

PRAYER & FASTING GUIDELINES

THESE GUIDELINES ARE MEANT TO BE USED AS A GUIDE ONLY. PLEASE CONSULT WITH YOUR DOCTOR (GP) BEFORE PARTICIPATING IN A FAST IF YOU HAVE BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH AN ILLNESS OR ARE TAKING ANY PRESCRIBED MEDICATION.

Fasting and Prayer at Ruach City Church — A Lifestyle

At Ruach City Church, our desire is for the Lord to Order our Steps as we enter into another year. We, therefore humble ourselves in dependence on Him, giving ourselves to Him, which is our reasonable service. As we focus on Him, we look to Him for direction and instruction for 2021 and beyond.

What is Fasting?

As Christians, we fast which means to abstain from physical nourishment (food). We do this in order to concentrate on the Lord or to obtain a response to a particular matter. Biblical fasting involves confession of sins, weeping and mourning in the process of praying whilst making our request known to God. In Matthew 6:16–18, Jesus himself, gives clear instructions to believers regarding fasting. In Matthew 4:2, we see that Jesus, himself, fasted. According to 2 Corinthians 6:4–6, fasting must be part of the lifestyle of a practicing Christian.

WEEK 1

LIQUIDS

(fruit juices, herbal teas, or water)



WEEK 2

WATER



WEEK 3

ABSOLUTE

(No food, liquids or water)

Why Should we Fast?

In Leviticus 16:29–30, we learn that fasting was originated by God as a commandment for man. Fasting was to be a designated time when man would not work but seek God with a repentant heart and ask forgiveness for his/her sins. It was only after God had granted him/her forgiveness that he/she could go to God with a personal request. Likewise, when we call a fast, Ruach City Church, seeks to collectively and personally repent and ask God for His forgiveness, before we seek His direction and guidance throughout this year — 2021.

How to Fast

It is very important to ensure that when you fast, God is your focus. A typical fasting day begins **6am–6pm**. A half day would finish at 12 noon. A guide for prayer times throughout your fasting day could be 6am, 12 noon, 3pm and 6pm. The fasting day can be divided into the following parts: **Prayer, Confession of sins** — Nehemiah 9:1–3; Daniel 9:3; **Prayer, including weeping together with making your request to God** — 2 Chronicles 20:3–4; Psalms 35:13; Joel 2:12; Matthew 17:21; Luke 2:37; **Separation from worldly activities** (this does not include your secular work or domestic responsibilities required of you) — Isaiah 58:3; Joel 1:14; Joel 2:15. We appreciate that not everyone will be able to abstain from food. However, there are alternatives which you can commit to as part of your fast. For example, **A Word Fast** — Refusal to speak any words which, when spoken, cause injury, fear, gossip, doubt, anger or guilt; **A Media Fast** — Refusal to watch TV, Videos, DVD's, to listen to the radio or to use the internet (unless work related).

**REMEMBER...
FASTING TAKES
DETERMINATION...
DANIEL 1:8; 9:3**

The Physical Results of Fasting

Your **body will respond** to the fact that you are eating less in terms of salt, sugar, carbohydrates and proteins. You are likely to feel weak, hungry, nauseous and irritable. You may find it difficult to absorb information mentally. This is all part of the **internal processing of your body** as it breaks up toxins. These **toxins will be released** from the body via **Sweating**/increase in body odour; **Urine** becomes darker in colour; **Tongue** becomes darker; **Bad breath**; **Acne**; **Increase in mucous** from the nose; **Constipation** — Drinking prune juice/herb teas is helpful; **Cold hands or feet**. All the above are a normal reaction to the fast.

The Spiritual Results of Fasting

Scripture shows that fasting humbles the soul (Psalm 35:13), Chastens the soul (Psalm 69:10), Loosens the bands of wickedness (Isaiah 58:6). Individuals fasted for many reasons:

- The needs of others (Acts 13:3)
- Mercy for the approaching death of a loved one (2 Samuel 12:15, 16)
- Deliverance from the enemy (Esther 4:16)
- Revelation to understand scripture
(Daniel 9:2, 3)

Fasting also brings:

- The appearance of angels (Daniel 9:3, 21)
- Answers to prayers (Deuteronomy 9:9)
- Destruction of enemies (Judges 20:26, 28)
- Personal encouragement (2 Chronicles 20:3, 15-18; Acts 27:23-24, 33)
- Spiritual guidance (2 Chronicles 20:3, 15; Acts 13:2)
- Revelation of God's will (Ezra 8:21, 23)
- Healing (1 Samuel 30:11, 12; Isaiah 58:6, 8)
- Outpouring of Holy Spirit (Joel 1:14; Jonah 3:5, 10; Acts 9:9, 17; Acts 10:30, 45)

AFTER BREAKING YOUR FAST EACH DAY

Do's

- Plenty of water, herb/bush teas
- Fruit juices e.g. apple, orange, cranberry, etc.
- Dark green vegetables such as broccoli, greens, spinach (can also be boiled to drink). Good for purifying the blood/energy giving
- Natural juices such as carrots, cucumber, apple, pears, celery, beetroot (using extractor/blender)
- Honey or brown sugar for sweetening
- Potatoes, boiled or jacket without butter or dairy product topping
- Green bananas, yam, sweet potato (small portions)
- Fish
- White meat, i.e. chicken, pork (optional), excess fat removed
- Oats porridge, preferably with Soya milk
- Pinch of salt and black pepper to taste

Don't's

- Do not drink tea or coffee
- Any dairy products, e.g. milk, cheese, eggs, yoghurt, condense milk, nutriment.
- Wheat, e.g. bread, dumplings, fried/boiled, biscuits, cakes, pastries
- Ice-cream
- Chocolate bars
- Rice
- Pulses, e.g. dried beans of any kind
- Do not fry any foods
- Chips, burgers or any kind of junk food
- No take-always whether Indian, Chinese, Caribbean
- Refrain from heavy/spicy seasonings
- Excess salt

