



10 BIBLICAL PURPOSES FOR FASTING

1. Prayer (Ezra 8:23)

Throughout the Bible, fasting is associated with prayer. For example, Jesus fasted and prayed during some of the most intense moments of his earthly life.

2. Seeking God (Judges 20:26)

The act of fasting does not help us “find” God, but it can soften our hearts, remove worldly concerns, and make us more receptive to his leading in our lives.

3. Grieving (1 Samuel 31:13)

Fasting is often a natural response to grief, and we see examples of fasting and grieving throughout Scripture. David and his men, for example, wept and fasted after the death of Saul and his sons (2 Samuel 1:12).

4. Seeking Deliverance (2 Chronicles 20:3-4)

Another common reason for fasting is seeking deliverance from enemies or circumstances. In Esther 4:15-17, we see Esther calling her people to fast and pray for deliverance before she approaches the king.

5. Repentance (1 Samuel 7:6)

Fasting as an act of repentance demonstrates the seriousness of our sins and a commitment to returning to God.

6. Humility (1 Kings 21:27-29)

Humility is acknowledging not only our need for God, but also our position under his authority in our lives. Fasting is a physical manifestation of our need for God.

7. Kingdom Work (Nehemiah 1:3-4)

Nehemiah’s example of fasting over the devastation of Jerusalem illustrates that we can fast and pray over a particular facet of God’s kingdom work.

8. Ministry (Isaiah 58:3-7)

Fasting can also be an element of ministry—showing our need for God as we serve others and giving of ourselves for their benefit.

9. Overcoming Temptation (Matthew 4:1-11)

Just as Jesus fasted in the wilderness, we can fast in order to seek God’s help in overcoming temptation.



10. Worship (Luke 2:37)

Fasting ultimately shows that we are pursuing God for life and sustenance—placing him above all else in our worship.

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