

2 Chronicles 20, part 2 "The Battle Is Not Yours, but God's"
January 9-10, 2010 Message # MB403



(Proverbs 27:1, NLT) Don't brag about tomorrow, since you don't know what the day will bring.

(2 Chronicles 20:1-2) After this, the Moabites and Ammonites with some of the Meunites came to make war on Jehoshaphat. Some men came and told Jehoshaphat, "A vast army is coming against you from Edom, from the other side of the Sea. It is already in Hazezon Tamar" (that is, En Gedi).

(2 Chronicles 20:3) Alarmed, Jehoshaphat resolved to enquire of the LORD, and he proclaimed a fast for all Judah.

- **Fasting in the Bible is a sign of humility, repentance, and dependence**

(Matthew 4:4) Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

(Acts 13:1-3) In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

- **During fasting and praying, CF'S are more sensitive to hearing God speak**

(Psalms 139:23) Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts.

(Ezra 8:23) So we fasted and petitioned our God about this, and he answered our prayer.

1. Some people will fast **one meal a day** for 7-21 days and only drink water for that meal.
2. Others will choose a **juice fast** for 7-21 days.
3. Others will choose to use the **Daniel fast** for 7-21 days.

WARNING If you have any health concerns, please consult your physician prior to beginning your fast – especially if you are taking medication, have a chronic condition, are diabetic, or if you are pregnant or nursing.



- **Make it more about PRAYER than FASTING**
- **Make it more about the SPIRITUAL than the PHYSICAL**
- **Fasting and prayer help us to know God better**

Matthew 5:6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

(2 Chronicles 20:4) The people of Judah came together to seek help from the LORD; indeed, they came from every town in Judah to seek him.

(2 Chronicles 20:12) O our God, will you not judge them? For we have no power to face this vast army that is attacking us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are upon you."

1. Admit we need God's help, wisdom, and direction

(John 15:5) "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

2. Look to God through prayer, fasting, and journaling

(2 Chronicles 20:13) All the men of Judah, with their wives and children and little ones, stood there before the LORD.



3. Wait and expect God to answer

(Psalms 32:8) I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you.

(Isaiah 30:21) Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, "This is the way; walk in it."

(2 Chronicles 20:14) Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jahaziel son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite and descendant of Asaph, as he stood in the assembly.

John 16:13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth...

Romans 8:14 (Balmer) Christ followers are led by the Spirit of God.

(2 Chronicles 20:15) He said: "Listen, King Jehoshaphat and all who live in Judah and Jerusalem! This is what the LORD says to you: 'Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army. For the battle is not yours, but God's.

- **GOD - we don't know what to do, but our eyes are on You**

(2 Chronicles 20:16) Tomorrow march down against them. They will be climbing up by the Pass of Ziz, and you will find them at the end of the gorge in the Desert of Jeruel.

- **WOW –God knows the future, God knows MY FUTURE**

(2 Chronicles 20:17) You will not have to fight this battle. Take up your positions; stand firm and see the deliverance the LORD will give you, O Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Go out to face them tomorrow, and the LORD will be with you."

4. Step out in faith and obey God

(Ephesians 6:10, NLT) A final word: Be strong with the Lord's mighty power.

- **Be Spirit Led – when God speaks, we step**
- **KEY: the LORD is with you**

All Bible references are from the New International Version (NIV) unless otherwise noted. NLT = New Living Translation.

What is Fasting?

Fasting is a spiritual discipline where you deny the body of something (in this case food) in order to grow more deeply spiritually. Fasting and Prayer is a biblical principle found in both the Old Testament and New. Many great men of God have found tremendous growth through fasting and prayer. Fasting alone is nothing without prayer. The idea is that when your stomach starts growling, you head for your prayer closet and not your refrigerator. You can also spend some of the time you might be at the dinner table in God's Word. The focus and the emphasis are on God, and growing closer to Him through prayer, not the denial of food.



"Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God." (Matthew 4:4)

Why should I Fast?

Jesus did not say, "If you fast..." but "When you fast..." (Matthew 6:16). Jesus fasted, and if we want to continue growing to be more like Him, we too should fast and pray.

- Fasting and prayer is a way to demonstrate to God, and to ourselves, that we are serious about our relationship with Him.
- Fasting and prayer helps us gain a new perspective and a renewed reliance upon God.
- Fasting provides a targeted and focused time to draw closer to God and experience the Holy Spirit speaking into your life.

What do I pray for during a Fast?

There are many things that you can pray for during a fast. Make sure that you make time to quietly wait upon the Lord. Expect to hear from Him!

- Ask forgiveness – "Search me, O God, and know my heart..." (PSA 139:23)
- Focus on living under HIS influence and allow the Holy Spirit to speak into your life

- Pray for our loved ones, friends and co-workers to be open to the gospel
- Ask God for specific needs in your life and EXPECT God to answer.
- If you haven't asked for the filling of the Holy Spirit in a long time, begin your time of prayer asking... Remember this is a spiritual exercise

"So we fasted and petitioned our God about this, and he answered our prayer." (Ezra 8:23)

How long should I Fast?

If you begin to become transparent, it's probably time to stop. Seriously, when choosing what type of fast you will be undertaking, it is important to also decide ahead of time how long you will be fasting and to what extent you will be fasting.

1. Some people will fast one meal a day for 7-21 days and only drink water for that meal.
2. Others will choose a juice fast for 7-21 days.
3. Others will choose to use the Daniel fast for 7-21 days.
4. Each of these is YOUR personal decision and one that should be prayerfully considered.

Again, make sure you remember that the fast is not about the food, it's about grower closer to God. This isn't a competition to see who can fast the longest; it's personal, between each person and God. Choose a realistic time frame and realistic fast.

Types of Fasts

Believe it or not, there are many different kinds of fasts. Choosing your type of fast is a very personal decision. Everyone is at different places in their walk with God. There is nothing more "inherently spiritual" about one type of fast as opposed to another. Your personal fast should present a level of challenge to it, but know your body, know your options, and most importantly, seek God in prayer about this and follow what the Holy Spirit leads you to do. It's also important to not let what you eat or do not eat become the focus of your fast. Remember, it's about God, NOT FOOD! This is a time to disconnect enough with your regular patterns and habits in order to connect closer to God.

! If you have any health concerns, please consult your physician prior to beginning your fast – especially if you are taking medication, have a chronic condition, are diabetic, or if you are pregnant or nursing.

While preparing for your fast, it is important to choose ahead of time what type of fast you will participate in. Not only will this help with making the necessary preparations to implement your plan, but as you commit to a specific fast ahead of time, and know how you're going to do it, you will position yourself to finish strong.

Listed below, are some options and variations of different types of fasts you can choose to engage in. As you read over the information provided here, please consider how it applies to your circumstances and convictions. Fasting does require reasonable precautions.

Specific Food or Activity Fast

This type of fast is about giving up a specific food or maybe several foods, an activity or habit from your life during a time of prayer and fasting.

For example, you may choose to eliminate meat, processed or fast food, or sweets. It could also involve fasting from an activity or habit, such as watching television, or social media, or video games. Remember, it's not about what you are "giving up", it's about how you fill that time. Fasting should draw you closer to God.



Daniel Fast

The Daniel fast is a great model to follow that proves to be extremely effective for spiritual focus, bodily discipline and purification in the body and soul. It is probably one of the most commonly referred to types of fasts; however, within the term "Daniel Fast", there is room for broad interpretation. In the book of Daniel we find two different times where Daniel fasted, once in Daniel 1 and again in Daniel 10. Daniel 1 states that he ate vegetables and water. In Daniel 10, while the passage does not give a specific list of foods that Daniel ate, it does state that Daniel ate no rich (or choice) foods as well as no meat or wine. So based on these two verses, we can see that either of these, or any variations in between constitutes a fast.

Remember, there is nothing "inherently spiritual" about one type of fast as opposed to another or the length of your fast. It is important to seek God in prayer and follow what the Holy Spirit leads you to do.

Sample Daniel fast – remember there are many ways to do the Daniel fast since the Bible is NOT specific. We have put together a quick reference of foods available for download:

http://www.calvaryccm.com/Libraries/Fasting/CCM_Daniel_Fast.sflb.ashx

Additional resources and recipes:

<http://www.fellowshipchurch.com/fast>
http://www.fellowshipchurch.com/fast_recipes

Juice Fast



A juice fast is when no solid food is consumed and instead involves the intake of vegetable juices, fruit juices and water. Many people will dilute the juices with water. The natural sugars in juices provide energy, and the taste and strength are motivational to continue your fast. You can use fresh juices, or off-the-shelf juice products, as long as they are 100% juice with no sugar or other additives. If you are beginning a juice fast, be careful when using acidic juices like orange and tomato juice (these are better tolerated if mixed with equal portions of water).

If you "juice" here are some of the best juices - fresh carrot, grape, celery, apple, cabbage, or beet. Fruit juices are "cleansers" and are best taken in the morning.

Since vegetable juices are "restorers" and "builders," they are best taken in the afternoon and evening.

Reminders about Fasting

- Make it more about GOD than YOU
- Make it more about PRAYER than FASTING
- Make it more about the SPIRITUAL than the PHYSICAL
- Make it more about HUMILITY than PRIDE
- Make it more about HEARING from God than SPEAKING to God
- Make it JOYFUL and not a BURDEN
- Fasting and prayer change ME and NOT God
- Fasting is a HUNGER FOR GOD
- Fasting declares my DEPENDENCE on God

More Resources for Fasting

http://www.billygraham.org/LFA_Article.asp?ArticleID=83

<http://www.ccci.org/growth/growing-closer-to-god/how-to-fast/index.aspx>

<http://daniel-fast.com/about.html>

<http://www.allaboutgod.com/biblical-fasting.htm>

<http://www.allaboutprayer.org/prayer-and-fasting.htm>