



## Fasting Effectively - Pt. 4

**Bishop Steven A. Norman, Pastor**

**Sunday Sermon – 1/25/2026**

**Isaiah 58:6** "Is this not the fast that I have chosen: To loose the bonds of wickedness, To undo the burdens, To let the oppressed go free, And that you break every yoke? 7 Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, And that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out; When you see the naked, that you cover him, And not hide yourself from your own flesh? 8 Then your light shall break forth like the morning, your healing shall spring forth speedily, and your righteousness shall go before you; The glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard. 9 Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; You shall cry, and He will say, 'Here I am.'" If you take away the yoke from your midst, the pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness, 10 If you extend your soul to the hungry and satisfy the afflicted soul, then your light shall dawn in the darkness, and your darkness shall be as the noonday. 11 The Lord will guide you continually, and satisfy your soul in drought, and strengthen your bones; You shall be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail. 12 Those from among you Shall build the old waste places; You shall raise up the foundations of many generations; And you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach, the Restorer of Streets to Dwell In. 13 "If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, From doing your pleasure on My holy day, And call the Sabbath a delight, The holy day of the Lord honorable, And shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, Nor finding your own pleasure, Nor speaking your own words, 14 Then you shall delight yourself in the Lord; And I will cause you to ride on the high hills of the earth, And feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father. The mouth of the Lord has spoken."

In our scripture, the prophet Isaiah describes the true fast that pleases God. This fast is not merely about abstaining from food and worldly pleasures; it's also about being a blessing to others. While fasting, one should pray for those in need, help alleviate their burdens, break oppressive yokes, and provide for their physical needs, such as food and other essential resources.

**Hebrews 13:16 But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.**

**One of the greatest ways that we can be a blessing to others is to set the oppressed free, as mentioned in verse #6** – there is no greater oppression than having an unrevived spirit. We are God's mouthpiece here on the earth and have been charged with winning souls for Jesus Christ. We Must understand that we have been given the privilege and we have the power within to speak life to a dead spirit. *God has put us among the walking Dead!*

Let's make sure that we are looking for and also praying for God to open up greater opportunities for us to share the gospel of the Kingdom of God and the gospel of the King of that Kingdom, which is Jesus Christ. Jesus said **Matthew 9:37 "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."**

This world is God's harvest field, and we have been given the awesome privilege to be born and live in these end times.



God is looking for laborers who will go into the harvest and unapologetically share that Jesus is the Christ, and that no man can have eternal abundant life and get to Father God except by Him.

Those who are willing to do that will be greatly rewarded by God.

I was very encouraged last week when over half the church came to the altar to receive an anointing for greater influence and to be a more effective witness for our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Prayer and/or fasting are the most powerful privileges God offers all believers; many today ignore them.

As we fasted over the last 21-days we have drawn closer to God. Seeking His face as well as His hand.

I'll say it again: be careful not to lose the progress you've made, especially the spiritual nourishment and growth you have gained during this time.

Many of you are walking at a higher level of self-control; you don't want to digress, but you will have to keep it intentionally until it becomes a way of life.

God promises that if we seek a closer walk with Him, He will come closer to us in fellowship.

**James 4:6-9 But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble." 7 Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. 8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you...**

The closer we draw to God, the more power we have to resist all enemy forces seen and unseen.

I speak now in Jesus Name that many of you have been set free from whatever has had you bound in the past will stay free.

This 21-day fast was an act of sacrifice to the Lord, showing our willingness to set aside food and other personal desires to seek a closer walk with Him.

**Romans 12:1 And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him.**

Fasting is one way we can diligently seek the Lord. **Hebrews 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.**

God always rewards sacrifice.

Abraham made a sacrifice and obeyed God, and God rewarded him with the greatest reward one can give.

**Genesis 15:1-6 After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward." 2 But Abram said, "Lord God, what will You give me, seeing I go childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" 3 Then Abram said, "Look, You have given me no offspring; indeed one born in my house is my heir!" 4 And behold,**



**the word of the Lord came to him, saying, "This one shall not be your heir, but one who will come from your own body shall be your heir." 5 Then He brought him outside and said, "Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be." 6 And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.**

The reward that God gave to Abram was Himself. God was telling Abram that He was His source.

The greatest reward that a believer gets from God is God Himself as our source. The great I AM.

After Abram received this revelation, all He had to do was to believe God for this reward to work for Him. **6 And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.**

The many spiritual rewards for such a sacrifice are spiritual growth, greater grace, faith, fortitude, peace, and joy. Being able to hear God more clearly so we can walk more precisely in ways that are pleasing to him.

But these are not the only rewards we can expect from this fast; the Bible says that if we sacrifice anything for the Lord, He will repay us.

**Mark 10:28-31 then Peter began to say to Him, "See, we have left all and followed You." 29 So Jesus answered and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's, 30 who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time — houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions — and in the age to come, eternal life.**

Don't get an overly spiritual view of the results of fasting, where you do not expect anything physical from God as a reward for this fast.

Jesus says if you sacrifice anything for me and the gospel, which is the Kingdom of God and the king of that Kingdom, that you can expect not only spiritual blessings but physical blessings as well.

God says that if we fast, we can expect him to reward us openly. **Matthew 6:17 ... Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.**

If you haven't seen the manifestation of the open reward, don't worry, it is on the way.

### **The heritage of Jacob**

**Isaiah 58:13-14 (NLT) "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. 14 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!"**

So, what is this promise that Isaiah calls the heritage of Jacob, and how do we know how New Testament believers receive it?

As we went through these 21 days of fasting, I'm here to tell you that we've already positioned ourselves to receive what this inheritance is designed to bring to our lives.



In the Old and New Testaments, we see that fasting always positions one to receive from the Lord. Moses, Elijah, David, Esther, Daniel, Nehemiah, Ezra, even Jesus and the early church, of Apostles, all fasted to receive from God. Even rebellious people like King Ahab and the children of Nineveh all fasted, and God answered their request.

The covenant promises to Jacob (Israel) include physical abundance, spiritual blessings such as righteousness, and a lasting relationship with God, all achieved by honoring God's ways, particularly through fasting. It represents a secure, prosperous future, both materially and spiritually, as a reward for faithfulness.

In Israel's time, this was tied to the Sabbath, but now, as new-covenant believers, we understand that Jesus Christ is our Sabbath rest, so we have the right to claim this covenant promise, especially now that we have finished the special time of consecration through prayer and fasting.

The fast we have been on to abstain from certain foods to live a healthier diet, and to abstain from a lot of fleshly and worldly pleasures, opens us up to receive more of what Jesus accomplished for us through his life, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and seating. It's kind of like unclogging the pipes and allowing the blessings to flow freely through us and to us.

We must understand that God wants to bless us. God wants to put his goodness on display for all the world to see, because we are his treasured possession, we are Jesus's beloved bride. **1 Peter 2:9-10 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; 10 who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.**

Now the greatest Blessing we have is God, as well, who is the just and righteous reward. But with that comes the assurance of the breakdown of what that means.

Having God as our great reward means receiving things far beyond what we can fathom. The Bible says that God already knows what we need before we ask.

God has already made promises available to fulfill everything that we need and every godly desire that we have. All we have to do is do as Abraham did and believe God at his word, and it shall come to pass.

As we have mentioned in past messages, God has already said yes to all of his promises, He's just waiting for us to position ourselves and say Amen," let it be unto us according to your word".