

Armed for Battle 2

Fasting

Last week we laid a foundation by looking at Israel's transition from the wilderness into the promised land. In the wilderness, God taught His people dependence. He provided manna. He kept their shoes and clothing from wearing out. He led them by cloud and fire. It was a season where God sustained them in hidden places.

But we saw that seasons do not stay the same forever. When they crossed over into their inheritance, the season changed. God had not changed — the season had. The promised land was good, but it required something new from them: possession. And possession required warfare. God had promised the land — and yet they still had to take it, little by little, battle by battle, in partnership with Him.

And that's why we ended last week by focusing on the first essential weapon God has given His people: prayer. Prayer is not a last resort. Prayer is our first line of defence. Prayer aligns us with God's will, positions us to hear His strategies, strengthens our obedience, and prepares us for battles before they arrive. God, in His sovereignty, has chosen partnership — and prayer is one of the primary ways we cooperate with heaven for what God wants to release in the earth.

But here is the reality: there are moments when God doesn't only call us to pray — He calls us to **consecration**. There are battles where we don't just need direction; we need clarity. We don't just need strength; we need focus. We don't just need help; we need to quiet the flesh so our spirit can hear and respond more clearly.

Prayer aligns us with heaven — fasting clears the channel so to speak.

So today we move from the first weapon to the second: **fasting**.

If prayer is the weapon that aligns us with God's will, fasting is the weapon that sharpens our spiritual focus and strengthens our capacity to engage in warfare. Fasting is not about deprivation for its own sake. It is about consecration, humility, sensitivity, and alignment.

Fasting does not twist God's arm.

Fasting does not make God more willing.

Fasting prepares us to hear, respond, and obey.

What Is Fasting? (Definition & Purpose)

Before we go further, it is important to understand **what fasting actually is**.

Biblically, fasting means **to abstain from food, or to restrict one's diet**, for a spiritual purpose. It does not always mean total abstinence. In Scripture, fasting can involve:

- Going without food entirely
- Restricting certain foods
- Simplifying diet intentionally

God created the human body to require food. He also created within us an appetite — hunger — to sustain life and activity. So why would a person willingly choose to go without food?

From God's perspective, the reason is simple: **fasting is a God-given means to accomplish a spiritual purpose**.

In the Old Testament, Israel was commanded to fast once a year on the Day of Atonement. On that day, the high priest entered the Holy of Holies to make atonement for the sins of the people. The people fasted to identify with that act of atonement — to remember their salvation and humble themselves before God.

Today, as Christians living under grace, we are not commanded to fast. But Jesus makes it clear that we are **permitted — and expected — to fast**.

Biblical Reasons Why We Fast

1. *Fasting is expected in the life of a believer*

Jesus did not say *if* you fast, but *when* you fast.

Matthew 6:16-18 (NKJV)

“Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.”

Jesus assumes fasting will be part of normal discipleship, just as prayer is.

He reinforces this again in Matthew 9:15 when He says:

“The days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast.”

Fasting is not reserved for spiritual elites. It is a **normal discipline for ordinary believers.**

2. *Fasting is about humility and dependence*

Throughout Scripture, fasting is consistently connected to humbling oneself before God. It is an embodied prayer that says, *“God, I depend on You more than I depend on food.”*

Psalms 35:13 (NKJV)

*But as for me, when they were sick,
My clothing was sackcloth;
I humbled myself with fasting...*

Ezra proclaimed a fast so the people could humble themselves and seek God's guidance and protection — and God answered.

Ezra 8:21-23 (NKJV)

Then I proclaimed a fast there at the river of Ahava, that we might humble ourselves before our God, to seek from Him the right way for us and our little ones and all our possessions. For I was ashamed to request of the king an escort of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy on the road, because we had spoken to the

king, saying, “The hand of our God is upon all those for good who seek Him, but His power and His wrath are against all those who forsake Him.” So we fasted and entreated our God for this, and He answered our prayer.

3. Fasting is often connected to transition, repentance, and realignment

In moments of national crisis, transition, or spiritual drift, God’s people fasted to recalibrate their hearts.

Joel 2:12-13 (NKJV)

A Call to Repentance

“Now, therefore,” says the LORD,

“Turn to Me with all your heart,

With fasting, with weeping, and with mourning.”

So rend your heart, and not your garments;

Return to the LORD your God,

For He is gracious and merciful,

Slow to anger, and of great kindness;

And He relents from doing harm.

Jonah 3 shows an entire city fasting, repenting, and turning to God — and God responding with mercy.

Jonah 3:5-10 (NKJV)

*So the people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them. Then word came to the king of Nineveh; and he arose from his throne and laid aside his robe, covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes. And he caused it to be proclaimed and published throughout Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; do not let them eat, or drink water. But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God; yes, **let every one turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands.** Who can tell if God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we may not perish?*

Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it.

Fasting creates space for **heart realignment**.

4. Fasting is never an end in itself

Isaiah 58 makes it clear that fasting exposes our hearts — not just our appetites.

God rejects fasting that is disconnected from obedience, justice, and humility.

True fasting leads to transformation — inward and outward.

Isaiah 58 (NLT)

True and False Worship

“Shout with the voice of a trumpet blast.

Shout aloud! Don’t be timid.

Tell my people Israel of their sins!

Yet they act so pious!

They come to the Temple every day

and seem delighted to learn all about me.

They act like a righteous nation

that would never abandon the laws of its God.

They ask me to take action on their behalf,

pretending they want to be near me.

‘We have fasted before you!’ they say.

‘Why aren’t you impressed?

We have been very hard on ourselves,

and you don’t even notice it!’

“I will tell you why!” I respond.

“It’s because you are fasting to please yourselves.

Even while you fast,

you keep oppressing your workers.

What good is fasting

when you keep on fighting and quarreling?

This kind of fasting

will never get you anywhere with me.

You humble yourselves

by going through the motions of penance,

*bowing your heads
like reeds bending in the wind.
You dress in burlap
and cover yourselves with ashes.
Is this what you call fasting?
Do you really think this will please the LORD?
“No, this is the kind of fasting I want:
Free those who are wrongly imprisoned;
lighten the burden of those who work for you.
Let the oppressed go free,
and remove the chains that bind people.
Share your food with the hungry,
and give shelter to the homeless.
Give clothes to those who need them,
and do not hide from relatives who need your help.
“Then your salvation will come like the dawn,
and your wounds will quickly heal.
Your godliness will lead you forward,
and the glory of the LORD will protect you from behind.
Then when you call, the LORD will answer.
‘Yes, I am here,’ he will quickly reply.
“Remove the heavy yoke of oppression.
Stop pointing your finger and spreading vicious rumors!
Feed the hungry,
and help those in trouble.
Then your light will shine out from the darkness,
and the darkness around you will be as bright as noon.
The LORD will guide you continually,
giving you water when you are dry
and restoring your strength.
You will be like a well-watered garden,
like an ever-flowing spring.
Some of you will rebuild the deserted ruins of your cities.
Then you will be known as a rebuilder of walls*

and a restorer of homes.

“Keep the Sabbath day holy.

Don’t pursue your own interests on that day,

but enjoy the Sabbath

and speak of it with delight as the LORD’s holy day.

Honor the Sabbath in everything you do on that day,

and don’t follow your own desires or talk idly.

Then the LORD will be your delight.

I will give you great honor

and satisfy you with the inheritance I promised to your ancestor Jacob.

I, the LORD, have spoken!”

Why Fasting Is a Spiritual Weapon

Fasting:

- Strengthens prayer
- Quiets the flesh
- Heightens spiritual sensitivity
- Positions us to hear God more clearly

Jesus links fasting to spiritual breakthrough in Matthew 17. Some resistance does not shift with prayer alone. Some battles require **sustained consecration**.

This is not about formulas — **it is about formation.**

Fasting is not about earning power; it is about removing interference.

Matthew 17:14-21 (NKJV)

14 And when they had come to the multitude, a man came to Him, kneeling down to Him and saying, 15 “Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and suffers severely; for he often falls into the fire and often into the water. 16 So I brought him to Your disciples, but they could not cure him.”

18 And Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour.

19 Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, “Why could we not cast it out?”

20 So Jesus said to them, “Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. 21 However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.”

The Daniel Fast (Definition and Purpose)

I want to focus specifically on the Daniel Fast because it is:

- Clearly biblical
- Sustainable for many believers
- Deeply connected to wisdom, clarity, and warfare
- Well suited for corporate fasting seasons

The Daniel Fast is **not a starvation fast**.

It is a **restricted fast** — intentional simplicity for spiritual focus.

At its heart, the Daniel Fast is an expression of **self-discipline**. It involves giving up foods we enjoy — not merely what is necessary — in order to seek God with clarity and perseverance.

1. Daniel 1 – The Daniel Fast as Consecration

Daniel was about sixteen years old when he was taken into Babylonian exile. He was chosen because he was gifted, intelligent, and capable. But the king wanted him to become Babylonian — in thinking, values, and appetite.

The king assigned Daniel rich foods and wine — symbols of luxury, indulgence, and assimilation.

Daniel 1:8 (NKJV)

But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king’s delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.

Notice this: the fast begins **with purpose**, not food.

Daniel chose simplicity — vegetables and water — not because vegetables were holy, but because consecration required discipline.

Daniel 1:12-15 (NKJV)

“Please test your servants for ten days, and let them give us vegetables to eat and water to drink. Then let our appearance be examined before you, and the appearance of the young men who eat the portion of the king’s delicacies; and as you see fit, so deal with your servants.” So he consented with them in this matter, and tested them ten days. And at the end of ten days their features appeared better and fatter in flesh than all the young men who ate the portion of the king’s delicacies..

After ten days, Daniel and his friends were stronger, healthier, and clearer than those who indulged in the king’s delicacies. And Scripture tells us **God responded** by giving them wisdom, knowledge, and understanding.

Daniel 1:17 (NKJV)

As for these four young men, God gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.

The Daniel Fast positioned them to carry God’s presence, wisdom, and authority in a foreign culture.

Before God used them publicly, they consecrated themselves privately.

2. Daniel 10 – The Daniel Fast as Spiritual Warfare

Later in Daniel’s life, fasting appears again — this time in the context of spiritual warfare.

Daniel 10:2-3 (NKJV)

In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant food, no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.

Daniel abstained from “pleasant food,” meat, and wine for twenty-one days.

“Pleasant food” refers to foods enjoyed for taste — rich, indulgent, desirable foods. Daniel gave up what he enjoyed, not merely what he needed.

This fast was again not total abstinence, but intentional restriction.

What is striking is that Daniel’s prayer was heard immediately — from the first day. Yet the answer was delayed due to resistance in the unseen realm.

Daniel 10:12-13 (NKJV)

Then he said to me, “Do not fear, Daniel, for 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. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia.

His prayer was heard **from the first day**. The delay was not God’s silence — it was spiritual resistance.

Fasting sustained Daniel while the battle unfolded.

This teaches us:

- Prayer can be heard immediately even though answers may be delayed by unseen resistance
- Perseverance matters
- Fasting supports endurance in prolonged battles

3. *What the Daniel Fast Produces*

Daniel 1:17 (NKJV)

As for these four young men, God gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.

Daniel 10:14 (NKJV)

Now I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision refers to many days yet to come."

From Daniel's life, we see the Daniel Fast produces:

- Spiritual clarity
- Discernment
- Understanding of God's purposes
- Strength to endure resistance
- Faithfulness without compromise

This is why the Daniel Fast is especially appropriate when:

- We are entering a new season
- We are seeking clarity or direction
- We are engaged in sustained spiritual warfare
- We are fasting corporately as a church

Throughout church history and in modern congregations, many churches testify that seasons of Daniel fasting have led to:

- Renewed hunger for God
- Breakthroughs in prayer and direction
- Greater unity
- Freedom from unhealthy patterns

These are testimonies — not guarantees — but they point to what God can do when His people humble themselves and seek Him together.

4. *Pastoral Framing for a Corporate Daniel Fast*

Fasting is not about comparison.

It is not about performance.

It is not about legalism.

Each person must respond according to grace, health, season, and conviction.

When we fast together — even in simple, accessible ways — we align ourselves corporately, heighten spiritual sensitivity, and position ourselves before God.

Conclusion

God brings His people out of wilderness seasons, and He brings them into promised land seasons. But inheritance always comes with resistance. God does not send us into battle unarmed.

Prayer aligns us with God's will.

Fasting sharpens that alignment.

Prayer is communication.

Fasting is consecration.

So hear this not as pressure, but as invitation. God is preparing us for the season we are in. As we fast and pray, may we be a people who are spiritually ready — clear, humble, obedient, and strong.

As we close today, I want to speak into the **season we are already in** as a church.

Last week we began this journey together by focusing on **prayer** — our first line of defence, our place of alignment, our partnership with God. And flowing out of that, **we launched this Daniel Fast together as a church.**

Today, we are **eight days into our fast.**

And that matters.

Because fasting is not just about how we begin — it is about how we **continue**, how we **persevere**, and how we **remain aligned** when the novelty wears off and the discipline becomes real.

If prayer aligns us with God's will, fasting sharpens that alignment.

Prayer is communication.

Fasting is consecration.

Fasting is not about doing something dramatic for God.

It is about doing something **intentional with** God.

Some of you have been fasting faithfully for the past week.

Some of you may have started and struggled.

Some of you may have joined partially.

Some of you may still be discerning how to engage.

And I want to say this clearly and pastorally:

there is no condemnation here.

This fast has never been about performance or comparison.

It has always been about **posture**.

Daniel did not begin his fast with a menu — he began with a decision:

“Daniel purposed in his heart...”

And the beautiful thing is this:

it is never too late to **purpose your heart again**.

Whether you are continuing, adjusting, or re-engaging, the invitation remains the same:

to seek the Lord with humility, focus, and sincerity in the season we are in.

As we move into the remaining days of this fast, God is not asking us to strain — He is inviting us to **stay positioned**. To stay attentive. To stay surrendered. To stay responsive.

This fast is not about rules.

It is not about willpower.

It is about **spiritual readiness** for promised-land realities.

Altar Call Reflection Questions:

Let's take a moment now and allow the Holy Spirit to speak to us personally.

1. How has my heart posture been during this first week of fasting?

Have I been intentional and attentive — or distracted, weary, or simply going through the motions?

2. Is the Lord inviting me to re-centre my focus for the remaining days of this fast?

Not to do more — but to listen more, surrender more, and seek Him more deliberately.

3. What has God been surfacing or highlighting in me during this fast?

Are there attitudes, appetites, distractions, or patterns He is gently bringing to light — where He perhaps wants to realign me?

4. Am I fasting with expectation — or have I drifted into routine?

Do I believe God is at work even when answers feel delayed, clarity is still forming, or resistance remains?

5. What is God asking of me for the remainder of this fast?

Is it perseverance? Is it adjustment? Is it deeper prayer? Is it renewed intentionality? Is it simply obedience one day at a time?

Prayer

If the Holy Spirit has been speaking to you through any of these questions, this is not a moment for guilt — it is a moment for **grace and strengthening**.

Some of the most important moments in fasting are not the first days — they are the middle days, when discipline replaces enthusiasm and faith is exercised quietly.

So right now, wherever you are, I want to invite you to respond to the Lord.

You may want to stand, come forward, lift your hands, or simply open your heart before Him. But let there be an inward response.

And if your prayer today needs to be simple, let it be this:

“Lord, I re-purpose my heart to seek You.”

“Strengthen me for the days ahead.”

“Keep me attentive to Your voice.”

Father, I pray for Your people today.

Thank You for what You have already been doing in us during this fast.

Thank You for the seeds You are planting, the clarity You are forming, and the sensitivity You are cultivating.

I ask that You would strengthen weary hearts, renew focus, and guard us from striving or comparison.

Help us to finish this fast well — not in our own strength, but in dependence on You.

As we continue in this *Armed for Battle* series, may we be a people who pray first, who fast with humility, who listen carefully, and who obey faithfully — confident that the same God who sustained us in the wilderness is equipping us for the promises ahead.

Amen.

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But we saw that seasons do not stay the same forever. When they crossed over into their inheritance, God had not changed — the season had changed. The promised land was good, but it required something new from them: possession. And possession required warfare. God had promised the land — and yet they still had to take it, little by little, battle by battle, in partnership with Him.

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Jesus did not say if you fast, but when you fast. Jesus assumed His disciples would fast, just as He assumed they would pray.

Matthew 6:16-18 (NKJV)

"Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly."

This tells us fasting is meant to be a normal spiritual discipline, not an occasional emergency measure for the especially spiritual.

10. *Fasting is about humility and dependence*

Throughout Scripture, fasting is consistently connected to humbling oneself before God. It is an embodied prayer that says, “God, I depend on You more than I depend on food.”

Psalms 35:13 (NKJV)

But as for me, when they were sick,

My clothing was sackcloth;

I humbled myself with fasting...

Ezra 8:21-23 (NKJV)

Then I proclaimed a fast there at the river of Ahava, that we might humble ourselves before our God, to seek from Him the right way for us and our little ones and all our possessions. For I was ashamed to request of the king an escort of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy on the road, because we had spoken to the king, saying, “The hand of our God is upon all those for good who seek Him, but His power and His wrath are against all those who forsake Him.” So we fasted and entreated our God for this, and He answered our prayer.

11. *Fasting is often connected to transition, repentance, and realignment*

In moments of national crisis, transition, or spiritual drift, God’s people fasted to return their hearts to Him. Fasting creates space for heart recalibration.

Joel 2:12-13 (NKJV)

A Call to Repentance

“Now, therefore,” says the LORD,
“Turn to Me with all your heart,
With fasting, with weeping, and with mourning.”
So rend your heart, and not your garments;
Return to the LORD your God,
For He is gracious and merciful,
Slow to anger, and of great kindness;
And He relents from doing harm.

Jonah 3:5-10 (NKJV)

So the people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them. Then word came to the king of Nineveh; and he arose from his throne and laid aside his robe, covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes. And he caused it to be proclaimed and published throughout Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying,

Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; do not let them eat, or drink water. But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God; yes, let every one turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. Who can tell if God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we may not perish?

Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it.

12. *Fasting is never an end in itself*

God repeatedly warns against fasting without obedience, justice, or humility. Fasting must be accompanied by a surrendered heart and a willingness to respond to what God reveals.

Isaiah 58 (NLT)

True and False Worship

“Shout with the voice of a trumpet blast.

Shout aloud! Don’t be timid.

Tell my people Israel of their sins!

Yet they act so pious!

They come to the Temple every day

and seem delighted to learn all about me.

They act like a righteous nation

that would never abandon the laws of its God.

They ask me to take action on their behalf,

pretending they want to be near me.

‘We have fasted before you!’ they say.

‘Why aren’t you impressed?

We have been very hard on ourselves,

and you don’t even notice it!’

“I will tell you why!” I respond.

“It’s because you are fasting to please yourselves.

Even while you fast,

you keep oppressing your workers.

What good is fasting

when you keep on fighting and quarreling?

This kind of fasting

will never get you anywhere with me.

You humble yourselves

by going through the motions of penance,

bowing your heads

like reeds bending in the wind.

You dress in burlap

and cover yourselves with ashes.

Is this what you call fasting?

Do you really think this will please the LORD?

“No, this is the kind of fasting I want:

Free those who are wrongly imprisoned;

lighten the burden of those who work for you.

Let the oppressed go free,

and remove the chains that bind people.

Share your food with the hungry,

and give shelter to the homeless.

Give clothes to those who need them,

and do not hide from relatives who need your help.

“Then your salvation will come like the dawn,

and your wounds will quickly heal.

Your godliness will lead you forward,

and the glory of the LORD will protect you from behind.

Then when you call, the LORD will answer.

‘Yes, I am here,’ he will quickly reply.

“Remove the heavy yoke of oppression.

Stop pointing your finger and spreading vicious rumors!

Feed the hungry,

and help those in trouble.

Then your light will shine out from the darkness,

and the darkness around you will be as bright as noon.

The LORD will guide you continually,

giving you water when you are dry

and restoring your strength.

You will be like a well-watered garden,

like an ever-flowing spring.

Some of you will rebuild the deserted ruins of your cities.

Then you will be known as a rebuilder of walls

and a restorer of homes.

“Keep the Sabbath day holy.

Don’t pursue your own interests on that day,

but enjoy the Sabbath

and speak of it with delight as the LORD's holy day.

Honor the Sabbath in everything you do on that day,

and don't follow your own desires or talk idly.

Then the LORD will be your delight.

I will give you great honor

and satisfy you with the inheritance I promised to your ancestor Jacob.

I, the LORD, have spoken!"

13. Why Fasting Is a Spiritual Weapon

Fasting strengthens prayer.

Fasting quiets the flesh.

Fasting heightens spiritual sensitivity.

Fasting positions us to hear God more clearly.

Jesus explicitly links fasting with certain breakthroughs in spiritual warfare. This tells us that some resistance does not shift with prayer alone. Some battles require sustained consecration and focused seeking.

Fasting is not about earning power — it is about removing interference.

Matthew 17:14-21 (NKJV)

14 And when they had come to the multitude, a man came to Him, kneeling down to Him and saying, 15 "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and suffers severely; for he often falls into the fire and often into the water. 16 So I brought him to Your disciples, but they could not cure him."

18 And Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour.

19 Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, “Why could we not cast it out?”

20 So Jesus said to them, “Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. 21 However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.”

The Daniel Fast

I want to focus specifically on the Daniel Fast, because it is:

- Clearly biblical
- Sustainable for many believers
- Deeply connected to wisdom, clarity, and warfare
- Suitable for corporate fasting seasons

The Daniel Fast is not a starvation fast.

It is a restricted fast — intentional simplicity for spiritual focus.

1. Daniel 1 — The Daniel Fast as Consecration

Daniel and his friends were entering a hostile environment — exile, pressure, cultural compromise. Before God used them publicly, they consecrated themselves privately. Daniel purposed in his heart not to defile himself (Dan 1:8). This is where fasting begins — not with food, but with intention.

Daniel 1:8 (NKJV)

But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king’s delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.

Their fast involved:

- Refusing certain foods
- Choosing simplicity
- Exercising discipline
- Maintaining consistency (Dan 1:12–15)

Daniel 1:12-15 (NKJV)

“Please test your servants for ten days, and let them give us vegetables to eat and water to drink. Then let our appearance be examined before you, and the appearance of the young men who eat the portion of the king’s delicacies; and as you see fit, so deal with your servants.” So he consented with them in this matter, and tested them ten days.

And at the end of ten days their features appeared better and fatter in flesh than all the young men who ate the portion of the king’s delicacies..

The result was not weakness, but strength. And more importantly, Scripture tells us that God responded by granting wisdom, knowledge, and spiritual understanding.

Daniel 1:17 (NKJV)

As for these four young men, God gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.

The Daniel Fast positioned them to carry God’s presence, wisdom, and authority in a foreign culture.

2. Daniel 10 — The Daniel Fast as Spiritual Warfare

Later in Daniel’s life, we see fasting connected not just to consecration, but to spiritual warfare.

Daniel enters a season of mourning and restricted eating for twenty-one days.

Daniel 10:2-3 (NKJV)

In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant food, no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.

This fast was again not total abstinence, but intentional restriction.

What is striking is that Daniel’s prayer was heard immediately — from the first day. Yet the answer was delayed due to resistance in the unseen realm.

Daniel 10:12-13 (NKJV)

Then he said to me, “Do not fear, Daniel, for 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. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia.

This passage teaches us several crucial truths:

- Prayer is heard immediately
- Answers can be delayed by spiritual resistance
- Perseverance in fasting and prayer matters
- Fasting sustains us while the battle unfolds

3. *What the Daniel Fast Produces:*

From Daniel's life, we see that the Daniel Fast is associated with **Spiritual clarity**

Daniel 1:17 (NKJV)

As for these four young men, God gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.

Daniel 10:14 (NKJV)

Now I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision refers to many days yet to come.”

- Increased discernment
- Understanding of God's purposes
- Strength to stand in prolonged seasons of resistance
- Faithfulness without compromise

This is why the Daniel Fast is so appropriate when:

- We are entering a new season

- We are seeking clarity or direction
- We are engaging in sustained spiritual warfare
- We are fasting corporately as a church

Pastoral Framing for a Corporate Daniel Fast

Fasting is not about comparison.

It is not about performance.

It is not about legalism.

Each person must respond according to grace, health, season, and conviction (Rom 14).

But when we fast together — even in simple, accessible ways — we:

- Align ourselves corporately
- Increase unity
- Heighten spiritual sensitivity
- Position ourselves for breakthrough

Just as prayer is our first line of defence, fasting is a way of saying:

“God, we are intentionally positioning ourselves before You.”

Conclusion

As we close today, I want to bring us back to the simple, powerful picture we began with in this series.

God brings His people out of wilderness seasons, and He brings them into promised land seasons. But promised land territory does not come without promised land realities. There is inheritance — and there is resistance. There is promise — and there is warfare. Not because God is unfaithful, but because God is forming a people who can **carry** what He gives, steward it well, and stand strong in it.

And today we have seen that God does not call us into battle **unarmed**.

He gives us weapons that are mighty through Him.

Prayer aligns us with God's will.

Fasting sharpens that alignment.

Prayer is communication.

Fasting is consecration.

Together, they position us for spiritual clarity, endurance, and breakthrough — not because we are earning power, but because we are removing interference and responding to God with humility and obedience.

And as we consider the Daniel Fast specifically, we are reminded that fasting is not about performance or comparison. It is not about legalism. It is about a willing, surrendered heart. It is about saying, "Lord, we are entering a season that requires more of us, and we want to be spiritually ready."

So here is my encouragement to you as we end: don't hear this as pressure — hear it as an invitation. The Lord is equipping us for the season we are in. He is preparing us for promised land living: for possession, for responsibility, for clarity, and for victory.

As we continue in this **Armed for Battle** series, may we be a people who pray first, who fast with purity, who obey quickly, and who stand faithfully — confident that the same God who sustained us in the wilderness is the God who will lead us in the promised land, and He will give us the strength and strategy to overcome.

Amen.