

God's Chosen Fast

Isaiah 57:15-59:21 It has been my custom over the years to have seasons of fasting. Fasting has many benefits, but the goal of fasting is not to get God to do something for you. When we fast, it is our time to intercede for others and also to have our own hearts changed. This passage in Isaiah lists several ways we can pray for others during a season of fasting. I must add there are different ways of fasting. Perhaps because of medical reasons you are not able to do without food. Many people do a Daniel fast, which is simply eating vegetables only. Other people fast on fruit juices. Some fast from watching TV.

How do we intercede for others in our seasons of prayer and fasting? We can pray prayers that will do the following:

1. Loosen the bands of wickedness of others
2. Undo heavy burdens people are carrying
3. Set free those who are oppressed
4. Break all kinds of bondages in others lives

I used to keep a list of men in our church who never attended church with their wives. During my season of prayer and fasting I always prayed for these men to be saved and set free from all bondage and that they would accompany their wives to church. I had the privilege of seeing one of those men saved and set free, and he now attends church regularly with his wife.

Besides praying when we fast, we can also do acts of kindness toward others. We can feed those who are hungry and bring the outcast into our homes. I have a friend who fasts regularly, and she has brought many a homeless man into her home for dinner. She also has been able to see the spiritual progress

of one of these men over a period of more than three years in which he has lived in their home. We also can give clothes to those who need them. These are just some of the ways we can reach out to others as well as pray for them.

One of the main ways we can cooperate with God in changing our own hearts during a fasting time is to not hide ourselves from our own flesh. This means we are to be available to be reconciled to those who are closest to us, our own families. Perhaps there is someone you need to forgive in your own family. Don't run from this. Instead, run to this person and humble yourself and ask their forgiveness.

The promise of God when we do these things in prayer and fasting is that He will reward us by hearing our cry. His presence will be with us, and also our health will spring forth. The primary agenda in fasting is to love one another through prayers of intercession and service to them. When we put others first, then our own needs and hearts are changed.

**READ: Isaiah 57:15-59:21; Philippians 1:1-26; Psalm 71:1-24.
Proverbs 24:9-10**