



# THE RETURN

**10 Days Of Prayer & Repentance**

**September 18-28**

## FASTING GUIDE

### *What is Fasting?*

Fasting is a spiritual discipline. The Bible records many instances in which people fasted: Moses, when he received the Law from God. (Exodus 34:27-28); Jesus for 40 days in the desert (Matthew 4:1-11) in preparation for being tempted by the devil; the widow Anna who dedicated herself to prayer and fasting (Luke 2:36-37); the early church fasted on many occasions. Church history shows that fasting preceded great revivals. No one, not even God will force you to fast - it is a personal choice every person should make for themselves. The goal is to focus on God and bring needs to Him. Fasting can change the way you view your spiritual life with God.

### *Why should I fast?*

In Leviticus 16:29 we learn that fasting is synonymous with “afflicting one’s soul.” Fasting is something the soul participates in. It requires the denial of the self, the body, and our wants because they are secondary to God. So, Biblical fasting is deliberately abstaining from food for a spiritual goal, purpose, or reason. Fasting can also uncover hindrances in our lives, sharpen our spiritual senses, bring an intensity/urgency to our prayer life, help us make better decisions and invites the supernatural into our lives.

### *Here are some steps to help you to fast:*

**STEP 1: Set Your Objective:** Ask the Holy Spirit to clarify His leading and objectives for your time of prayer and fasting. This will enable you to pray more specifically and strategically. Through fasting and prayer, we humble ourselves before God.

**STEP 2: Make Your Commitment:** Pray about the kind of fast you should undertake. Jesus implied that all of His followers should fast (Matthew 6:16-18; 9:14,15). For Him it was a matter of when believers would fast, not if they would do it. Before you fast, decide on the following: for the day, for a part of the day, for one meal (some of this may be dependent on your medical condition). During a fast, drinking of water is accepted and a restriction of some physical/social activity is advised.

**STEP 3: Prepare Yourself Spiritually:** The foundation of fasting and prayer is repentance. Unconfessed sin will hinder your prayers. Prepare your heart by asking God to forgive you, seek forgiveness from Him, ask God to fill you with His Holy Spirit (Eph 5:18, 1 John 5:14,15), surrender all to Christ as Lord and Saviour (Romans 12:1,2), meditate on the attributes of God (His love, sovereignty, wisdom, power, compassion - Psalm 48:9,10; 103:1-8, 11:13), come in prayer with an expectant heart (Hebrews 11:6) and stand firm against spiritual opposition from Satan (Galatians 5:16, 17).

A single fast, however, is not a spiritual cure-all. Just as we need fresh infillings of the Holy Spirit daily, we also need new times of fasting before God. Consider making fasting and prayer a part of your spiritual disciplines.