

LOC DANIEL FAST 2022

ELEVATE

SEPTEMBER 4-25

21 DAY DEVOTION

fasting
praying
giving
elevating

Dear Friend,

We are so glad you have decided to participate in our annual Daniel Fast. There really is no better way to reset our spiritual compass and bring about refreshing in every area of our lives than through prayer and fasting. Our hope is that this time of praying and fasting will refresh us personally but also corporately as we seek His blessing and direction.

At LOC we look at our annual church fast a little differently than others might. While some ministries choose to fast at the beginning of a new calendar year (January), God has led us to fast at a different time for a very specific reason. As Moses led the children of Israel out of Egypt and to Mt. Sinai, God revealed a prophetic calendar that I believe aligns with the spiritual climate around us. I believe that this divine calendar serves as a signal to us that change is coming - that this is a season of preparation and setup. And as we approach this time of the year, several years ago, the Holy Spirit impressed upon our hearts to call this house to a time of preparation for this spiritually charged season.

The fall feasts are unique among the appointed times of the Lord. The lessons they teach form a natural progression of thought from repentance, to redemption to rejoicing. According to the Bible, the Biblical holiday of Rosh Hashanah, or the Feast of Trumpets, marks the beginning of a new year. Rosh Hashanah literally means "the head of year". In relation to our calendar, the Feast of Trumpets begins at sundown on Sunday, September 4. I believe that Rosh Hashanah signals a new year for the believer, a shift in our walk with Him, a promotion to another glory level. Rosh Hashanah marks a new beginning! We already know that the Jewish system of acts doesn't work anymore (GRACE took its place!), but I will remind you that the Bible doesn't say that God is Jewish - it says He is Spirit ("*God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.*"). His people were Jewish in Leviticus when He established His timetable, but when Jesus Christ came and died for us, you and I became His people. According to Genesis 3:29, *if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

We have timed this 21 day fast to **begin on Sunday September 4 at sundown and end on Sunday, September 25 at sundown**, the Jewish Holiday of Rosh Hashanah, the Feast of Trumpets, which is the beginning of a new prophetic year of destiny! The theme for this fast is "Elevate". I want you to raise your commitment and expectation this year! Don't enter into this fast with the same mindset as years before. Don't do what's comfortable and easy. Make a greater sacrifice so that you can

expect a greater miracle. And be specific about your expectation...what are YOU fasting for? Your family, children, marriage, health, mind, soul? Is it for spiritual renewal, for guidance, for healing, for the resolution of problems, for special grace to handle a difficult situation, or for a major decision? Whatever you are fasting for, I believe that help is on the way. And that help just might show up as result of YOUR fasting. (refer to Day 1 of our devotions and you'll see why!)

We pray that you will experience the presence and power of God in an extraordinary way as you commit yourself to Him over these 21 days. May you draw closer to God than ever before as you seek more of Him.

As you begin this journey, ask the Holy Spirit to clarify His leading and objectives for your Daniel Fast. This will enable you to pray more specifically and strategically. Think about the top two or three most pressing issues on your heart and hone in on those with God. Write these down in the space provided below, and be open to hearing what God wants to show you in those areas.

When praying, make your primary goal to know Jesus more and rest in Him. Focus first on what's right about Him, such as His goodness and His greatness and see everything else through that filter.

Finally, make time to pray daily. Don't overcomplicate this! Just talk to God. Have that place and time where you can seek Him every day. If you don't plan to pray, you won't.

Praying expectantly with you,

Pastor Aaron & First Lady Cowart

During this fast, I am praying and believing God for:

Fasting Information

Why you should fast:

If you do not already know of the power and importance of fasting, here are some very important facts:

- Fasting was an expected discipline in both the Old and New Testament eras. For example, Moses fasted at least two recorded 40-day periods. Jesus fasted 40 days and reminded His followers to fast, "when you fast," not if you fast.
- Fasting and prayer can restore the loss of the "first love" for your Lord and result in a more intimate relationship with Christ.
- Fasting is a Biblical way to truly humble yourself in the sight of God (Psalm 35:13, Ezra 8:21). King David said, "I humble myself through fasting."
- Fasting enables the Holy Spirit to reveal your true spiritual condition, resulting in brokenness, repentance, and a transformed life.
- The Holy Spirit will quicken the Word of God in your heart and His truth will become more meaningful to you!
- Fasting can transform your prayer life into a richer and more personal experience.
- Fasting can result in a dynamic personal revival in your own life-and make you a channel of revival to others.

If you fast, you will find yourself being humbled. You will discover more time to pray and seek God's face. And as He leads you to recognize and repent of unconfessed sin, you will experience special blessings from God.

How to fast

As you prepare to fast, it is important to choose a fasting plan that works for you. While this section provides some general information about different types of fasts, as well as some suggestions on how to create your own fasting plan, it is important to mention that there is nothing more inherently spiritual about one type fast as opposed to another. These are simply guidelines and suggestions on different things you can do.

Fasting can include food, social media, and entertainment, among other things. It should be something you are accustomed to so that it stretches you to give it up. Giving it up for a period of time enables one to focus on God. For example, when those hunger pangs happen, turn to prayer. When you usually watch your television shows, open your Bible to read and pray instead. Fast from social media or watching sports so you can focus on God.

Don't let what you eat or do not eat become the focus of your fast. Our focus should be on drawing closer to God. Remember, this is a time to disconnect enough from your regular patterns and habits in order to connect more closely to God.

Remember, the goal of fasting is not just to do without food. The goal is to draw nearer to God.

Here are a few tips to keep in mind before getting started.

1. Start where you are:

We are all at different places in our walk with God. Likewise our jobs, daily schedules and health conditions are all different and place various levels of demand on our energy. So most importantly, whether you've fasted before or this is your first time, start where you are. Your personal fast should present a level of challenge to it, but it's very important to know your own body, know your options and, most importantly seek God in prayer and follow what the Holy Spirit leads you to do.

2. Make your commitment:

Pray about the kind of fast you should undertake. Jesus encouraged us to fast (Matthew 6:16). For Him it was a matter of when believers fast, not if they would do it. Before you fast, we encourage you to decide up front the type of fast God wants you to undertake and how much time each day you will devote to prayer and reading God's word. Making these commitments ahead of time will help sustain your fast when physical temptations and life's pressures tempt you to abandon it.

Different types of fasts

Specific food or activity fast:

In this type of fast you omit a specific item(s) from your meal plans. For example, you may choose to eliminate all red meat, processed foods, fast foods, or sweets. Most people can incorporate this type of fast relatively easily. It can also prove to be a great solution for people with specific dietary needs or medical conditions that may cause certain limitations.

While fasting typically refers to refraining from specific food items, you may also find it extremely beneficial to fast from a regular activity or habit. This might include things such as television, social media and the like.

Prayer and fasting are about both connecting to God and disconnecting from the world. Try to tune out some of the regular distractions from your day as much as possible. Replace that time with things that will nourish you spiritually.

Daniel Fast:

The Daniel fast is a great model to follow and one that is extremely effective for spiritual focus, bodily discipline and purification of the body and soul. It is probably one of the most commonly referred-to fasts; however, within the Daniel fast there is room for broad interpretation.

In the book of Daniel we find two different times where the prophet Daniel fasted. Daniel 1 states that he ate only vegetables and water, and in Daniel 10, while the passage does not give a specific list of foods that Daniel ate, it does state that he ate no rich (or choice) foods, as well as no red meat or wine. So based on these two verses, we can see that either these, or combinations of the two, constitute a Daniel fast.

Again, it is important to mention that there is nothing inherently spiritual about one type of fast as opposed to another. The foundation of the Daniel fast is fruits and vegetables. Some starchy vegetables and dairy could be included, but that depends on the individual. Your goal should be to seek God in prayer about this and follow what the Holy Spirit leads you to do.

Fasting safely:

As you begin your fast, you may hear from concerned loved ones and friends who urge you to protect your health, and they are right. You should protect your health. But we want to encourage you that if done properly, fasting will not only prove to be a spiritual blessing, but a physical blessing as well.

You may, however, have a physical problem that would make fasting unwise and dangerous. This could include tumors, cancer, blood diseases, diabetes or heart disease. If that is the case, include your doctor in your decision on how to fast. Also, if you are under any type of medication, you may want to talk with your doctor before changing your regime.

3. Beginning and ending your fast well:

Depending on the type of fast you choose, it may be important to prepare your body ahead of time before beginning the fast. Take a week or so to transition into your fast; otherwise it may be difficult on your body. For example, if you would like to go on a fruits and vegetables or juice fast, start eliminating meat, white grains, and refined sugars from your diet the week before. Also you may want to start to cut back on dairy products and some of your caffeine intake.

The same principle applies to breaking your fast. When your fast is over, add foods back in very gradually. You won't want to break your fast with a greasy cheeseburger!

The goal for this 21-day fast is that you would experience a new intimacy in your relationship with God. As you prepare to begin, we encourage you to prepare your heart spiritually. The foundation for fasting and prayer is repentance. Unconfessed sin can hinder your prayers.

Here are several things you can do to prepare your heart:

- Remember that God is your Father and He loves you and is for you.
- Confess every sin that the Holy Spirit calls to your remembrance and accept God's forgiveness (1 John 1:9).
- Seek forgiveness from people whom you have offended, and forgive those who have hurt you (Mark 11:25, Luke 11:4, 17:3, 4).
- Ask God to fill you with His Holy Spirit according to his command in Ephesians 5:18 and His promise in 1 John 5:14,15.
- Surrender your life fully to Jesus Christ as your Lord; refuse to obey your worldly nature (Romans 12:1,2).
- Begin your time of fasting and prayer with an expectant heart (Hebrews 11:6).
- Do not underestimate spiritual oppositions. Satan sometimes intensifies the natural battle between body and spirit (Galatians 5:16,17).

Final fasting tips:

- Keep your fridge and pantry stocked with the items you need. Being unprepared to fast sets you up to give into temptation.
- Make it a priority to attend church during your 21-day fast. Being around other believers will encourage you to keep on going when fasting gets difficult.

For additional recipes & encouragement like us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/LOCDanielFast>

- If you are fasting with others, you may want to meet together in a small-group setting. You can share what God is showing you in your devotional time as well as spend time in prayer together.
- If you mess up, don't get discouraged. Just get right back on track and keep going. God's mercies "are new every morning" (Lamentations 3:22-23). He wants you to finish, and He will give you the grace and strength to do it!

If you sincerely humble yourself before the Lord, repent, pray, and seek God's face; if you consistently meditate on His word, you will experience a heightened awareness of His presence (John 14:21). The Lord will give you fresh, new spiritual insights. Your confidence and faith in God will be strengthened and you will feel refreshed. Our prayer is that this will be a significant time in your life where you experience God's presence like never before.

Morning Prayer

Thanks to technology, we can touch and agree every day and strengthen each other in prayer. We have incorporated a prayer line, **Monday - Friday, 6:30AM-7:00AM**. The goal is to begin our day praying out the devotion that corresponds to that day *together*. We invite you to join Pastor as we bombard heaven in prayer!

Dial-In Number: (667) 770-1268

Participant code: **880703**

Daniel's Fast Devotional

day 1. The Battle Is Not Yours - Pastor Israel Aaron Cowart Daniel 10:12-14

For many of us, here we are again! For others, welcome to the Live Oak Church Daniel Fast! This has become one of the most powerful times of the year for this ministry. We believe that God has ordained this time for us to come together as a corporate body, consecrate ourselves and set aside a brief moment in our calendar year to prepare for what He has next.

Fasting is a spiritual discipline whereby we deny ourselves some food to make room for HIM. This is an action that speaks a statement of truth... "Less of what I want, and more of what YOU want for me."

Daniel was fasting for 21 days because he desperately wanted to better understand what his God was saying to him. He consecrated himself to the Lord, disciplined himself and humbled himself to focus on what God was saying to him. What's interesting to me about Daniel 10:12-14 is that the Bible tells us that on the FIRST DAY of his fast, the Lord sent the answer. But the enemy didn't want that answer to get to Daniel by way of the angel. In an effort to stop the divine communication from God, the enemy dispatches his own fallen angel, the prince of Persia - a principality - to hinder the answer from getting to Daniel. For the next 21 days there was a battle taking place that Daniel didn't know anything about. It wasn't until Daniel completed his 21 day fast that God sent Michael to help the angel with the answer to be released to come to him.

Picture this...Daniel is fasting and there is a battle, a conflict, taking place in the spirit realm. The answer was there. The angel had been dispatched. But it was Daniel's fasting that released the hand of God to fight for him in places that he didn't know he needed help.

I always feel compelled to begin this first day giving you a word of caution as you enter into this fast. You're "not wrestling against flesh and blood, but against *principalities*, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, AGAINST SPIRITUAL HOSTS OF WICKEDNESS IN THE HEAVENLY PLACES...". The enemy is fully aware that you mean business and that you are in waiting with a spirit of expectation as to what God's answer is going to be concerning the issues of your life that you are fasting about beginning today! But I also want to encourage you. Don't worry. Don't get anxious. Don't doubt. Because it is your fasting that releases the hand of God to fight for you. I believe the answer has

already been given, and though the enemy will attempt to hold it up, be encouraged that he cannot win!

This is a time to position yourself and to understand the divine movements of God. As you do, trust that God is taking care of every spiritual hindrance and every contrary force that may attempt to frustrate you. Be blessed today knowing that God is on your side, and the battle is not yours!

Today as you begin this spiritual journey, this is my prayer for you: "Lord, I pray for angels to be released. Dispatch help to your sons and daughters, not just natural help, but supernatural help. I believe God for angelic forces to fight on your behalf, to protect and watch over you, to minister to the heirs of salvation. In Jesus' name, Amen."

day 2. Elevate your Knowledge and Confidence in God - Elder Howard Cary - Isaiah 65:24

Good morning! There are over 7.7 billion people in the world, so this morning you may ask yourself, "does God know me?" The question is, "do you know God?" Our Heavenly Father, Yahweh, never becomes preoccupied or forgetful toward His children. God said it would be more likely for a nursing mother to forget her baby than for Him to forget one of His children! Think about it...a nursing mother has compassion and a profound sensitivity to her baby. Even if the baby is in another room the mother's senses are in tune with her baby and with each sounding cry, she knows when it is time to feed and care for the child. That said, the mother never becomes so preoccupied with other things that she neglects the needs of her baby.

It is fitting that God chose this imagery to describe how He cares for His people (You), for He is more sensitive to the needs of His children (You) than even the most loving mother. He infinitely anticipates every cry for help, even before we can call out in need, God is responding with His answer (Isa. 65:24). This is one of the most comforting promises God has given to us: that He will never forget us!

So today, elevate your faith and don't let any challenging or difficult circumstances you are facing during the fast convince you that God has forgotten you. Don't ever assume that God is more concerned with the needs of other, more significant, more "spiritual people" than He is with yours. Scripture teaches that God looks upon you with the same love, attention, and compassion as a nursing mother would look upon her

baby. So, elevate your knowledge and confidence in God today, listen to the Holy Spirit and be reassured that He loves you just like that!

day 3. Purpose In Everything - First Lady Christi Cowart

Ruth 2:1-4

Ruth 2:1-4 MSG - "It so happened that Naomi had a relative by marriage, a man prominent and rich, connected with Elimelech's family. His name was Boaz. One day Ruth, the Moabite foreigner, said to Naomi, "I'm going to work; I'm going out to glean among the sheaves, following after some harvester who will treat me kindly,": Naomi said, "Go ahead, dear daughter." And so she set out. She went and started gleaning in a field. Following in the wake of the harvesters. Eventually she ended up in the part of the field owned by Boaz, her father in law Elimelech's relative. A little later Boaz came out from Bethlehem, greeting his harvesters, "God be with you!" They replied, "And God bless you!"

Proverbs 20:24 MSG - The very steps we take come from God; otherwise how would we know where we're going?

God providentially led Ruth to the fields of Boaz. Some people may call this a coincidence, but the mature believer understands that God is at work in every detail of our lives. Nothing escapes His attention, and our circumstances are never happenstance. He threads grace through every single strand and seams each element together with His redemption.

NOTHING in our lives is wasted. In God's economy, every detail has value and purpose. What seems like a random event to us, will one day serve a purpose in our lives. God is always working for our good and if we will lean into what He is doing He will take us to higher heights and deeper depths. In all things, He is working for our good when we cooperate with His leading. Faithful obedience will be rewarded abundantly and you will one day look back and see that you landed in just the right "field" to receive all that He has for you. Bloom where you are planted, put in the hard work and know that God is cultivating beautiful fruit in your heart as you labor for Him.

day 4. The Key to Elevation - Pastor Israel Aaron Cowart Matthew 23:11-12

Elevate: raise or lift something (or someone) up to a higher position: raise to a more important or impressive level:

The world around us is clearly opposed to the kingdom we belong to. The world's strategy for promotion looks completely contrary to God's strategy.

You've probably heard it said that we live in a dog-eat-dog world. This expression refers to a place or situation that is highly competitive. In a dog-eat-dog world, people will do whatever it takes to be successful, even if that means harming others.

I recently read on indeed.com "9 Strategies To Help You Earn A Promotion":

1. Give more value
2. Pay attention to people who have been promoted
3. Ask for feedback from your supervisor
4. Get noticed in your workplace
5. Demonstrate your leadership skills
6. Identify and solve problems
7. Become a positive presence in your workplace
8. Maintain a strong work ethic
9. Motivate yourself constantly

Now let me give you God's strategy:

- *Matthew 23:11-12 - The greatest among you will be your servant. For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.*
- *Luke 4:11 - For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."*
- *James 4:10 - Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will lift you up.*
- *1 Samuel 2:7-8 - The Lord sends poverty and wealth; He humbles and he exalts. He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap; He seats them with princes and has them inherit a throne of honor.*

While I appreciate what the editorial team at indeed.com is offering as tools for promotion, there's really only ONE guaranteed strategy for elevation...*humility*. Humility is defined as "a modest or low view of one's

own importance". Humility is the ability to view yourself accurately as an individual with talents, as well as flaws, while being void of arrogance and pride. Isn't that really what this fast is about? Denying our flesh, thinking less of ourselves to become what HE wants us to be?

When we humble ourselves before the Lord, we are admitting that we can't do it without HIM...we are admitting that we're not able, but He IS. Humility is admitting that I am nothing without Him and I need His wisdom, strength, power and direction if I am to have any semblance of success in my life. He is the omniscient, omnipotent God of the universe that knows much better than we do what's best for us.

The reality is that what He has planned for each of us is well beyond what we deserve or what we are qualified for. In this season of prayer, fasting and giving, take a moment to humble yourself before Him and then He will be able to promote you in ways that man cannot. As a matter of fact, I have found that He won't even ask their permission! He will elevate, raise up, promote and advance you in ways that man-made strategies will never measure up to.

day 5. Elevating Your Service To God - Pastor Matt Rahn

Ephesians 2:10

God shaped you to serve him. The Bible says, "God made us what we are. In Christ Jesus, God made us to do good works, which God planned in advance for us to live our lives doing" (Ephesians 2:10 NCV).

Before you were born, God had already decided what contribution He wanted you to make with your life. God did not put you on this planet just to take up space, to use resources, and to die. No! He put you here to serve Him by serving others. And nobody else can be you. If you don't serve God the way He intended for you to serve Him, then the world misses that part of the puzzle.

Another name for "good works" is ministry. Anytime you use your talents and abilities to help somebody else, you are actually ministering to them. The Bible says in 1 Peter 4:10, "God has given each of you some special abilities; be sure to use them to help each other, passing on to others God's many kinds of blessings." (TLB). You know the talents that you have and they're not just for your benefit. God gave you your talents for the benefit of other people. That's why nobody has it all together. God wired the universe so that we would need each other.

The truth is you serve God by serving others. On Earth it's impossible to serve God directly. The only way you can serve God on Earth is by serving other people. So anytime you help somebody else, God says it's like you're doing it for him. You're practicing on Earth what you're going to do for eternity. This is why we believe serving here at Live Oak Church is so important.

day 6. One Bite at a Time - Tamara Miller-Hall
Deuteronomy 28:1

Several years ago I was recommended for a job that at the time I felt like was beyond what I was actually qualified for. Even with my current job I initially turned it down for the very same reason. I was quickly reminded that my former job was a big piece of what my current job now requires of me. An older gentleman approached me and asked, "how do you eat a biscuit?" With confusion written all over my face I just stared at him, he simply responded with, "one bite at a time, if you chew the whole thing, you'll choke. So take one bite at a time." Light bulbs went off! It was then I knew that God was preparing me for more.

Elevation requires preparation. No one excels to the top overnight. Our Father desires for us to grow, rise above what is normal, and in order to do that, we must first prep. Fast, eliminate distractions/things that take away your time with God. Pray, seek him; ask him to reveal those things that keep you from going higher. This will require you to WAIT, LISTEN, be still so that you can be prepared for what he has to say, and remember to remain humble, it's not about you, it's all about HIM.

Deuteronomy 28: 1 AMP-" Now it shall be if you diligently listen to and obey the voice of the Lord your God, being careful to do all of HIS commandments which I am commanding you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth.

day 7. Elevate Your Faith - Pastor Jarvis Sanchez
Romans 10:17(KJV)

So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Elevating your faith is necessary when it comes to your individual walk with Christ. Moving forward in this Daniel Fast gives us an opportunity to do that. Whether you're a new found Christian or have been saved all your life, we can still struggle sometimes in our faith. We must stay consistent and steady in reading or hearing God's word. His word is the

seed that grows our faith. Just like growing vegetables in a garden, in order for the vegetables to grow you need to plant a specific seed. The seeds of knowing God's word and what He says about you and your life, and His promises that help us grow increases our faith. It doesn't just stop there; in order for the seed to flourish and grow you have to apply action by watering it, pulling weeds, and fighting off animals and bugs. So in other words, we can't just be hearers of God's word we also have to be doers. We have to apply action behind our faith. Putting action behind our faith encourages us even the more.

So moving forward, elevate your faith by reading God's word regularly and apply it to your everyday lives and watch how your faith grows and elevates you even higher in Him.

Prayer for today:

I know this Daniel Fast is not easy but God You are faithful. When I am weak You will provide my strength. When I get discouraged You will pick me up. I may be hungry but You will satisfy all my needs God.

**day 8. Elevation From Your Comfortable Place - First Lady Christi Cowart
Ruth 1:15-19**

Ruth 1:15-19 MSG - "Naomi said, "Look, your sister in law is going back home to live with her own people and gods; go with her. But Ruth said, "Don't force me to leave you; don't make me go home. Where you go, I go; and where you live, I'll live. Your people are my people, your God is my god; where you die, I'll die, and that's where I'll be buried, so help me God—not even death itself it going to come between us!"

When Naomi saw that Ruth had her heart set on going with her, she gave in, and so the two of them traveled on together to Bethlehem. When they arrived in Bethlehem, the whole town was soon buzzing: "Is this really our Naomi: And after all this time!"

The decision to not to return to Moab was a defining moment for Ruth. She shows incredible strength of character by choosing to not take the easy way out. Ruth had no idea what was to come, but she steps completely forward toward a new future. She not only makes a commitment to honor Naomi, but she breaks from the pagan heritage of her past and places her loyalty with Jehovah God.

So many times when things get tough for us, we find ourselves being pulled back to what is easy and familiar. We want to go back to "what we know" because we are comfortable there. Elevation isn't found in the comfortable place. Elevation comes when we totally surrender to

God and His will for our lives. Elevation comes when we forsake what we know and choose to NOT show our selfish desires. Walking into the unknown to follow after God and chasing hard after Jesus will always produce something amazing in our lives. It won't be easy and we may not understand it all, but His ways are always better.

Chase hard after Him!!! Elevation is coming!!!

day 9. Your Kingdom Come - Mandy Rahn
John 12:24-25

When we pray the Lord's prayer, we pray, "Thy Kingdom Come." To sum up His kingdom, it is His reign over all His creation...earth, sky, seas, and us. It is His reign over our lives. The words also sum up our role in His kingdom; to see His will be done in our lives and those around us.

So what does this mean for us? To see the kingdom of God on earth as in heaven, we need to live a life that honors God and glorifies Him. A life that is entirely surrendered to Jesus. A life that is ELEVATED in FAITH. A life that reflects Him and points people to Him. It's going to look different for everyone. When we elevate HIM in our LIVES His will is being done ON EARTH just as it is in Heaven.

God has plans for each one of us. While those plans are to prosper us and lead us to eternity with Him, ultimately His plans are to bring glory to Him. As His children, we must decide whether we want to take our place in His kingdom. Do we want to live out His plans or our own? Do we want to take up our cross and follow Him in whatever way He asks us? Do we want to be led by His Holy Spirit in every season, whether it means taking a back seat or standing in the limelight? Do we want to Elevate our time with Him and subtract time from other things?

God's kingdom is a beautiful tapestry. It's made up of many intricate parts, all knitted together to declare His majesty and holiness. We are part of that tapestry, all different in our own ways, but all part of the story of bringing Him glory and pointing people to Jesus.

"Pray like this: Our Father in heaven, may Your name be kept holy. May Your Kingdom come soon. May Your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven."

Scriptures:

Matthew 6:9-10 NLT

John 12:24-25

day 10. The Privilege and Power of Prayer - Elder Daisy Jones

Nehemiah 1-2

You have the highest privilege and honor in the world: Prayer. You have full and unlimited access by faith to speak into the ears of the Sovereign God of all existence. You can cry Abba Father any time and any place. You don't need special passwords, symbols, collateral, financial backing, social status, or anything except faith. God hears you.

Let's look at Nehemiah 1:1-11, (The MSG) and see this beautiful privilege and power in its simplest and purest form. Nehemiah is in the palace complex when Hanani, one of his brothers, arrives from Judah with some fellow Jews. He asks them about the conditions of his people and it is bad news.

Nehemiah hears this, sits down and cries. He mourns for days, fasting and praying before the God-of-Heaven. "God, God-of-Heaven, the great and awesome God, loyal to his covenant and faithful to those who love him and obey his commands: Look at me, listen to me. Pay attention to this prayer of your servant that I'm praying day and night in intercession for your servants, the People of Israel, confessing the sins... And I'm including myself, and my ancestors, among those who have sinned against you. We've treated you like dirt: We haven't done what you told us, haven't followed your commands... All the same, remember the warning you posted to your servant Moses: 'If you betray me, I'll scatter you to the four winds, but if you come back to me and do what I tell you, I'll gather up all these scattered peoples from wherever they ended up and put them back in the place I chose to mark with my Name. Well, there they are— your servants, your people whom you so powerfully and impressively redeemed. O Master, listen to me, listen to your servant's prayer—and yes, to all your servants who delight in honoring you—and make me successful today so that I get what I want from the king."

As Nehemiah serves as the king's cupbearer, his heart is heavy and it shows on his face. The king: "Why the long face? You're not sick are you?"

Nehemiah responds: "Long live the king! And why shouldn't I be depressed when the city where my family is buried, is in ruins and the city gates have been reduced to cinders?"

The king asked him, "So what do you want?"

"Praying under my breath to the God-of-Heaven, I said, "If it please the king, and if the king thinks well of me, send me to Judah, to the city where my family is buried, so that I can rebuild it."

What happens is phenomenal. Read on through the book of Nehemiah and see a lifestyle of prayer impacting the lives of thousands.

What do you want God to do in your life? Have you asked Him to do it? Go ahead and get comfortable being uncomfortable—pray.

day 11. The Worrying Worshipper - Pastor Ahmad Hall Philippians 4:6-7

Let's be honest... The times in which we are living are stranger than ever. I've thought to myself lately that I never would have thought that I would live to see such a moment in time. But here we are. The cost of living has increased tremendously. Food banks and shelters are working overtime to accommodate the lines that are wrapped around their buildings. The resources of man are depleting. And the pay rate hasn't budged. Is this cause for concern? Should we worry?

As priests in the Kingdom of God we cannot reduce ourselves to becoming Worrying Worshippers. Pause. "Worrying" should never be an adjective used to describe a worshipper. Play. If we continue to find ourselves in constant worry and disarray, we would have to begin to question the very foundation of our faith. And unaddressed worry can become fear.

What does the word of God say to believers who find themselves in seasons where everyone and everything around them seems to promote worry? Here are a couple of scriptures.

"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is life not more than food, and the body more than clothes?" Matthew 6:25

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." Philippians 4: 6-7

In this season of fasting and praying, may we elevate our worship and diminish our worries. We belong to God and everything we have belongs to Him. Even our worries. Give them to Him. God never intended for us to worry. He created us to worship. For His good pleasure. We are his workmanship. He created us with a purpose. May prayer be that your elevated worship will carry you, the hand of God will guard your mind, and that you will focus on the God who has seen you through so many

times before. He is able to keep you from falling and keep your mind in perfect peace.

"For God has not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind..."

2 Timothy 1:7

day 12. God's Timing - Elder Richard Johnson

Romans 1:10-12

"...I pray that now at last by God's will the way may be opened for me to come to you. I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong—that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith." (NIV)

God is a blessing God. He desires to grant favor to His children. At the same time, we have our own free will, which God will not violate. Sometimes, we cheat God of the ability to bless us when we selfishly and stubbornly force our own way. The Lord's clock does not abide by our calendar. As much as we want things to run according to our own design, God's blueprint is much better. There is an order to things that God has established. He is the sovereign Lord over all the universe, including our lives and our world. He created all the things we see that we don't understand.

Paul had desired to go to Rome, but he knew that his trip would be much more profitable in the Lord's timing. Sometimes, we have to wait on God. Sometimes, we may know what God has called us to do, yet we know it is not yet time. When we wait on the Lord to say when the time is right, we can know it is going to be an incredible ride! It might not be easy, but it will be good. If it is easy, be careful. Satan will do everything he can to oppose God's plans, and if you are not facing opposition, you may want to pray to see if you are indeed walking in God's timing.

If we wait upon the Lord and His timing, it is going to be great!

Dear God,

Thank You for the love, grace and mercy that You extend to me day in and day out. Thank You for Your goodness; for Your kindness. Thank You for the incredible plans You have for my life. Please lead me into and through them in Your timing and not in my own. In Jesus' name. Amen.

day 13. Make Room For Him - Israel Luke Cowart

James 4:10

When writing this God took me to James 4:10 in the King James Version where it reads; "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up." You can see that the idea of lifting up, or "elevating," is very clearly talked about and that an elevation theme is used within the text. That was where I felt God wanted me to go. However, often when reading biblical texts and Scripture, the Bible has themes and ideas that they play with, like calls, or challenges, or stories with deeper meaning (parables). He brought me to that first phrase within the verse, "Humble yourselves". This phrase humble yourself in the Greek is the word "ταπεινώω" (tap-i-no'-o) which literally translates "to make low" or "to level". This fast is about ELEVATION and how we can be ELEVATED towards something new and fresh, something revelatory within our lives, but in doing so, we are reminding ourselves that we are finite humans serving an infinite God. See this fast is not about creating something new, it is about understanding sacrifice, making sacrifice, so that we can make room for God and His revelation within our lives.

So, in looking into James 4:10, you can understand and begin to recognize that the idea of ELEVATION, and the idea of moving to a new place where the Lord has lifted you, begins with a self awareness and a self-made decision to humble ourselves, to make ourselves low in the eyes of God. In church we often love to praise God for the new promotion, or the new car, or the provision, and that's always something we should do because God has a plan to provide for us as He is the God of more than enough. However, I would challenge your thinking today and I would ask if you have realized that in sacrificing something for this fast, whatever that may be, you have also lowered yourself and made yourself lowly, recognizing that in this finite world, you are making the decision to sacrifice and humble yourself in the eyes of an infinite God. Because I truly believe that God wants to ELEVATE you and move you to the new places He has for you after this fast is over. That is why during this fast our hearts and stomachs struggle, because as humans who live in a broken, sinful world, we find it hard to humble ourselves. But before Elevation comes we must make a self recognition of the self-righteous flesh and humble ourselves to the infinite God.

A prayer for today:

Lord, You called us to make of ourselves humble sacrifices in Your eyes. As we focus towards You and we allow our flesh to die so that we can be elevated, let us not forget about how You humbled Yourself and sent your Son to die for us.

May we not forget today to humble ourselves and to recognize that You, as the infinite God, have called us not to selfishness, but rather You have called us to be self-denying. We do this so that we can make room for You and everything You have in store for us. We pray for self awareness, and a Christ focused state of mind, so that we can focus on Your will. Amen

day 14. Who's holding you back?? - Pastor Jarvis Sanchez
Proverbs 13:20

"Walk with the wise and become wise, for a companion of fools suffers harm." Who do you spend most of your time with? Are they helping you become the person God called you to be? Are they holding you accountable with your priorities in life? These questions are simple to answer yet can have a huge impact on your life. Who we surround ourselves with on an everyday basis will have the most influence on us as an individual. By no means am I saying "don't spend time with others who don't believe in the Bible." We are called to be the salt and light of this world. We want to build relationships with those and guide them to a relationship with God. What I'm asking is, "who are the people around you the most?" Sometimes we have a close friendship and love for certain people in our lives but they could be the ones holding us back from what God wants for our lives. We have to pray and ask God to surround us and give us wisdom to discern who is right for us in this particular season of our lives.

As Proverbs 27:17 says "As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another." So rubbing two iron blades together makes the edges become sharper, thereby making them more efficient in their task to cut and slice. When you surround yourself with those of the same beliefs you start to become more efficient in the specific call on your life. You need those who believe in you, encourage you, and support you. Reevaluate your inner circle. Are they the ones who help you with moral values, your walk with Christ, or help you make the right decisions. Sometimes the ones closest to you give advice based on emotion and not their faith. Don't allow anyone to hold you back from what God wants for your life.

day 15. Elevating Your Thoughts - Pastor Matt Rahn

Psalm 63:1-8

"God, you are my God; I eagerly seek you. I thirst for you; my body faints for you in a land that is dry, desolate, and without water. So I gaze on you in the sanctuary to see your strength and your glory. My lips will glorify you because your faithful love is better than life. So I will bless you as long as I live; at your name, I will lift up my hands. You satisfy me as with rich food; my mouth will praise you with joyful lips. When I think of you as I lie on my bed, I meditate on you during the night watches because you are my helper; I will rejoice in the shadow of your wings. I follow close to you; your right hand holds on to me." (Psalm 63:1-8)

It is thought that Psalm 63 reflects on the time when David fled into the wilderness of Judea to get away from Absalom, whose forces were trying to kill him. David was intensely lonely. He was weary and sad. The future most certainly looked bleak and uncertain.

The last few years there may have been times where you have battled similar emotions. Right now many are weary. There are days where it feels like one problem is being stacked on top of another. When these moments come, you must decide to eagerly seek God. What does this look like?

Praise God. When David reflected on God's power and glory, he couldn't help but give praise. We are never alone in life. Our heavenly Father has more than enough power to easily rescue us from any problem. God lives to make your paths straight. The ways of the Lord are right, and the upright walk in them. (Hosea 14:9)

Remember where you dwell. David committed to remember how God had been his help and that he dwelt in the shadow of God's wings. Just as a fierce bird of prey shelters its young under its wing, so our God shelters and protects us. God will protect, assist, and fight for His children.

Commit your future to God's control. No matter what came to pass, whether he would remain king or not, or whether he would live or die, David chose to trust God's will for him. Remember, your future is in God's hands. He will use you and your circumstances to display His glory, love, and grace. No matter what happens, cling to Him.

As you reflect on God and His blessings, you'll find your spirits lifting. Move with trust and confidence because your heavenly Father upholds you. Cast all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. (1 Peter 5:7)

day 16. Where the House Once Stood - Pastor Ahmad Hall
Matthew. 7:24-27

A few years ago my son Tristan and I were driving through the small town of Cassville, Ga. Several weeks before then, a house in the area caught fire and completely burnt to the ground. By this time all the ash and debris had been removed. I pointed to the space where the house once stood and I said, "Tristan there was once a house there. Now what do you see?" He replied, "Is that cement Dad?" I looked over at him and said, "Yes son! The cement you see was shaped and molded before the house itself was built. It's called a foundation." And I continued, "Though the house itself may have burnt down, the owners of the home won't have to start completely over if the foundation is good. It may be a hard and long journey to rebuild the house but if the foundation is good, they have the perfect place to start."

Life can become extremely difficult. In all actuality most can't even seem to shake day to day challenges. The truth of the matter is that no matter what life may throw our way, we must be sure that the foundation we stand on is strong enough to withstand any and every circumstance.

Tough times will continue to come. But we as believers have a foundation that is strong. A foundation that is sure. A foundation that has proven "Himself" and has withstood the test of time.

Jesus says in Matthew 7:24-27, "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

He was speaking of Himself. Jesus is our strong foundation. He has never been conquered.

He has never been defeated. If we build our house on Him we can make it through the worst of times and we will begin to see the silver lining in the most trying circumstances.

When our world begins to crumble and our spiritual house begins to shake, we can be sure that our foundation will not fail us. Jesus will never fail us. And even if the roof and walls should begin to cave in on us, we can rest in knowing that Jesus is our foundation and we won't have to start all over again. We can continue to stand on the Rock of our salvation, stretch out on faith, and begin to rebuild where the house once stood.

day 17. Plant the Seed You Have – Elder Nathan Jones
John 12:24-25

A friend gave me a large box of seeds a couple of years ago. The box contained more than a thousand packages of vegetable seeds. My friend, who is also a gardener like me and enjoys the process, gave me the box after he took out the seeds he wanted. I, in turn, have given away hundreds of seed packets to people I know who enjoy the process of gardening. There are still several hundred packages of seeds, more than I can plant and harvest. The box used to be in the garage, but it was getting so hot, that I relocated it to my closet. Yes, my closet, to my wife's displeasure. Anyway, the number of seeds could produce several football fields of food for thousands of families. Normally Big Box stores keep seeds for only one year because they're normally viable for just one year. It makes sense, the older the seed the less viable it is to bring forth a harvest. As long as the seeds are stored up, and remain in the packet, they will never bring forth a harvest. Those seeds, if only stored up in the closet, will never feed the hungry, never feed the poor, and will eventually dry up. I know I have to plant and harvest these seeds and give away even more of them.

John 12:24-25, The Message, reads: "Listen carefully: Unless a grain of wheat is buried in the ground, dead to the world, it is never any more than a grain of wheat. But if it is buried, it sprouts and reproduces itself many times over. In the same way, anyone who holds on to life just as it is destroys that life. But if you let it go, reckless in your love, you'll have it forever, real and eternal." Here Jesus is talking about His own death, burial, and resurrection that redeemed us, reconciled us, established hope and a future, and set us who believe, on a new life course of fruitfulness.

His love did that. He was talking about Himself. He is talking about us. You may not have vegetable seeds stored up like me, and you may not enjoy gardening, but what you do have is seed(s) to change the lives of others.

What seed do you have stored up that needs to be planted? What seed (s) can you sacrifice and plant to change a relationship? What seed(s) are you planting in your home, in the workplace, and where you go?

Point 1: The seed doesn't produce any fruit until it's planted.

Point 2: The seed produces a big harvest (the process or period of gathering in crops) of the seed you planted when it is put in the ground.

Point 3: God has given each of us at least one seed.

Prayer: Father God, help me to recognize the seeds You have put in my hand, be thankful for them, and to sow them for the kingdom. During this time of fasting and prayer, I open up my heart to receive Your direction and deeper understanding of who You are and what You want to accomplish in me and through me. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

day 18. Elevate your Thinking - Sydney Cowart **John 16:12**

Sometimes we sit and we pray to God asking him to help us and we listen to what He answers and we go, "Huh? God what are you trying to say to me?" You might have asked him for a promotion on the job...He might respond with "leave your job." You might have asked Him for a wife or a husband and He says, "you're not ready." We hear these responses from God and we don't understand them. If we're being honest with ourselves, sometimes we ignore what God says because it doesn't fit the time in our life. Isaiah 55:8 says "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, declares the Lord. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts."

We are so quick to hear what God is saying, and ignore it because we do not like it. Sometimes we have to realize that even though we might not like it, we need it. By elevating our thinking, we allow ourselves to unlock what God really wants to do in our lives. When we Elevate our thinking we allow ourselves to read more into what God is saying. Maybe God is saying leave your job...there is a better one waiting for you. Maybe God is saying it's not the right time...he has more work to do in you. It might not make since now, but months, or even years later, it may click and you may be able to say, "I waited, now I know why."

We do not understand everything that we read in the Bible, in John 16:12 Jesus said to his disciple, "I have much more to say to you, more than

you can now bear" If we do not understand everything we read, we surely cannot understand every answer He gives. We want a fixed answer, we want God to say these words and nothing else; but if we elevate our thinking to think outside of what we want, outside of the answer we wanted to get, then who's to say that all along we had the answer we wanted, it was just presented in a different way.

When we elevate our thinking we say, God I am willing to understand that even though I might not understand it I am open to it. As Christians we should be willing and open to elevate our thinking to be more receptive of God's word. God's plan does not always make sense. This may be because we factor in our own understandings. Elevated thinking takes discipline. The world we live in does not accept eternal or elevated thinking. However, as a follower of Christ you can think eternal and elevated thoughts. You can think with elevated thoughts because you have the mind of Christ. (John 1:12-13)

day 19. Unstuck - Pastor Israel Aaron Cowart **2 Kings 25:27-30**

I was working a youth camp in Tifton, Georgia one summer when a tractor cutting grass on the large campground got stuck on the edge of the pond. After fighting with the mud for some time trying to get unstuck, someone knew that I owned a 4x4 truck (yes, it was a Ford), and asked if I would come pull the tractor out of the mud. I had him unstuck in a matter of minutes, and he was back to cutting grass.

Sometimes we find ourselves stuck in life. It's not that we chose to get in too deep. It's not that we chose to get too close to the edge. We were just "living"...doing what we do every day, and the circumstances overtook us. The thing about being stuck is that you feel like you've been there longer than you actually have because you're waiting on somebody else to come pull you out after fighting to get out on your own. (By the way, we're not talking about mud any more.)

So how do we get out? Out of the muck of life? Out of the mess we got ourselves into? Because the reality is that it is exhausting trying to free ourselves from something that has such a strong grip on our lives. I'll give you the key...it takes FAVOR. We need someone that has the ability to pull us out and set us free. King Jehoiachin was "stuck" in a Babylonian prison for 37 years, and yet God moved on the heart of the king of Babylon to show him favor and release him from prison. As a result, King Jehoiachin was elevated above other kings and treated better than he had been in a long time.

Today, September 23, is the 27th day of the 12th month on the Hebrew Civic calendar. Today could've been the anniversary of King Jehoiachin's release. And today, I declare that uncommon, overdue favor is being shown to you. May this day be written down in the chronicles of your life as a day that everything changed for the better. You will no longer have to fight your way out. Regardless of what you did to get stuck in your current situation, the favor of God is moving on the hearts and minds of every person necessary to elevate you to a better place of living. Today you get UNSTUCK - this is your day of release from everything that's been trying to hold you back.

day 20. Transcend Without Limitations - Hillery Sanchez
Isaiah 55: 8-9

To transcend means "to exceed or to go past defined limits; to exist above and independent from; to rise above, surpass, succeed." Oxford English Dictionary

Isaiah 55:8-9 says, "'For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways," declares the LORD. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."

This verse is consistent with the biblical theme of the transcendence of God. He is higher, greater, and more than what humanity can know. Humanity has limitations and boundaries, God transcends the boundaries of human limitations. God's thoughts are higher than humanity's thoughts and his ways are higher than humanity's ways because he is outside of the confines that humanity experiences as part of the creation order—he stands distinct as a creator.

There are countless times I can think of that God's unmerited favor has pulled us, or our loved ones, out or above certain circumstances:

- Only a few out of hundreds were accepted into a nursing program and you were one of them.
- An entire department is at risk of losing their job but you get selected not only to keep your job, but you receive a promotion.
- There was a deadly crash on your daily commute route, but you just missed it and were sent on a detour.
- Your medical diagnosis was supposed to limit your abilities and cause you long suffering, but you are feeling better than you have felt all your life.

Being a Child of God means we stand out or exist above from those of the world. Because of God, we surpass beyond our expectations. Limits that are placed on us by ourselves or others are removed or disregarded when we put God first.

Dare we try God? Oh taste and see that the Lord is good and is bigger and better than anything we face. Certain trials give us bad reports that can shake our faith, but what does God say? He already sees our triumph and victory! You may not see it right now, but through the eyes of faith, know that by His mighty hand, you will receive blessings and will go higher in His plan for your life. See, satan knows that if we take our eyes off the things of the Lord, then our eyes will be focused on what he has distracted us to see. The Lord says that we should focus on, "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report."

Psalms 16: 8-11 says, "I know the Lord is always with me. I will not be shaken, for He is right beside me. No wonder my heart is glad, and I rejoice. My body rests in safety. For you will not leave my soul among the dead or allow your holy one to rot in the grave. You will show me the way of life, granting me the joy of your presence and the pleasures of living with you forever."

As we fast and pray, choose to stand boldly on God's promises. Don't be tempted to limit what you think you're capable of accomplishing on this fast. Trust Him to be your source of strength and endurance.

Prayer: God we thank you in advance that you are going to transcend, transform, elevate, replenish, and restore like never before!!

day 21. Confirm It - Pastor Israel Aaron Cowart **Genesis 15:1-11**

There's no doubt that every one of us desire to live the blessed life and see the things we've been praying about for the last 21 days come to fruition. Those possibilities can stir our spirits and motivate us to give God praise for what He's about to do. I believe that this fast is positioning us for the manifestation of those blessings. But this fast cannot be the conclusion of our vow. In order for things to come together, the fact still remains that you won't see the manifestation of what you shout about if you don't activate it.

God wants us to be conformed to the truth of His word. When you "know the truth, the truth shall make you free." When truth becomes reality, you will prioritize your life around that truth.

When Abraham was unsure of how God would bring to pass the word He had spoken over his life, he asked God how he could be assured it would come to pass. God's response was, "bring me an offering." In other words, establish a covenant between Me and you and that will serve as the confirmation that what I said, I will do. That one offering changed the course of his future!

Participating in this fast alone will not manifest the blessed life. You have to activate it through consistently maintaining your commitment to God. That means that tithing and giving must be a priority in your life in order to activate the word spoken over you. People that don't tithe operate out of self-effort. Those that do tithe are sending a message that they rely on God's effort. And God's effort is always more powerful than ours.

Active stewardship is the key to the blessed life. God has already downloaded a word of revelation into your spirit that you are blessed, prosperous, the head and not the tail, the lender and not the borrower. But that word doesn't become useful until you activate it.

1 Samuel 10:7 (NLT) said, "...when these confirming signs are accomplished, you'll know that you're ready..."

I believe that as we come together today for the culmination of this 21 day fast, the Confirmation Seed Offering that we are bringing could be the one seed that changes your life and confirms to God that you believe everything you're praying for WILL come to pass!

This Sunday, act on the direction God gives you to sow to confirm his promise for your life!



Real people. Real issues. Real God.

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