

21 DAYS OF FASTING AND PRAYER WEEK 1



THE FOLLOWING DEVOTIONALS ARE FROM THE
"JAMES RIVER CHURCH 21 DAYS OF FASTING AND
PRAYER DEVOTION PLAN"
(WWW.BIBLE.COM/READING-PLANS/12259-21-DAYS-OF-FASTING-AND-PRAYER-DEVOTIONAL)

DAY 1

As we start this 21 Days of Fasting and Prayer, I want to encourage you to join me in thinking about the next 21 days as more than just going without food, or a spiritual battle, or a discipline to get what you need from God. All of those things will certainly be aspects that we will encounter, but there is more. This is a spiritual journey, think of it as a spiritual pilgrimage. A pilgrimage may lead you to a new place physically but primarily leads you to a new place spiritually.

In Psalm 84 the Psalmist is writing about those people who had their heart set on making a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Listen to how he writes about those who are making the journey, “Blessed are those who dwell in your house.” “Blessed are those whose strength is in you.” The person making the journey is blessed, they have joy, they receive strength, in fact, they go from “strength to strength.”

You’re not making this journey alone, the God who loves you more than you can imagine is calling you to a new place, a new season, a new experience of His glory. This 21-day journey is going to life-changing, you’ve taken the first step, I can’t wait to see what God is going to do.

READING:

Psalm 84
Matthew 6

PRAY FOR:

Missionaries:

- **Bill Chapel—Hungary**
- **Joey Coons—Chi Alpha/Ball State**
- **David Delp—South Africa**

Resurrected Youth
Speed the Light

NOTES

DAY 2

As you start fasting, it is important to understand that you have entered into a spiritual battle. Part of the spiritual battle is fought as the body adjusts to the rigors of fasting. For most people, there is more than just a little detoxing happening in our bodies. But the battle is more than physiological; as we fast, a spiritual battle is being waged. Things are happening in the spiritual realm that we neither perceive nor understand outside of God revealing them to us.

Fasting is more than just missing a meal. Powerful seasons of fasting are experienced when we purpose to spend additional time in God's presence during the fast. As well, every hunger pang, every feeling of fatigue, and every caffeine headache will be a reminder to call on God in that moment and to cry out for those things you are seeking Him to do in your life. David Mathis writes, "[Fasting] is a desperate measure, for desperate times, among those who know themselves desperate for God."

But don't just focus on the battle or the pain – Scripture promises there is fullness of joy in God's presence and there are pleasures at His right hand. Delight yourself in pursuing Him, and you'll know the joy of seeing Him work in your life.

READING:

Psalm 16
Hebrews 12

PRAY FOR:

Missionaries:

- **Bernie and Brenda Smith—West Africa**
- **Scott and Erin Pongratz—South Africa**
- **Daniel and Elisha Robertson—MAPS**

Kids Ministry
BGMC

NOTES

DAY 3

What are you needing God to do through this 21 Days of Fasting and Prayer? What are you praying for? Take time to write these needs down. Look at them daily as you pray. Whenever hunger grips your stomach or the cravings for coffee come, read your list and be reminded that your fasting is for a purpose. Through your fast, God will answer!

READING:

Psalm 37

Psalm 27

PRAY FOR:

Missionaries:

- **Gary and Janice Dickerson—West Africa**
- **David and Debbie Johnson—Asia**
- **Jim and Linda Schulz—Alaska**

Shepherd's Door

Gideons international

NOTES

DAY 4

In Mark Chapter 9, a father brought his son to Jesus' disciples. The boy was demonized and an epileptic, and even though God had healed people through the disciples before, nothing happened when they prayed for the boy to be healed. When the disciples brought the boy to Jesus, the boy was healed. Later the disciples asked Jesus this question, "Why couldn't we do it?" Jesus answered in verse 29, "This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer and fasting."

There are some things that God will do in our lives but only in response to our spending additional time in His presence combined with fasting. Fasting breaks strongholds, liberates people, and moves us into a realm of realizing God's power in our lives. The more time you're spending with God, the more you're going to see the hand of God on your life in an extraordinary way. Maybe there's an obstacle that you have been facing for a long time. Perhaps you have prayed and prayed, and you don't understand why you are not making any headway in the situation. You might be thinking, "Will God ever give me victory?" Jesus' response to the disciples is His response to you – some things only come by prayer AND fasting.

READING:

Mark 9

2 Corinthians 10

Psalms 144

PRAY FOR:

Missionaries:

- **Abraham and Sarah Liu—Japan**
- **Rich and Wanda Ferguson—Peru**
- **Josh Haviland—Prison Ministries**

Women's and Men's Ministries

Small Groups

Convoy of Hope

NOTES

DAY 5

The story of Nehemiah is a vibrant example of the favor that comes with denying ourselves for the purpose of drawing near to God. Nehemiah worked for a powerful pagan king - one that did not worship the God of Israel. When Nehemiah heard how the city walls in his hometown of Jerusalem had been burned and left in ruins; he knew that he had to do something about it. The problem was that the king Nehemiah served had issued a decree that Jerusalem not be rebuilt. How would the king ever be convinced to not only change his mind, but pay for the wall of Jerusalem to be restored? Nehemiah's solution was to fast and pray.

He asked God for favor in his situation and denied his stomach for the purpose of showing that his desire and need for God's help was greater than his desire and need for food.

Nehemiah's fast paved the way for God to give him favor with a pagan ruler that changed the course of history. You may be facing a situation that is testing your courage and your strength – believe God is going to use this fast to bring His favor into your life.

READING:

Nehemiah 1
Nehemiah 2

PRAY FOR:

Missionaries:

- **Rick McCartney—Wales**
- **Bruce and Lisa Ridpath—Colombia**
- **Beverly Freund—Chi Alpha**

Worship Team
Habitat for Humanity

NOTES

DAY 6

Things are always changing around us. We go from season to season in life – Spring, Summer, Winter, Fall – and just as the seasons change so does every other aspect of life. But even though we must accept that change is constant, it doesn't mean it is easy.

Change always brings both excitement and uncertainty as we try to navigate the new opportunity or challenge in front of us. This is why fasting is so important during seasons of transition and change. As we look through Scripture, we often see that new seasons of God's favor and work were preceded by fasting.

Moses fasted before he received the Law (Exodus 34:28).

Jesus fasted before the start of His earthly ministry (Matthew 4:2).

Paul fasted before the start of his missionary ministry (Acts 13:2).

Wherever you are at during your season of change, fasting will bring clarity, confidence, and commitment to stick it out. Fasting brings a fresh anointing of power for the new seasons of life.

READING:

Exodus 34

Matthew 4

Acts 13

PRAY FOR:

Missionaries:

- **Nathan and Lisa Turney—New Zealand**
- **Spencer Kelley—Chi Alpha**
- **2 unnamed missionaries in sensitive areas**

Pastor Matt and Ellie and their family

Pastor Chris and Abby and their family

NOTES

DAY 7

Have you felt distant from God? Maybe as you read this you feel as if you are in a spiritual desert. You are calling out to God, but it seems as if your cry is falling on deaf ears. You might even be thinking, “Why isn’t God responding?”

The better question is, “What is blocking the voice of God in my life that I am not hearing what He is saying?”

The constant distractions that surround our lives can so easily block our ability to hear God’s voice. Everything from the TV, to smartphones, to social media can distract our attention and keep us from clearly hearing from the Lord. Seasons of fasting help to quiet our hearts so we can hear from God.

There is a unique spiritual sensitivity that comes through prayer and fasting. If you are struggling to discern God’s voice, one of the best things you can do is fast!

Scripture is clear: God is speaking.

READING:

Isaiah 58

1 Chronicles 16

Psalms 27

1 Samuel 3

PRAY FOR:

Missionaries:

- **Greg and Nikkita Lewen—Canary Islands**

- **Luke Furr—Chi Alpha**

Sunday Morning Service

NOTES



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