

PRAYER & FASTING

By WAYNE ALCORN

As we pray and seek the Lord, many believers have decided to fast in the midst of the extreme COVID-19 circumstances. You may ask, what is fasting and how do I do it?

Fasting is a spiritual practice that enables us to grow in our relationship with God.

The purpose of a fast is to set aside a specific span of time for restricting certain foods or practices as a physical commitment to seek God through deeper personal engagement and fervent prayer. God's people would often fast and pray for Divine help in times of crisis. Read *2 Chronicles 20:3*; *Esther 4:16*; and *Daniel 9:3* for more insights.

When we combine fasting with prayer and meditation, we can experience a more focused time of closeness with our Lord and seek His wisdom and help.

Here are some options for you to consider:

- **A COMPLETE FAST**

In this type of fast, you drink only liquids, typically water with optional light juices.

- **A PARTIAL FAST**

This fast is sometimes called the 'Jewish Fast' and involves abstaining from eating any type of food in the morning and afternoon. This can either correlate to specific times of the day, such as 6:00am to 3:00pm, or from sunup to sundown.

- **A SELECTIVE FAST**

This type of fast involves removing certain elements from your diet. One example of a selective fast is the *Daniel Fast*, a pseudo vegan fast, during which you remove meat, sweets and bread from your diet, consume water and juice for fluids, and fruits and vegetables for food.

- **A SOUL FAST**

This fast is a great option if you do not have much experience fasting from food; have health issues that prevent you from fasting food; or if you wish to refocus certain areas of your life that are out of balance. For example, you might choose to stop using social media or watching television for the duration of the fast and then carefully bring that element back into your life in healthy doses at the conclusion of the fast.

- **COMMUNION**

On the upcoming National Day of Prayer and Fasting, why don't you substitute that one meal of the day by taking communion and standing in prayer on God's promises for healing.

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