

FASTING

What is fasting? Have you ever fasted? Is it important

Fasting in Scripture is, almost always, abstaining from food for an extended period of time.

Old Testament Fasting

Leviticus 23 – The Jews were commanded to fast in Old Testament one day out of the year, Day of Atonement - usually associated with repentance.

2 Samuel 12:16 – David fast over his sick child .

Esther 4:16 – Esther encourages the Jews to fast.

Jesus Fasted

Matthew 4:1-4 – Jesus says man shall not live by bread alone.

Matthew 6:16-18 – Jesus taught his disciples to fast.

Prayer and Fasting associated

Nehemiah 1:4 "So it was, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned for many days; I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven."

Acts 13:2 As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."

Acts 14:23 So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

Fasting is a way to demonstrate to God, and to ourselves, that we are serious about our relationship with Him. Fasting helps us gain a new perspective and a renewed reliance upon God.

Types of Fast:

- Regular Fast - 2 Chronicles 20; regular fast is done by abstaining from all food, both solid and liquid, except for water; Jesus did this in Matthew 4.
- Partial Fast - Daniel 10; spent 3 weeks fasting from certain foods.
- Absolute/Total Fast - Esther 4; when she found the plans for the Jews to be killed in Persia, she and the other Jews fasted from food and water for 3 days, before entering the kings court to ask for mercy.
Moses did this for 40 days on Mt. Sani, which was a miracle (Deut. 9:9); Elijah also when he fled for his life in wilderness (1 Kings 19)