



# Prayer and Fasting for Spiritual Breakthrough:

## Team Evaluation, Discovery Bible Story Set, & Resources

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### Introduction to FPS's Prayer Strategies Discovery Bible Studies Set:

Prayer—or engagement with God—is integral to every aspect of the lives of the team members and the corporate team, as well as to the strategy and approach they use. Within this document, you will find the following: a definition and explanation to the Prayer strategy, a set of questions to help you diagnosis the status of your team's use of this strategy, a Discovery Bible Story Set to help you understand Scripture's view on this strategy, and links for further resources related to this Prayer strategy. We recommend completing the team's diagnostic first then adapt the Discovery Story Set to meet your team's needs. Feel free to use the typical DBS questions, however, in addition we've tried to suggest you ask these much deeper questions to elicit specifics regarding this strategy. The Fellowship of Prayer Strategists have a set of nineteen different prayer strategies. These are not intended to be the complete picture of this strategy but a glimpse at the use for this strategy. You can find more strategies at [www.prayer-strategists.net](http://www.prayer-strategists.net). We hope these tools will prove helpful in considering ways you and your team can increase your capacity for extraordinary prayer for the sake of the King and His Kingdom.

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### Prayer and Fasting for Spiritual Breakthrough

**Definition:** Setting aside good things voluntarily to prioritize the best things invites the increase of God's involvement and our empowerment for the task.

**Explanation:** "Fasting...opens the way for the outpouring of the Spirit and the restoration of God's house. Fasting in this age of the absent Bridegroom is in expectation of His return. Soon there will be the midnight cry, 'Behold, the Bridegroom! Come out to meet Him!' It will be too late then to fast and to pray. The time is now." —*The Chosen Fast*, Arthur Wallis

The practice of regular fasting as normal Christian behavior was taught by Jesus (Mathew 6:16-17; 9:15), exercised by the early church (Acts 13:2), and has been the regular discipline of believers throughout church history. The practice of fasting in Scripture usually includes, but is not limited to, abstinence of food (Daniel 10:3) and may be engaged in for varying durations – typically for no more than a few days at a time.

Abstaining from *all food* for extended periods of time is biblical but was rare and unusual in Scripture (Exodus 34:28, I Kings 19:5-8, Luke 4:2), and thus should never be undertaken without counsel and appropriate supervision. The same standard applies to an absolute fast (Esther fast – no food or water for 3 days) of any duration (Esther 4:16). The maximum length of an adult fast that is biblically supported is 40 days without food, for a male adult in good health, and 3 days without water. The Bible does not speak of children engaging in fasting food.

Whether fasts are corporate or personal, Christians are once again making this ancient practice a normal part of their spiritual routines. Corporate called fasts, such as Lent, may be followed by Christians throughout the world. Church planting movements or local churches may call

specific times of fasting and prayer to worship the Lord and seek Him for a specific purpose. Regardless of the national, corporate or personal issues, entreat the Lord with fasting and prayer with right motive to the glory of God. As God leads in choosing the fast, (ie. when we fast, how long we fast, the nature of the fast, and the spiritual objectives) the obedient disciple will enjoy the rewards of God's affections and power for breakthrough.

*For the DBS Study on this topic: Matthew 6:16-18; Matthew 9:15; Jeremiah 36:6 and Joel 2:15; Psalm 69:10 and Matthew 5:4; Zechariah 7:5 and Acts 13:2; Jonah 3:5,10; Isaiah 58:3-12; Daniel 9:2,3,21,22; Luke 2:36-38; Acts 13:1-3 and Acts 14:23*

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## Diagnostic Questions for You & Your Team:

1. Do you regularly pray and fast individually? As a team?
2. Have you called special seasons of consecration, prayer and fasting as God directs?
3. Are there strongholds in the region or people group that God may be calling you to a time of fasting and prayer for breakthrough?

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## Discovery Bible Story Set:

1. Jesus' Teaching on Fasting – **Matthew 6:16-18; Matthew 9:15**
  - A. **Pray** as a group before beginning that God would speak to us and open our hearts to hear Him.
  - B. **Read** the entire passage aloud at least 2 times or listen to an audio version twice through. If your group uses storying, present the scripture in this way. Then, have the group practice re-telling the story together.
  - C. **Discussion questions:**
    - What do you like about the story? What is difficult or what don't you like?
    - What do you learn about people from this story? What do you learn about God?
    - How are we to care for our bodies while fasting?
    - When did Jesus say his disciples would fast in Mt. 9:15?
  - D. Take a few minutes to **quietly listen** to God. What is He instructing you to do from what you're hearing? Share with each other what you're sensing. Are some of His instructions quite different than you might have imagined? How?
  - E. Who is God asking you to **share** this story with? When will you do it? Share with the group.
  - F. What key principles about prayer as member health can you draw from this passage?
2. The Regular and Public Fasts – **Jeremiah 36:6 and Joel 2:15**
  - A. **Pray** before beginning that God would speak to us and open our hearts to hear Him.
  - B. **Read** the entire passage completely through.
  - C. **Discussion questions:**
    - What do you like about the story? What is difficult or what don't you like?
    - What do you learn about people from this story? What do you learn about God?
  - D. Take a few minutes to quietly **listen to God**. What is He instructing you to do from what you're hearing? Share with each other what you're sensing. Are some of His instructions quite different than you might have imagined? How?
  - E. Who is God asking you to **share** this story with? When will you do it? Share with the group.
  - F. What key principles about prayer as member health can you draw from this passage?
3. Fasting to Worship God – **Zechariah 7:5 and Acts 13:2**
  - A. Pray before beginning that God would speak to us and open our hearts to hear Him.
  - B. **Read** the entire passage completely through.

**C. Discussion questions:**

- What do you like about the story? What is difficult or what don't you like?
- What do you learn about people from this story? What do you learn about God?

D. Take a few minutes to quietly **listen to God**. What is He instructing you to do from what you're hearing? Share with each other what you're sensing. Are some of His instructions quite different than you might have imagined? How?

- E. Who is God asking you to **share** this story with? When will you do it? Share with the group.
- F. What key principles about prayer as member health can you draw from this passage?

4. For Personal Sanctity – **Psalm 69:10 and Matthew 5:4**

**A. Pray** before beginning that God would speak to us and open our hearts to hear Him.

**B. Read** the entire passage completely through.

**C. Discussion questions:**

- What do you like about the story? What is difficult or what don't you like?
- What do you learn about people from this story? What do you learn about God?
- What are areas of pride the Lord might have you bring before him in humble fasting?

**D.** Take a few minutes to quietly **listen to God**. What is He instructing you to do from what you're hearing? Share with each other what you're sensing. What is He challenging you with here?

**E.** Who is God asking you to **share** this story with? When will you do it? Share with the group.

**F.** What key principles about prayer and forgiveness related to our individual and corporate health can you draw from this passage?

5. Seeking God's Forgiveness and demonstrating Repentance and Humility – **Jonah 3:5-10**

**A. Pray** before beginning that God would speak to us and open our hearts to hear Him.

**B. Read** the entire passage completely through.

**C. Discussion questions:**

- What do you like about the story? What is difficult or what don't you like?
- What do you learn about people from this story? What do you learn about God?

**D.** Take a few minutes to quietly **listen to God**. What is He instructing you to do from what you're hearing? Share with each other what you're sensing. How might this guide your strategies?

**E.** Who is God asking you to **share** this story with? When will you do it? Share with the group.

**F.** What key principles about prayer and healing ministry can you draw from this passage?

6. Fasting to Free the Captives – **Isaiah 58:3-12**

**A. Pray** before beginning that God would speak to us and open our hearts to hear Him.

**B. Read** the entire passage completely through.

**C. Discussion questions:**

- What do you like about the story? What is difficult or what don't you like?
- What do you learn about people from this story? What do you learn about God?
- What are the actions God's people are to do in versus 6-7?
- 'Then' what will happen in versus 8-9?

**D.** Take a few minutes to quietly **listen to God**. What is He instructing you to do from what you're hearing? Share with each other what you're sensing. Are some of His instructions quite different than you might have imagined? How?

**E.** Who is God asking you to **share** this story with? When will you do it? Share with the group.

**F.** What key principles about prayer and member health can you draw from this passage?

7. Fasting for Revelation – **Daniel 9:2,3,21,22**

- A. **Pray** before beginning that God would speak to us and open our hearts to hear Him.
- B. **Read** the entire passage completely through.
- C. Discussion questions:
  - What do you like about the story? What is difficult or what don't you like?
  - What do you learn about people from this story? What do you learn about God?
- D. Take a few minutes to quietly **listen to God**. What is He instructing you to do from what you're hearing? Share with each other what you're sensing. Are some of His instructions quite different than you might have imagined? How?
- E. Who is God asking you to **share** this story with? When will you do it? Share with the group.
- F. What key principles about prayer and member health can you draw from this passage?

#### 8. Fasting for the Fulfillment of Prophecy – **Luke 2:36-38**

- A. **Pray** before beginning that God would speak to us and open our hearts to hear Him.
- B. **Read** the entire passage completely through.
- C. Discussion questions:
  - What do you like about the story? What is difficult or what don't you like?
  - What do you learn about people from this story? What do you learn about God?
  - How long might Anna have been in regular fasting and prayer before seeing the Christ child?
- D. Take a few minutes to quietly **listen to God**. What is He instructing you to do from what you're hearing? Share with each other what you're sensing. Are some of His instructions quite different than you might have imagined? How?
- E. Who is God asking you to **share** this story with? When will you do it? Share with the group.
- F. What key principles about prayer and member health can you draw from this passage?

#### 9. Fasting to Appoint Elders – **Acts 13:1-3 and Acts 14:23**

- A. **Pray** before beginning that God would speak to us and open our hearts to hear Him.
- B. **Read** the entire passage completely through.
- C. Discussion questions:
  - What do you like about the story? What is difficult or what don't you like?
  - What do you learn about people from this story? What do you learn about God?
- D. Take a few minutes to quietly **listen to God**. What is He instructing you to do from what you're hearing? Share with each other what you're sensing. Are some of His instructions quite different than you might have imagined? How?
- E. Who is God asking you to **share** this story with? When will you do it? Share with the group.
- F. What key principles about prayer and member health can you draw from this passage?

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#### Further Resources on Prayer and Fasting for Spiritual Breakthrough:

- **Shaping History Through Prayer and Fasting**, Derek Prince - Whitaker House - 1973, 2002
- **God's Chosen Fast**, Arthur Wallis - Christian Literature Crusade - 1968, 1994
- **The Rewards of Fasting: Experiencing the Power and Affections of God**, Mike Bickle and Dana Candler - Forerunner Books - 2005
- **A Hunger for God**, John Piper - Crossway Books - 1997
- **The Daniel Fast**, Susan Gregory - Tyndale Momentum - 2010
- [www.billbright.com/howtofast](http://www.billbright.com/howtofast)
- [www.freedomyou.com](http://www.freedomyou.com)

Further resources and connection with other prayer strategists are available through the Fellowship of Prayer Strategists and their website [www.prayerstrategists.net](http://www.prayerstrategists.net).