

THE 13 ARTICLES OF FASTING

FASTING WITH A PURPOSE

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BYU Women's Conference 2009: Friday 12:30 – 1:30, Madsen Recital Hall, HFAC

Every time we fast, we should fast with a purpose. We fast:

1) By commandment and as a part of worship. (4 Nephi 1:12)

...they did walk after the commandments which they had received from . . . their God, continuing in fasting and prayer, and in meeting together oft both to pray and to hear the word of the Lord.

2) To assist the poor and the needy. (Isaiah 58: 4,7)

Behold, ye fast . . . to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house.

“An important reason for fasting is to contribute the amount saved from the meals not eaten to care for the poor and the needy.” Elder L. Tom Perry (Ensign May 1986)

3) To know the truth for ourselves and to increase our faith. (Alma 5:46)

Behold, I say unto you they are made known unto me by the Holy Spirit of God. Behold, I have fasted and prayed many days that I might know these things of myself.

4) To have the companionship of the Spirit. (Alma 17:9)

...and they fasted much and prayed much that the Lord would grant unto them a portion of his Spirit to go with them, and abide with them...

5) To teach with God's authority and to bring others to the truth. (Alma 17:3, 9)

. . . they had given themselves to much prayer and fasting . . . and when they taught, they taught with power and authority of God. . . and they fasted much and prayed much that they might be an instrument in the hands of God to bring, if it were possible, their brethren . . . to the knowledge of the truth . . .

6) To plead for the welfare of the souls of those who know not God. (Alma 6:6)

Nevertheless the children of God were commanded that they should gather themselves together oft, and join in fasting and mighty prayer in behalf of the welfare of the souls of those who knew not God.

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7) To have the spirit of prophecy and revelation. (Alma 17:3)

But this is not all; they had given themselves to much prayer, and fasting; therefore they had the spirit of prophecy, and the spirit of revelation . . .

8) To express gratitude and rejoicing. (Alma 45:1)

Behold, now it came to pass that the people of Nephi were exceedingly rejoiced, because the Lord had again delivered them out of the hands of their enemies; therefore they gave thanks unto the Lord their God; yea, and they did fast much and pray much, and they did worship God with exceedingly great joy.

9) To comfort us in times of mourning. (Alma 28, 4.6)

And now this was a time that there was a great mourning and lamentation heard throughout all the land . . . And now surely this was a sorrowful day. . . and a time of much fasting and prayer.

10) To bless the sick and give added faith to those giving and receiving priesthood blessings. (Matt. 17:14-21)

Jesus answered: "Because of your unbelief. . . Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting."

11) To help us to live the Gospel and give us the strength to resist temptation.

"Fasting coupled with mighty prayer, is powerful . . . It can strengthen us against times of temptation."
Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin (*Ensign*, May 2001)

12) To obtain forgiveness for our sins.

"[Prayer] is a sincere confession of sin and transgression and a request for forgiveness . . . at times fasting is appropriate as a strong evidence of our sincerity."
Elder James E. Faust (*Ensign* May 2002)

13) To share our most holy desires and our special needs with the Lord. (D&C 95:16)

. . . for your fasting, and your praying, and the offering up of your most holy desires unto me.