



## FASTING & PRAYING 2024

Our theme for this Lenten Season 2024 is: **Praying and Fasting The Key To The Impossible**

**Phil 4:13- I can do everything through him who gives me strength. (NIV)**

### **I. Our Eating**

One meal daily.

During this season we will not be eating red meat and nor sweets (cakes, pies, puddings and so forth) for 40 days. For the first 30 days, (Feb. 14<sup>th</sup>-Mar. 14<sup>th</sup>) you may eat seafood, poultry, vegetables, nuts, grains, and fruit. For the last 10 days (Mar 15- Mar.24<sup>th</sup>) you should only eat vegetables, nuts, grains, and fruit. Please drink plenty of water.

**Note:** If you have medical conditions that may negatively impact you, please consult your physician before starting your fast.

### **Special instructions**

1. Each morning when you rise, wash your face and anoint your head with oil.
2. Read your word of the day.
3. Each household give a sacrificial offering to the Lord of \$40 by Easter Sunday.

In many instances in scripture we see fasting, praying and giving. This threefold cord is not easily broken. The Lord hears and answers prayer when we move as his word has instructed.

### **OLD TESTAMENT EXAMPLE**

Jehoshaphat was a godly king. He loved the Lord with all his heart. But he had one weakness: a tendency to make ungodly alliances, which got him into serious trouble more than once. Then a strong alliance of nations came against him that he met the greatest crisis of his life. Had divine intervention not come, his nation could have been destroyed. The people believed in God's word and God's process and they obeyed.

And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. So Judah gathered together to ask help from the LORD; and from all the cities of Judah they came to seek the LORD. (II Chr. 20:3,4)

Jehoshaphat not only fasted himself, but he gave orders for a fast to be observed throughout the land. People thronged into Jerusalem to join with the king in prayer and fasting. Their petition was led by the king (II Chr. 20:6-13). In this prayer, Jehoshaphat called God's attention to the covenants He had given to Abraham and Moses.

He admitted his own powerlessness to stand before the enemy, and that his only hope was in God. Was this prayer that ascended to God from a fasting people answered? Yes indeed! A prophet, Jahaziel, was sent to them saying. (See 2Chr. 20:15-17). Jahaziel gave certain instructions to the people. They were not to be discouraged or afraid to face this large army (large issues, problems) and the Lord would give them the victory — without any fighting! And so it was when they began to sing praises to the Lord, confusion came into the ranks of the enemy and they began to destroy one another until not one man was left. Judah returned to Jerusalem with joy, and the fear of God came on the nearby kingdoms (verses 27-2)

### **Other Examples**

1. JOEL'S WARNING TO CALL A FAST AS THE DAY OF THE LORD APPROACHED (Joel 2:14-20)
2. ESTHER SAVES HER NATION THROUGH FASTING (Esther Ch. 4)
3. DANIEL PRAYS AND THE CAPTIVITY COMES TO AN END (Dan. 9:24)

### **NEW TESTAMENT EXAMPLE**

#### **ANNA THE PROPHETESS**

One of the first characters introduced in the New Testament is Anna the prophetess. She was nearly a century old and lived in the temple, fasting and praying and waiting upon God. And this woman was a widow of about eighty-four years, who did not depart from the temple, but served God with fasting and prayers night and day (Luke. 2:37). Perhaps there were those who wondered what she had accomplished in all those years. But it is evident that her prayers played a part in preparing the way for the coming of the Messiah. When the Christ-child was brought into the temple by Joseph and Mary, the Spirit revealed His presence to her. So it was with inexpressible joy that she gave thanks before the people that this was, He Who would bring redemption to Israel — the Redeemer she had been looking to appear, for so long.

### **Other Examples**

1. CHRIST IN THE WILDERNESS (Math 4:1-11)
2. THE TEACHING OF CHRIST CONCERNING FASTING (Math 6:16)
3. FASTING OPENED THE DOORS TO THE GENTILES TO RECEIVE THE GOSPEL (Acts 13:1-13)

## **II. 40 Lent Bible Verses To Help You Reflect**

- Day 1** 1 Peter 5:6 - Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.
- Day 2** Isaiah 58:6 - Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?
- Day 3** Psalm 42:2 - My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?
- Day 4** Joel 2: 12-14 - "Even now," declares the Lord, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning." Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending
- Day 5** Matthew 6:21 - For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
- Day 6** Lamentations 3:25 The Lord is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him;
- Day 7** Isaiah 30:18 Yet the Lord longs to be gracious to you; therefore he will rise up to show you compassion. For the Lord is a God of justice. Blessed are all who wait for him!

- Day 8** Psalm 27:14 Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord.
- Day 9** Matthew 6:16-18 When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.
- Day 10** Isaiah 40:31- But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.
- Day 11** Psalm 33:20-22 We wait in hope for the Lord; he is our help and our shield. In him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in his holy name. May your unfailing love be with us, Lord, even as we put our hope in you.
- Day 12** Psalm 130:5-6 I wait for the Lord, my whole being waits, and in his word I put my hope. I wait for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the morning.
- Day 13** Micah 7:7 But as for me, I watch in hope for the Lord, I wait for God my Saviour; my God will hear me.
- Day 14** Romans 12:12 Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.
- Day 15** Hosea 12:6 But you must return to your God; maintain love and justice, and wait for your God always.
- Day 16** Matthew 6:33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.
- Day 17** 1 Peter 5:6-7 Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.
- Day 18** Galatians 5:5 For through the Spirit we eagerly await by faith the righteousness for which we hope.
- Day 19** Jeremiah 29:12 Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you.
- Day 20** Psalm 33:20-22 We wait in hope for the Lord; he is our help and our shield. In him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in his holy name. May your unfailing love be with us, Lord, even as we put our hope in you.
- Day 21** Psalm 62:5 For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence, for my hope is from him.
- Day 22** Psalm 25:4-5 Show me your ways, Lord, teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Saviour, and my hope is in you all day long.
- Day 23** Mark 1:12-15 At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness, and he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted[a] by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him. After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!"
- Day 24** Matthew 4: 1-11 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: "'He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'" Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their

splendour. “All this I will give you,” he said, “if you will bow down and worship me.” Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’” Then the devil left him, and angels came

- Day 25** Philippians 3:10-11 I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.
- Day 26** John 16:33 I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.
- Day 27** Zephaniah 3:17 The Lord your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you; in his love he will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with singing.”
- Day 28** John 3:14-18 Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.” For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son.
- Day 29** Day 29 Micah 5:4 He will stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they will live securely, for then his greatness will reach to the ends of the earth.
- Day 30** Joel 2: 1-2 Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy hill. Let all who live in the land tremble, for the day of the Lord is coming. It is close at hand—a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and blackness. Like dawn spreading across the mountains a large and mighty army comes, such as never was in ancient times nor ever will be in ages to come.
- Day 31** John 10:10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and have it to the full.
- Day 32** Zechariah 9:9 Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.
- Day 33** Luke 19:28-42 After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. As he approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, “Go to the village ahead of you, and as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you untying it?’ say, ‘The Lord needs it.’” Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, “Why are you untying the colt?” They replied, “The Lord needs it.” They brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it. As he went along, people spread their cloaks on the road. When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen: “Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!” “Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!” Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, “Teacher, rebuke your disciples!” “I tell you,” he replied, “if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.” As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, “If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes.
- Day 34** Luke 22:14-23 When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. And he said to them, “I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God.” After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, “Take this and divide it among you. For I tell you I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.” And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave

it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you. But the hand of him who is going to betray me is with mine on the table. The Son of Man will go as it has been decreed. But woe to that man who betrays him!" They began to question among themselves which of them it might be who would do this.

- Day 35** Luke 22: 44-46 It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, for the sun stopped shining. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." When he had said this, he breathed his last.
- Day 36** Day 36 Luke 23:50-56 Now there was a man named Joseph, a member of the Council, a good and upright man, who had not consented to their decision and action. He came from the Judean town of Arimathea, and he himself was waiting for the kingdom of God. Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus' body. Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen cloth and placed it in a tomb cut in the rock, one in which no one had yet been laid. It was Preparation Day, and the Sabbath was about to begin. The women who had come with Jesus from Galilee followed Joseph and saw the tomb and how his body was laid in it. Then they went home and prepared spices and perfumes. But they rested on the Sabbath in obedience to the commandment.
- Day 37** Luke 24: 1-6 24 On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen!"
- Day 38** Luke 24:25-27 He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.
- Day 39** Luke 24:28-32 As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus acted as if he were going farther. 29 But they urged him strongly, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. They asked each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?"
- Day 40** Luke 24:33- They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together and saying, "It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon." Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread. While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, "Do you have anything here to eat?" They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate it in their presence. He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms."