



MACEDONIA CHURCH OF GROVETOWN

2020 Consecration

CLARITY: FOCUSED FAITH FULFILLED



Due to health restrictions, some people may not be able to complete every aspect of the fast. Please consult with your doctor before entering this fast. At a minimum, go as far as your health will allow.

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Introduction

In the ten years of ministry, we have had wonderful experiences getting to know the many people God has sent through our ministry. In these ten years, we have touched over 1,800 lives. Many have received what God had for them in this ministry and transitioned to their next duty station, job, or other endeavors. As we move forward, I believe God is calling each of us to **activate** our gifts through the vision and mandate of taking earthly families to a Godly glory through education, emancipation, and empowerment. As we embrace this season of Consecration, we should embrace the idea of God using us collectively and individually to focus on Him and fulfill the vision of transforming this community into an epicenter of family restoration!

Isaiah 6 New International Version (NIV)

6 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne; and the train of His robe filled the temple. 2 Above Him were seraphim, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. 3 And they were calling to one another: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of His glory." 4 At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke. 5 "Woe to me!" I cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty." 6 Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. 7 With it he touched my mouth and said, "See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for." 8 Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for Us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!"

I believe that we are poised to see God's will manifested as we understand, and move into the next level spiritually, physically, emotionally, economically, and ecumenically. Last year we built a strong foundation that will transform our lives and our children's children lives as well. As we embark into this endeavor to embrace and realize the personal and corporate vision of God, we need to stay alert, and spiritually prepared for the powerful distractions and deterrents great visionaries like Isaiah, Joseph, Martin Luther King, and so many other men of Faith confronted. When fulfilling things that elevate you and the future of your children, we will face spiritual Uzziahs, haters, and the status quo. In a sense, we face an enemy that prefers that you stay broken and common. To fulfill vision it requires preparation, sacrifice, focus, commitment, and will. As Christ suffered to create righteousness for us, we will volunteer to suffer to have a greater relationship with Him and to establish and fulfill a multi-generational vision to putting God at the head of our lives. To prepare for our year of FOCUSED FAITH FULFILLED, we will have two fasts going during the same period, in that you may choose either a 40-day fast or 21-day fast as the Spirit of the Lord leads.

The number 40 has great significance in the bible. We find the ultimate testimony to its significance when studying its commonality to events in the lives of people and ultimately Jesus. The number 40 is the number of divine testing and dominion. Please note some examples of the biblical significance to the number 40.

- It rained for 40 days and 40 nights when God wanted to cleanse the world and start over.
(Gen 7:12 KJV) And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights.
- Noah waited another 40 days after it rained before he opened a window in the Ark.
(Gen 8:6 KJV) And it came to pass at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made:
- Embalming required 40 days (although this was an Egyptian custom, the Egyptians recognized the period of 40 for the preparation of going into a new life, what they called the afterlife)
(Gen 50:3 KJV) And forty days were fulfilled for him; for so are fulfilled the days of those which are embalmed: and the Egyptians mourned for him threescore and ten days
- Moses was on the mountain with God for 40 days (TWICE)
(Exo 24:18 KJV) And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and gat him up into the mount: and Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights.
(Exo 34:28-29 KJV) And he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments.
*(Deu 10:10 NIV) Now I had stayed on the mountain forty days and nights, **as I did the first time**, and the LORD listened to me at this time. It was not His will to destroy you.*
- Moses' face shone after the 40 days on the mountain.
(Exo 34:29 KJV) And it came to pass, when Moses came down from mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses' hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him.
- It took the spies 40 days to search out the Promised Land and bring back fruit.
(Num 13:25 KJV) And they returned from searching of the land after forty days.
- The Israelites spent 40 years in the wilderness, one year for each day they explored the Promised Land.
(Exo 16:35 KJV) And the children of Israel did eat manna forty years, until they came to a land inhabited; they did eat manna, until they came unto the borders of the land of Canaan.
(Num 14:33-34 NIV) Your children will be shepherds here for forty years, suffering for your unfaithfulness, until the last of your bodies lies in the desert. {34} For forty years--one year for each of the forty days you explored the land--you will suffer for your sins and know what it is like to have Me against you.
- Goliath came for forty days before being killed by David
(1 Sam 17:16 NLT) For forty days, twice a day, morning and evening, the Philistine giant strutted in front of the Israelite army.
- Elijah strengthened by one angelic meal went forty days to Mount Horeb where the Lord passed by and he heard the voice of God
(1 Ki 19:8 KJV) And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God.

- Jonah warned the City of Nineveh they had 40 days until God would overthrow the city. The people repented in those 40 days and God spared the city.
(Jonah 3:4 and 10 KJV) *And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.*
And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that He had said that He would do unto them; and He did it not.
- Jesus fasted for 40 days in the wilderness
(Mat 3:17 KJV) *And lo a voice from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."* (Mat 4:1-2 KJV) *Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. {2} And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He was afterward a hungered.*
- Jesus was seen in the earth 40 days after His crucifixion
(Acts 1:3 NIV) *After His suffering, He showed Himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that He was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God.*

We see commonly divine changes coming about after 40 days. In addition, we see divine direction after a 21-day fast. Daniel's experience came up in my Spirit (Daniel 10:2-14). In this, what was already available in the Spirit was manifested after a 21-day fast. The vision for God's people became clear to Daniel at that time.

I believe we are in a season of divine provision; a breakthrough is available to us, but we cannot seek a divine blessing with mortal concepts or ideology. We must seek divine provision through God's eyes. Proverbs 3:5-6 tells us that we must trust in God wholeheartedly, and He will direct our path. To receive from God, we must **activate** His statutes and operate in His divine direction. Are you seeking answers from the Lord right now?

It is my prayer that all stay faithful to this consecration for the sake of God's righteousness. As we take up this cross, I believe God will glorify the work with meeting our request. Keep in mind that fasting alone does nothing to make us consecrated. We must also consecrate our thinking and our time. Commit yourselves to prayer and study while in this consecration. Remember to keep your mind right because without a mind connection to the consecration for God, you are just dieting.



UNDERSTANDING Prayer and Fasting



Why Pray?

Prayer is important during your fast. Prayer keeps you focused and in communication with God. Just in case you are like many people who wonder about how to pray, Jesus gave the disciples the model for prayer. The disciples of Jesus asked Him how to pray. He gave them an example. How does the Lord's Prayer serve as a model for prayer?

There are several elements to it:

- Recognition that God is who He says He is
- Offering respect and acknowledgment to His supremacy
- Recognition that the universe is His
- Humility from the petitioner
- Request for the supply of daily needs for sustenance
- Acknowledging that there is evil, therefore, requesting aid/deliverance when confronted with it
- Request for the forgiveness of personal sin and an attitude of forgiveness towards others
- Request for guidance

The Word tells us we should pray without ceasing, but in many cases, we pray and when we do not immediately see the results, we stop praying and assume that God is not listening. Unanswered prayer can be very troubling and painful so remember the following as you create a lifestyle of habitual prayer.

1. ***When prayer does not bring results, it is an indication that something is wrong.*** The Word of God in the Old and the New Testament will give insight to why prayers are not answered and the type of prayers in which God will respond. God answers prayers as soon as we request, but the revelation of His answer is based on divine timing. Luke 18:1
2. ***God is faithful to answer prayer.*** We teach through slang when things seem impossible that it doesn't have a prayer, but prayer is to show that nothing is impossible. Mark 11:24
3. ***God's will and Word do work when they are understood and put into practice.*** Praying the Word of God should accompany understanding.

True prayer will do the following:

- Build intimacy with God
- Bring honor to His nature and character
- Cause respect for His integrity
- Enable belief in His Word
- Cause trust in His love
- Affirm His purpose and will
- Appropriate His promise

What Does the Bible Say about Prayer?

Throughout the Bible, people sought God's assistance and guidance through prayer. Prayer was and is a form of praise and thanksgiving as well. The Psalmist, David, is noted for his lyrical praises, supplications, and intense emotional outpourings:

*"I will lift up my eyes to the mountains;
From whence shall my help come?
My help comes from the Lord,
Who made Heaven and Earth,
He will not allow your foot to slip;
He who keeps you will not slumber..." (Psalm 121:1-3).*

Praying with God's Word

If it is accepted that the Bible is God's inspired word, then praying His word will impact His will. "So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me, empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it" (*Isaiah 55:11*). Additionally, faith is a necessary element: "And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him" (*Hebrews 11:6*).

Mercy, Struggling with Faith

However, God is merciful to those who are struggling with faith issues. For example, a distraught father sought the aid of Jesus' disciples. The father's son was possessed by a demon, which harmed the boy and prevented the boy from speaking and hearing. The disciples failed to cast out the demon. The father pleaded for Jesus' help in the matter. Jesus asked the father if he believed. The father's response: "...if You can, take pity upon us and help us!" Jesus replied, "If you can have faith, all things are possible to him who believes!" The father replied, "I do believe; help my unbelief!"

Jesus cast out the demon and the boy was restored to his father (*Mark 9:14-27*).

God Wants People to Pray

The Bible clearly declares that God wants people to pray to Him: *Isaiah 64:7-8* says

"⁷And there is none that calleth upon Thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of Thee: for Thou hast hid Thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities. ⁸But now, O LORD, Thou art our Father; we are the clay, and Thou our potter; and we all are the work of Thy hand.

We should have continual prayer in our lives.

"...pray without ceasing..." / Thessalonians 5:17

Types of Prayer

Kenneth Hagin in his book 'The Art of Prayer', spoke of several types of prayer and even claimed that many people limit God in their prayers because of the limited understanding of prayer. Ephesians 6:18 indicated that we should pray with all manner of prayer. The bible teaches several types of prayer. These are a few:

Prayer of consecration = In this prayer, we dedicate our lives to the Lord for His use. In this we pray that His will be done.

Prayer of faith = The prayer of faith is a prayer of petition. (The prayer that changes things.) Matthew 21:22; Mark 11:24. This prayer is always based on the Word of God revealed to us in the Word. These prayers never contain the word "if". God's Word is final all by itself.

Prayer of commitment = In the prayer of commitment, we cast our cares on the Lord. (I Peter 5:7)

Prayer of worship = The type of prayer that invokes the presence of God. God inhabits praise of His people and this is a prayer of adoration. Luke 24:52, 53; Acts 13:1-4

Prayer of Agreement = When your prayer agrees with strategic actions from heaven. Mathew 18:18-20

Praying in the Spirit = (Praying in tongue) I Corinthians 14:14, 15

United Prayer = Prayer for strength of purpose for a group of believers in God. Acts 4:23-31

Prayer of Supplication = A requisition from God. Philippians 4:6

Intercessory Prayer = A prayer of mercy for another. (Gen 18:16-33; Micah 7:18; Ez 33:11)

When you pray, keep in mind the following twelve biblical principles of your prayer life. -

Power and purpose of prayer by Dr. Myles Monroe

1. **Become Silent** – Matthew 6:6 speaks of the first act of prayer. Get away from all into a place where you will not be disturbed. Getting quiet helps you to eliminate distractions. Getting quiet and putting your mind on God expresses your humility before Him as well. Isaiah 26:3 speaks of a peace that is more than enough. Meaning place of prosperity.
2. **Give adoration** – This step is the hallowing of the name of God (Luke 11:2). Adoration means worshiping God. When you adore someone, you express how precious they are to you.
3. **Make confession** – Confession is made when you allow the Spirit of God to speak of your sins and you come in agreement with them by confessing your condition, once it is exposed to you by the Holy Spirit. (Gal 5:16) In confession, gain forgiveness and purity. (1 John 1:9-10)
4. **Give thanks** – After confessions we should give thanks to God. (1 Thess 5:16-18) Thanksgiving at this point is primarily because your heart is free from the things you confessed.
5. **Make supplication** – Philippians 4:6 speaks of the fact that we should not be anxious. but should rather go to Him in prayer and make our request known to God.
6. **Specify petitions and requests** – When we come before the judge we should be prepared and not use useless words. Know specifically what you want to request and know what the Word of God says concerning your desire. (Ecclesiastes 5:2) Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore, let thy words be few.
7. **Secure the promises** – This step is a part of step six. When you are petitioning God, you are doing it based on His promise. Embrace the right to the promises of God. (2 Corinthians 1:20) Embrace that you are entitled to every promise God made to you. The answer to your needs as related to the promises of God is Yes and Amen.
8. **Plead the case** – Prayer is a legal art whereby you are talking to a just judge concerning your rights as in Luke 18:1-8. In this chapter with the unjust judge, Jesus is explaining how to get your prayers answered.
9. **Believe** – The power of our prayer is faith. Jesus speaks of the power of believing in Luke 18:22-24. Daniel 10:10-15 shows how when Daniel prayed God answered immediately. Mark 9:24 we see a man speaking to Jesus saying he believed, but asking for help in his lacking in faith. We cannot allow doubt to enter into our prayers. James 1:5-7 says our prayers should be without wavering.
10. **Give thanks** – This is the second thanksgiving and is different in reason, but the same in nature. Just like the thanksgiving in the fourth step of prayer, this step is thanksgiving to what is divinely completed in God. In this, you are thanking God for what you don't see, believing it is already done. Thanking God activates Angels (Hebrew 1:14)
11. **Live in expectation** – Live in expectation knowing that what is done in prayer is manifesting physically.
12. **Practice active belief** – In Luke 11:1 Jesus starts with prayer but completes his teachings with ask, seek, and knock. This speaks to the life we live after prayer indicating that we should not only expect what we requested in prayer but we should operate as if its available. Searching for what God has done.

There are six hurdles to answered prayer

- Learning about prayer, but not practicing it – false sense of satisfaction.
- Mental assent, rather than action – agrees with God, but does not believe.
- Hearing the words, but not absorbing it – absorbing the Word is to meditate on it.
- Hoping, rather than having faith – This hope is wishful thinking hope, not biblical hope; faith is knowing.
- Praying for faith – If we are praying for faith, then we do not believe.
- Laziness/Cares of the world – Matthew 25:26 wicked service allows life concerns to keep us from the faith of work.

Major hindrances to prayer

Why Fast?

We fast to unlock divine resources or to strengthen your relationship with God. Isaiah 58 mentions a number of resources available. To mention a few: protection, revelation, provision, revival, God's presence, deliverance, and much more.

In the Old Testament, the word "fasting" in the Hebrew meant, "to cover your mouth". In the New Testament, it means, "not to eat". Therefore, biblical fasting cannot be anything other than not eating. Fasting from television, radio, or other things cannot be considered biblical fasting. It could only be seen as abstinence. We cannot discount the significance and the spiritual benefits you get from abstaining, but we cannot mistakenly call it fasting.

What makes Fasting Useless?

Isaiah 58 also describes the characteristics of a bad fast.

- Fasting for image – it is not for looking religious. Zach 7:5
- Fasting as a merit badge – To get merit with God. Isaiah 58:3
- Fasting to feed a religious spirit – Isaiah 58:3-4
- Fasting to form an illusion of godliness – Isaiah 58:5
- Grind off all religions – Because other religions fast.

Biblical Fasts

1. The Esther Fast- three day fast (no food or no water) for God's favor (Esther 4:6). In times of trouble or great crisis, we should not fall apart. We should rise up against the enemy.
2. The Daniel Fast – a 21-Day Fast – Consisting of only vegetables, fruit, and water. – Daniel 10:2-3, Daniel 10:10-11, 14
3. The Self-Examination Fast - the one-day fast – Leviticus 23:27. This is the type of fast indicated in Jeremiah 36:6. Before the Day of Atonement, God's people went through a one-day fast for self-examination and consecration.
4. The Fast before the battle – Judges 20. In this passage, we see God's people consulting God for a battle. God permitted them on two occasions to go into battle and they lost 40,000 soldiers in each pursuit. On the third approach, they fasted and gave burnt offerings. God then gave them the victory. We should never go into battle without fasting first.
5. Fasting to lift the judgment of God. 1 Kings 21:27-29
6. Fasting for healing – Isaiah 58 6-9. In this passage, you will find the quote, "Your healing will spring forth speedily.
7. The Domination Fast – The forty-day fast – Matthew 4. Jesus fasted 40 days before starting His ministry.

When you fast, you will raise up a foundation for many generations. In Ezra 8:21, we find this illustrated. In addition, we see in the passage the powerful reasons for a fast.

- First, we fast to seek direction from God. *God will reveal the right direction to go in when you are in transition. We should never make decisions without a fast first.*
- Secondly, we fast for our children. *In Ezra, the word says that we can raise a foundation for generations through our fasting.*
- Thirdly, we fast for substance. See Ezra 21. *We fast to petition God about our substance, our resources, and our finances. By this, we are affirming that God is the source of our supply. We bring alive the words of the Psalmist declared, "The earth is the Lord's and fullness thereof".*

Write some of the things you need to focus on during your Passion Fast:

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.”

Philippians 4:6

Prepare for the Fast

These are a few things you need to do to prepare yourself and your household for fasting:

1. **Establish a place and a time where you can pray.** Prayer is critical while fasting; it is the time where you will experience breakthrough and have what the Lord is saying to you.
2. **Plan to drink plenty of water** during your fast.
3. **Establish a time for reading and meditating on the Word.** Read the Word and think through what you have read.
4. Your goal is closeness with God. Do not let the legalistic aspect of the fast crowd out the relational aspect.
5. **You must refrain from critical speaking**, spreading negative words about or to anyone. If you have friends that tempt you into this lifestyle, then you must plan to take a break from them.
6. **Limit watching and listening to the TV and Radio;** Focusing on religious and educational shows, rather than things that could possibly cloud your judgment.
7. **Establish a form of accountability** during your fast, either a prayer partner or another person in the fast.
8. **Check your mind at all times.** Remember if it means nothing to you, then it will mean nothing to God. If you do not combine your fasting with prayer and the Word, it will mean nothing more than dieting.



STRENGTHENING Your Consecration

Ten Fasting Tips For a Successful Fast

By Ron Lagerquist

The following provide some practical fasting tips that will assist you in fasting with the least number of distractions. They come from a resource of personal experience of those who fast often and have been forced to learn the hard way to find the smoothest path into the, sometimes difficult, personal terrain of fasting. During a fast, focus is critical. You will become painfully aware of how noisy, chaotic, and cluttered your world has become. This is because fasting will force you to slow down. Vacations allow us to leave our busy life for a while and escape to a quieter landscape. Fasting is quite the opposite, instead of an escape; you will come face to face with your life in a new way. It can be overwhelming, even unmanageable when all the years of useless pursuits flash before you, demanding focus and attention.

Here are ten principles that will help manage the chaos and find victory and power over your life again.

1. Tell the least number of people that you are fasting.

Fasting is an exciting event and it is easy to blab off to everyone that you are on a fast, especially when you begin to experience the incredible benefits. The problem is that you set yourself up for failure and disappointment when you make your fast public. There are two reasons for this:

First, most people will think that you are crazy. They will not understand. And if you do not have any fear of fasting, they will supply all the fear you need. Satan often uses those who are closest to us to cause the most trouble.

- *You look like you have aids!*
- *You're becoming a fanatic!*
- *You're going to become protein deficient!*
- *Times have changed, people don't fast anymore!*
- *Are you under a doctor's supervision?*

Fear, fear, fear, fear--the last thing you need on your fast is fear. Keep in mind, fear does not come from God; it comes from the devil.

Secondly, do not tell people that you are fasting as it can cause the fast to become a law to your heart. When you are tempted to break the fast, the thinking will be that, *Aunt Myrtle, Uncle Ed, Dad, Mom, and half the church knows I'm on a fast. If I quit now, I'll be humiliated in front of all of them.*

Your fast is between you and God and no one else. And when you are being tempted to break, you don't need to be concerned with Aunt Myrtle. You are fasting because you are in *love* with Jesus. The key to a great fast is to stay fixed on Jesus, not people or circumstances. Keeping your fast between you and God will help you stay focused in times of temptation.

2. Turn off the TV.

Watching TV while on a spiritual fast will become increasingly ridiculous. In every commercial, you are being tempted with food. Most of all, it destroys your Christ-focus. It is not going to kill you to turn off the TV and radio, and stop buying the newspaper. The world will continue happily along without your presence. Of the many times I have broken a fast, I can usually root it back to allowing myself some form of earthly distraction.

Even a short fast has many different stages. Fasting speeds up your emotional state to the point where one moment you will have a sense of closeness to God with a feeling of well-being, then the next moment the bottom falls out and you feel empty and cold.

Remember, a tug-of-war is going on in the soul between the flesh that is being inflicted and the spirit that is being strengthened.

You are the most vulnerable when you're feeling deprived. **That is the time when you must be aware of the temptation to find an escape.** Let God be your entertainment. Turn to Him when you feel deprived.

Look for your Bible, not the converter!

3. Get alone with God.

Fasting and solitude have always gone hand in hand. Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit away from the crowds into the desert (Luke 5:15).

What kind of man would King David have been if he had not spent countless lonely nights as a shepherd? The stars were his friends and playing the harp was a way of expressing his heart to God. It is in loneliness and the quietness of solitude that we learn friendship with Jesus. It does not matter how large a ministry you have; you need to get alone with God. Your ministry will survive without you--and if it doesn't, it was built on the wrong foundation, *you* not Christ!

4. Feast on His Word.

Just think of all those lost hours of time spent on radio, television, and newspapers. Well, during your fast make a diet adjustment. Saturate yourself in His Word. Use every available means possible--tapes, books, videos, Christian television, but most of all, the Bible.

However, be careful, you might develop a renewed mind. You may begin to think differently. Behavior patterns may begin to surface that others will think fanatical.

The Word will develop within you an irrepressible enthusiasm that, *you can do all things in Christ who is your strength, and you are the righteousness of God.* You might have the nerve even to think that the only difference between you and the apostle Paul is that he didn't have a cordless phone. In your spare time, you may start a new hobby, like casting out demons or healing the sick.

We are not ignorant of the power of media to change peoples' thinking. Can you imagine the power the creative Words of God will have on your thinking if you begin to fill yourself with His spiritual food?

5. Meditate.

Christians, especially in North America, have lost the art of meditation. In fact, we almost consider it a pagan practice. *But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law, he meditates day and night (Psalm 1:2).*

For the most part, our thinking, especially for the undisciplined, has a mind of its own. We are victims of our own thoughts. I'm sure that you've experienced it time and again. You could be driving your car, and without any conscious decision, you begin to worry. You envision yourself in the worst-case scenario and before you know it, you are embraced by a mood of melancholy and despair.

Through meditation, we wrestle down negative thoughts and emotions that plague us every day. Meditation is a discipline of the mind where you take charge of your thoughts, directing them towards God.

We are a society of lazy thinkers. Television has become an electronic imagination. It determines, with vivid stereo and full color imagery, how we feel and think.

Try sitting down, closing your eyes and allow your imagination to be filled with a single thought. *You have been chosen by God before the creation of this world, according to His good pleasure and will.*

Allow your mind to be filled with the implication of how that single truth affects who you are, and your importance to this world. This will be difficult because negative thoughts come easiest to the mind. They are safe.

As you travel throughout your thinking, you will begin to experience obstacles of fear and unbelief. Those thoughts will oppose themselves against the Word of God. You will find that often your first experience with meditation is like a wrestling match in the mind, instead of an experience of peace and stillness. As you begin to experience the authority you have over your own thinking, the floodgates of joy will burst within you, maybe for the first time. You will develop an awareness of how you and the Word of God are one in your thinking.

There may be fifty years of hardened residue built up that you will have to come up against as you meditate to internalize the Word. The Word of God is the single force in all of eternity that is able to enter your thinking and recreate your character, mind, and emotions, transforming them into the image of Christ.

There is nothing spiritual about opening a Bible and reading it. Christians all over North America do that in their personal devotions and remain unchanged. Meditation opens the soul to the Word that it may begin to come in and make great change.

We suggest that you take a scripture or a single nugget of truth and meditate all day. Look at your reflex-thinking, see if it conforms to that truth--and if it does not, cast it down as an evil thing that hinders you from communing with God.

6. Go for walks alone.

Clouds, a breeze in the face, flowers, trees, sun, moon, and stars are the expressions of God to you--His creation. As you fast, your five senses will become sharp and clear, allowing the loveliness of God in all that He has made to impact your soul. Whether winter or summer, go for long walks with

God. Invite Him to come with you. Experience the beauty of what He has made to feel the quality and vastness of His universe. Reach outward with your soul, embracing God through what He has made.

7. Take a phone break.

Clear your schedule. Take a break from the phone. No interruptions! This is a period to minister to Christ and your own spiritual need for deeper intimacy with Him. Whatever ministry you are involved with, it can survive without you. If it falls apart without you, God's not running it.

Withdraw from people's lives for a time of intimacy with God. Jesus did it often. He would wander the desolate hills and valleys, the no-man's land of Israel. It must have been hard to leave those who were sick and emotionally shipwrecked, those searching for some meaning and purpose, but He left them repeatedly. If Christ needed to refresh His spirit, then even more so do you.

Many have found escape by submerging in ministry. They leave themselves behind by focusing on the needs of others. They draw people like a magnet with kindness and compassion. However, what seems to be selfless devotion is just a search for identity and purpose, a desperate attempt to prove value. Men and women rise to large ministries, teaching millions of people, through television and radio, yet have never quieted themselves enough to meet their own inner terror. If only they knew that in that quietness, they would find the smiling face of their God. A God who does not condemn, reject or criticize, but accepts, embraces and loves us as we are.

Dear friend, during your fast, find your peace. Pause in your soul. Deal aggressively with every thought of rejection, loneliness, and self-contempt. Tell yourself that you are fully accepted by God and that you need nothing more. Christ's blood paid for your acceptance. Are you trying to give more than that?

Enter the solitude of loneliness. No should be no ministry or throngs of people, only God. Get to a place of inner reflection to realign the heart. When you emerge from the desert, your ministry will take on a depth that will profoundly touch the lives of those whom you serve.

8. Be quiet.

Much dreaming and many words are meaningless. Therefore, stand in awe of God (Ecclesiastes 5:7).

With pride come many words. Tame the tongue. Bring it into submission. Be silent. There is humility in silence. The literal interpretation of the word fast is to *cover your mouth*. The noise of words can cover insecurity, drowning the murmurs of a restless soul. What vulnerabilities do you face when we are silent? We use words for boundaries, for protection, for meaningless distraction. Yet, it is only in silence that we can quiet the soul to experience the awe of God; an experience of majestic greatness that transcends the emptiness of words.

9. Do not enter into needless temptation.

The smells and sight of food can be difficult during a fast. As you continue along the path of fasting, all five senses will increase in sensitivity. When the next-door neighbor opens a jar of fresh peanut butter, you will know it. Every desire to draw closer to God will be obscured in peanuts. All you can imagine is the smooth, delicious flavors of peanut butter melting on freshly browned toast.

During a fast, you will be surrounded with the hostile world of food, especially in a country that has become addicted to eating. Do all you can to separate yourself from temptation--the neon signs, commercials, and the golden arches?

You will learn that you can live quite happily without food. God can supply all your needs emotionally for the trials and difficulties of the day. Caffeine, fat, and sugar are crutches that we depend on to keep us moving when we feel emptiness. God will fill all emptiness if we are simply willing to give Him a chance.

Take a risk. Get hungry! Explore the emptiness of your own stomach. Of course, your children need to eat. Do your best to arrange a schedule where your spouse is able to do the cooking. This also can be an excellent situation for your children to experience a sense of responsibility in the home. You can plan meals for the next 5, 20 or 30 days or however long you decide to fast. They may not want too, but once your family sees that your decision is firm and that this is important to you, they will support you. You are displaying a powerful example of seeking God that they will never forget.

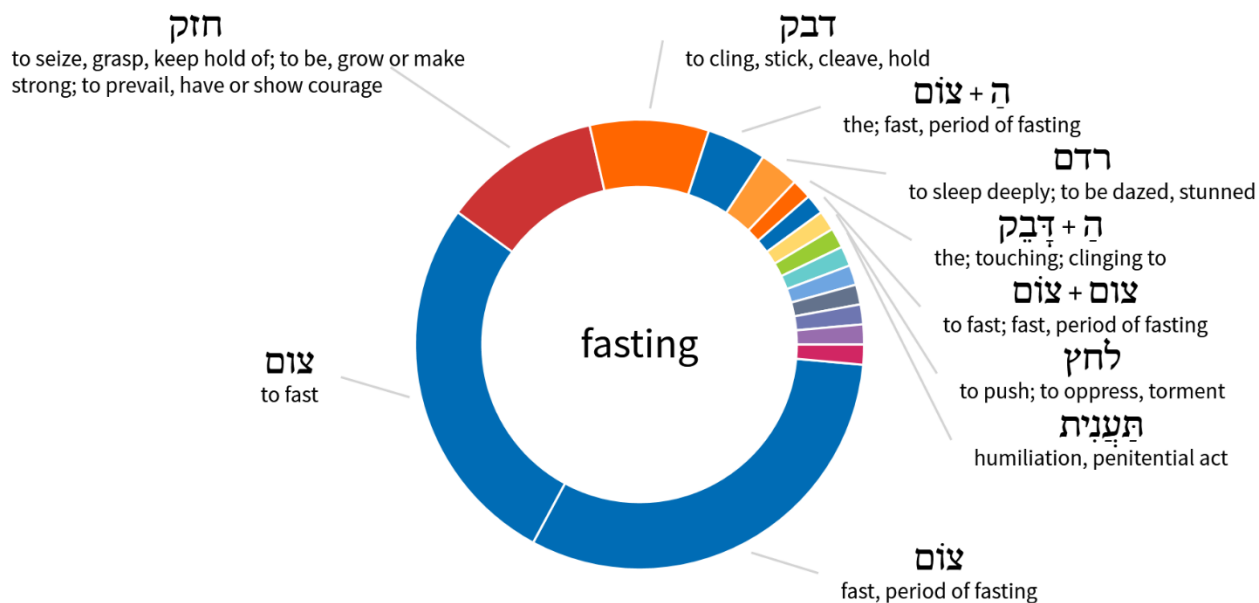
10. Sleep.

If you are going to detoxify, you ought to do it on a good night's sleep. The last thing you need during the difficult part of your fast is to be tired and overworked. It is worth investing time and energy toward a fast, as if you were investing in a vacation. We look forward to a vacation, saving money, planning as if it will become a highlight of our year. Fasting is a spiritual vacation with God, traveling to foreign parts of your character, learning more about yourself. Breaking old patterns and developing a brand-new culture that will affect the rest of your life.

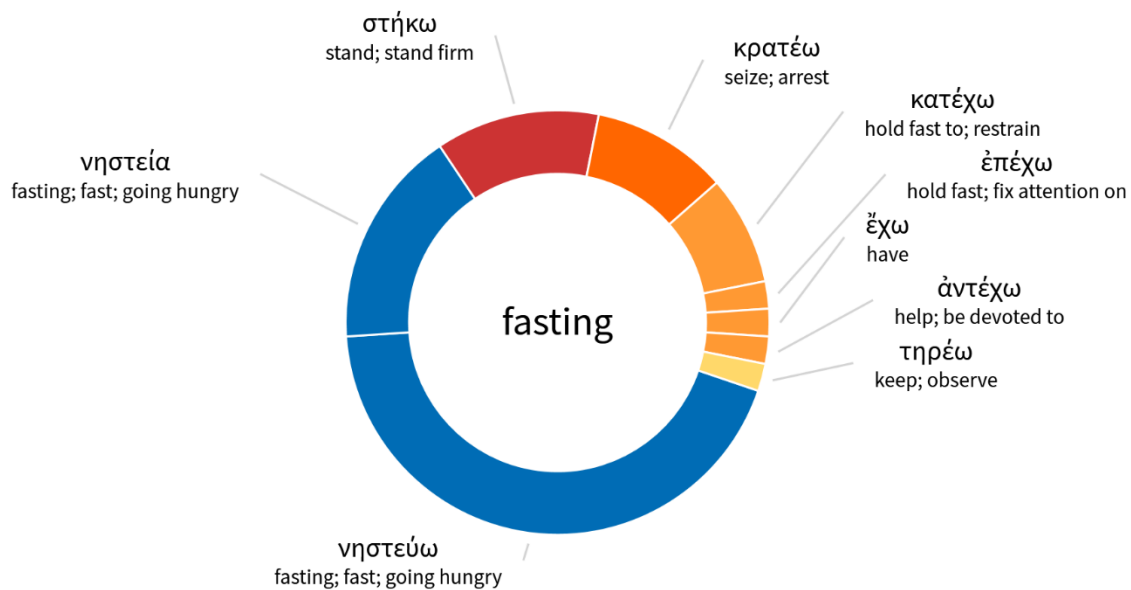
Most of us live on the edge, rarely getting the sleep that we need to function with clear-mindedness. During a fast, it is essential that you get enough sleep. Come home from work, take a shower, and allow yourself time to quietly and restfully meditate and pray.



70 References to the word *fast* in the Old Testament



48 References to the word *fast* in the New Testament



A silhouette of a person kneeling in prayer, with hands clasped, against a sunset background. The text "Fasting & Prayer" is overlaid in white.

Fasting & Prayer

PRE-FASTING Bible Study

True Fasting

58 “Shout it aloud, do not hold back. Raise your voice like a trumpet. Declare to My people their rebellion and to the descendants of Jacob their sins.

² For day after day they seek Me out; they seem eager to know My ways, as if they were a nation that does what is right and has not forsaken the commands of its God. They ask Me for just decisions and seem eager for God to come near them.

³ “Why have we fasted,” they say, “and You have not seen it? Why have we humbled ourselves, and You have not noticed?” “Yet on the day of your fasting, you do as you please and exploit all your workers.

⁴ Your fasting ends in quarreling and strife, and in striking each other with wicked fists. You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high.

⁵ Is this the kind of fast I have chosen, only a day for people to humble themselves? Is it only for bowing one’s head like a reed and for lying in sackcloth and ashes? Is that what you call a fast, a day acceptable to the LORD?

⁶ “Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? ¹

Word Study KJV

58:1 Cry aloud, spare not, [lift up] thy voice like a trumpet, and show My people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.

2 Yet they seek Me daily, and delight to know My ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God: they ask of Me the ordinances of justice; they [take delight] in approaching to God.

3 Wherefore have we fasted, *say they*, and Thou seest not? *wherefore* have we afflicted our soul, and Thou [takest no knowledge?] Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labors.

4 Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not fast as *ye do this* day, to make your voice to be heard on high.

5 Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? *is it* to [bow down] his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes *under him*? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the LORD?

6 *Is not this* the fast that I have chosen? to loosen the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?²

In this passage, we see a challenge to the religious practices of the people of God. We are often told the things we should do but not told the purpose behind the acts. If we do not learn the purpose behind our activities for God, we will fall into the dangers of worthless religious activities. In this passage, God is challenging worthless religious activities just as Jesus did in the New Testament.

Verse 1-5

In the first five verses, God challenges the people concerning their religious practices. The question was asked, “When you fast, are you fasting for **Me**” (Verse 5a ***“Is it a fast that I have chosen?”***)

What are the characteristics of your religious activities?

- Debating concerning how the fast should take place.
- You are not getting results out of your fasting and praying.
- God responding to the things you do.

¹ *The New International Version*. 2011 (Is 58:1–6). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

² Zodhiates, S., & Baker, W. (2000). *The complete word study Bible: King James Version* (electronic ed.) (Is 58:1–6). Chattanooga: AMG Publishers.

- You are looking to be seen or heard for the appearance of righteousness.
- Your actions motivated by pleasure of weight lost or compliments.
- Your actions are not self-denying, but rather self-focused.
- You allow irritability to cause you to act without love.

Contrary to the things most religious practices encourage, fasting may have personal benefits, but it's more about focus - your focus on God and a personal desire to get closer to Him.

Here's the prospective we must have:

- Fasting is about worship.
- Fasting is an act of humility before God.
- Fasting is an acknowledgement of God's worth vs. self-worth.
- Fasting is about seeking God's will for your life.
- Fasting does not move God; it moves us to God when done properly.

What type of results will a fast bring?

1. It will release the bonds of wickedness (Power to come against unfair treatment).
2. It will undo heavy burdens - (Thongs of yoke) String that puts yoke on oxen.
3. Let the oppressed go free.
4. Break yokes.

NOTES:

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Word Study

⁷ *Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are [cast out] to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou [hide not thyself] [from thine own flesh?]*³

8 Then shall thy light [break forth] as the morning, and thine health shall [spring forth] speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the LORD shall [be thy rearward.]

9 Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and He shall say, Here I *am*. If thou [take away] [from the midst] of thee the yoke, the [putting forth] of the finger, and speaking vanity;

10 And *if* thou [draw out] thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness *be* as the noonday:

11 And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and [make fat] thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.⁴

NIV

⁷ Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter— when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? ⁵

⁸ Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness ^v will go before you, and the glory of the LORD will be your rear guard.

⁹ Then you will call, and the LORD will answer; you will cry for help, and He will say: Here am I. “If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk,

¹⁰ and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday.

¹¹ The LORD will guide you always; He will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail. ⁶

7

A fast is not about avoiding food. Most people spend a lot of time focusing on determining what they should or should not eat. This mindset distracts your true focus of humility before God.

How do you keep a Godly focus during a fast?

- **Feed the Hungry** – Benevolence during a fast is key to keeping the right focus (Matthew 5:42).
 - o Keep a Godly focus
 - Give to them that ask.
 - Do not turn away from the person that borrows.

³ Zodhiates, S., & Baker, W. (2000). *The complete word study Bible: King James Version* (electronic ed.) (Is 58:7). Chattanooga: AMG Publishers.

⁴ Zodhiates, S., & Baker, W. (2000). *The complete word study Bible: King James Version* (electronic ed.) (Is 58:8–11). Chattanooga: AMG Publishers.

⁵ *The New International Version*. 2011 (Is 58:7). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

⁶ *The New International Version*. 2011 (Is 58:8–11). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

- **Cover them that are naked.**
- **House the homeless.**
- **Hide thyself not** = means do not make stranger those who are in need. They are a part of you by the nature of being an extension of you through God.
 - o Matthew 25:42-43 “The least are manifestations of God as well.”
⁴² For I was **hungry** and you gave me nothing to eat, I was **thirsty** and you gave Me nothing to drink, ⁴³ I was a **stranger** and you did not invite Me in, I needed **clothes** and you did not clothe Me, I was **sick** and in **prison** and you did not look after Me.’

Results to expect: (Reasons for fasting)

- Your Light will break forth.
 - o Light = or (Hebrew) meaning Sun
 - o Break = Baqa (Hebrew-Baw-Kah) Meaning make a breach
- Your healing will spring forth.
 - o Healing = aruka (Hebrew-ar-oo-kaw) meaning wholeness of body or mind
 - o Spring = Samah (Hebrew- tsaw-mahk) bring forth or grow
- Your righteousness will precede you.
 - o Righteousness = Sedeq (Hebrew- tseh-dek) equity
 - o Go before = Paneh (Hebrew –paw-neen) Presence
- The Glory of God will be your rear guard.
 - o Glory = Kabod (Hebrew –kaw-bode) weight, splendor, honor
 - o Re-reward = asap (Hebrew –aw-saf) To gather for any purpose
- The Lord will answer your call.
 - o God’s answer will always be present when you need Him.
- God will respond to your cry.
 - o Cry = Shawa (Hebrew-shaw-vah) Automatic response to the onset of bondage
 - o God will speak.

These responses are still conditional. There are things we have to do.

- Put away the yoke, and the pointing of the finger.
 - o This yoke is the influence of politics, economics, social injustice
 - o Pointing of the finger refers to false accusations (watch gossip)

Vs 11. Says God will

- Guide you continually
- Satisfy your soul in droughts
- Strengthen your bones

NOTES:

Word Study KJV

12. And *they that shall be* of thee shall build the old [waste places:] thou shalt [raise up] the foundations of [many generations:] and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.

13 If thou [turn away] thy foot [from the Sabbath,] *from* doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honorable; and shalt honor Him, [not doing] thine own ways, [nor finding] thine own pleasure, nor speaking *thine own* words:

14 Then shalt thou [delight thyself] in the LORD; and I will cause thee to ride upon the [high places] of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken *it*.⁸

NIV

¹² Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins and will raise up the age-old foundations; you will be called Repairer of Broken Walls, Restorer of Streets with Dwellings.

¹³ “If you keep your feet from breaking the Sabbath and from doing as you please on My holy day, if you call the Sabbath a delight and the LORD’s holy day honorable, and if you honor it by not going your own way and not doing as you please or speaking idle words,

¹⁴ then you will find your joy in the LORD, and I will cause you to ride in triumph on the heights of the land and to feast on the inheritance of your father Jacob.” For the mouth of the LORD has spoken. ⁹

As we operate in the principles of God, we will always expect results. God has given a word and the word of God always brings results. Fasting is one of the principles of the word of God and when done properly, it will always yield a result. If you are fasting, with no results you should consider the condition of your mind while fasting.

Proper Fasting will result in:

- Rebuilding of the strong foundation of your forefathers.
- It will make you the leaders of restoration.
- You will find JOY.
- You will gain access to your spiritual inheritance.

If you are fasting the right way, there will be a real revelation from God. We are not going to receive anything without a work. The work was defined in last week’s bible study. God spoke to the children of Israel to give

⁸ Zodhiates, S., & Baker, W. (2000). *The complete word study Bible: King James Version* (electronic ed.) (Is 58:12–14). Chattanooga: AMG Publishers.

⁹ *The New International Version*. 2011 (Is 58:12–14). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

them a way out of a test 150 years before the problem came. The Assyrians were coming to destroy, but the people of God were called to establish God's Kingdom.

1. They shall build the old waste places. Rise up the foundation of many places.
 - a. God calls us to build what's wasting in the land.
 - b. To make known God's Kingdom everywhere.
 - c. Not focus on our own foundation (Church).
2. And you shall be called the repairer of the breach.
 - a. We will restore the things that are broken down (Marriages, Families, etc.).
3. The restorer of the paths.
 - a. Help people find the route to God
 - b. Guiding the family
4. Then you will find Joy in the Lord and ride the high places on the earth.
 - a. God will put you in the places to receive blessings.

NOTES:

This image shows a full page of blank, lined paper. It features approximately 20 horizontal black lines spaced evenly apart, typical of notebook paper. The lines extend across the entire width of the page, leaving small margins at the top and bottom. There are no vertical lines, text, or other markings present.

Fasting is not an end in itself; it is a means by which we can worship the Lord and submit ourselves in humility to Him. We don't make God love us any more than He already does if we fast, or if we fast longer. Fasting invites God into the problem. Then, in the strength of God, victory is possible.

– Elmer L. Towns

Introduction

If you are seeking a closer walk with God, consider fasting. Throughout Scripture, fasting refers to abstaining from food, or food and drink, for spiritual purposes. Fasting is more than a diet adjustment; it involves spiritual intensity and intercession. Fasting should always be accompanied with prayer, meditation, and Bible study.

We should never be motivated by the mistaken idea that our fasting will move God to do what we want. Even if we wanted to, we could never manipulate God. *The purpose of our fasting is to move us closer to God and to seek His will in our lives.*

One of the greatest spiritual benefits of fasting is becoming more aware of our own inadequacies and God's adequacy; becoming more aware of our own failings and His self-sufficiency. The purpose of all disciplines, including fasting, is to change us so that we may become more Christ-like. Fasting helps us to listen to what God wants us to be and do.

The list of biblical personages who fasted reads like a *Who's Who* of Scripture. For example: Moses the lawgiver, David the king, Elijah the prophet, Esther the queen, Daniel the advisor to kings, Anna the prophetess, Paul the apostle, and Jesus Christ the incarnate Son.

A word of caution: Before anyone attempts to go on a fast, please consult your physician if you have health problems such as diabetes, kidney disorders, or other serious conditions. The normal spiritual fast is going without food for a period of time during which you ingest only liquids (water and/or juice). The duration can be one day or several days. Some Christians fast on juice or water up to a week. The absolute fast is abstaining from both food and water. The duration shouldn't exceed one or two days unless you have discussed absolute fasting ahead of time with your doctor.

1st key passage: [Matthew 6:16-18](#)

Does Jesus command fasting, or does He only comment on how to fast properly? What should we do and how should we look when fasting? Why?

One key to fasting is motivation. What are the differences in motivation between truly seeking God and fasting to gain power or admiration?

2nd key passage: [Matthew 9:14-15](#)

Did Jesus expect His disciples to fast after He was gone?

It is said that fasting brings us closer to God. Could this be one of the reasons Jesus said His disciples would fast after He would no longer be with them? What are other reasons?

3rd key passage: [Isaiah 58:3-10](#)

In this passage, Isaiah tells us that the Jews were fasting, but God was not answering their requests. Why not? What kind of fast does God want?

When people turn from mistreating others, to helping them with their needs, does that in itself count as fasting? Are we to obey when we fast, obey before we fast, or obey instead of fasting?

Is fasting a way to get God to answer our prayers? Will fasting solve our problems? Will it lead to more effective evangelism? Does it solve humanitarian problems? What does God promise to do if His people fast in the right way? Will we gain power over sin?

Some may wish to share how God has answered their prayers when they were fasting for His intervention.

Fasting reminds us that we are sustained “by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God” ([Matthew 4:4](#)). Food does not sustain us; God sustains us.

– Richard J. Foster

When we fast and pour our heart out to God, it's been said that He gives us His "eyes" to see the situation or the problem as it really exists. How is this beneficial to us?

During the fast, why is it helpful to read various portions of Scripture that may apply to our situation and then meditate on them?

Challenge for growth

The next time you feel the need to fast for any spiritual reason, please consider these benefits that fasting produces: 1) spiritual examination and introspection; 2) spiritual confession; 3) spiritual intercession. In what way does fasting help us pray for others?

NOTES:

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Fasting

**"And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications,
with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes: And I prayed unto the Lord God,
and made my confession... "Daniel 9:34**

I. Is there a place for fasting in New Testament times?

A. Fasting was not required of the disciples of Jesus.

Matthew 9:14 (Mark 2:18; Luke 5:33) "Then came to Him the disciples of John, saying, why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but Thy disciples fast not?"

B. But Jesus spoke of a day when there would be a place for fasting.

Matthew 6:16-18 (Not "if," but "when ye fast ...") "Moreover, when ye fast, ...But thou, when thou fastest..."

Matthew 9:14-15 (Luke 5:34-35) "And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast."

II. What guidelines are set forth in scripture concerning fasting?

A. It is to be done in a manner of humility and secrecy.

Matthew 6:16-18 "Moreover when ye fast, be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; that thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret ..."

Luke 18:9-14 "And He spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: Two men went up into the temple to pray. . . The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are . . . I fast twice in the week, I give tithes . . . And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to this house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

B. Fasting is closely related to prayer and reading of the Word.

I Samuel 1:6-8, 17-18, etc. "And her adversary . . . provoked her; therefore she wept, and did not eat. Then said Elkanah her husband to her, Hannah, why weepest

thou? and why eatest thou not? and why is thy heart grieved? ...Then Eli answered and said, Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of Him . . ."

Nehemiah 1:4 ". . . when I heard these words, I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven."

Nehemiah 9:1-3 ". . . the children of Israel were assembled with fasting . . . and stood and confessed their sins . . . and read in the book of the law of the Lord their God one fourth part of the day; and another fourth part they confessed, and worshipped the Lord their God."

Daniel 9:3, 20 "And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplication, with fasting . . . and while I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication . . ."

Joel 2:12 ". . . turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning."

Jonah 3:8, etc. "For word came unto the king ... and he caused it to be proclaimed and published ... saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing: let them not feed, nor drink water: But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God ... Who can tell if God will ... turn away from His fierce anger ... And God saw ..."

Luke 2:37 "And she was a widow of about 44 years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day."

Acts 9:9, 11 "And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink."

Acts 10:30 "Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and, behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing."

Acts 13:2 "As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said . . ."

Acts 14:23 "And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord . . ."

I Corinthians 7:5 ". . . that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer . . ."

C. A fast may be either absolute or partial.

1. Examples of absolute (complete) fasts:

Deuteronomy 9:9, 18 ". . . 40 nights, I neither did eat bread nor drink water."

Ezra 10:6 "Ezra. . . did eat no bread, nor drink water: for he mourned . . ."

Esther 4:16 "Go, gather together all the Jews . . . and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day . . ."

Acts 9:9 ". . . and neither did eat nor drink"

Acts 27:33 ". . . This is the fourteenth day that ye have tarried and continued fasting, having taken nothing."

2. Examples of partial fasts (abstinence from certain foods only):

I Kings chapter 17

Daniel 10:3 "I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled."

D. There is a place for both the corporate (group) and the individual (personal) fast.

1. Examples of corporate fasts:

I Samuel 7:5-6 "And Samuel said, Gather all Israel ... and they gathered ... and fasted ... "

II Chronicles 20:34

Ezra 8:21-23 "Then I proclaimed a fast ... So we fasted and besought our God ..."

Nehemiah 9:1-3 " ... the children of Israel were assembled with fasting ..."

Joel 2:15-16 "... sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly; gather the people ..."

Jonah 3:5-10 "the people ... proclaimed a fast ... from the greatest of them even to the least"

Acts 27:33-37

2. Examples of the individual fast:

II Samuel 12:15-16, 22-23 "... and David fasted, and went in, and lay all night upon the earth."

I Kings 21:27-29 "When Ahab heard those words, he... fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly."

Psalms 35:13 "But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth: I humbled my soul with fasting ..."

Daniel 9:3 "And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer ... with fasting ..."

Luke 2:36-37 "And there was one Anna, a prophetess ... a widow of about 44 years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day."

Acts 9:9 " ... and neither did eat nor drink."

III. Fasting in itself is of no spiritual value (Isaiah 58; Jeremiah 14:12; I Corinthians 8:8) – "that which is of the flesh is flesh," John 3:6 – but it is the attitude of a heart sincerely seeking Him to which God responds with blessing.

Joel 2:12, 13 "Rend your heart, and not your garments ..."

Romans 14:6, 17

I Corinthians 15:50

A. Only fasting that is done with the right motive, that of glorifying God, can be pleasing in His sight.

Isaiah chapter 58 "Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and Thou seest not? ... Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure ... ye fast for strife and debate ... ye shall not fast as ye do this day ... Is it such a fast that I have chosen? To loose the bands ... to undo the heavy burdens ... to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him ..."

Zechariah 7:5-6 "... When ye fasted and mourned ... those 70 years, did ye at all fast unto Me, even to Me?"

Matthew 6:16-18 "The hypocrites ... disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast."

Luke 18:9-14 "The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I am not as other men are ... I fast twice in the week ..."

B. The same Bible that teaches abstaining from foods (as God leads) also warns us against testing the Lord (Matthew 4:7).

1. Our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 6:9), and we are to care for them as such (v. 20).
2. It may indeed be profitable for a season for us to exercise severe discipline, to "keep under my body, and bring it into subjection" (I Corinthians 9 :27), to be "temperate in all things" (I Corinthians 9 :25), but we must also realize that "that which is flesh is flesh," and we cannot produce spiritual results – however sincere our intentions – from that which is purely flesh.
3. To deny the flesh of its natural desires may cause us to be more "in tune" to hear the voice of the Lord (Deuteronomy 9:18, 25, etc.), but it also places us in a realm more easily prone to the attack of the enemy. It was when Jesus had been fasting for 40 days that He was faced with the greatest Satanic attack (Matthew 4:1-3; Luke 4:1-2).

C. Scripture warns that in the last days there will be many "forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats," etc. (I Timothy 4:1-3). We are to test the spirits, to see whether they be of God (I John 4:1).

IV. How long should I fast?

A. Bible personalities fasted and sought God diligently until they obtained from God what they desired (see the examples of Hannah, I Samuel 1:6-8, 17-18; and Paul, Acts 9:9,17-19) – or until the Lord made it evident that what they requested simply would not be obtained (as in the case of David, II Samuel 12:15-23).

B. The length of a fast may vary.

1. One night.
Daniel 6:18
2. One day.
I Samuel 7:6
II Samuel 1:12; 3:35
Judges 20:26
3. Three days and three nights.
Esther 4:16
Acts 9:9, 17-19
4. Seven days.

- I Samuel 31:13
- II Samuel 12:16-23
- 5. Fourteen days.
Acts 27:33-34
- 6. Twenty-one days.
Daniel 10:3-13
- 7. Forty days.
 - a. Moses (at two different times).
Exodus 24:18; 34:28
Deuteronomy 9:9, 18, 25-29; 10:10
 - b. Elijah.
I Kings 19:8
 - c. Jesus.
Matthew 4:2 (Mark 1:13; Luke 4:2)

V. When should I fast?

Many occasions for fasting are recorded in scripture.

A. The ordination of elders and commissioning of apostles to ministry.

Acts 13:3 "And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away."

Acts 14:23 "And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord..."

B. Intercession for the people of God.

Exodus 24:18
Deuteronomy 9:8-9, 12-20, 23-27
Ezra 10:6
Daniel 9:3-4
Joel 2:12-14, 17-18
Jonah 3:5-10

C. Humbling and chastening of oneself.

I Kings 21:27-29 "... Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before Me?"
Psalms 35:13 "... I humbled myself with fasting ..."
Psalms 69:10 "I wept, and chastened my soul with fasting ..."

D. Seeking the Lord and His way.

Judges 20:26-28, etc. "Then all the children of Israel, and all the people, went up, and came unto the house of God, and wept, and sat there before the Lord, and fasted that day until evening, and ... inquired of the Lord ... (whether to) go out to battle ... And the Lord said, Go up ..."

II Chronicles 20:3 "And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah."



FASTING

Bible Study

HABAKKUK LESSON 1

The prophet Habakkuk penned this book in approximately 605 B.C. This was about the time the Babylonians came into power. Very little is known about him, except his work in this book. The theme of the book is the mystery of providence. Habakkuk was troubled over the sinful world going unpunished. In the Dead Sea Scrolls, Habakkuk was well preserved. Paul referred to Habakkuk chapter 2 verse 4.

Romans 1:17 "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."

It was these two Scriptures which influenced Martin Luther greatly, and he started the protestant reformation. We will now begin the verse by verse study.

Habakkuk 1:1 "The burden which Habakkuk the prophet did see."

The word "burden" lets us know that Habakkuk was troubled by what he saw around him. The statement "did see", possibly, means that Habakkuk had a vision from God.

Habakkuk 1:2 "O LORD, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear! [even] cry out unto thee [of] violence, and thou wilt not save!"

This is a plea to God to hear his prayers. He sees the injustice around him, and does not understand why God is not punishing those involved. We have all, at some time or other, cried out "how long?". It appears from this, that Habakkuk had prayed many times to God to do something about the moral decay of Judah. It appears, that those who pretended to belong to God {Judah} had strayed very far away, and Habakkuk had prayed so much about the seriousness of the problem, he had begun to doubt that God was hearing his prayers.

Habakkuk 1:3 "Why dost thou shew me iniquity, and cause [me] to behold grievance? for spoiling and violence [are] before me: and there are [that] raise up strife and contention."

From this it appears, that Habakkuk was in the ministry. He was like a watchman. He saw all the evil and warned the people, yet God had not punished them. He is asking God, why He allows him to see all of the wrong, if God is not going to change it. Habakkuk is a righteous man, living in a society that has gone mad. He is questioning how God can know of these sins and abominations, and not do anything about them. I personally look at society today, and wonder why God has not thundered in judgment against our society. This strife and contention is speaking of those rebellious who are not keeping God's law. Perhaps, those that question God's law are some who should know better, because they are the leaders of the people.

Habakkuk 1:4 "Therefore the law is slacked, and judgment doth never go forth: for the wicked doth compass about the righteous; therefore wrong judgment proceedeth."

Not only are the wicked people not keeping God's law, but they are attacking the righteous. They are actually opposed to those who have taken a stand for God. The law which had governed even their civil law is unequal. Habakkuk is disappointed that justice is no longer part of their society.

Habakkuk 1:5 "Behold ye among the heathen, and regard, and wonder marvelously: for [I] will work a work in your days, [which] ye will not believe, though it be told [you]."

Up until this Scripture, Habakkuk had been complaining to God. In this Scripture, we see an answer to Habakkuk from God. Habakkuk is living for God in the middle of those who do not. During Habakkuk's lifetime, God will take care of this situation. God will work so quickly and marvelously, that it will be difficult for Habakkuk to believe. God will use a heathen nation to bring the chastisement upon His people. Those of God's

children who are living in sin, will not expect their punishment to come through a heathen nation. God can use whoever He wants to, however.

Habakkuk 1:6 "For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, [that] bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwelling places [that are] not theirs."

The Chaldeans are even more evil than Judah. God always begins His judgment with the house of God. It is the chastisement God has judged, that will come upon them. It is just Babylon, {Chaldeans} that it comes by. They were a very cruel army. We must remember, that God sent them.

Habakkuk 1:7 "They [are] terrible and dreadful: their judgment and their dignity shall proceed of themselves."

At the time they attack Judah, they have become very powerful. There seemed to be no one who could stop them. They will not be aware that God sends them to attack Judah.

Habakkuk 1:8 "Their horses also are swifter than the leopards, and are more fierce than the evening wolves: and their horsemen shall spread themselves, and their horsemen shall come from far; they shall fly as the eagle [that] hasteth to eat."

They are a mighty world army, and they have many horses. They will sweep across this little land quickly, bringing destruction along the way. The comparison to "evening wolves" speaks of their ferocious nature.

Jeremiah 5:6 "Wherefore a lion out of the forest shall slay them, [and] a wolf of the evenings shall spoil them, a leopard shall watch over their cities: every one that goeth out thence shall be torn in pieces: because their transgressions are many, [and] their backslidings are increased."

Habakkuk 1:9 "They shall come all for violence: their faces shall sup up [as] the east wind, and they shall gather the captivity as the sand." The mention of the "east wind" is speaking of an ill wind. The "supping up" is just speaking of total destruction. The "gathering as of sand" speaks of the large number of people taken.

Romans 9:27 "Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved."

Habakkuk 1:10 And they shall scoff at the kings, and the princes shall be a scorn unto them: they shall deride every strong hold; for they shall heap dust, and take it."

The Chaldeans who came had no respect for kings, or princes. They were treated the same as all the other people. The walls, or the fortress, was no problem to them. They went through the land with such destruction they left piles of dust. They took the valuable things and burned all the rest. They left nothing of any help to the people. They were such a powerful army, that they were almost impossible to stop. God had moved away from His people, and left them to defend themselves. They were no match {in the physical} for these Chaldeans.

Habakkuk 1:11 "Then shall [his] mind change, and he shall pass over, and offend, [imputing] this his power unto his god."

It was God's judgment on His people that allowed this heathen army to succeed. They were so arrogant, they gave no credit to God, but instead said their false gods had helped them conquer. The sad thing about this army that came sweeping through, was they went beyond the limits God had set for them.

Habakkuk 1:12 "[Art] thou not from everlasting, O LORD my God, mine Holy One? we shall not die. O LORD, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and, O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction."

This is a request from Habakkuk to God for the covenant people. He knows in his heart, that God will stop this onslaught, before they destroy God's people. Habakkuk is recognizing God in His might in this. He knows that God can stop this chastisement, if He will. Habakkuk is speaking for himself, and for all of the others who had not bowed their knee to Baal. Sometimes, when the chastisement of God comes upon a people, some innocents get hurt in the process. This was the case here. Habakkuk knows they need to be chastised for their unfaithfulness to God, but he believes God will stop, before they are destroyed.

Hebrews 12:5 "And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him:"

Hebrews 12:6 "For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth."

Habakkuk 1:13 "[Thou art] of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity: wherefore lookest Thou upon them that deal treacherously, [and] holdest Thy tongue when the wicked devoureth [the man that is] more righteous than he?"

Habakkuk is reminding God, that the Chaldeans {Babylonians} are more evil than God's unfaithful family. He is questioning God about using such an evil people to chastise His people. Habakkuk is reminding God, that He is holy and cannot look upon sin without destroying it. Habakkuk is questioning the wisdom of God overlooking the Babylonian's sins, and punishing His own people who are comparatively less sinful.

Habakkuk 1:14 "And makest men as the fishes of the sea, as the creeping things, [that have] no ruler over them?"

Habakkuk is appealing to God to see the merciless way they are coming and sweeping away God's people, as a fishermen catches fish in his net without discrimination. The creeping things and fish have no one to take their part. Habakkuk thinks God's people do no longer have Him to take their part.

Habakkuk 1:15 "They take up all of them with the angle, they catch them in their net, and gather them in their drag: therefore they rejoice and are glad."

This is just saying, that this army of the Chaldeans has taken whole nations before them, without sparing anyone. The net of a fisherman catches everything in front of the net. The army rejoices over the capture of all these people, as a fisherman does when he has a large catch of fish.

Habakkuk 1:16 "Therefore they sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag; because by them their portion [is] fat, and their meat plenteous."

These Chaldeans {Babylonians} do not even recognize the fact that God has helped them make this catch. They thank their false gods for their victory, by burning incense to them.

Habakkuk 1:17 "Shall they therefore empty their net, and not spare continually to slay the nations?"

As soon as they have caught one group, they go out with their net, again, and catch another. This is the way of this evil army. They go from one nation to another taking the people captive, and killing those who are not useful to them. They are never satisfied. They have in mind conquering the whole world. As if God is not aware of this, Habakkuk reminds Him.

Habakkuk 1 Questions

1. Approximately when was the book of Habakkuk penned?
2. What is the theme of this book?
3. What greatly troubled Habakkuk?
4. What Scripture Paul wrote, is the same as Habakkuk chapter 2 verse 4?
5. What influenced Martin Luther so much, that he started the protestant reformation?
6. What does verse 1 reveal about Habakkuk's message?
7. What is verse 2 pleading with God about?
8. Habakkuk had prayed many times for God to do what?
9. In verse 2, it appears, that Habakkuk had begun to doubt what?
10. Habakkuk was, probably, in the _____.
11. Habakkuk was a _____ man, who lived in a society gone mad with sin.
12. What does the author wonder about our society today?
13. These evil people are actually _____ to those who have taken a stand for God.
14. When does God say He will take care of this situation?
15. What will be unexpected about the chastisement God sends upon His people?
16. Who does God raise up to chastise His people?
17. What kind of army were the Chaldeans {Babylonians}?
18. Their horses are swifter than _____.
19. Quote Jeremiah chapter 5 verse 6.
20. They shall gather the captivity as the _____.
21. How will they treat the kings and princes?
22. Who does this army give credit for their victory to?
23. What is Habakkuk requesting in verse 12?
24. God can stop this _____ if He will.
25. Quote Hebrews chapter 12 verses 5 and 6.
26. What is Habakkuk reminding God of in verse 13?
27. What are the men compared to in verse 14?
28. What is Habakkuk complaining about the army God sent, that is compared to a fish net?
29. What do these Babylonians {Chaldeans} have in their mind to do?

NOTES: _____

HABAKKUK LESSON 2

We will begin this lesson in **Habakkuk 2:1** "I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what He will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved."

Habakkuk is speaking in this verse. He is waiting to see what God will say to him. He is not shirking his duties in the meantime. He will still act as the watchman. We see that Habakkuk separates himself from this sinful people. He goes aside, perhaps, to a place in the mountains, until he hears from God. He is expecting God to reprove him for the questions he asked Him in chapter 1.

Habakkuk 2:2 "And the LORD answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make [it] plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it."

There really is no reprove in this. God does answer Habakkuk though. This is telling Habakkuk to write the very book we are reading here. The reason God wanted Habakkuk to write it down, was so future generations could draw from it. Habakkuk is a book that many scholars have drawn from. In the earlier lesson, we mentioned the fact that Paul quoted from Habakkuk. We, also, mentioned that Martin Luther started the Protestant reformation after studying Habakkuk. Many have been so moved by this little book, that it encouraged them to be workers for God. I, myself, was shown this very Scripture {and the one following} by inspiration of God, just before I began writing these Bible studies.

Habakkuk 2:3 "For the vision [is] yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry."

Every person who has a vision of a work God would have him do, could be inspired by these Words. God does things in His time, and not when we think it is time. Notice, in all of this, God does not scold him about the vision, or even the questions he has asked God. He explains that, sometimes, they do not come to pass at the time of the vision. They may happen weeks, months, or even years later. The vision is for a time God appointed. God reminds Habakkuk that he is to patiently wait on the answers to come. When the appointed time comes, they will not tarry.

Habakkuk 2:4 "Behold, his soul [which] is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith."

This statement is not just for Habakkuk, but for all of God's people. Our faith in God should not be determined by things we see with our eyes.

Hebrews 11:1 "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Our faith in God is what separates us from the world. The world has no hope. We have hope of the resurrection. Those who have confidence in themselves, are not depending on their faith in God to see them through.

Habakkuk 2:5 "Yea also, because he transgresseth by wine, [he is] a proud man, neither keepeth at home, who enlargeth his desire as hell, and [is] as death, and cannot be satisfied, but gathereth unto him all nations, and heapeth unto him all people:"

This is speaking of a man who is lacking in moral character. He drinks heavily. He runs around. He is living for the desires of the flesh, and his flesh will die. The sad thing is this type of person winds up in hell for all of eternity. In this particular instance, this is speaking of the Babylonians {Chaldeans}. They, as a nation, are headed for total destruction in hell.

Habakkuk 2:6 "Shall not all these take up a parable against him, and a taunting proverb against him, and say, Woe to him that increaseth [that which is] not his! how long? and to him that ladeth himself with thick clay!"

All of the nations, who have been captured, and their people killed by these ruthless Babylonians, have taken up a parable against them. They know that God will bring condemnation upon these evil people, they just do not know when. They have taken countries and people that do not belong to them. They are really asking God how long will He wait to punish these evil men? The "clay" in the Scripture above speaks of things that are earthly. The things they have piled up and called wealth will pass away. They are things of this earth. We Christians should lay up our treasures in heaven, where nothing can destroy them.

Habakkuk 2:7 "Shall they not rise up suddenly that shall bite thee, and awake that shall vex thee, and thou shalt be for booties unto them?"

Even their people, that the Babylonians take captive, are no more to them than the inanimate things they count as their booty. The people are thought of as the possession of the captors. Their cruelty toward their captives will come right back to them, when they are under the judgement of God. The army, which destroys them, will be just as cruel to them, as they had been to their captives.

Habakkuk 2:8 "Because thou hast spoiled many nations, all the remnant of the people shall spoil thee; because of men's blood, and [for] the violence of the land, of the city, and of all that dwell therein."

Babylon had been a conqueror that seemed impossible to stop. God will bring judgement on Babylon by the Medes and Persians. The cruelty and the bloodshed the Babylonians had brought on others, would bring the very same type of treatment upon them. They had gone much further than God intended them to, when they attacked Judah and Jerusalem. God's judgement of the Chaldeans would be severe for this reason.

Habakkuk 2:9 "Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house, that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil!"

The Babylonians {Chaldeans} had taken great wealth from the people they had defeated. They had taken far more than their needs and left the people without anything. They had thought so highly of themselves, they had tried to lift themselves up as high as the skies by all the wealth they had obtained at other's expense.

Habakkuk 2:10 "Thou hast consulted shame to thy house by cutting off many people, and hast sinned [against] thy soul."

This, of course, is speaking to the Babylonians. They had made a terrible name for themselves by their cruelty in battle. People both feared and hated them. They have gone so far with their cruelty, they have sinned in their souls.

Habakkuk 2:11 "For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it."

We do know the handwriting on the wall condemned these evil people. Perhaps, that is what is intended here. In their time of joy and revelry, a hand from God wrote a message of condemnation and destruction upon them.

Habakkuk 2:12 "Woe to him that buildeth a town with blood, and stablisheth a city by iniquity!"

They shed much blood to get the wealth they had. They are condemned for building great buildings over the shed blood of those they conquered.

Habakkuk 2:13 "Behold, [is it] not of the LORD of hosts that the people shall labour in the very fire, and the people shall weary themselves for very vanity?"

Babylon, which was built to such magnificence with the slave labour, was but vanity. The people building this magnificent place labored as if in fire. It was not a labor of love, but forced labor. All of their labor is in vain, because Babylon and all its finery is destroyed, never to be built again.

Habakkuk 2:14 "For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea."

God's glory far surpasses all the glory of these big cities, like Babylon. The following Scripture is almost identical to the one above.

Isaiah 11:9 "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea."

The following Scripture tells what the above Scripture means better than I could explain it.

Hebrews 8:11 "And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know Me, from the least to the greatest." The knowledge of the glory of God will cover all the people of the earth in that day.

Habakkuk 2:15 "Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that puttest thy bottle to [him], and makest [him] drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness!"

This drink is alcoholic in nature. The drink was given to the neighbor, so his judgement would be impaired. The person who gave the drink to his neighbor had an ulterior motive. This is speaking of the impaired judgement the nations had dealing with Babylon. These Babylonians are like the evil Babylon in Revelation which leads the people to sin. The Babylonians have shamed them.

Habakkuk 2:16 "Thou art filled with shame for glory: drink thou also, and let thy foreskin be uncovered: the cup of the LORD'S right hand shall be turned unto thee, and shameful spewing [shall be] on thy glory."

Babylon is thought of by all the other nations in a shameful way. God exposes them, and they are destroyed. They are shown to be uncircumcised. They do not belong to God. They will drink of the cup of God's indignation.

Revelation 18:6 "Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double." This is speaking of Babylon.

Habakkuk 2:17 "For the violence of Lebanon shall cover thee, and the spoil of beasts, [which] made them afraid, because of men's blood, and for the violence of the land, of the city, and of all that dwell therein."

The Babylonians {Chaldeans} had destroyed the forest of Lebanon. They had destroyed the temple in Jerusalem and Judah, as well. They were a threat to man and beast. They destroyed the beasts along with the people who got in their way. They killed with the sword, burned, and took captive. They were a very violent people.

Habakkuk 2:18 "What profiteth the graven image that the maker thereof hath graven it; the molten image, and a teacher of lies, that the maker of his work trusteth therein, to make dumb idols?"

An image cannot help them. It has no power to save them. Their false gods will be of no help at all, when the judgement of God comes upon them. They had put their faith and trust in false gods, not in God.

Habakkuk 2:19 "Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake; to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach! Behold, it [is] laid over with gold and silver, and [there is] no breath at all in the midst of it."

This is speaking of the things the false gods were made with. Their false gods are not alive, and cannot speak, or help them.

Habakkuk 2:20 "But the LORD [is] in His holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before Him."

This is in direct contrast to their false gods. The LORD is alive. He can, and does, speak to His people. He can help, or punish, His people whenever He chooses, because He Is God. His holy temple, here, is speaking of His throne in heaven. God is not like those idols which had to be in one place at one time. He is "omnipresent", everywhere all the time. He is not limited to one location. His presence hovered over the mercy seat in the holy of holies in the temple in Jerusalem. The unfaithfulness of His people caused Him to leave. All of the earth should keep silence before the LORD, because all of it belongs to Him. He created it all for Himself. I will give you a few Scriptures to ponder on about this very thing.

Acts 17:29 "Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device."

John 1:3 "All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made."

Colossians 1:20 "And, having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, [I say], whether [they be] things in earth, or things in heaven."

Colossians 1:16 "For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether [they be] thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him:"

Revelation 4:11 "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created."

Habakkuk 2 Questions

1. Who is speaking in verse 1?
2. He will act as a _____.
3. What is Habakkuk expecting from God?
4. And the Lord answered me, and said, _____ the vision down.
5. What is God telling him to write?
6. Why is it to be written?
7. What New Testament penman quoted Habakkuk?
8. _____ started the Protestant reformation after studying Habakkuk.
9. What relationship does the author have with verse 2 and 3 of this lesson?
10. The vision is for an _____.
11. Though it tarry, _____ for it.
12. Who, in particular, can be inspired by these verses?
13. What does God explain to Habakkuk in verse 3?
14. The just shall live by _____.
15. Quote Hebrews chapter 11 verse 1.
16. What hope do we have, that the world does not have?
17. What things, in verse 5, show us the man is without moral character?
18. Who is verse 5 speaking of?
19. Who take up a parable against him?
20. What is the "clay" speaking of in verse 6
21. Who will God use to bring judgement on the Babylonians?
22. The Babylonians had sinned against their _____.
23. What is verse 11 speaking of?
24. Quote Isaiah chapter 11 verse 9.
25. Quote Hebrews chapter 8 verse 11.
26. What kind of drink is verse 15 speaking of?
27. What does the drink do to them?
28. How do the other nations think of Babylon?
29. What had they done to Lebanon?
30. What had they put their trust in?
31. The LORD is in His _____.
32. Let all the earth keep _____ before Him.
33. What does "omnipresent" mean?
34. Which is your favorite of the Scriptures the author gave to ponder on?

NOTES: _____

2020 Consecration

40 Day Dominion Fast
Begin: March 3

21 Day Daniel Fast
Begin March 22

2020 Theme - Clarity: Focused Faith Fulfilled

Purpose: This consecration is to prepare for the Glory of God to usher in supernatural breakthroughs in our lives individually and collectively.

Scripture References: **Psalm 127; 1 Peter 2:5-9; 1 Thessalonians 5:11; Romans 14:19; Ephesians 4: 1-16, Habakkuk 2:2-4**

Goal: Results in areas:

- Clarity of God's Divine will for fulfilled vision in our personal lives
- Clarity of God's Divine will for fulfilled vision in our ministries and church family.
- Clarity of God's Divine will for fulfilled vision in our Community, City, Region, State, and Country.

This fast is a consecration to connect with the will of God and **activate** our faith to have clarity and be completely engaged within its fulfillment.

<u>40 DAY FAST</u>		<u>21 DAY FAST</u>	
March 3	No meat (You may have fresh water fish only)	Mar 22	Fish, Fruit, and Vegetables
March 13	No meat and no fish	March 29	Days of no meat and no fish
March 23	Fruit and Vegetables and water only	April 5	Fruit and Vegetables and water only
April 2	Eden Fast (Seed Bearing meat)		

40 Days 1 Meal per day fast

One balanced meal at the same time daily, liquid meal replacement for other meals.

Some may choose to do fruit and vegetables or liquids only for the whole fast. You have that liberty.

*****Due to health restrictions, some people may not be able to complete every aspect of the fast. Please consult with your doctor before entering this fast. At a minimum, go as far as your health will allow.*****

The fast will also consist of some abstinence as well as some behavioral modification. Please see below a list of things we must do during this fast.

1. Limit the amount of Television and Radio (Substitute with Religious Programming).
2. No excess spending. Pay your bills and buy your necessities i.e. Groceries, medicines, and so on. Refrain from eating out unless you have to because of employment or prescheduled events.
3. Whenever you have a desire to spend, take the money that you would have used for an item of desire and put it into savings. Keep a list of the things you desired.
4. Keep your thinking and conversations positive. Phil 4:8

21-Day Daniel Fast Daily Log

My twenty-one day Fast Begins _____ (dates) and ends on _____ (dates).

The reason I'm fasting:

From what am I fasting?

The results of my Perfection Fast

1st seven days

2nd seven days

3rd Seven Days

Testimonies I will share:

40-Day Dominion Fast Daily Log

My forty day Fast Begins _____ (dates) and ends on _____ (dates).

The reason I'm fasting:

From what am I fasting?

The results of my Perfection Fast

1st Ten days

2nd Ten days

3rd Ten Days

4th Ten Days

Testimonies I will share:

40-Day One Meal per Day Dominion Fast Daily Log

My forty day Fast Begins _____ (dates) and ends on _____ (dates).

My meal time is _____ Daily

The reason I'm fasting:

From what am I fasting?

The results of my Perfection Fast

1st Ten days

2nd Ten days

3rd Ten Days

4th Ten Days

Testimonies I will share:

Vegetarian Recipes

Fried Cabbage

1-2 Tablespoons of Olive Oil
1 Onion sliced
1-2 Tablespoons of minced garlic
1 Carrot shredded or julienne
1 Yellow Bell Pepper sliced
1 Cabbage sliced
3-4 Tablespoons of butter
½ or 1 Teaspoon Thyme
Salt and pepper to taste

Heat oil on medium to high in a large frying pan. Add onions. Cook for 1-2 minutes. Add garlic. Cook for about 30 seconds. Add Carrots. Cook for about 2 minutes. Add peppers. Cook for about 1 minute. Add Cabbage. Stir all of the ingredients together, then add the butter and the rest of the ingredients. Add a lid to allow the cabbage to simmer. Stir occasionally. Cook until desired tenderness.

Ravioli Bake

2 Packages of cheese ravioli

2 Tablespoons of minced garlic (or garlic to taste)

2-4 Portabella mushrooms, roughly chopped

1 Small bag of baby spinach

Fresh basil, oregano, parsley, rosemary, or thyme (All optional)

2 cups of heavy cream

½ Cup of chopped tomato

Salt and pepper to taste

½ Cup of Parmesan cheese, shredded

Cooking Directions:

Cook the ravioli according to package directions. Preheat oven to 375 Fahrenheit

Sauté garlic in teaspoon or two of olive oil over medium to high heat. Add the mushrooms, cook until tender. Next, add the spinach. When the spinach has wilted, add the heavy cream. Add the chopped tomatoes. Salt and pepper to taste.

Add 1/3 of the ravioli in a roasting pan. Add 1/3 of the sauce. Sprinkle with Parmesan. Repeat the steps. Top with Parmesan and bake for 20 minutes.

Note: Cut the ingredients in half for a small ravioli.

Quesadillas Recipe

2 teaspoons vegetable oil or olive oil

½ cup of chopped onions

1 can of black beans, drained and rinsed

1 can of whole kernel corn, drained

½ cup of salsa (more or less...optional) Note: I prefer Tostitos brand.

¼ teaspoon of red pepper flakes (optional)

Cooking Directions:

Heat oil in a large saucepan on medium heat. Stir in onion, and cook until softened. Stir in beans and corn, then add salsa, and pepper flakes; mix well. Cook until heated through, about 3 minutes.

Butter

Large tortilla

Package of shredded Mexican blend cheese

Melt 2 teaspoons of butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Place a tortilla in the skillet, sprinkle evenly with cheese, top with some of the bean mixture, add more cheese, and then fold the tortilla. Cook until golden, then flip and cook on the other side. Melt more butter as needed, and repeat with remaining tortillas and filling.

Top with Sour Cream (optional)

Links to Other Recipes

<http://www.veggiesoulfood.com/>

<http://www.veggiesoulfood.com/blog/2016/1/10/basic-and-bbq-seitan-meatless-monday-week-2>

<http://www.veggiesoulfood.com/blog/2014/11/1/seitan-steak-meatless-mondays-week-24?rq=seitan%20steak>

<http://www.veggiesoulfood.com/blog/2014/11/2/bbq-seitan-sub-or-burger-meatless-mondays-week-26?rq=sub>

<http://www.veggiesoulfood.com/blog/philly-cheesesteak-meatless-monday-week-40>

EASY Vegan RECIPES

delicious, nutritious, compassionate cuisine

VegRecipes.org

BREAKFAST

Carrot Muffins

Makes 1 dozen

- 1 cup whole-wheat flour
 - 1 cup oats or wheat bran
 - 1 tablespoon cornstarch
 - 2 teaspoons baking powder
 - 1 teaspoon allspice
 - ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
1. Preheat the oven to 375°F.
 - ½ teaspoon salt
 - 1 cup raw carrots, grated
 - 1 cup water
 - 1/3 cup sugar or maple syrup
 - ¼ cup mild-flavored oil or vegan butter, melted
 2. In a large mixing bowl, combine flour, oats or bran, cornstarch, baking powder, allspice, cinnamon, and salt. Toss in the grated carrots. Add the water, sugar or maple syrup, and oil or butter, and mix gently.
 3. Spoon the batter into a lightly oiled or lined muffin pan, so each tin is about two-thirds full. Bake for 25-30 minutes, or until an inserted toothpick comes out clean. Allow to cool in pan for 5 minutes before transferring to a baking rack.

Fluffy Pancakes

Serves 4

- 1 ½ cups all-purpose flour
 - 1 tablespoon baking powder
 - 1 tablespoon sugar
 - ¼ teaspoon salt
 - 2 ½ cups dairy-free milk
 - 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
-
1. Heat a non-stick skillet over medium heat until a drop of water gently sizzles and pops.
 2. Mix together the dry ingredients in a large bowl. Whisk in the wet ingredients, being careful not to over-mix. If there are lumps, allow the batter to sit for a minute so they can break down.
 3. Fill a quarter cup and pour batter onto the skillet. Cook over medium heat. Flip when the edges begin to dry and bubbles on the top start to pop.
 4. Cook for another 1-2 minutes and serve with vegan butter, maple syrup, agave syrup, or fresh fruit.

Savory Breakfast Sandwiches

Makes 4 sandwiches

- ¼ cup apple cider vinegar
 - 3 tablespoons soy sauce
 - ¼ cup olive oil
 - 1 ½ teaspoons black pepper, divided
 - 1 14-ounce package firm tofu, drained and cut crosswise into 8 slices
 - 1 large onion, chopped
 - 4 cloves garlic, chopped
1. Preheat oven to 450°F.
 - 8 ounces button mushrooms, sliced
 - 1 medium tomato, chopped
 - 2 cups baby spinach leaves
 - ½ teaspoon dried thyme
 - 1 teaspoon salt
 - Vegan butter (optional)
 - 4 English muffins, toasted
 2. In a shallow baking dish, mix together the vinegar, soy sauce, olive oil, and ½ teaspoon of the black pepper with a whisk. Place tofu slices in a single layer in the dish, then turn over to coat on all sides. Allow tofu to marinate for 20 minutes, turning occasionally.
 3. Place baking dish in oven for 20 minutes. Flip tofu slices over and continue to bake for an additional 10-20 minutes until crispy and most of the liquid has been absorbed.
 4. Meanwhile, spray a large skillet with oil or cooking spray. Sauté onion and garlic over medium-high heat until onion begins to soften. Add mushrooms and continue cooking until they begin to brown. Add tomato, spinach, thyme, salt, and remaining black pepper. Cook and stir until spinach is wilted and any liquid has evaporated, turning heat to medium low if the vegetables are browning too quickly. Adjust seasoning.
 5. To assemble sandwiches, spread vegan butter on English muffins, if using. Then add 2 tablespoons of the cooked vegetables to the bottom half of each muffin. Top with 2 slices of tofu and evenly distribute the remaining vegetables on top of the tofu slices on all 4 sandwiches. Cover with the other muffin halves and press down to help keep vegetables from spilling out.

Tofu French Toast

Makes 6-8 pieces

- 8 ounces silken tofu
 - ½ cup dairy-free milk
 - 1 teaspoon agave or maple syrup
 - ½ teaspoon cinnamon
1. Heat a non-stick pan over medium heat.
 - 1 ripe banana
 - Vegan butter or mild-flavored oil for cooking
 - 6-8 slices of bread
 2. Blend the tofu, dairy-free milk, syrup, cinnamon, and banana on high until smooth. If too thick add a few tablespoons extra dairy-free milk or water. Pour the coating mixture into a shallow dish and dip the bread into the mixture, thoroughly coating both sides.
 3. Melt a teaspoon of oil or vegan butter on the hot skillet, then add your soaked bread.
 4. Cook for 2-3 minutes and flip to cook the other side once the edges begin to turn golden brown. Repeat with remaining bread.
 5. Serve with fresh fruit, powdered sugar, or maple syrup.

New-To-You Food Guide

Cheese

Dairy-free cheeses are often made from nuts, soy, or tapioca. Nutritional yeast (see below) also adds a cheesy flavor to foods. Brands: Daiya, Parma, Teese, Tofutti, Treeline, Vegan Gourmet

Condiments

Condiments, including butter, mayo, and sour cream, are available in veg-friendly forms. Brands: Earth Balance, Just Mayo, Nayonaise, Tofutti, Vegan Gourmet, Vegenaïse

Milk, Yogurt, and Ice Cream

Dairy-free products are made from almonds, coconut, flax, hemp, oats, rice, and soy. All are free of cholesterol. Brands: Almond Breeze, Coconut Bliss, Pacific, Silk, So Delicious, Tempt, Tofutti, Whole Soy

Nutritional Yeast

This flaky, inactive yeast has a cheesy flavor. Try substituting for parmesan on top of pasta or pizza, or in any other food to which you'd like to add a cheesy taste. Fortified versions are packed with B vitamins, including vitamin B12, and other essential minerals. Brands: Bragg, Red Star

Seitan

Made from wheat gluten, seitan is packed with protein and offers a meaty texture when cooked. Brands: Upton's Naturals, West Soy

Tahini

A calcium-rich, creamy, sesame seed paste often used in Middle Eastern cuisine.

Tempeh

Tempeh is a firm, fermented soybean product. It has a nutty flavor and can take the place of meat in a recipe. Brands: Lightlife, Tofurky

Tofu

Made from soybeans, tofu is popular in vegetarian recipes because it is high in protein and calcium, and it easily absorbs flavors in a recipe. It comes in a white block that can be fried, sautéed, steamed, or used in smoothies. Check recipes to see whether you should use a firm or silken variety.

TVP/Vegan Crumbles

Textured Vegetable Protein (TVP) is a dried protein that must be soaked in liquid before adding to a recipe. Vegan crumbles can be used straight from the package. Both add

a meaty texture to stew, chili, and pasta sauce. Brands: Beyond Meat, Bob's Red Mill, Gimme Lean, Tofurky

LUNCH

Barbecue Seitan Sandwiches

Serves 4

- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 package seitan strips or chunks cut into strips
- 1 cup vegan barbecue sauce
- ¼ cup water
- Hot sauce (optional)
- 4 hamburger buns
- Suggested toppings: lettuce, tomato, green pepper, coleslaw, red onions

1. Heat the vegetable oil in a large pan over medium heat. Add the onion and sauté for 5-8 minutes, or until the onion is very soft. Add seitan, and cook until lightly browned, stirring often.

2. Add the barbecue sauce and water and cook, stirring every 5 minutes, until the sauce has thickened and been absorbed by the seitan. Add hot sauce to taste if using.

3. Toast the inside of the buns to prevent them from getting soggy, then spoon the seitan mixture onto the rolls and garnish. Serve hot.

Black Bean Soup

Serves 6-8

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 green bell pepper, chopped
- 1 can diced tomatoes
- 2 tablespoons white or apple cider vinegar
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
- 3-4 bay leaves
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 6 cups black beans, cooked
- 2 cups vegetable broth
- ¼ cup fresh parsley

1. In a large stockpot over medium-high heat, sauté the onion, garlic, and bell pepper in the olive oil until the onion begins to soften, about 5 minutes.
2. Add the tomato, vinegar, cumin, coriander, paprika, bay leaves, salt, and pepper and cook for another 5 minutes.
3. Add the beans and broth and reduce to a simmer. Cook for about 15 minutes, covered.
4. Remove bay leaves and serve garnished with parsley.

Egg-Free Salad Sandwiches

Makes 4 sandwiches

- 1 12-ounce package extra firm tofu
- ½ cup vegan mayonnaise
- 2 teaspoons mustard
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice or apple cider vinegar
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 celery stalk, diced
- 1 small pickle, diced
- 2 green onions, diced
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Indian Black Salt (kala namak) (optional)
- Bread, tomato, lettuce, or other desired sandwich fixings

1. Wrap the tofu in a paper towel, then a clean dish towel. Press by leaving between two heavy pots for about 10 minutes. Replace the soaked dish towel with another dry towel and press for another 5 minutes. Chop up the tofu into nonuniform chunks or cubes.

2. Toss tofu in a bowl with the vegan mayonnaise, mustard, lemon juice or vinegar, garlic powder, and cumin. Stir in the celery, pickle, and onions. Season with salt, pepper, and black salt if using. Use less salt if also using black salt, which adds a great egg-y flavor.

3. Toast bread before assembling your sandwiches and serve with your favorite fixings.

DINNER

Champion Chili

Serves 8

- 1 cup dry TVP or 1 package vegan crumbles (optional)
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 large onion, coarsely chopped
- 1 28-ounce can diced tomatoes
- 1 small can tomato paste
- 1 jalapeño pepper, minced (optional)
- 3 tablespoons chili powder (or more to taste)
- 2 teaspoons ground cumin
- 2 teaspoons garlic powder
- 2 teaspoons Italian seasoning
- 1 teaspoon salt
- Black pepper to taste
- ½ cup vegetable broth
- 2 carrots, chopped
- 1 bell pepper, chopped
- 2 15-ounce cans of beans drained and rinsed (kidney, black, pinto, etc.), add a third can of beans if not using vegan crumbles or TVP
- 1 cup frozen corn
- 1 zucchini, chopped

1. If using TVP, start by heating a few teaspoons of vegetable oil in a large skillet. Add the TVP and toast over medium-high heat, stirring constantly for about 3 minutes. Toasting the TVP will give the texture a bit more of a bite and keep it from getting soggy. Bring 1 cup of water or vegetable broth to a boil and pour over the TVP. Set aside.
2. In a large stockpot, heat 1 tablespoon of vegetable oil over medium heat. Add the onion and cook for about 2 minutes. Next add the diced tomatoes, tomato paste, jalapeño (if using), chili powder, ground cumin, garlic powder, Italian seasoning, salt, and pepper and allow to cook for about 5 minutes.
3. Add the broth, soaked TVP or vegan crumbles (if using), carrots, and bell pepper. Cover and turn down heat. Simmer for 30 minutes.
4. Add the beans, corn, and zucchini and simmer uncovered for an additional 30 minutes.
5. Adjust seasoning to taste and serve with rice or pasta and top with vegan sour cream, if desired.

Lots of Layers Lasagna

Serves 6-8

- 1 14-ounce package extra firm tofu
 - 1 tablespoon lemon juice or white vinegar
 - 1 teaspoon salt
 - 1 teaspoon garlic powder
 - 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
 - ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
 - 1 package vegan crumbles or 2 cups TVP
1. Preheat the oven to 375°F.
 - 2 cups vegetable broth, if using TVP
 - 1 tablespoon olive oil
 - 6 cups red marinara sauce
 - 1 12-ounce package lasagna noodles
 - 8 ounces raw spinach
 - ½ cup vegan mozzarella shreds
 2. To create tofu-ricotta, drain and mash the tofu in a mixing bowl. Add the lemon juice, salt, garlic powder, Italian seasoning, and nutmeg. Set aside.
 3. If using vegan crumbles, break up in a small frying pan with the tablespoon of olive oil. Fry for about 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Once it starts to turn golden and crispy, remove from heat. If using TVP, soak it in the 2 cups of boiling broth.
 4. Spread a thin layer of marinara sauce on the bottom of a 9 x 13-inch pan.
 5. Prepare the dry noodles by spreading the tofu-ricotta evenly on each piece. Place 1 layer of noodles on the bottom of the pan. Place a layer of spinach leaves on top of the noodles, followed by half of the vegan crumbles or TVP.
 6. Then pour 1 cup of marinara sauce, making sure it is evenly distributed over the whole pan. Repeat with the second half of your ingredients. Top with a final layer of noodles, the last cup of marinara sauce, and the half cup of vegan cheese.
 7. Cover with foil and bake for 35-45 minutes, until the sauce is bubbling. Uncover and bake for an additional 5 minutes. Allow to cool and set for at least 15 minutes before serving.

Meatloaf

Serves 4-6

- 1-pound vegan crumbles
- ½ cup soft bread crumbs
- ¼ cup dairy-free milk
- 1 small onion, minced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- ¼ cup ketchup or tomato paste
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon mustard

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.

- 1 teaspoon horseradish
- 1 teaspoon salt

Glaze

- ¼ cup ketchup or tomato paste
- 1 tablespoon mustard
- 1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
- 1 tablespoon molasses

2. Combine all of the meatloaf ingredients in a large bowl and mix thoroughly. Line a bread loaf pan with parchment paper and press the loaf ingredients into it.

3. Whisk together the glaze ingredients and spread evenly across the top of the loaf.

4. Cover pan with foil and bake for 50 minutes. Uncover and bake for another 10 minutes.

Roasted Lemon Garlic “Chicken”

Serves 4

- 8 small red potatoes, quartered
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 2 lemons, 1 cut into thin slices or wedges and 1 juiced
- 3 sprigs fresh rosemary, de-stemmed
- 6-8 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- ¾ pound green beans, trimmed
- 1 package of vegan chicken cutlets

1. Preheat oven to 400F. Place the potatoes on a large baking sheet and toss with a tablespoon of the olive oil. Sprinkle with some salt and pepper. Roast for about 15 minutes, while preparing the rest of the ingredients. This step will form a nice skin on the potatoes.
2. Coat a large baking dish or cast-iron skillet with 1 tablespoon of the olive oil. Arrange the lemon slices and 1/3 of the rosemary in a single layer on the bottom of the dish or skillet.
3. In a large bowl, combine the remaining olive oil and rosemary with the lemon juice, garlic, salt, and pepper; add the green beans and toss to coat. Using tongs, remove the green beans and arrange them on top of the lemon slices. Remove the potatoes from the oven and arrange along the edge of the dish or skillet on top of the green beans.
4. Place the vegan chicken in the same bowl as the olive oil mixture and coat thoroughly. Place the chicken onto skillet and pour any of the remaining olive oil mixture over the top.
5. Roast in the oven for 20-30 minutes or until the green beans are tender, but still bright, and the chicken is golden brown around the edges. Place a piece of the roasted chicken on each serving plate and divide the green beans and potatoes equally. Top with the lemon slices and serve hot.

SNACKS/SIDES

Egg-Free Potato Salad

Serves 6

- 2 pounds red potatoes, cut into large cubes
- 1/3 cup vegan mayonnaise
- 2 tablespoons Dijon or brown mustard
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 ½ teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 cup celery, diced (optional)
- ¼ cup red onion, chopped (optional)
- ¼ cup parsley or chives, finely chopped

1. Bring a large pot of water to a rolling boil, then carefully add the chopped potatoes. Cook for about 10 minutes or until potatoes are soft enough to be pierced with a fork, but not at all mushy. Drain and rinse in cold water. Set aside to cool completely.

2. Separately, combine the mayonnaise, mustard, lemon juice, salt, and pepper in a small bowl and mix well to combine.

3. When the potatoes are fully cooled, place them in a large bowl with the celery, onion, and parsley or chives. Mix gently to combine. Add the mayonnaise mixture and toss to coat. Cover and chill for at least 2 hours. Adjust seasoning before serving.

Creamy Mac & Cheese

Serves 2-4

- ½ pound pasta
- 1 tablespoon mustard
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice or apple cider vinegar
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon peanut butter or tahini
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- ½ teaspoon paprika
- 1 cup nutritional yeast
- 2 cups dairy-free milk
- 1-2 teaspoons salt
- ½ cup vegan cheese shreds (optional)

1. Cook the pasta until al dente (cooked through, but still slightly firm). After draining the pasta, use the hot stockpot to cook your sauce.
2. Combine the mustard, lemon juice, soy sauce, and peanut butter (or tahini) in the stockpot over low heat. Add the garlic powder, paprika, and nutritional yeast, whisking to combine. Slowly add the dairy-free milk, a little at a time, until it reaches your desired thickness. Add salt and adjust to taste.
3. Add the vegan cheese if desired and cook until cheese is completely melted. Turn off the heat and add the pasta, tossing to coat all the noodles.

Holiday Stuffing

Serves 6-8

- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil, divided
 - ½ small onion, diced
 - 2 celery stalks, chopped
 - 4 cups bread cubes, toasted
 - 1 cup vegetable broth
 - 2 Fuji, gala, or pink lady apples, cored and chopped
1. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
 - 1/3 cup raisins
 - ¼ cup dried cranberries
 - 1 teaspoon basil
 - 1 teaspoon garlic powder
 - 1 teaspoon oregano
 - Salt and pepper, to taste
 2. In a large skillet, heat 1 tablespoon of the oil. Sauté the onion and celery until tender, about 5-7 minutes.
 3. Use the remaining oil to grease a medium casserole dish and pour the sautéed vegetables into the dish.
 4. Add all the remaining ingredients and toss well, making sure all of the bread cubes are soaked in the vegetable broth. Bake for 45 minutes.

DESSERT

Chewy Chocolate Chip Cookies

Makes 25-30 cookies

- 1 cup vegan butter, softened
 - ½ cup white sugar
 - ½ cup brown sugar
 - ¼ cup dairy-free milk
 - 1 teaspoon vanilla
1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
 - 2 ¼ cups flour
 - ½ teaspoon salt
 - 1 teaspoon baking soda
 - 12 ounces dairy-free chocolate chips
 2. In a large bowl, mix the butter, white sugar, and brown sugar until light and fluffy. Slowly stir in the dairy-free milk and then add the vanilla to make a creamy mixture.
 3. In a separate bowl, combine the flour, salt, and baking soda. Add this dry mixture to the liquid mixture and stir well. Fold in the chocolate chips.
 4. Drop small spoonfuls of the batter onto non-stick cookie sheets and bake for 8-10 minutes.

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Classic Cupcakes with Buttercream Frosting

Serves 2-4

Cake

- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 ¼ cup dairy-free milk
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- ¾ cup sugar
- 1 ½ teaspoons baking powder

Cake

- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt

Buttercream Frosting

- 1 cup vegan butter
- 3-4 cups powdered sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 3-4 tablespoons dairy-free milk

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Prepare a cupcake tin by placing baking liners into each of the cups.
2. In a small bowl, slowly mix the oil, vinegar, and vanilla into the dairy-free milk, allowing it to curdle. In a large bowl, sift together the flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, and salt.
3. Pour the liquid mixture over the flour mixture and stir gently, being very careful not to over-mix. Once combined, spoon the batter into each of the lined cupcake cups, filling each about two-thirds of the way full.
4. Bake for 20-25 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center of a cake comes out clean. Remove from oven and allow to cool for a few minutes in the tray. Once cool enough to touch, remove from the tray and cool the rest of the way on a cookie rack.

Buttercream Frosting

1. While the cupcakes are cooling, prepare the buttercream. Start by whipping the vegan butter with an electric mixer or by hand until slightly soft and smooth. Add the powdered sugar, 1 cup at a time. Add the full 4 cups for a sweeter and stiffer frosting.
2. Mix in the vanilla, salt, and a little bit of the dairy-free milk until your desired consistency is reached. Spread or pipe the frosting onto the completely cooled cupcakes in whatever fashion you like and enjoy.

Fudge Brownies

Makes 20 brownies

- 2 cups flour
- 2 cups sugar
- ½ cup cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup vegetable oil (½ cup can be substituted with apple sauce for a more cake-like brownie)
- 1 cup water
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 cup dairy-free chocolate chips (optional)
- ½ cup chopped walnuts (optional)

1. Preheat oven to 350°F and grease a 9 x 13-inch baking pan.
2. Combine dry ingredients in a mixing bowl. Whisk together wet ingredients and fold into the dry ingredients. If desired, add half the chocolate chips and chopped walnuts to the mix. Pour mixture into the prepared pan and sprinkle with remaining chocolate chips and walnuts, if using.
3. For fudge-like brownies, bake for 20-25 minutes. For cake-like brownies, bake 25-30 minutes. Let the brownies cool slightly before serving.

Pumpkin Pie

Serves 6-8

- 16 to 24 ounces silken tofu
 - 2 cups pumpkin purée
 - $\frac{3}{4}$ cup maple or agave syrup
 - $\frac{3}{4}$ cup evaporated cane sugar
 - $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cornstarch
 - 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1. Preheat the oven to 400°F.
 - 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
 - 1 teaspoon ground ginger
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground nutmeg
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
 - $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground cloves
 - 1 9-inch unbaked pie shell
 2. Combine all of the filling ingredients in a blender or food processor and blend until completely smooth. Pour the mixture into the pie shell.
 3. Bake for 30 minutes, then turn down the oven temperature to 350°F. Bake for another 30-45 minutes or until the center of the pie appears set.
 4. Remove from oven and allow to cool completely. Chill for at least 2 hours to allow the pie to firm up even more.

VEGAN EATING ON A BUDGET

Whether you're a student, raising a family on a tight budget, or just saving for the future, choosing vegan foods doesn't mean breaking the bank. There are plenty of nutritious vegan options that are as economical as they are tasty. Here are some meal ideas to help you discover how easy—and affordable—it is to transition to a more compassionate diet:

Breakfast

- Oatmeal with fruit or maple syrup
- Cereal with soy milk and sliced bananas
- Peanut butter or jam on toast or a bagel
- Smoothie of fresh or frozen fruit with soy milk

Lunch & Dinner

- Rice, beans, and vegetables on a platter or in a tortilla
- Pasta with marinara sauce and frozen veggies
- Baked sweet potato topped with salsa, baked beans, or veggie chili
- Lentil soup with veggies

Snacks

- Celery, apples, or carrots topped with peanut butter or hummus
- Popcorn seasoned with nutritional yeast or salt
- Make-your-own trail mix with nuts, raisins, and sunflower seeds

Visit ***TryVeg.com*** for additional meal ideas and to request a free Vegetarian Starter Guide!