

Biblical Model for Corporate Fasting

Daniel 9

<p>The context for fasting</p> <p>Fasting is focused on God <i>How has our culture failed to bear the image of God?</i></p> <p>Fasting is honest about sin <i>Has this season of Lent revealed any defects of character or commitment?</i></p> <p>Fasting relies on Scripture <i>What promises or commands in Scripture stand out to you?</i></p> <p>Fasting hopes in God <i>Look up verses in "When to Fast".</i></p> <p>Fasting seeks renewal through grace not self-effort <i>Look up verses in "What Fasting is Not".</i></p>	<p><u>1</u> In the first year of Darius... <u>2</u> I, Daniel, understood from the Scriptures, according to the word of the LORD given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years. <u>3</u> So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes. <u>4</u> I prayed to the LORD my God and confessed:</p> <p>“O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with all who love him and obey his commands, <u>5</u> we have sinned and done wrong. We have been wicked and have rebelled; we have turned away from your commands and laws. <u>6</u> We have not listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes and our fathers, and to all the people of the land.</p> <p><u>7</u> “Lord, you are righteous, but this day we are covered with shame—the men of Judah and people of Jerusalem and all Israel, both near and far, in all the countries where you have scattered us because of our unfaithfulness to you. <u>8</u> O LORD, we and our kings, our princes and our fathers are covered with shame because we have sinned against you. <u>9</u> The Lord our God is merciful and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against him; <u>10</u> we have not obeyed the LORD our God or kept the laws he gave us through his servants the prophets. <u>11</u> All Israel has transgressed your law and turned away, refusing to obey you.</p> <p>“Therefore the curses and sworn judgments written in the Law of Moses, the servant of God, have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against you. <u>12</u> You have fulfilled the words spoken against us and against our rulers by bringing upon us great disaster. Under the whole heaven nothing has ever been done like what has been done to Jerusalem. <u>13</u> Just as it is written in the Law of Moses, all this disaster has come upon us, yet we have not sought the favor of the LORD our God by turning from our sins and giving attention to your truth. <u>14</u> The LORD did not hesitate to bring the disaster upon us, for the LORD our God is righteous in everything he does; yet we have not obeyed him.</p> <p><u>15</u> “Now, O Lord our God, who brought your people out of Egypt with a mighty hand and who made for yourself a name that endures to this day, we have sinned, we have done wrong. <u>16</u> O Lord, in keeping with all your righteous acts, turn away your anger and your wrath from Jerusalem, your city, your holy hill. Our sins and the iniquities of our fathers have made Jerusalem and your people an object of scorn to all those around us.</p> <p><u>17</u> “Now, our God, hear the prayers and petitions of your servant. For your sake, O Lord, look with favor on your desolate sanctuary. <u>18</u> Give ear, O God, and hear; open your eyes and see the desolation of the city that bears your Name. We do not make requests of you because we are righteous, but because of your great mercy. <u>19</u> O Lord, listen! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, hear and act! For your sake, O my God, do not delay, because your city and your people bear your Name.”</p>
---	---

Biblical Principles of Fasting

What Fasting Is

- It is abstaining from food or another essential need in order to seek God.
- It expresses a deep need for God, more essential than bread is for the body.

What Fasting Is Not

- It is not a sign of greater spirituality (Luke 18:9–18)
- It is not a magic formula guaranteeing an answer (2 Samuel 12:15–17)
- It does not make one more acceptable to God (Isaiah 58:3–6)

When to Fast

- In a time of battle and confrontation (Judges 20:19–28)
- In times of repentance from backsliding (1 Samuel 7:2–7)
- In times of personal sorrow or loss (2 Samuel 1:12)
- When we need help (2 Chronicles 20:2–4)
- When we need wisdom (Acts 13:2–3)
- When we need special anointing or dedication (Matthew 4:2)

How We Fast

- With faith and obedience (Isaiah 58:3ff)
- With humility (Ezra 8:21)
- With urgency (Daniel 9:3)
- With Scripture (Jeremiah 36:6)
- With others (Esther 4:16)
- With a focus on pleasing God alone (Matthew 6:16–18)
- With a heart that rests in God (Joel 2:12–14)