

Christian Fasting

Introductory

Making physically weak and becoming spiritually strong makes right fasting.

When I am weak, then I am strong. (2 Corinthians 12:10)

Don't tear your clothing in your grief, but tear your hearts instead. (Joel 2:13)

Not imposed or forced but opportunity- *Whenever you fast.* (Matthew 6:16)

Purpose

Fasting that breaks chains, frees the oppressed, and shares food with the hungry.

⁶ *The kind of fast I want is that you stop oppressing those who work for you and treat them fairly and give them what they earn.* ⁷ *I want you to share your food with the hungry and bring right into your own homes those who are helpless, poor, and destitute. Clothe those who are cold, and don't hide from relatives who need your help.* (Isaiah 58:6-7)

Aim

i) Knowing God- *You have not eaten bread, I did this so that you may know that I am the LORD your God.* (Deuteronomy 29:6)

ii) Prayer- *I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven.* (Nehemiah 1:4)
With prayer and fasting. (Acts 14:23)

iii) Humility- *I humbled myself with fasting.* (Psalm 35:13)

All of us to fast and humble ourselves before our God. (Ezra 8:21)

iv) Broken Spirit- *My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart you, God, will not despise.* (Psalm 51:17); *You shall afflict your souls.* (Leviticus 23:27)

v) Repentance- *Fasting and wearing sackcloth; confessed their sins.* (Nehemiah 9:1-2)

vi) Closeness - *The LORD is close to the brokenhearted.* (Psalm 34:18)

vii) Patience- *I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation.*
(Philippians 4:12)

viii) For healing- *When they were ill, I put on sackcloth and humbled myself with fasting.*
(Psalm 35:13);

And the Lord made Bathsheba's baby deathly sick. ¹⁶ *David begged him to spare the child and went without food, and lay all night before the Lord on the bare earth.* (2 Samuel 12:15-16)

[among above 8- focus on your point/s of interest]

Manner

i) After eating not lay down- *He ate and lay down; but the angel of the LORD came back a second time and touched him, and said, Arise.* (1 Kings 19:6-7)

ii) Weeping & mourning- *With fasting and weeping and mourning.* (Joel 2:12)

iii) Going to Church- *Consecrate a fast, call a sacred assembly; Gather the elders and all the inhabitants.* (Joel 1:14); *Consecrate a fast, proclaim a sacred assembly.* (Joel 2:15)

iv) Appropriate to situation- *The attendants of the groom cannot mourn as long as the groom is with them, but the days will come when the groom is taken away from them, and then they will fast.* (Matthew 9:15)

v) No show off but spiritual contact- *Not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them.* (Matthew 6:1)

Put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting. (Matthew 6:17-18)

Types of Fast

1) Super or absolute Fast – no food, no water- *Moses was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights without eating bread or drinking water.* (Exodus 34:28)

2) Water-only Fast- this is the fast for spiritual, meditative, and detoxifying reasons.

The "40-day fast" is modeled after Jesus' time in the wilderness (Matthew 4:2), during which scholars believe he abstained from food but likely drank water.

Consuming only water, considered the most traditional and physically demanding form of biblical fasting. Bible verse describing the Israelites finding no water in the wilderness.

So Moses brought Israel from the Red sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur and found no water. (Exodus 15:22)

3) Daniel Fast - *Steward gave them simple vegetables and water. (Daniel 1:16)*

I did not eat any tasty food, nor did meat or wine enter my mouth. (Daniel 10:3)

4) Soul Fast or Social Media Fast. *No entertainment was brought before him. (Daniel 6:18)*

[e.g. leave smoking/wrong videos]

5) Liquid Fast - no solid food but consuming liquids like tea, soup, or juice, water and fruit for nutrients and energy.

Indirect Ref.-(1 Corinthians 3:2; Hebrews 5:12)

6) Partial Fast - selective foods and times to fast.

Indirect Ref.- (Numbers 6:1-4; Prov. 23:3; Matt.3:4; Acts 21:25; 1 Cor.9:25)

Lent Season- The Council of Nicaea officially recognized the 40-day Lenten fast as a standard period of preparation before Easter in 312 A.D.

[Among above 6 select your choice]

Duration

i) 40 days- *Moses was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights without eating bread or drinking water. (Exodus 34:28)*

So he (Elijah) got up and ate and drank. Strengthened by that food, he traveled forty days and forty nights. (1 Kings 19:8)

ii) 7 days- *They fasted for seven days. (1 Samuel 31:13)*

iii) 3 days- *For three days he (Paul) was blind, and did not eat or drink anything. (Acts 9:9)*

Queen Esther instructs, do not eat or drink for three days. (Esther 4:16)

iv) 24 hours- *You shall afflict yourselves, from evening to evening. (Leviticus 23:32)*

v) (8 hours) day time- *They fasted that day until evening. (Judges 20:26)*

They mourned and wept and fasted all day. (2 Samuel 1:12)

vi) Any duration- *Joab and his brother Abishai killed Abner. Then David said to all the people who were with him, "Tear your clothes and put on sackcloth, and mourn." (2 Samuel 3:30-31)*

[Among above 6- select your convenient duration]

Starting time is not clearly mentioned- *Whenever you fast. (Matthew 6:16)*

Ending time- after sunset- *May God punish me (David), and ever so severely, if I taste bread or anything else before the sun sets. (2 Samuel 3:35)*

Body, soul & spirit:

Physical- your bread...divide your means seven ways, or even eight.

Cast your bread upon the waters, for you will find it after many days. Give a portion to seven, or even eight, for you do not know what calamity may happen on the earth. (Ecclesiastes 11:1-2)

Intellectual- keep away from wrong teaching- *Jesus said... beware of the yeast [teaching] of the Pharisees and Sadducees. (Matthew 16: 6)*

Spiritual- *The true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth. (John 4:23)*

They all ate the same spiritual food. (1Corinthians 10:3)

Conclusion

*They gave themselves **first** to the Lord and, even as you abound in every way. (2 Corinthians 8:5,7)*

Jesus Christ crucified himself for my sins. Now I should believe him as my personal Saviour and Lord. Then my good works and fasting will be acceptable to God. If not saved then my offerings are unacceptable to God just like:

The Lord had regard for Abel and his offering, but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. (Genesis 4:4-5)

Prayer:

Lord Jesus I accept you as my personal Lord and Saviour, teach me to do an acceptable fast in your eyes. **AMEN**

-Ross Nazirullah