reintroducing solid food to your stomach and digestive track will likely have negative, even dangerous, consequences. Try several smaller meals or snacks each day. If you end your fast gradually, the beneficial physical and spiritual effects will result in continued good health.

Here are some tips to help end your fast properly:

- Break an extended water fast with fruit such as watermelon
- While continuing to drink fruit or vegetable juices, add the following:
 - First day: Add a raw salad
 - Second day: Add a baked or broiled potato, no butter or seasoning
 - Third day: Add a steamed vegetable
 - Thereafter: Begin to reintroduce your normal diet.
- Gradually return to regular eating with several small snacks during the first few days. Start with a little soup and fresh fruit such as watermelon and cantaloupe. Advance to a few tablespoons of solid food such as raw fruits and vegetables or a raw salad and baked potato.

Final Thoughts...

1. As you select your type of fast, plan ahead and determine what each day and week will look like. **Luke 14:28 NIV, "Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Won't you first sit down and estimate the cost to see if you have enough money to complete it?"**
2. Keep your household stocked with items you will need. Being unprepared to fast sets you up to give into temptation. Make wise choices, read the labels, choose natural and raw foods as much as you can avoiding artificial ingredients.
3. Make it a priority to attend church during your fast. Being around other believers will encourage you to keep on going when fasting gets difficult.
4. If you mess up, do not get discouraged. Get back on track and keep going, every morning His mercies are new (**Lamentations 3:22-23**). He will give you the grace and strength to finish, do not quit (**Galatians 6:9**).

• SAMPLE RECIPES FOR FASTING •

CANTALOUPE MELON SMOOTHIE

½ medium-size cantaloupe, seeded and cut from the rind
½ cup orange juice (juiced from fresh oranges)
Juice of 2 limes (taste before you add all the juice at once)
1 medium-size banana, peeled and cut into chunks
Fresh mint leaves for garnish (optional)
2 cups of ice cubes – makes it like a frozen ice drink (optional)
Mix all in the blender and serve

APPLE BLUEBERRY OATMEAL CEREAL

2 sweet apples
¾ cup rolled oats
1 cup blueberries
½ cup almonds
1 cup apple juice
Cook the oats as directed on box. Chop or grind the almonds, chop the apples and combine. Add the blueberries. Top with a sprinkle of nutmeg, cinnamon and apple juice.

QUINOA SALAD

1 cup uncooked quinoa, rinsed in a fine-mesh colander
2 cups water
1 can (15 ounces) chickpeas, rinsed and drained, or 1 ½ cups cooked chickpeas
1 medium cucumber, seeded and chopped
1 medium red bell pepper, chopped
¾ cup chopped red onion
1 cup finely chopped flat-leaf parsley
¼ cup olive oil
¼ cup lemon juice (from 2 to 3 lemons)
1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
2 cloves garlic, pressed or minced
½ teaspoon fine sea salt
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
To cook the quinoa: Combine rinsed quinoa and water in medium saucepan. Bring mixture to a boil over medium-high heat, and then decrease heat to maintain a gentle simmer. Cook until quinoa has absorbed all the water, about 15 minutes, reducing heat as time goes on to maintain a gentle simmer. Remove from heat, cover, and let quinoa rest for 5 minutes, to give it time to fluff up. In a large serving bowl, combine the chickpeas, cucumber, bell pepper, onion and parsley. Set aside. In a small bowl, combine olive oil, lemon juice, vinegar, garlic and salt. Whisk until blended, then set aside.

Once the quinoa is mostly cool, add it to the serving bowl, and drizzle the dressing on top. Toss until the mixture is thoroughly combined. Season with black pepper to taste, and add an extra pinch of salt if necessary. For best flavor, let the salad rest for 5 to 10 minutes before serving. This salad keeps well in the refrigerator, covered, for about 4 days. Serve chilled or at room temperature.

CHILI BEANS

2 – 15oz. cans of kidney beans
1 – 15oz. can of roasted tomatoes
1 small can of tomato paste or sauce
1 bag of Morning Star Crumbles Vegan Meat
½ onion and ½ green pepper
1 package of dry chili mix
Cheddar cheese and sour cream
Stir fry onions and peppers, add chili mix, add tomato paste/sauce, and then add veggie crumble for approximately 2 minutes. Let beans simmer while cooking your vegetables – do not overcook the beans. Add all together and enjoy.

LETTUCE WRAP

1 Package of Lettuce Wrap
1 bag of Morning Star Crumbles Vegan Chicken
½ onion and mushroom to your taste
Lettuce (any kind will work)
Ginger Sauce or Peanut Sauce to pour on top of the wrap
Sour Cream and cheese (Vegan) (Optional)
Stir fry the onions and mushroom, add crumbles for about 2 minutes; then add the lettuce wrap mix – be careful, it can be salty! Break off a Piece of lettuce, fill the mixture, add the sauce, add cheese and sour cream (optional). Enjoy with soup!

DISCLAIMER: Canaan Baptist Church makes no claim to the health benefits of any of the recipes printed herein.

• WHY ARE WE FASTING •

Why Are We Fasting At Canaan?

It is a tradition at Canaan Baptist Church that every Wednesday of the week be devoted to prayer and fasting. The reason for this request is that as we move as a church body in 2021 there are many challenges ahead and we want to be prepared for them. Therefore, as believers we are praying and asking the Lord for the following:

1. Praying for the health of Canaan
 - a. Realigning our focus
 - b. Unity of believers
 - c. A fresh anointing
2. Praying for the church leadership
3. Praying for growth and increase
4. Praying for all members and their individual prayer request

Spiritual Preparation – The key to prayer and fasting is repentance. Unconfessed sin will hinder your prayer. Here are several things you can do to prepare spiritually:

- Ask God to search your heart (Psalms 139:23).
- Confess every sin the Holy Spirit calls to your attention and accept God's forgiveness (I John 1:9).
- Seek forgiveness from all you have knowingly offended and forgive all who have hurt you.
- Make restitution as the Holy Spirit leads you.
- Ask God to fill you with His Holy Spirit.
- Yield your mind and body and spirit to the Lordship and leadership of Christ (Romans 12:1-2).
- Meditate on the attributes of God: His love, sovereignty, power, wisdom, faithfulness, grace, mercy, and holiness.
- Begin your time of prayer and fasting with an expectant heart (Hebrews 11:6) and do not underestimate spiritual opposition (Galatians 5:16-17)

The decision on what “**type of fast**” may be an individual one: normal, absolute or partial; however, the most important activity may be that we stop any activity for a period of time that takes our eyes from the Lord. As we become more affected by His presence so do other people around us. By spending time in the secret place with God, we start to walk by the Holy Spirit in everyday life. We find that rather than striving to achieve things for God, **He is building His kingdom through us!**

• WHAT IS PRAYER •

Prayer is simply communication between man and God. Prayer is a two pronged process in which man not only talks to God but opens himself to God's response. It is the believer's way of communicating our thoughts, needs and desires to Him for ourselves or others.

Prayer is the avenue that God has provided to the believer for making known the deepest feelings of our heart. According to biblical scholar, Oswald Chambers, "***Prayer does not equip you for greater works, but is the greater work.***" Prayer is a vital key that connects us with our heavenly Father. It can move the hand of God in situations where there is no other hope. Since this is such an important component of our worship, we would do well to examine what prayer is, how we should pray, and the ingredients of prayer.

How should we pray? Our prayers need not be wordy or impressive in speech. Matthew 6:7 states, "When you pray, don't babble like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words." (NIV)

How often should we pray? If possible, there should be set times each day that we pray, or as the need arises. 1Thessalonians 5:17 states, "pray continually." (NIV)

There are several ingredients for prayer: They are: Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication and Surrender:

- **Adoration** - adore and admiration; thinking about and telling God who He is. (2 Kings 19:15)
- **Confession** - ask for forgiveness; recognizing and appreciating God for who He is will help us to recognize our own shortcomings. (1 John 1:9)
- **Thanksgiving** - after we realize how good God has been to us, in spite of us, then we are able to truly be thankful. (Psalms 100:4)
- **Supplication** - petition God; ask Him for what we want. (Ephesians 6:18, Philippians 4:6).
- **Surrender** - leave it at the altar, completely releasing all to God, commit your way unto the Lord; trust also in Him; and He should bring it to pass. (Psalms 37:5)

Communication is a vital element in any successful relationship including our relationship with God. Just as we may be able to predict the actions of a good friend or relative, because we know that person so well, so God wants us to know Him. He wants us to know His personality; who He really is. His desire is that we have the closest and most personal relationship with Him that is possible. One of the keys for building that kind of relationship lies in our having deep intimate, honest, and forthright conversations with Him: '***now that's PRAYER.***'

• EXAMPLE FASTING MEALS •

Example MEALS 1: Fruits, Vegetables, Juices, and Water

Breakfast – Fruit smoothie with whey protein

Mid-morning Snack – Fresh fruit or fresh vegetables

Lunch – Raw vegetable salad with light organic dressing and vegetable broth soup

Mid-afternoon Snack – Fresh fruit or fresh vegetables

Dinner – Fresh salad with light, organic dressing and steamed or grilled vegetables

Example MEALS 2: 100% Juice or Water Only

Breakfast – Fruit smoothie with whey protein

Mid-morning Snack – Herbal tea or vegetable broth soup

Lunch – Raw vegetables

Mid-afternoon Snack – Fresh fruit juice or fruit smoothie with whey protein

Dinner – Vegetable juice or vegetable broth soup

Example MEALS 3: Modified Daniel Fast

Breakfast – 1-2 servings whole grains with fresh fruit juice

Mid-morning Snack – Fresh fruit or fresh chopped vegetables

Lunch – 1-2 servings whole grains; fresh salad with light organic dressing

Mid-afternoon Snack – Fresh fruit or fruit smoothie with whey protein

Dinner – 1-2 whole grains; fresh salad with light organic dressing

• FOODS TO EAT •

Whole Grains: Brown Rice, Oats and Barley

Legumes: Dried Beans (Pinto, Navy, or Northern), Split Peas, Lentils, Black Eyed Peas

Fruits: Apples, Apricots, Bananas, Blackberries, Blueberries, Boysenberries, Cantaloupe, Cherries, Cranberries, Figs, Grapefruit, Grapes, Guava, Honeydew Melon, Kiwi, Lemons, Limes, Mangoes, Nectarines, Oranges, Papayas, Peaches, Pears, Pineapples, Plums, Prunes, Raisins, Raspberries, Strawberries, Tangelos, Tangerines and Watermelon.

Vegetables: Artichokes, Asparagus, Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Carrots, Cauliflower, Celery, Chili Peppers, Collards, Corn, Cucumbers, Eggplants, Garlic, Gingerroot, Kale, Leeks, Lettuce, Mushrooms, Mustard Greens, Okra, Onions, Parsley, Potatoes, Radishes, Rutabagas, Scallions, Spinach, Sprouts, Squashes, Sweet Potatoes, Tomatoes, Turnips, Watercress, Yams, and Zucchini

Seeds: Nuts, Sprouts

Liquids: Water, All- Natural Fruit Juices, 100% All-Natural Vegetable Juices, Herbal Caffeine-Free Teas, Honey or Sugar in the Raw (Turbinado)

Water: Drink plenty of water daily throughout the fast.

• FOODS AND BEVERAGES TO AVOID •

Meats, White Rice, Fried Foods
Cakes, Cookies, Pastries and Pies
White Sugar, Sugar Substitutes
White Flour or Any Food Items Containing flour
Margarine, Shortening, High Fat Products
Alcohol, Wine and All Soda
Coffee, Tea, Hot Chocolate with Caffeine

DRINK PLENTY OF WATER THROUGHOUT THE FAST!

• HOW DO I PREPARE TO PRAY •

In **2021** we are asking the entire Canaan family to pray and ask God for His divine guidance in every spiritual aspect that we have planned and most of all, that everything be done, “decently and in order”.

We will briefly review “**What is prayer**” and then focus on “**How do I prepare to pray**”.

1. **Prayer is our communication with God.** It is the privilege that everyone who believes in God and who accepts His Son Jesus the Christ as his Lord and Savior enjoys, including all the benefits that Jesus has to offer. It is the access that we who are mere mortals have with the Divine Creator of the universe. The Bible exhorts us in Hebrews 4:16, “Let us then fearlessly and confidently and boldly draw near to the throne of grace (the throne of God’s unmerited favor for us sinners) that we may receive mercy (for our failures) and find grace to help in good time for every need.” Amplified Version
2. **Prayer is the soil in which hope and healing grow best.**
3. **Prayer is our acknowledgment of our need for God.**

Now, let us examine **how we prepare to pray**. The Lord has given us some requirements found in the Bible for successful prayer.

1. **A humble heart** as II Chronicles 7:14 states, “If my people who are called by my name would humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and will heal their land.” If we earnestly pursue to have a humble heart, God will hear our prayers and grant our petitions. The Lord despises the arrogant person, who believes that they are in control of their lives.
2. **We want to pray wholeheartedly**, that is, put our entire heart into our prayer, honestly with fervor totally believing that God is able to hear our petitions. Jeremiah 29:13 tell us that, “you will seek me and find me when you seek me with all of your heart.”
3. **Pray in faith** believing that God hears and answers our prayers. In Mark 11:24 Jesus states, “Therefore I tell you whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it and it will be yours.”
4. We want to be in **right standing with God, righteous**. We cannot approach God, who we cannot see, if we are feuding with our brother, who we see daily. We want to follow James 5:16, “Therefore, confess your sin to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.”
5. We also want to be **obedient to God** when we pray. 1 John 3:22 gives us a further understanding, “And when we receive whatever we request because we obey Him and do the things that please Him.”

• **NEVER DOUBT WHAT PRAYER CAN DO** •

13 REASONS TO PRAY (KJV)

1. Prayer opens the door to the secrets of God. *Jeremiah 33:3, 1 Corinthians 2:9-10*
2. Prayer puts our lives at peace with God and sets a place for us in eternity. *Romans 10:9-10*
3. Prayer changes our destiny and restores our nations. *2 Chronicles 7:14*
4. Prayer helps us to find (and keeps us in) the will of God. *Colossians 4:12*
5. Prayer gives us boldness. *Acts 4:31*
6. Prayer and fasting gives us a supernatural power over demonic forces. *Matthew 17:21*
7. Prayer protects our families, blesses men and keeps worldly and godly authorities in order. *1 Timothy 2:1-2*
8. Prayer keeps us from temptations. *Matthew 6:13, 26:41*
9. Prayer is our path to perfect peace and our substitute for anxiety. *Philippians 4:6-7, Isaiah 26:3*
10. Prayer is God's will. *1 Thessalonians 5:16-18*
11. Prayer makes good what we eat. *1 Timothy 4:5*
12. Prayer heals our physical bodies. *James 5:15*
13. Prayer gives us strength and wisdom to handle our enemies. *Psalms 109:3-4*

- Day 10 / Jan. 13th: Prayer Focus – Spiritual Growth** – “But grow in the grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.” *2 Peter 3:18 (KJV)*
- Day 11 / Jan. 14th: Prayer Focus – Sanctification** – “If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, [and] prepared unto every good work.” *2 Timothy 2:21 (KJV)*
- Day 12 / Jan. 15th: Prayer Focus – Healing** – “Fear thou not; for I [am] with thee: be not dismayed; for I [am] thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.” *Isaiah 41:10 (KJV)*
- Day 13 / Jan. 16th: Prayer Focus – Intercessors** – “I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all me;” *1 Timothy 2:1 (KJV)*
- Day 14 / Jan. 17th: Prayer Focus – Families** – “And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” *Genesis 28:14 (KJV)*
- Day 15 / Jan. 18th: Prayer Focus – Young Adults** – “But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.” *1 Timothy 6:11 (KJV)*
- Day 16 / Jan. 19th: Prayer Focus – Seniors** – “Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.” *2 Corinthians 4:16 (NIV)*
- Day 17 / Jan. 20th: Prayer Focus – Finance/Stewardship** – “Honor the LORD with your wealth and with the first fruits of all your produce; then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine.” *Proverbs 3:9-10 (ESV)*
- Day 18 / Jan. 21st: Prayer Focus – Unity** – “I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.” *John 17:23 (ESV)*
- Day 19 / Jan. 22nd: Prayer Focus – Immigrants** – “This is what the LORD Almighty said: ‘Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another. Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the foreigner or the poor. Do not plot evil against each other.’ *Zechariah 7:9-10 (NIV)*
- Day 20 / Jan. 23rd: Prayer Focus – Racial Understanding** – “In Christ family there can be no division into Jew and non-Jew, slave and free, male and female. Among us you are all equal. That is, we are all in common relationship with Jesus Christ. Also, since you are Christ's family, then you are Abraham's famous “descendant”, heirs according to the covenant promises.” *Galatians 3:28-29 (MSG)*
- Day 21 / Jan. 24th: Prayer Focus – Evangelism** – “So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelist, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ” *Ephesians 4:11-13 (NIV)*

• THE PRAYER AND FASTING 21-DAY PRAYER FOCUS •

As we prepare for this rich spiritual experience, we are providing daily prayer focus concerns. Let us witness the power of God move when the saints are united in prayer and fasting for these concerns.

Instructions for Getting Started

On your first day of fasting remember:

- Pray and stay in God's Word
- Drink plenty of water
- Keep your focus and avoid temptation
- Remember your fast and its purpose
- God will give you grace to succeed
- Play praise and worship music as much as possible
- Keep a daily journal

Day 1 / Jan. 4th: Prayer Focus – Revival – *“Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.” Jeremiah 33:3 (KJV)*

Day 2 / Jan. 5th: Prayer Focus – Love – *“And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.” 1 John 4:16 (KJV)*

Day 3 / Jan. 6th: Prayer Focus – Joy – *“I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High.” Psalms 9:2 (KJV)*

Day 4 / Jan. 7th: Prayer Focus – Peace – *“Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.” Colossians 3:15 (NIV)*

Day 5 / Jan. 8th: Prayer Focus – Longsuffering – *“Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;” Colossians 3:12 (KJV)*

Day 6 / Jan. 9th: Prayer Focus – Gentleness – *“Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation: and thy right hand hath holden me up, and thy gentleness hath made me great” Psalms 18:35 (KJV)*

Day 7 / Jan. 10th: Prayer Focus – Goodness – *“He loveth righteousness and judgment: the earth is full of the goodness of the LORD.” Psalms 33:5 (KJV)*

Day 8 / Jan. 11th: Prayer Focus – Faith – *“For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.” Romans 1:17 (KJV)*

Day 9 / Jan. 12th: Prayer Focus – Leadership – *“But Jesus called them together and said, “You know that the rulers in this world lord it over their people, and officials flaunt their authority over those under them. But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must become your slave.” Matthew 20:25-27 (NLT)*

• WHAT IS FASTING AND EXAMPLES OF FASTING •

The “act of fasting” is to refrain from food and drink for a spiritual purpose. Fasting brings one into a deeper, more intimate and powerful relationship with the Lord. When you eliminate food from your diet for a number of days, your spirit becomes uncluttered by the things of this world and amazingly sensitive to the things of God. And we have numerous examples of true servants of God who turned to this spiritual practice to draw close to the Almighty. Of course, the act of fasting can also relate to abstinence from other things that we take in. For instance, we can decide to abstain from participating in certain activities such as watching television, playing videogames, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Pinterest and shopping, etc. As in all things, we would want to please God in all that we do. In pursuit of that end, we learned that there are three different types of fasts and of course the Bible gives us good examples of each.

Types of Fasts in the Bible

The three types of fasts found in Scripture are Normal, Absolute and Partial:

- **Normal** – total abstinence from food. An example: Jesus “ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry.” (Luke 4:2 NIV)
- **Absolute** - abstinence from both food and water. Example: “For three days Paul was blind, and did not eat or drink anything.” (Acts 9:9 NIV)
- **Partial** – restriction of diet rather than complete abstinence. Example: Daniel “So the guard took away their choice food and the wine they were to drink and gave them vegetables instead.” (Daniel 1:16 NIV)

Examples of Fasting in the Bible

1. Moses fasted as he received the revelation of the covenant between God and Israel. (Exodus 34:27-28)
2. Esther called a corporate fast for favor with the King to prevent the destruction of the Jews. (Esther 4:16)
3. Jesus began his public ministry with fasting, led by the Spirit into the wilderness. (Matthew 4:2)
4. Anna fasted and prayed for over sixty years, and she knew who Jesus was the moment she laid her eyes upon him. She was one of the first to proclaim the coming of the Messiah. (Luke 2:37)
5. The leaders of the early church fasted for discernment and direction when leading and making decisions in the early church. Paul was sent onto his first missionary journey after fasting. (Acts 13:1-5)

• DANIEL FAST •

The “Daniel Fast” is a partial fast from meats, sweets, breads and any drink except water for a specific time period (Daniel 10:2-3). That means you are eating vegetables, fruits and drink water only.

The History of the Daniel Fast

The Daniel Fast is found in Daniel 1:5-20 and Daniel 10:2-3. The purposes were:

1. To overcome the flesh.
2. For spiritual breakthroughs.

During the third year of the reign of King Jehoiakim in Judah, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon sieged Jerusalem and took with him hostages to Babylon, “youth without blemish, well-favored in appearance and skillful in all wisdom, discernment, and understanding, apt in learning knowledge, competent to stand and serve in the king’s palace” (Daniel 1:4 AMP). Daniel and his three (3) friends: Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah were part of that group of youth. The Bible states, “the king assigned them a daily amount of food and wine from the king’s table” (Daniel 1:5 NIV). They were to be trained for three years, and after that they were to enter the king’s service.

However, verse 8 states, “But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine.” Daniel did not want to eat the king’s delicacies because it would have included food that was forbidden by the Mosaic Law ([Leviticus 11](#)); eating it would mean defiling his body. Alternatively, it could have been because the king’s meats had been dedicated to the false Babylonian idols as was their practice. Daniel believed to do so would have been to acknowledge their idols as deities, against God’s commandments. Daniel made a request of Ashpenaz, the king’s chief of court officials to feed him and his three companions vegetables and water. Ashpenaz secretly fed them nothing but vegetables and water for ten days. At the end of ten days, he compared them to the other men. Daniel and his friends looked healthier and better nourished than any of those who ate the royal food. As a result of their decision not to defile themselves, “God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom” (Daniel 1:17 AMP). And when they came before the king, “he found them ten times better than all the (learned) magicians and enchanters who were in his whole realm” (Daniel 1:20).

Another example of Daniel fasting is found in (Daniel 10:2-3 NIV), which says, “At that time I, Daniel, mourned for three weeks. I ate no choice food; no meat or wine touched my lips; and I used no lotions at all until the three weeks were over.” Daniel began another fast, taking no sweets, no meat, and no wine for three weeks, during that time he was focused on prayer. At the end, his prayer was answered by an angel.

Therefore, we learn from these two (2) examples found in Daniel, that if we are willing to subdue our flesh and focus on prayer, our relationship with the Almighty will deepen, we will grow in wisdom about the things of God and walk worthy of the name, Christians.

• PRAYER OF CONSECRATION •

Father, I consecrate this fast to you and set my mind to gain understanding in these matters for which I am concerned. (Write your concerns out and keep them before your eyes. Do not lose sight of the reason for your fast.)

I humble myself before You, Most High God. In accordance with Daniel 10:1-3, I will eat no _____ for the period of _____ days.

I obey the Word of Jesus by putting on festive clothing, so that no one will suspect that I am fasting.

Father, You know every secret, and I look to You for my reward. I am assured that You hear me when I pray according to Your will, and I know that I shall have the petitions that I desire of You.

Father, I delight myself in You, and You cause my desires to be agreeable with Your will.

I choose the fast which You have chosen: to lose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free, and to break every yoke. I share my food with the hungry and provide the poor wanderer with shelter – when I see the naked, I will clothe him, and I will not turn away for my own flesh and blood. Then my light will break forth like the dawn, and my healing will quickly appear; then my righteousness will go before me, and Your glory, Lord, will be my rear guard.

Father, thank You for cleansing my spirit, soul and body. All my ways seem innocent to me, but my motives are weighed by You, my Lord and my Master. I commit this fast to You, and my plans will succeed. I thank You that it is You Who give the wise answer to the tongue.

Forever; O Lord, Your Word stands firm in heaven. Your faithfulness extends to every generation, like the earth You created; it endures by Your decree, for everything serves Your plans.

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Scripture References:

Matthew 6:17,18 TLB; 1 John 5:14,15; Psalms 37:4; Proverbs 16:3 AMP; Isaiah 58:6-8 TLB; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Proverbs 16:2,3 NIV; Proverbs 16:1; Psalms 119:89-91 TLB