

Which Fast should I fast?

by
D.A
Mango

A short guide on how to fast
the Lord's way

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"Is this the fast that I have chosen?" Isaiah 58:6

By D.A MANGO

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Introduction

The Bible records a time when the Jews were wondering why God does not respond to all their fasting. They were asking *“why do we fast and you don’t look our way? Why do we humble ourselves and you don’t even notice?”* So, God decided to send them a prophet to tell them what was wrong with their fasting. God’s feedback took a whole chapter. Therein God instructed the prophet to show the people the bad way they were fasting and to ask them *“is this the fasting I have chosen?”* In this book we will do an in-depth study of this chapter and learn what God taught them about fasting. Just to give you a bit of context, imagine a doctor preparing to admit a patient into hospital. Yet instead of the patient asking the pertinent questions regarding his health, the patient starts querying about the diet and when he is likely to leave! The duration of the hospital stay is all the optimum time the doctor needs to overhaul his health; yet the patient’s concern is misplaced. If he continues asking whether he is allowed to eat this or that and the check-out date, even the doctor will not give him serious attention. When a fast places much weight on the non-pertinent issues, it is possible to check out of the fasting without any spiritual benefits. If there is no guidance on what the godly expectations are, one may fast-amiss because much weight has been placed on the minors rather than the majors. It is better to know why Daniel fasted and what his fasting achieved, than to know what he did not eat. This booklet will place weight on the spiritual objectives and outcomes expected of a godly fast. Fasting is abstaining from food. To abstain from something is to refrain, desist, and withdraw from it for a period. What should one be doing during this sanctified set-apart time? What type of godly reverence is expected in a fast? What are the outcomes one should expect in a fast? In this short fasting-guide we will study the spiritual benefits and outcomes God outlined to Isaiah and see how best one can avoid the question *“is this the fast I have chosen?”*

Yours in fasting,

Mango, D A

Fasting is not a stand-alone exercise

Imagine someone who enrolls in a gym at the beginning of the year. He makes sure that he exercises daily but does not change his lifestyle. He continues with his bad eating habits without checking what he drinks and eats. What is the net effect? The lifestyle he has outside the gym will eventually cancel the diligence he puts into the gym. Even though the gym is a potent force for change, it has to be accompanied by other parallel activities. The gym can only work as a great propeller of healthy living if practised in conjunction with other activities.

Fasting is a great tool to spiritual change if all parallel [spiritual] activities are done well. It is the fuel that drives other spiritual activities – it is not an objective on its own. Just like gyming is the fuel that drives healthy living but it is not an activity to be done on its own. It is meant to be a lever to achieve other health objectives. Fasting is the icing on the cake, but you need to be having a cake.

Jesus touched on this principle, when He told his disciples that “this kind does not come out except by prayer and fasting.” The objective was to cast out a demon through the exercise of prayer. They had practised the prayer on the child without much success because they treated prayer as a stand-alone exercise. They needed to accompany it with something else in order to make it [the prayer] work. Jesus told them that extra thing required was fasting. The situation demanded prayer AND fasting not prayer alone.

Fasting is a leverage to achieve pre-set spiritual objectives - it is not an objective on its own. So if someone is fasting in January because everyone fasts in January, he might as well be accompanying everyone to the gym in January because many enrol in a gym as a New-Year-resolution. But if one considers his situation and decided to first meet a personal-fitness specialist, he will not only be advised how to gym correctly but also what other activities to do outside the gym. That is the objective of this book. To advise on what other activities need to accompany the fast to make it a godly success.

There are many verses in the Bible which refer to fasting as an additional extra. Many activities mentioned in scripture are usually done “with fasting” as an additional extra. Let us a look at a few

1. *Neh_9:1 Now in the twenty and fourth day of this month the children of Israel were assembled with fasting, and with sack clothes, and earth upon them. **Objective : A solemn assemble before God***
2. *Dan_9:3 And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes: **Objective : To seek the face of God***
3. *Joe_2:12 Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: **Objective : To seek the face of God***
4. *Act_14:23 And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed. **Objective : To seal an ordination***
5. *2Ch_20:3 And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah.
Objective : To humble their heart and turn the face of God*
6. *Ezr_8:21 Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river of Ahava, that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance. **Objective : For safe passage in dangerous terrain***
7. *Est_4:16 Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish. **Objective: To seek audience with King without appointment and overturn a dangerous decree.***

Having said so, it is also possible that the Holy Spirit may call one to fast ‘in advance’ without revealing any ‘objectives’ beforehand. Usually this person has been led already to be in an attitude of prayer, before the reason for the fast is eventually revealed. For example, before Paul and Barnabus were first called, the Bible says they were ministering to the Lord and fasting. Thereafter the Holy Spirit said they should be set apart. After this was done, the next verse says they again fasted and prayed, before releasing them into ministry. The second fasting now had a specific objective while the first fasting was accompanying their ministering to the Lord. See the story in Act 13:2 -3

So if there is no clear objectives at the beginning of the fast, one can set himself in an attitude of prayer, ministering to the Lord and the Holy Spirit shall surely visit him with an objective.

In summary¹, man should fast when they are under the following situations;

1. When under chastening [2 Samuel 12:16-23]
2. When under judgment [I Kings 21:27]
3. When in need [Ezra 8:21]
4. When in danger [Esther 4]
5. When worried [Dan 6:18]
6. When in trouble [Acts 27:9.33]
7. When in spiritual conflict [Mt 4: 1 -11]
8. When desperate in prayer [Acts 9]

All for one purpose, so that we can move closer to God and hear him clearly and receive faster.

Why is Fasting necessary?

Fasting is a most potent spiritual weapon when it comes to spiritual warfare. This is because it is the tool to transfer one from the natural plane to the spiritual plane i.e. from the three-dimensional natural world we operate in to a multi-dimensional spiritual one. The Bible says God is a spirit and those who want to relate to Him must do so in spirit. Fasting is one tool to elevate man from the natural to the spiritual atmosphere. It shuts down the natural man and its desires and kick-starts the spirit-man and its power. There is *a natural man and there is a spirit man* - 1 Cor 15:44. Fasting is the proven method to put the Spirit man over the natural man because there are some heights which only the spirit-man can ascend to.

The Bible captures the struggle between these two states well in Gal 5:16-17 – when it states *walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do..* Fasting therefore makes our efforts to effect spiritual change to be more effective. All changes required on the physical plane have to be effected on the spiritual plane first. Remember the angel who contended with the prince of Persia in the spiritual plane while Daniel was waiting for an answer in the physical. That warfare happened

during his 21-day fasting. The angels broke through from the spirit because Daniels prayer-fast prevailed in the physical.

So fasting sharpens the spirit man and arms it to make demands effectively in the spirit realm. The battle in the Garden of Gethsemane was a spiritual war waged with prayer but only one man was doing all the shooting. The other three spirits were overcome by their flesh – that is why Jesus asked them to *watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak* - Mat_26:41

In summary², fasting is a spiritual surgical procedure aimed at the following

1. Humbling the soul before God [Ps 35;13]
 2. Chastening of the soul [Ps 69:10]
 3. Crucifying the appetites and denying them so as to give oneself to prayer [2 Sam 12: 16-23 ; Mt 4; 1-11]
-

Does fasting move God?

Does fasting move God to act on my behalf? Will God not hear me if I don't fast? God hears you whether you fast or not. This is because He is already in you by the Holy Spirit and knows the desires of your heart before you pray them out. Fasting is more for man's benefit than for God's. It is to make man's reposition himself well so that His signal can be reach him clearly. Let's take a mobile phone as an example. Usually there are areas in your neighbourhood where the signal is not clear and you have to move round in search of a prime position. It does not mean that your mobile phone provider is not doing their job. They are - it is just that your phone is not capturing their signal well enough. When there is a strong signal maybe your phone indicates 4 or 5 signal-bars on the screen; this can down to 3 or lower if the signal is weak. So fasting is an exercise which re-positions us such that we can receive the full signal-strength from above. It places us in a strong position to hear and receive from above in a strong, loud and clear manner.

In summary³ Fasting proves to God one's readiness for the following

1. That he is seeking God to the exclusion of all else [I Cor 7;5]
2. He is open to full submission and obedience to Him [Mt 6:16-18 ; 9:15 ; Lk 5;33]

These two create an enabling environment for God to show Himself strong – so fasting can makes things move faster for you.

God's Chosen Fast

At a time when many are fasting based on how Daniel, Esther or Dry fasted, is there a prescribed fast somewhere in the Bible? Does it offer guidance on what to eat and how long to fast? The Bible has dedicated a chapter detailing what constitutes a truly godly fast. In it, the length and what to eat during the fast is not even mentioned. This fact alone offers us an insight into how God sees a fast as being more about attitude than about abstained food. This Fast is detailed in Isaiah 58. In it the people were complaining that they have sought God with fasting before and yet He was unmoved. So the Lord sent the Prophet Isaiah to let them know how they had been praying and fasting amiss. Let's review the chapter in full first before we break it down verse by verse;

Isa 58:1 Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.

Isa 58:2 Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God: they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God.

Isa 58:3 Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours.

Isa 58:4 Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high.

Isa 58:5 Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the LORD?

Isa 58:6 Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?

Isa 58:7 Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house?

when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?

Isa 58:8 Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the LORD shall be thy reward.

Isa 58:9 Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity;

Isa 58:10 And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday:

Isa 58:11 And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones:

and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.

Isa 58:12 And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.

Isa 58:13 If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words:

Isa 58:14 Then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.

I have called the above **God's Chosen Fast** based on the question God asked in verse 5? The chapter can broadly be divided in four general guidelines for fasting God-style as follows;

1. The quest to find and please God – verse 1 and 2
2. Using fasting to get His attention and the reason why it is not received – verse 3 - 5
3. The laid down procedure for an acceptable fast – verse 6 to 14
4. The benefits of the fasting the Lord's way – verse 8 to 14

The reasons God gave for not accepting their fast can be broken down into four again as listed below

- a. In the day of your fast ye find pleasure
- b. In the day of your fast exact all your labours
- c. You fast for strife and debate
- d. You smite with the fist of wickedness
- e. You do thy pleasure on my holy day

Let us study each of the above reasons in more detail and draw parallels with our modern contemporary lifestyle.

1. ***In the day of your fast ye find pleasure*** – A fast is to please God and not to please oneself. So there has to be an abstention of some things you find pleasure in outside of food. A fast is akin to mourning so it negates the exercise if one is indulging in some usual everyday activity. It is upto to the individual to judge himself accordingly - as our generation has many things we indulge in which one may not even see as pleasure. So it is needless to list what we usually seek in our life today; as it will

surely extend beyond everyday pleasure activities like TV, surfing, gaming etc. The general guide I offer is for one to ask himself *'knowing how jealous my God is will this activity offend Him when I am seeking Him this earnestly? Ex 20:5'* Even Paul said the only time in a marriage one is not allowed to pursue sexual pleasure is during fasting. So there are many personal things one classify under *'finding your own pleasure'*? If godly conjugal rights can be abstained from during a fast, how about other modern pleasures like sports, news, Facebook etc.? God's chosen fast is not a time for *doing thine own ways, finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words – verse 13.*

2. *In the day of your fast you exact all your labours* – This point is difficult to guide on because of the varied careers Christians have in our day. So to help us interpret it well, I have included other Bible translations of this verse to throw more light on this particular point. This will help each of us to judge ourselves personally on how he can take it easy without exacting all labours.

- *"Behold in the day of your fast your own will is found, and you exact of all your debtors."* [DRB]
- *"You do things to please yourselves on those special days of fasting. And you punish your servants, not your own bodies. [ERV]*
- *"Behold, in the day of your fast you seek your own pleasure, and oppress all your workers".*[ESV]
- *"Behold, on the day of your fast you find pleasure; and you drive all your laborers hard."*[LITV]

From the above we can see the correct spirit required - even if we have to go on with our day-to-day business as usual we can find ways of taking it easy for reverence-sake. It is a time to lean not on our understanding but on Him who understands all things. So it is best for one to pray for the Holy Spirit to guide him on how not to exact all his labours as most Christians are employed and not running their own business. It is prudent to point out here the Jesus Christ has a ministry of giving his beloved rest, so He would be able to guide us on how to find a way of winding down while actually at work. The very fact the fasting takes away some of your energy will inevitably force one to take it easy anyway but wisdom is still required. Remember the Jews here were waxing all capitalistic at this time and so the spirituality of the fasting got lost.

3. *You fast for strife and debate* – Again here we have to study various translations in order to draw parallels with our modern society.

- (BBE) *If keeping from food makes you quickly angry, ready for fighting and giving blows with evil hands; your holy days are not such as to make your voice come to my ears on high.*
- (ERV) *You are hungry, but not for food. You are hungry for arguing and fighting, not for bread. You are hungry to hit people with your evil hands. This is not the way to fast if you want your prayers to be heard in heaven!*
- (GNB) *Your fasting makes you violent, and you quarrel and fight. Do you think this kind of fasting will make me listen to your prayers?*
- (JPS) *Behold, ye fast for strife and contention, and to smite with the fist of wickedness; ye fast not this day so as to make your voice to be heard on high.*

So, it looks like instead of them avoiding offending others and being offended, they walked right into situations which demanded that they contribute their opinions or justify themselves. They not only looked for trouble but they made themselves open to trouble. So, they ended up being snared into strife and debates. Jas_3:2 advises that *in many things we offend all but if any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.*

Our generation has many opportunities for offense as we no longer go out to socialise but society comes to us through our mobile devices. Strife, debate and fights actually seek us out when we are sitting quietly. By the time you decide to remove someone from your Facebook newsfeed, you have already read his offending ungodly post. It is difficult to divert messages sent to your *WhatsApp* before they land. The moment you open it, there it is. So this caution actually applies more to our generation, as we can rarely control external strife before it hits our inbox.

So fasting is a time to go all out and avoid avenues where needless debating is rampant. This caution is repeated in verse 10 when God says a fast is not a time for *putting forth of the finger and speaking vanity.* A fast is a time to let go and let God and not a time to participate in divisive issues whether in office, home or social media. Proverbs 10:19

says there is *sin in the multitude of words but he that refrains his lips is wise*. In our generation we have to rephrase and add “he who refrains his fingers” from his keyboard is wiser. Looks like if your voice is high down-low it shall not be heard up on-high.

4. *You fast to smite with the fist of wickedness* – as we have seen from the above translations, this point is actually an extension of the above except that the strife has now become physical. The Jews used to punish their workers physically during the fast. Imagine looking for favour with God but giving none to man. Seeking mercy from God and offering none to your fellow man. The focussed more on looking good outside while there heart is still vindictive, revengeful and unforgiving. They clean the outside of the cup without bothering with the inside.

A fast is a time to judge oneself and reflect on one’s love-walk by overthrowing self and its carnal-lusts. It is not just a time for a man to *afflict his soul, bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him* – without changing his behaviour. For our generation this caution is even more serious as we do not need to smite to sin; all we need to do is think it. Mat_5:22 captures this when it says *whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire*. This can be extended to having ungodly thoughts and attitudes on the inside yet behaving godly on the outside.

5. *You do thy pleasure on my holy day*; The Jew was trained to revere the Sabbath to the point of death, yet they were breaking it during a fast. Does this really apply to us? It does when you consider where God is coming from. God’s reasoning was if a day is consecrated as a Holy day [without a fast], how much more should you respect it during a fast? It is that simple. If in most countries it is illegal to work on a public holiday imagine how much more so it is to work on God’s holy day. Heaven is a country and a kingdom with Sunday as a public holiday. Just as workers can report their boss and the police come to arrest the owner, so can the Lord arrest someone who works on his day during a

fast. It is His special day just like a country has a special day reserved as a holiday. Just as the Jews had Saturday as a holy holiday, so do Christians have the day He resurrected as a holiday. In the next chapter we will go into detail.

The purpose of God's Chosen Fast

After going through the above wrong reasons, God went ahead to educate them on the type of fast He has chosen - that it should have the following objectives;

1. *To loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?*

It is not a coincidence that this first objective of fasting is so close to the personal Mission Statement that Jesus outlined when He came from His own 40-day-fast in the wilderness. His Mission statement is outlined in Luke 4:18-21 stating that the *Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.*

The chief objective of any fast should be tied to the higher mission of God's salvation to mankind. This should be translated globally and nationally before it is turned into a community, family or personal objective. Even though one may not be afflicted personally to this level, they are called as Christians to intercede to for those who are. This fits in with the admonition Paul gave in 1Ti 2:1-6 when he said *I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.*

Fasting falls within the spiritual activities of supplications, prayers and intercessions. This tells us that a fast has the possibility of effecting great global changes. There is great reward in tying a personal fast to a higher godly purpose. Even in the Old Testament, God was saying that prayer and fasting should be tied to His own

purposes. By fasting and praying according to the Mission of Jesus Christ makes your fasting to be 'a Chosen Fast'.

2. *Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?*

This is the only place that a food is mention in this Chosen Fast but it is not with regard to what one can eat but what one can give. So instead of a fast focusing on what I am not eating, it should be remembering those who have not even eaten in the first place. As strange as it sounds in the context of a fast, it actually lines with other Christian values. What does it profit a Christian to abstain from food and not remember the hungry around him? At least he is fasting for noble reasons but the others are fasting for lack of eating-choices.

Again, Jesus touched on this spiritual objective when He spoke about the day of judgement in Mat 25:40-43 when he said *the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.*

It is such a contradiction for one who is called to feed the hungry, to celebrate that he is not eating; yet the food he has abstained from has not been shared. In **God's Chosen Fast**, the money that has been 'saved' from not buying any groceries could be given to the hungry, poor, naked or poorer relatives. Rather than avoid the malls and restaurants during a fast, it is okay to go in and buy the same quality and quantity of food he usually eats for the poor and needy instead. Anyone who does this will be *taking away from his midst the yoke; drawing out his soul to the hungry, and satisfying the afflicted soul – verse 10.*

This means those who do not fast due to medical reasons have been missing out; because **God's Chosen Fast** is not about which food goes into the mouth. It is about the food that goes out of your hand. Jesus touched on this area, though He was on a different topic, when He said *it is not what goes in that destroys a man, but what comes out of the man*. A **Chosen Fast** does not focus on what is going into the mouth or not – but on how that soul is reaching out to the hungry and satisfying the afflicted soul.

3. *Turn from doing thy pleasure on my holy day*

In the last chapter we saw how if the Lord expects holy reverence on a normal worship day then extra-special reverence will be needed during a period of fasting. Among the teachings outlined in this booklet, I suppose this one will be the most contentious; because many will quote back the verses which state that we are not to be bound to a day as New-Creation children. But the reasoning God gave all through Isaiah 58 is simple to adopt in our modern faith practice.

As we are talking about reverence in a fasting period, it follows that what God has set aside to be revered [outside a fast] should be revered even the more during the fast. If mortal man can punish for working on a holiday, how much more should God for those who violate his holy day – especially in a Fast!

The Jews had no doubt about the reverence of the normal Sabbath yet their piety had gone so low that they dared break it during a fast. If breaking the Sabbath incurred the death penalty [outside a fast] what kind of penalty could it incur in a fast? No wonder God warned them on Jer 17:27 that *if ye will not hearken unto me to hallow the Sabbath day, and not to bear a burden, even entering in at the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day; then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched*.

So it is easy to see why God had to include Sabbath reverence when he was teaching the Jews how to fast correctly. It would have been

useless for them to fast correctly and then break the Sabbath in the process. We can almost hear Him saying *what use is your fast if you cannot respect just one day of the week which I have asked of you?* So it is therefore not difficult at all to draw parallels to this with our Christian faith - because we also have a day we reverence. The day the Lord resurrected - Sunday.

Let us go into the details of how God expected a holy day to be revered during a fast. Isa 58:13 guides us in 3 broad ways of what God expects

- I. turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day;
- II. call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable;
- III. honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words:

How can this be broken down for the modern-day Sunday goer? Let's take it one by one.

- *Keep away thy foot from the Sabbath , from doing thy pleasure on my holy day*

The above shows that it involves keeping yourself grounded from pleasure activities. We have touched on pleasure already during a fast, so God is repeating Himself here because the holy Sabbath [Sunday] is now involved. Whether it is for pleasure or necessity the thinking is to keep yourself grounded with respect for God's day during a fast. The same way unbelievers keep themselves grounded to unwind on national [public] holiday even away from sinful pleasure, so should a Christian keep his feet grounded for the Lord's holy pleasure. It is unfortunate that every pleasure nowadays has to involve some travel coupled with some exchange of money. If one keeps Himself grounded on Sunday he will not find himself in an awkward position of giving his money to someone [a shopkeeper] who disrespects God [by trading on the Lord's

Day]. If a shop cannot honour God by closing on Sunday, why should a Christian honour that outlet with his feet - on Sunday, of all days! The fact that someone is selling to you on Sunday automatically means He has no reverence for anything God; so by buying from him, we join them in their transgression. If a Muslim can refuse money brought to the shop when he is closing for Friday prayers, surely we can also hold onto our money until Monday! Especially in a fast.

- *Call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable;* enjoy the day that God Himself has set aside for you delightfully with activities which bring godly joy. Every country has an annual holiday dedicated to a person who contributed greatly to the independence of the country. It is consecrated as a national holiday where no one is allowed to work. And everyone dutifully stays home and rests in honour of the person. How much more should a Christian reverence a day when he was delivered from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of His Lord JESUS? He should revere the day more than unbelievers revere the country's Independence Day - both inside and outside his home. The resurrection day is our Independence Day as a Christian. The litmus test for this is if the Lord visits that day will He catch us watching and doing something *delightful, holy and honourable to Him*? JESUS is still Lord over our Sunday, just as He is *Lord even of the Sabbath day* - Matthew 12:8.
- *Honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words:* Again, the Lord is repeating Himself as we have covered this in the explanation above. How does God expect us to honour Him? Not enjoying your personal hobbies and pleasures whether in word or deed. This is a tall order bordering on being legalistic but it is difficult to get another interpretation of this text. As we saw earlier, most kinds of pleasure prevalent in our generation

cannot be divorced from a mobile device. All the modern [word] deeds we enjoy now involve chatting, reading and updating ourselves with the friends and news in social media. Not to mention newspapers and other old media etc.

It is impossible to give a complete list of how one should conduct himself because lifestyles do vary. As the above guidelines are not exhaustive, the best way to approach this area is to ask yourself if this activity makes God jealous – will God desire the attention this activity is stealing from Him? This fits with the character of God who says He is not only a jealous God, but *His name is actually Jealous* -Exodus 34:14. Mr. Jealous says *thou shalt worship no other God because He is a consuming Fire* - Duet 4:24. He gets consumed with jealousy and His heart becomes woeful and breaks when we *dishonour him by doing our own ways, finding our own pleasure and speaking our own words* on His Day.

○ *What if I fast without any special reverence to Sunday?*

Then will we qualify to get the results listed in Isaiah 58? If we do revere our Lord's

Day the same way the Lord asked Jews to revere His Sabbath, then we can also claim the benefits they were promised to them. One of them is that *I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it*. It is better to err in reverencing Sunday [or any other set-aside day] too much that to discover later that Sunday meant much more than we thought. If there is nothing to be gained by keeping Sunday holier than usual, then at least one can rest assured that we led a more consecrated faith-walk. But if Sunday is holier than we revere it, and we continue handle it with less care than we should, then Isaiah 58 shows that there is a lot to loose.

I understand this teaching will go against the grain for those who believe that we are no longer held captive by any day – but if we are already keeping Sunday holy, what harm could be done by keeping it extra holy in a fast? If we keep the *first day to be holy, then the branches of the rest of the week will also be made holy* - Romans 11:15-17. It is a matter of keeping the Lord's Day holy as the first-fruit of the new week. By going back to Old Testament we learn the mind of God regarding things not fully-expounded in the New Testament. The method God details on how something should be kept holy, is a better guide than the way man says it should be kept. And Isaiah 58 is the reference we have. It is prudent to prayerfully ask the Lord to throw more light regarding this matter as we fast. For detailed teaching on this, get my book titled *Is the Lord of the Sabbath the Lord of your Sunday?*

In summary we can see that **God's Chosen Fast** involves four key platforms

1. Praying
2. Fasting [God's way]
3. Giving
4. Sunday reverence

Prayer Points from God's Chosen Fast

What does God expect us to pray for during a fast? There are so many prayer points one can extract from Isaiah 58 but I will only focus on eight. Before we rush to give out prayer points it is important to talk about how to prepare to fast. Starting a fast without preparing mentally and physically is like someone who does not know how to swim diving straight into the deep-end of the pool.

Experienced prayer-warriors will tell you how much spiritual warfare goes on before a fast. The enemy sends many pre-emptive strikes to abort the mission before take-off. Physically preparation may involve preparing the body to be expecting less. Spiritual preparation may involve preparing the spirit to press into God more. A body which was over-fed during the holiday season will not respond kindly to a complete shut-down demanded in early January. So, the person should already have started toning down on the food intake before the fasting D-day. There are many distractions to fasting and your own body should not be counted among them.

Spiritual preparation can also be done by turning down the volume of worldly media and starting up the volume on spiritual media. This may involve preparing extra spiritual activities in advance involving - we shall cover this in the chapter *Spiritual activities during the Fast*. Reading this Fasting e-book also is already a spiritual preparation in itself. It does not augur well to look for fasting resources right in the middle of fast; as it is akin to checking tyre pressure after embarking on a journey.

Many prayers are answered before or as a fast begins. This is because a fast is a spiritual exodus and just by arising many enemies are scattered in advance. Something similar happened to Daniel. The angel Gabriel told him he had *been caused to fly swiftly when the commandment came at the beginning of your supplications*— verse 21. At the beginning, before he said Amen. The Bible says while he was *still speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and that of Israel, and presenting my supplication, the angel Gabriel himself appeared* – Dan 9:20. Another angel dispatched on a separate mission told him from *the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble*

yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words. This angel was 21 days late but from the first day Daniel prayed, he was heard already. Watch out for spiritual movement before embarking of the fast especially in one's dreams.

So separation and the choice of prayer/fasting partners are key – in fact the lesser you are the better because you are only as strong as your weakest link. That's why Jesus said when two or three are gathered. Whatever pre-activities the partners do before the fast formally begin can have significant consequences? Just as the enemy can launch a pre-emptive strike to neutralise the fast before it kicks off; so can the Father provide a pre-emptive answer before the Fast formally starts. Ask Daniel.

I have avoided the temptation to provide full-blown prayer-points in this part of the book as it may distract from the teaching and due to the fact that many have personal prayer-points at this time. So I have provided a prayer outline below based on the prayer-points God provided in Isaiah 58 namely

1. to loose the bands of wickedness,
2. to undo the heavy burdens,
3. to let the oppressed go free,
4. ye break every yoke
5. build the old waste places:
6. raise up the foundations of many generations;
7. repairing of the breach,
8. restoring the paths to dwell in.

The below prayer-points have not been personalized but are left wide-open for one to personalise or expand on them. Feel free to re-work them accordingly. However if detailed prayer-points based on the above are required they are available in the section titled "**Power by Prayer**". Obviously there are pre-prayers to be conducted beforehand including Praise and Worship which have not been included here. For these please ask the free E-book *IF MY PEOPLE volume I*.

1.to loose the bands of wickedness,
 - I. Every band of wickedness afflicting my country be loosed in the name of JESUS.
 - II. Every band of wickedness afflicting my region is loosed in JESUS name.
 - III. Every band of wickedness afflicting my family be loosed in JESUS name
 - IV. Every band of wickedness tying my progress down is loosed in JESUS name.
 - V. _____

2.to undo the heavy burdens,
 - I. Lord Jesus, you are the great burden-bearer, undo the heavy burdens afflicting my land
 - II. Lord Jesus, you are the great burden-bearer, undo the heavy burdens afflicting my family
 - III. Lord Jesus, you are the great burden-bearer undo the burdens bearing me down
 - IV. _____

3. ... to let the oppressed go free,
 - I. Lord Jesus, you came to set the captives free, in your name I declare their freedom in this land.
 - II. _____

4. ye break every yoke?
 - I. Lord Jesus, my anointed saviour, breaks every yoke chocking my nation.
 - II. _____

5. raise up the foundations of many generations
 - I. Lord Jesus, the rock of my salvation; repair my foundation
 - II. _____

6.build the old waste places:

I. Ancient of Days, repair the ancient ruins in my lineage

7.the repairer of the breach,

I. Jesus you are the refiner and purifier, repair the breach in the walls of my life

II. _____

III. _____

8. The restorer of paths to dwell in

I. Lord Jesus, Great Shepherd of my life, restore the streets of my life

II. _____

Results of the Chosen Fast

The Lord is very clear in this text on the results expected out of His chosen fast. From the list below we can see that the objectives He had listed earlier are taken care of. That is the burdens, oppression, yokes and wickedness He had complained about are taken care. Both personally and communally. A close study will also reveal some extra-bonus benefits which one may have not prayed for in the fast. Below are 14 clear results of what one should expect if they go through His Chosen Fast as follows;

1. *Then shall thy light break forth as the morning – verse 8*
2. *Thine health shall spring forth speedily - verse 8*
3. *Thy righteousness shall go before thee - verse 8*
4. *The glory of the Lord shall be thy rearward - verse 8*
5. *Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am - verse 9*
6. *The Lord shall guide thee continually - verse 9*
7. *The Lord shall satisfy thy soul in drought - verse 9*
8. *The Lord shall make fat thy bones - verse 9*
9. *Thou shalt be like a watered garden - verse 9*
10. *Thou shalt be like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.*
11. *They that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places:*
12. *Thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations;*
13. *Thou shalt be called, the repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in.*
14. *Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father:*

In modern-day parlance, the above benefits of **God's Chosen Fast** can be summarised as follows;

- I. Clear guidance on which direction to take in life
- II. Divine health
- III. Answers to prayer
- IV. Bountiful provision in lean times

- V. Repair of foundation [past generational] problems afflicting one's life.
- VI. Future generations [spared from foundation problems] as affliction shall not arise again.
- VII. The Joy of the Lord strengthening one's walk
- VIII. Counted among the high and mighty on earth.
- IX. The blessing of Abraham overtaking your life

May all the above come to pass in your life.

Isn't this teaching under the Old Testament

As the bulk of this teaching is based on the OT it is easily to find fault with it. I expect to get feedback that it does not have much influence for us under the New Creation. Especially the portion of giving during a fast. As Jesus stated that *salvation is of the Jews* there are some truths which require a study of the OT in order to be unpacked. However, having said that, a study of the NT uncovers many similarities with what we learnt about **God's Chosen Fast**. In fact this combination of praying, fasting and giving was touched upon by Jesus and the other writers of the gospels as we will now see below.

Jesus' teaching on fasting

When Jesus taught in Matthew 6 on how to pray and do godly acts , He summarised his teaching under three actions points

- a) When you give
- b) When you pray
- c) When you fast

This was captured in that famous chapter 6 of Mathew where the He told his disciples how to pray.

Let us study the highlights of this teaching and see what we can learn from it.

Mat 6:1 "Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.

Mat 6:2 "Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward.

Mat 6:3 But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,

Mat 6:4 so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

Mat 6:5 "And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward.

Mat 6:6 But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

Mat 6:7 "And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words.

Mat 6:8 Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

Mat 6:14 For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you,

Mat 6:15 but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

*Mat 6:16 "**And when you fast**, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward.*

Mat 6:17 But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face,

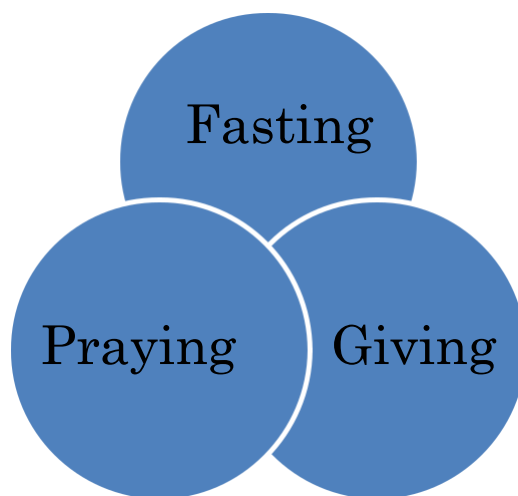
Mat 6:18 that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

The first thing of note in this teaching is that each of the activities carries its own benefits. On each of them JESUS repeated that the same sentence “*and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.*” So we can therefore infer that if all three activities are done in conjunction with one another then the rewards will be marvellous. The KJV also adds that “*thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.*” This is akin to your light breaking forth – a key benefit stated in the Chosen Fast and also *your light rising from obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday.*

It means what when these three are done the way God wills, then the reward will be manifest on earth. Jesus did not state what this ‘open reward’ was but whatever it is, we can be sure that it shall not be far from the benefits listed in the OT of Isaiah 58.

It is also interesting that JESUS included the classic forgiveness teaching in this portion – that when you do not forgive others “*even your Father will not forgive you*”. This lines up with what Isaiah 58 was talking about when it comes to those fasting while smiting and debating with others.

So, this teaching of Matt 6 lines up closely with Isaiah 58. Infact it even has a more potent promise in that we see clearly that *Praying + Fasting + Giving* when combined do have tremendous results.



These three combined bring out spiritual-synergies when all three are done together. The benefits of Giving and Praying are replete in the Bible.

There is reason Jesus put these three together - this combo will surely bring fast results in your fasting.

Who practiced God's Chosen Fast in the Bible?

The Bible did not leave us comfortless with regard to an example of someone who practiced this three-fold fast. This person is none other than a Gentile called Cornelius. Let his story below speak for itself.

Act 10:1 There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band, Act 10:2 A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway. **Gave and prayed always** Act 10:3 He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius. Act 10:4 And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. **At this point no fasting is mentioned but Cornelius himself will confirm he was in in fasting in verse 30 below** Act 10:5 And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter: Act 10:6 He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do. Act 10:7 And when the angel which spake unto Cornelius was departed, he called two of his household servants, and a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually; Act 10:8 And when he had declared all these things unto them, he sent them to Joppa. Act 10:9 On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour: Act 10:10 And he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance, **[Is it a coincidence that even Peter was in praying and fasting]** Act 10:11 And saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: Act 10:12 Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. Act 10:13 And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. Act 10:14 But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. Act 10:15 And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. Act 10:16 This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven Act 10:17 Now while Peter doubted in himself what this vision which he had seen should mean, behold, the men which were sent from Cornelius had made enquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate, Act 10:18 And called, and asked whether Simon, which was surnamed Peter, were lodged there. Act 10:19 While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee Act 10:20 Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them. Act 10:21 Then Peter went down to the men which were sent unto him from Cornelius; and said, Behold, I am he whom ye seek: what is the cause wherefore ye are come? Act 10:22 And they said, Cornelius the centurion, a just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews, was warned from God by an holy angel to send for thee into his house, and to hear words_of thee. Act 10:23 Then called he them in, and lodged them. And on the morrow Peter went away with them, and certain brethren from Joppa accompanied him. Act 10:24 And the morrow after they entered into Caesarea. And Cornelius waited for them, and had called together his kinsmen and near friends. Act 10:25 And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. Act 10:26 But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man. Act 10:27 And as he talked with him, he went in, and found many that were come together. Act 10:28 And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean. Act 10:29 Therefore came I unto you without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent for: I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me? Act 10:30 And Cornelius said, **Four days ago I was fasting until this hour;** and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and, behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, Act 10:31 And said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God. **Praying and giving**

If Cornelius was a Jew, this example would not have been useful in this book. But the fact that he was a gentile at a that specific-time -when the gospel had not reached the Gentiles - they are many things we can learn as follows;

1. He was a Gentile with no basis of religion, so he was following the religion of the Jews *as a just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews*. He was following Jewish practices even though he need not. He was practising the saying of JESUS that “salvation is from the Jews” - Joh_4:22
2. He was known for his prayer life – him and his household. The angel of God caught him red-handed following the Jewish practice of praying at the ninth hour.
3. He was known for giving life – even by God.
4. He was known for his fasting life – as he confessed to Peter.
5. He was referred to as having a *good report among all the nation of the Jews*. Could he have that good report if he was not behaving the Jewish with regard to fasting and Sabbath-keeping in God’s chosen way ?

Is it any wonder that he was chosen to be the first gentile to receive salvation and become a Christian? It is the angel who reported to him his standing in heaven – that his prayers and giving lifestyle have found favour with God. No wonder God did not send another just any of his servants but one who was also fasting and prayer.

There is much gain in God’s Chosen fast - praying, fasting and giving.

Side-benefits of Fasting

Apart from the results already captured above in God's Chosen Fast, fasting as an exercise on its own delivers many side-benefits. By the very fact that you are getting closer to God, many blockages in spirit, soul and body are cleared – issues which cannot be diagnosed or even cured medically. Presumptuous sins may be highlighted and dealt with. Habits which one was not even aware of can be corrected. Even things which you did not pray can even come to pass.

Sometimes one may finish a fast and realise that appetite towards a particular food is no longer there. Yet one had been eating it for such a long time. On further investigations you discover that that food is not good for your health. The same may happen to TV programming one used to watch. One may suddenly lose interest in it during or after a fast. This overhauling can extend to books, magazines, relationships, movies, websites and all other activities which one may previously have deemed to be normal. This happens because the Holy Spirit shuts down entrances which the enemy uses to steal godly focus and attention. He uproots things which are choking His flow in a man. This is why what one eats or does not eat in a fast is the lesser issue. The larger issue is what the fast is doing to overhaul the life of the person's spirit, soul and body. Just as medicine can have some bad side-effects, so should a godly fast have some good side-effects!

In summary⁴, fasting aids man to

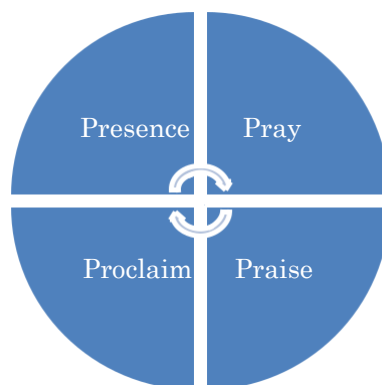
- I. gain mastery over appetites ;
- II. overcome temptations ;
- III. gain power over demons ;
- IV. develop faith ;
- V. crucify unbelief
- VI. have a fruitful prayer-life

The above are covered in Mt 4:1-11; 17:14-21

Spiritual exercises during the Fast

Since not all the fasting hours are spend praying, there is a tendency to have extra time in one's hands if one truly sets himself apart. So, what else can one do?

A time of fasting presents great opportunities to develop new spiritual exercises which are usually neglected due to lack of time. For the purpose of this book, we will focus on just two - Praise and His Presence. In order to help one develop an all-round spiritual experience during a Fast, I have developed a spiritual-tool below to help us build and exercise spiritual muscles. It is based on four key spiritual workouts namely - Presence, Praise, Prayer and Proclamation. These four P's make up **the Power Circle**.



The **Power Circle** is a spiritual workout tool to empower you to use each of the P's effectively. Each of the four P's can be based on a scripture [s]. So, we will use Isaiah 58 as a basis to exercising these four methods. We will see how spiritual power can be activated in each of them.

1. Power by Praise -
2. Power by Proclamation
3. Power by Presence
4. Power by Prayer -

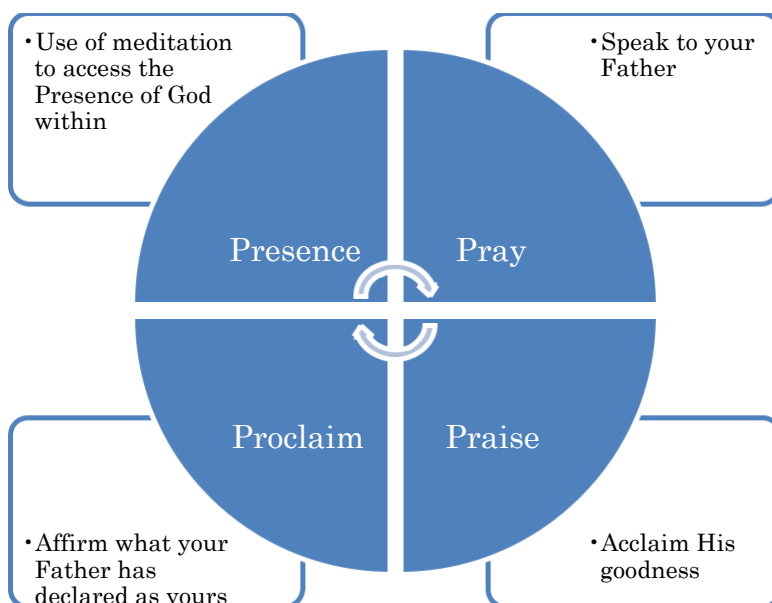
The above are not new – as many already practice them as separate stand-alone events, but they have now been made to work in unison with each other in order to maximize their power. A fast gives an opportunity to bring some synergy into all these activities and make them work as one.

This Power Circle will be an effective spiritual tool for maintaining spiritual ground and keeping evil forces at bay.

The principle behind the Power-Circle is based on continuity, which is a theme well covered in the Bible. For example, the Bible admonishes us to *pray without ceasing*; to ensure that the *praise of God is continually in our lips*. The instructions of God are rarely once-off but are to *be bound continually upon thine heart, and tie around the neck - Pro_6:21*. Act_6:4 states that the apostles appointed other ministers to do the admin-work so that they could *give themselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word*. Heb_13:15 states that *we should offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name*

Using the Power Circle in a Fast

We recommend these four P's be used in combination using the below Power-circle in order to maximize its effectiveness. It is recommended that we start with Presence, then Prayer, Praise and the Proclamation.



There is great synergy in doing it in one sitting but if it is not possible then it can be divided as follows. We will now study each P in some detail.

1. Presence
2. Prayer + Praise
3. Proclamation

Since all the above principles have been taught exhaustively as stand-alone topics in other books, I will only touch on them briefly below.

1. Presence

God send the Christ to bring lost man back into fellowship with Him. The most powerful tool for change is by union and communion. For this exercise, we use meditation to create a calm presence for us to access the presence of God within us. It assumes you have received the gift of the Holy Spirit as this is the homing device within you to link with God. The process involves choosing a verse of the Bible and reading it repeatedly. And then mulling over it in such a way as to make it sink from our mind into our hearts. This is to be done in a silent and reverent manner as it takes a lot of energy to focus for any length of time.

Your spirit will then bear witness with your spirit that you are in the presence of God. Once this happens, all that is required from you is silence and awareness. If the mind strays then the verse is used repeatedly to latch back into the presence of God.

2. Prayer

Prayer is supplicating to God as a child to a father in the name of Jesus. Psa_72:15 says that to him *prayer also shall be made for him continually; and daily shall he be praised.* In the next section we will offer a lot of prayer points based on Isaiah 58.

3. Praise

Praise is to express adoration by your lips. It is a weapon of warfare as there are many stories in the Old Testament of Israel

letting praise-singers lead them into battle. Psa_95:2 says *let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms*. Psa_71:14 says that *I will yet praise thee more and more*. Praise will move the hand of God more than any other thing. No wonder Heb_13:15 states that *we should offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name*

4. **Proclaiming**

To make a proclamation is to pronounce and say to oneself what you are fully persuaded of. This done in line with the word of God. Affirming that you can do what the word of God says you can do. You have what the word says you have. In Tit_3:8 Paul gave Titus a faithful saying, when he told him that the things I have taught you *thou must affirm constantly*.

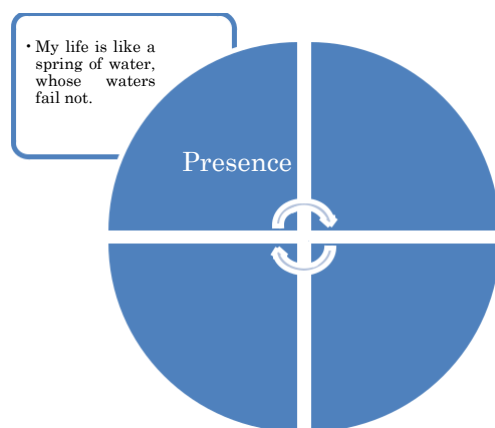
Power in Presence

As mentioned earlier, we prepare by meditation on a relevant scripture. As we enter His presence we calm our soul as let this portion of scripture dominate our being as we mull it. As it sinks deep into our heart we let it dwell in there for a while until its entrance sheds light on the truth behind this verse. When this happens then we will be causing to pass that scripture in Psa_119:130 that *the entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple*. Allow the Holy Spirit to magnify the power of each scripture within you. You can turn each verse below over and in our heart by meditating to activate His Presence.

Using Isaiah 58 as our proof-text we start with the first quadrant in the Power Circle [PC] labelled Presence. We take one verse at a time and work it out each daily – the breakdown below is based on a 14 day fast but can be adjusted accordingly. Using the verses God promised will be the result of His **Chosen fast**, we can use them to enter His Presence as a meditation tool. For each promised benefit we will meditate on one verse per day.

- Day 1 - My light breaks forth as the morning – verse 8

- Day 2 - My health shall spring forth speedily - verse 8
- Day 3 - My righteousness shall go before thee - verse 8
- Day 4 - The glory of the Lord shall be thy rear guard - verse 8
- Day 5 – When I call my Lord shall answer; when I cry, and He shall say, Here I am - verse 9
- Day 6 - My Lord shall guide thee continually - verse 9
- Day 7 – My Lord shall satisfy thy soul in drought - verse 9
- Day 8 - The Lord shall make fat thy bones - verse 9
- Day 9 - My life shalt be like a watered garden - verse 9
- Day 10 – My life is like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.
- Day 11 - Lord make me the one to build the old waste places:
- Day 11 – Lord , Help me raise up the foundations of many generations;
- Day 12 – Lord, make me the repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in.
- Day 13 – Lord , I delight myself in You
- Day 14 – Lord, cause me to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed me with the heritage of Abraham:



As you turn around this verse in your spirit, you will be travelling therein into greater heights of this truth. As is you will be giving space in your spirit for this truth to make impact. You will be widening the circle of impact that this truth can have in your own life. This is easier to experience than to explain in words. Stay as long as you feel the Presence of God gaining ground in your heart.

Power by Prayer

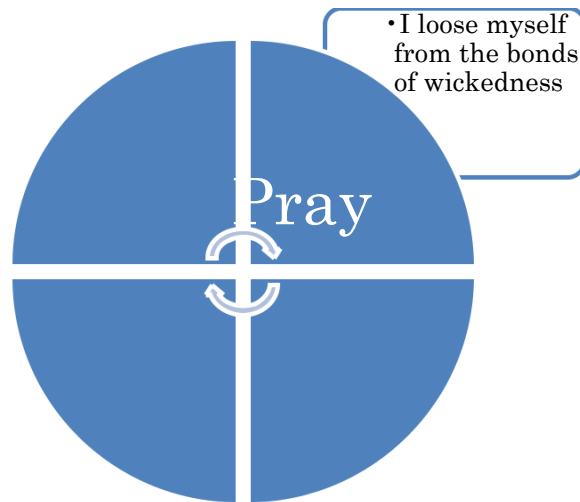
While in that same presence of God, a prayer will arise in your spirit along the lines of what you are meditating on. As the author I cannot say what prayer will arise as this may depend on each individual. But for the purposes of this book, I have written the following possibilities based again on our proof text. These may work well as stand-alone prayer points [PP];

a. PP to loosen the bonds of wickedness

1. Bonds of wickedness holding my life down , loose your grip in the name of JESUS CHRIST
2. I loose myself from the bonds of wickedness
3. By the power of resurrection, I arise from demonic bondages from my past holding me down.
4. By the power of the risen life that JESUS gives; every bondage in my life is loosed.
5. By the power of the risen life in Christ Jesus, I break out of every material and spiritual bondage holding me hostage.
6. [Mention your name], thou art loosed from all wickedness binding you down!

B. PP to undo the bands of the yoke

1. I undo the bands of the yoke chocking my life in JESUS name.
2. Bands of the yoke , be cut away by the sword of the Lord Jesus
3. Finger of God untie the bands of the yoke tying me down
4. Finger of God ,untie the bands of the yoke tying my family down
5. Finger of God undo the bands of the yoke tying my people down
6. Finger of God undo the bands of the yoke in every area of my life.



C. PP to let the oppressed go free,

1. I am him whom the Son has set free is free – I am free indeed
2. I declare myself free from all oppression in the name of JESUS.
3. Loose your grip from my life you satanic oppressors
4. Release your grip you prince of terrors from my people
5. Forces of sin and death raging around my life I command you to stop in the name of JESUS.
6. I speak to all demonic oppressors; let my family/people/nation go in the name of JESUS.

D. PP for breaking every enslaving yoke

1. I break the enslaving hand yoking my life.
2. I break out from every demonic hand yoking my life down.
3. The hand of the Lord is not too short to deliver me from the hand of the oppressor
4. With a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, the Lord delivers me from the enslaving yoke.

E. PP for building the old waste places:

1. The ancient ruins of my life are rebuilt in the name of JESUS.
2. Ancient of Days, repair the ancient ruins in my lineage.
3. Ancient of Days, visit my roots and uproot everything you did not plant.
4. Ancient of Days, rebuild my life again with angelic builders.
5. Ancient of Days , make me the High Tower of my generation

F. PP for foundational repair

1. In the name of JESUS I raise up the foundations of my building that have laid waste for many generations;
2. Jesus , chief cornerstone , repair my foundation
3. I remove every evil stone in my foundation and replace it with JESUS the stone that the builders rejected.
4. Jesus you are the plant of renown , uproot of the weeds in my garden
5. Jesus , prune my life and make me to bear new fruit
6. Lord Jesus ,the rock of my salvation ; repair my foundation
7. Every demonic burial of my virtues be unearthed in JESUS name
8. Every altar from my foundation fighting me is crushed by the Rock called CHRIST.
9. Every divination and curse following me from my foundation be broken in name of the JESUS
10. Every crack in our family foundation which is causing the enemy to afflict me is sealed today by the blood of Jesus.
11. Every strong man, woman or wicked powers from my foundation causing stagnation, limitation, defeat and failure be destroyed in the name of Jesus.
12. I overturn every ungodly ancestral covenants entered into knowingly and unknowingly by my relatives dead or alive.
13. Every power from my foundation holding me and my family captive, I break loose in the name of JESUS.

G. PP for repair of the breach,

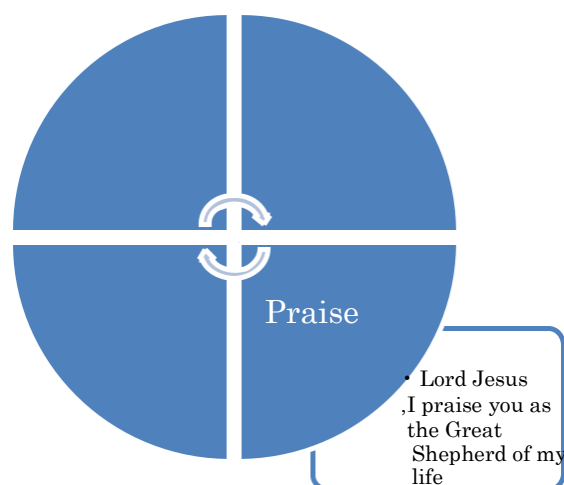
1. Jesus you are the refiner and purifier , repair the breach in the walls of my life
2. Lord Jesus seal and repair the breaches in the wall of my life
3. Lord Jesus repair my foundation so the generations unborn can call me the Repairer of the Breach,

H. PP for restoration of paths to dwell in

1. Lord Jesus, repair my foundation so my generation can call me the Restorer of Streets to Dwell In.
2. Lord Jesus, you are the Way the Truth and the Life, restore the streets of my life.
3. Lord Jesus ,Great Shepherd of my life , restore the streets of my life

Power by Praise

Normally prayer should eventually lead you into a praise, as you find yourself grateful that your supplication is about/already been answered. It is difficult to offer a prescription on praise as you are already used to praising God in your own way [maybe even before praying]. However, let your praise focus on the text of Isaiah 58 and on the meditation and prayer point that you were occupied with - it may be along these lines;



1. Sing the song "Ancient of Days" .

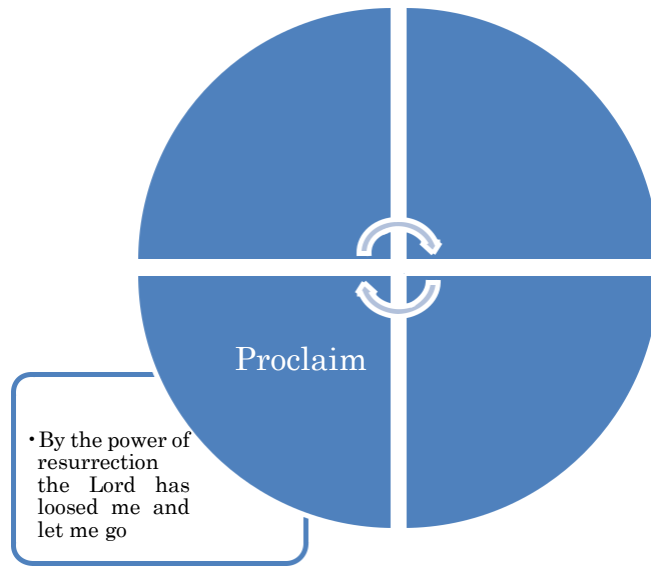
2. Sing any song with the “anointing”.
3. Jesus , you are the rock , my strong tower
4. Lord Jesus you are the chief cornerstone in my foundation.
5. Lord Jesus, you are the Way the Truth and the Life.
6. Lord Jesus ,I praise you as the Great Shepherd of my life
7. Lord I thank you for Risen Life that I have in Christ Jesus
8. Jesus I am the son you have set free - so I am free indeed

Power by Proclamation

If this is all done in one session, this claiming section will act as a climax. It is like reaching the peak of the mountain and shouting your achievements for all to hear. Claiming the promises is important as it allows one’s faith to arise to walk in them. Heb 13:5-6 says for *he has said*, “*I will never leave you nor forsake you.*” So we can confidently say, “*The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?*” He has said so we can confidently say.

Proclaiming is confidently saying what He has said. These cause things in the spirit to manifest in the material because all things are formed in the spiritual realm first before they appear in the physical. It is an act of faith voiced upon *the evidence of things not seen* - Heb 11:1. To help in this quest the following declarations may prove useful

1. I rebuild my life on the Rock called CHRIST.
2. I relocate my life from sinking sand to CHRIST the solid stand
3. I am rescued from the hand of the demonic oppressor by the right-hand of God.
4. My life is rescued from the demonic abyss in the name of JESUS.
5. By the power of resurrection, the Lord has loosed me and let me go



6. By the power of resurrection, I am loosed and let go from all bands tying my life
7. By the risen life of JESUS CHRIST in me, I break out of the bands of death and corruption.
8. Because of the anointing of the Lord the yoke of demonic slavery is broke in my life.
9. By the power of resurrection I come out of the demonic bondage in the name of Jesus
10. By the power of the Risen Life in me I come out of the grave of oppression
11. Jesus you are my spiritual rock against all evil rocks in my foundation
12. All those who offend me contend with CHRIST the Rock of offence.
13. All those who cause me to stumble contend with CHRIST the stone of stumbling.
14. I live in the fullness of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Holy Communion and Fasting

Even though fasting is a time one sets-apart for God; it is easy to be distracted if one has lots of time in his hands. It is an opportune time for one to seek ways of pressing in deeper into God. This will be in obedience to one of the last instructions JESUS gave to his disciples if they were to make a success of their ministries.

1. *Joh_15:4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.*
2. *Joh_15:7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.*

The word abide [*men'-o*] means to *stay in a given place, state, relation or expectancy* – as in to *continue, dwell, endure, be present, remain, stand, tarry*. This is the opposite of activity. It is so easy to mistake our activities for or on behalf of JESUS as abiding in Him. This can even take the form of religious chores like reading the Bible, serving others and even preaching. One can do it so zealously such that, that very thing replaces JESUS in one's life. This is what happened to Martha. She thought she was serving JESUS in Luk_10:41 but was told *Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things – only one thing is needful*. That thing was abiding in Him. It is not good to do the work of the Lord and forget the Lord of the work. Because without Him you can do nothing.

Jesus is a person. He has the Life you need to live the life you want. So if we pursue other [religious] life we will get fruitless. But if we seek him as the Source of life, He will make us fruitful. He is the vine running into our branches. If we stay unplugged it will not be long before we start malfunctioning. First in the root and then eventually onto the leaves and then the fruit will soon show you are not grounded in the Author of Life. He is the Life who gives life - because He is *the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world-* Joh 6:33

This is now where the Holy Communion fits in. It is a tool to usher one into an atmosphere of abiding. Jesus confirmed this when he declared Joh 6:56-57 that *He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.*

So it is clear that the one who eats and drinks of Him dwells in Him - which means abides in him. And He continued and said he that partakes of Him shall also live by Him just as He lived through His father while on earth. This has deep and far-reaching implications which we cannot even capture in this booklet. It impacts on personal health, wealth, influence, ministry etc. No wonder JESUS cautioned his critics in Joh 6:27 to *labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.*

Fasting with Holy Communion offers the best opportunity to activate this promise in one's life. If you caught the above drift then you have figured that this holy-exercise can be used in practised as part of **Power by Presence**, like we saw in the Power Cycle. The Holy Communion has much more value locked in it that we usually leverage – it is more than a meal of fellowship and communion. It is a route to the source of life itself. Partake of it in the privacy of your home during your Fast. For more on the Holy Communion see my book *Attention! The road to God's Success Secrets.*

VIII. Further study of fasting

From *Torrey New Topical Textbook*

Spirit of, explained

Isa 58:6; Isa 58:7;

Not to be made a subject of display

Mat 6:16-18;

Should be to God

Zec 7:5; Mat 6:18;

For the chastening of the soul

Psa 69:10;

For the humbling of the soul

Psa 35:13;

OBSERVED ON OCCASIONS OF

Judgments of God

Joe 1:14; Joe 2:12;

Public calamities

2Sa 1:12;

Afflictions of the Church

Luk 5:33-35;

Afflictions of others

Psa 35:13; Dan 6:18;

Private afflictions

2Sa 12:16;

Approaching danger

Est 4:16;

Ordination of ministers

Act 13:3; Act 14:23;

ACCOMPANIED BY

Prayer

Ezr 8:23; Dan 9:3;

Confession of sin

1Sa 7:6; Neh 9:1; Neh 9:2;

Mourning

Joe 2:12;

Humiliation

Deu 9:18; Neh 9:1;

Promises connected with

Isa 58:8-12; Mat 6:18;

OF HYPOCRITES

Described

Isa 58:4; Isa 58:5;

Ostentatious

Mat 6:16;

Boasted of, before God

Luk 18:12;

Rejected

Isa 58:3; Jer 14:12;

Extraordinary Exemplified

Our Lord

Mat 4:2;

Moses

Exo 34:28; Deu 9:9; Deu 9:18;

Elijah

1Ki 19:8;

National Exemplified

Israel

Idg 20:26; Ezz 8:21; Est 4:3; Est 4:16; Jer 36:9;

Men of Jabesh-gilead

1Sa 31:13;

Ninevites

Jon 3:5-8;

Of Saints Exemplified

David

2Sa 12:16; Psa 109:24;

Nehemiah

Neh 1:4;

Esther

Est 4:16;

Daniel

Dan 9:3;

Disciples of John

Mat 9:14;

Anna

Luk 2:37;

Cornelius

Act 10:30;

Christians

Act 13:2;

Apostles

2Co 6:5;

Paul

2Co 11:27;

Of the wicked-Exemplified

Elders of Jezreel

1Ki 21:12;

Ahab

1Ki 21:27;

Pharisees

Mar 2:18; Luk 18:12;

References

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