

MILLSTONES TO MILESTONES

AN 18-MONTH FASTING JOURNEY FOR
BODY, MIND & SPIRIT

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PREFACE

Every generation longs for renewal. Some search for it in diets and fitness programs, others in self-help books, still others in spiritual retreats. But renewal is never one-dimensional. We were not made as fragments — body in one place, mind in another, spirit in yet another. We were made whole.

And yet, the reality is that many of us carry *millstones*: burdens of regret, division, fatigue, and lost focus. These weigh us down physically, mentally, and spiritually. But what if those same millstones could become *milestones* — markers of progress, healing, and growth?

That is the purpose of this book.

For centuries, God's people have fasted. From Moses on Sinai to Esther before the king, from Jesus in the wilderness to the early church before great decisions, fasting has been the discipline of turning down noise in order to hear the voice of God more clearly. Today, science affirms what faith has long practiced: fasting restores the body, sharpens the mind, and awakens the soul.

This book is built around a simple but powerful rhythm: **nine 96-hour fasts, spread every other month, over eighteen months.** Why this rhythm? Because transformation requires both intensity and sustainability. Forty days in the wilderness may have prepared Jesus for His mission, but for us, it is the steady cadence of four days at a time that builds lasting renewal.

Each fast is anchored in a **principle of leadership and integrity.** Each one is paired with practical guidance for body, mind, and spirit:

- **Body** — progressive movement plans that build strength, balance, and resilience.
- **Mind** — journaling prompts and reflection questions that train clarity, consistency, and emotional stability.
- **Spirit** — Scripture and prayer practices that root fasting in God's presence, unity, and truth.

This is not a diet. This is not a quick fix. This is a journey. By the end of eighteen months, you will not simply have endured nine fasts — you will have walked a path of transformation. You will see changes in your body, clarity in your mind, and alignment in your spirit. You will live more whole, more present, more true.

The invitation is simple: let this journey be the reset your whole life has been waiting for.

INTRODUCTION

How to Walk This Journey

You are holding more than a book. You are holding a blueprint for change.

This is not something to skim on a weekend or finish in one sitting. It is an **eighteen-month journey**, built around a rhythm of fasting, reflection, and renewal. The design is deliberate: nine fasts, each lasting 96 hours, spaced every other month. Each fast focuses on a principle, pairs with a simple movement plan, and provides reflection practices for mind and spirit.

Here is what you can expect as you walk this path:

1. **The Body Will Reset**

- Each fast is paired with progressive movement routines. You will start with stretching and walking, and gradually add balance work, resistance, endurance, and full-body circuits. By the end, you will not just have survived nine fasts — you will have built sustainable strength, balance, and resilience.

2. The Mind Will Clarify

- Fasting trains patience, focus, and discipline. Through journaling and reflection prompts, you will learn to notice distractions, endure discomfort, and practice consistency. This is leadership training for the mind as much as it is renewal for the body.

3. The Spirit Will Awaken

- Each fast is anchored in Scripture and a principle of integrity. You will not only abstain from food; you will feed on truth. Over time, you will experience what Jesus promised: *“Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.”*

This rhythm is not about deprivation. It is about alignment. By fasting every other month, you give your body time to recover, your mind time to integrate, and your spirit time to deepen. It is a sustainable cadence that builds transformation step by step, milestone by milestone.

How to Use This Book

- **Read One Chapter Per Fast.** Each chapter guides you through the body–mind–spirit practices for

that fast. Don't rush ahead — allow the rhythm to unfold.

- **Engage the Appendices.** These include quick-reference charts, group practices, and additional study tools.
- **Journal Along the Way.** The prompts provided are not optional extras; they are the core of the mental and spiritual reset.
- **Share the Journey.** Fasting was never meant to be solitary. Invite others — family, small groups, or your church — to join you. Unity multiplies transformation.

A Word of Encouragement

You may feel daunted by the idea of eighteen months. But think of it this way: transformation doesn't happen in a weekend. It happens in steady rhythms, one choice at a time.

By the end of this journey, you will not just look different — you will *live different*. Stronger in body. Clearer in mind. Rooted in truth.

The path begins now. Take courage. Step into the first fast with expectancy. Lay down your millstones. Mark your first milestone. And let the journey begin.

CHAPTER 1

Stepping Into Renewal

“THEREFORE WE DO NOT lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.”

— 2 Corinthians 4:16

Every journey begins with a first step. For the next 18 months, this journey will not be measured by miles but by milestones — moments of renewal that reshape your body, focus your mind, and restore your spirit.

The first fast is about beginning. Not finishing, not proving, not perfecting. Simply beginning. It is about taking that first intentional step into a rhythm of fasting, prayer, reflection, and movement that will anchor you in renewal.

The Invitation to Renewal

Renewal is not a one-time event; it is a rhythm. Just as the seasons shift, our bodies and spirits need seasons of reset. Fasting is one of God’s ancient tools for this renewal.

From the prophets of Israel to the early church, fasting was a way of realigning life with God's purposes. When Moses fasted on Sinai (Exodus 34:28), it was to receive God's Word. When Esther called her people to fast (Esther 4:16), it was to prepare for deliverance. When the church in Antioch fasted (Acts 13:2-3), it was to seek clarity for mission.

Today, science reveals what Scripture has always implied: fasting not only humbles the soul but heals the body.

- At **24 hours**, cells begin detoxifying.
- At **48 hours**, inflammation lowers, blood sugar stabilizes, and energy shifts.
- At **72-96 hours**, stem cells awaken, the immune system resets, and clarity of thought increases.

This is why your journey begins with a **96-hour fast**. It is long enough to press beyond surface hunger into deep renewal, but short enough to be safe, repeatable, and sustainable every other month.

“Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.” (Psalm 51:10)

Renewal begins by emptying — not to be left barren, but to make room for something better.

Movement as Renewal's Companion

Fasting without movement risks turning inward only.

Movement adds expression: a way for the body to join the spirit in worship.

The goal here is not exhausting workouts. In fact, high-intensity training during fasting can be counter-productive. Instead, the focus is on gentle, sustainable movement: **stretching and fast walking**.

- **Stretching** loosens the body, improves circulation, and relieves tension as toxins release.
- **Walking** increases fat metabolism, supports cardiovascular health, and clears the mind.

These movements are more than exercise. They are **physical prayers**: ways of embodying the surrender and renewal happening in your inner life.

Theme of the First Fast: Renewal, Not Perfection

If you carry one truth into this fast, let it be this: **you are stepping into renewal, not into perfection**.

Too many people quit fasting because they believe the goal is flawless execution. But the real goal is reorientation — turning your attention back to God, to health, to focus, to clarity.

- **For the heart (spirit)**: Renewal means giving God space to speak into weary places.
- **For the mind (focus)**: Renewal means clearing out distractions and remembering what truly mat-

ters.

- **For the hands (action):** Renewal means establishing daily habits — stretching, walking, journaling — that reinforce inner change.

“He refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name’s sake.” (Psalm 23:3)

How to Prepare for the First Fast

1. **Two days before:** Shift to lighter meals — vegetables, fruits, lean proteins. Reduce processed foods and alcohol.
2. **One day before:** Eat moderately; avoid a “last supper” mindset. Hydrate well. Sleep early.
3. **During the fast (Days 1–4):**
 - Water: 2–3 liters daily.
 - Electrolytes: add a pinch of salt or magnesium as needed.
 - Journaling: reflect daily.
 - Movement: follow the routine below.
4. **Breaking the fast:** Start with broth or soft vegetables, then eggs or fish, before returning to balanced meals.

Movement Plan for Renewal

Daily Routine (20–25 minutes)

Morning Stretch (10 minutes):

- Neck rolls (5 each direction).
- Shoulder circles (10 forward, 10 back).
- Cat-cow stretch (5 rounds).
- Seated hamstring stretch (20–30 seconds per leg).

Walking (10–15 minutes):

- Brisk but conversational pace.
- Outdoors if possible (sunlight and fresh air support renewal).
- Focus breathing: inhale 4 steps, exhale 6.

Day 4: Gentle walk + light stretching only.

Scriptural Anchors for Renewal

- “Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” (Romans 12:2)
- “Even youths grow tired and weary... but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength.” (Isaiah 40:30–31)
- “The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases... they are new every morning.” (Lamentations 3:22–23)

- *“Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.” (2 Corinthians 4:16)*

These verses remind us that renewal is daily, incremental, and God-given.

Journaling Prompts for Renewal

1. Where in my life do I most need renewal right now — body, mind, or spirit?
2. What burdens or distractions am I ready to release?
3. What does it look like to step into this fast with faith instead of fear?
4. As I walk and stretch, how can I use those moments as prayer?

Aligning Heart, Mind, and Hands

- **Heart (Spirit):** Use fasting hunger as a trigger for prayer. Each pang is a reminder: “Man does not live by bread alone.” (Matthew 4:4)
- **Mind (Focus):** When mental fog or fatigue sets in, pause. Breathe deeply. Remind yourself: renewal happens beneath the surface.
- **Hands (Action):** Commit to the daily movement plan. These small actions anchor you in discipline

and keep renewal embodied, not just imagined.

Closing Word for Fast 1

The first milestone is not about perfection. It is about beginning. Each stretch, each step, each hour of hunger is not wasted. Renewal is being written into your body, mind, and spirit.

“Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.” (1 Corinthians 15:58)

As you complete this fast, pause and thank God for the gift of renewal. Mark this milestone not by how flawlessly you performed, but by the courage you showed in beginning.

This is your first step. From here, the path moves toward greater strength, deeper honesty, and authentic light.

CHAPTER 2

Building Strength in the Journey

“FINALLY, BE STRONG IN the Lord and in his mighty power.”

— Ephesians 6:10

Your first fast was about **stepping into renewal** — beginning the journey, humbling yourself, and opening space for God to work. Now the road stretches forward. Renewal is not a one-time spark but a continuing rhythm. With this second fast, you begin to **build strength for the journey**.

Strength in Scripture is rarely just about muscles or might. It is about resilience, endurance, and truth lived out authentically. This fast calls you to **grow in strength at the core** — physically, mentally, and spiritually — so that what is hidden can uphold what is seen.

If Chapter 1 laid the foundation, Chapter 2 begins the building.

Why Strength? Why Now?

At the start of any journey, adrenaline can carry you.

Excitement fuels those first steps. But sooner or later, novelty fades and resistance rises. That's when strength matters most.

- **Spiritually**, strength means authenticity: living without masks, choosing truth over performance, honesty over image.
- **Mentally**, strength means clarity and focus — confronting lies, standing in light, and refusing to retreat to old habits.
- **Physically**, strength means cultivating your core — the stabilizing muscles that keep your body balanced and resilient.

Just as a building collapses without strong foundations, a leader collapses without inner strength.

“Surely you desire truth in the inner parts; you teach me wisdom in the inmost place.” (Psalm 51:6)

Strength begins in the center.

Fasting as Strength Training for the Soul

When you fast, you strip away supports: food, comfort, routine. Hunger tests you. Fatigue tempts you. In those moments, your inner strength is forged.

Think of fasting as **resistance training for the soul**. Just as a muscle grows by resisting weight, your spirit grows by resisting impulse. Every hunger pang is an opportunity

to say: *“Not by bread alone, but by every word from the mouth of God.”* (Matthew 4:4)

Fasting trains you to endure — not by sheer willpower, but by leaning on God’s strength when yours runs out.

Scriptural Anchors for Strength

- *“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.”* (Ephesians 6:10)
- *“God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.”* (Psalm 46:1)
- *“Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid... for the Lord your God goes with you.”* (Deuteronomy 31:6)
- *“When I am weak, then I am strong.”* (2 Corinthians 12:10)

These verses remind us that strength is not self-manufactured. It is received in surrender, grown in weakness, and proven in faith.

How to Prepare for the Second Fast

1. **Two days before:** Shift toward clean, whole foods. Focus on vegetables, lean proteins, fruit. Limit sugar and refined carbs.
2. **One day before:** Eat lighter meals; hydrate thoroughly. End the evening with prayer for strength.

3. **During the fast (Days 1–4):**

- Water + electrolytes daily.
- Core and interval walking (outlined below).
- Journaling on authenticity and strength.

4. **Breaking the fast:** Start with broth and cooked vegetables, then soft proteins like eggs or fish, before returning to balanced meals.

Movement for Building Strength

The physical practice of this fast focuses on **core strength** — hidden muscles that stabilize the body. Just as authenticity strengthens the unseen core of your life, these exercises strengthen the body's center.

Daily Routine (25–30 minutes)

Morning Core + Stretch (10–12 minutes):

- Cat-cow stretch (5 rounds).
- Side stretches (20 seconds each side).
- Plank hold (2×20–30 seconds).
- Glute bridge (2×10 reps).
- Bird-dog (2×8 reps per side).

Walking (12–15 minutes):

- Brisk pace for 2 minutes, slow for 1 minute.
- Repeat 3–4 cycles (interval training).
- Focus breathing: inhale 4 steps, exhale 6.

Day 4: Gentle walk + light stretching only.

The Inner Work of Authenticity

Strength without honesty becomes arrogance. That's why this fast pairs strength with **authenticity**.

To be authentic is to live without shadows. To choose transparency before God and others. To refuse the trap of performance and live instead in light.

- **Heart (Spirit):** Invite God to search hidden places. Confess what you've buried. Trust His grace to heal.
- **Mind (Focus):** Acknowledge the lies you've believed — about yourself, your worth, or your calling. Replace them with truth.
- **Hands (Action):** Practice honesty this week — with your journal, in your prayers, or in one vulnerable conversation.

“If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus... purifies us from all sin.” (1 John 1:7)

True strength is not hiding weakness but living in the light.

Journaling Prompts for Strength and Authenticity

1. Where in my life am I most tempted to wear a mask?
2. What truth about myself do I need to face honestly before God?
3. How has pretending weakened my relationships or leadership?
4. What might change if I lived fully in the light, even if it costs me image or pride?

Practical Alignment: Heart, Mind, Hands

- **Heart (Faith):** Pray daily: “Lord, *be my strength where I am weak.*” Write down one area of vulnerability and surrender it.
- **Mind (Focus):** When hunger rises, remind yourself: “*This is strength training.*” Every pang builds endurance.
- **Hands (Action):** Complete the core + interval walking routine daily, even when tired. Small acts of physical strength mirror inner resilience.

Spiritual Insight: The Core as a Metaphor

The core is often overlooked, but it supports everything else. In the same way, authenticity is unseen by many, but it upholds your entire life.

A weak core leaves you unstable. A weak spirit leaves you vulnerable. But a strong center — physical and spiritual — carries you forward with balance and power.

This is why the second fast builds strength at the center. It is about choosing honesty, standing in light, and developing endurance that cannot be shaken.

Closing Word for Fast 2

This second milestone is not about outward show but inward growth. It is about strengthening what is hidden, because what is hidden always shapes what is seen.

“The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in him, and he helps me.” (Psalm 28:7)

As you complete this fast, remember: strength is not just about willpower. It is about surrender. It is about truth. And it is about the hidden core that holds everything else together.

Your second milestone is complete. From here, we move into the next challenge: learning to **guard your name like gold** — protecting integrity as your greatest treasure.

CHAPTER 3

Guarding What Cannot Be Lost

“A GOOD NAME IS more desirable than great riches; to be esteemed is better than silver or gold.”

— Proverbs 22:1

Names carry weight. They represent not only what we are called but who we are known to be. A reputation is fragile — it takes years to build, but moments to damage. In leadership, in relationships, in discipleship, your name is your testimony.

This third fast is about **integrity** — protecting and cultivating your good name by living consistently with the truth. If the first fast called you to renewal, and the second built strength in honesty, the third calls you to stand guard over your reputation, your commitments, and your influence.

When Scripture says to “guard your name,” it is not about pride, image, or fame. It is about integrity, credibility, and trustworthiness.

Why Guarding Your Name Matters

Reputation is influence in motion. People follow not because of what you say but because of what your name represents to them.

- **Spiritually:** Your name is tied to witness. A life lived in holiness points others to Christ. A life lived in hypocrisy causes others to stumble.
- **Mentally:** Guarding your name means keeping your commitments, following through on your word, and staying consistent under pressure.
- **Physically:** Guarding your name is mirrored in balance and stability — learning to stand upright when forces try to push you off center.

This is why this fast emphasizes **balance and lower-body strength**: stability in posture as a metaphor for stability in character.

“The integrity of the upright guides them, but the unfaithful are destroyed by their duplicity.” (Proverbs 11:3)

Scriptural Anchors for Integrity

- *“A good name is more desirable than great riches.” (Proverbs 22:1)*
- *“Better is the poor whose walk is blameless than the rich whose ways are perverse.” (Proverbs 28:6)*
- *“Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in*

heaven.” (Matthew 5:16)

- “Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much.” (Luke 16:10)
- “Do not merely listen to the word... Do what it says.” (James 1:22)

Each verse highlights integrity as something visible, steady, and enduring.

How to Prepare for the Third Fast

1. **Two days before:** Eat balanced meals with lean proteins and vegetables. Avoid heavy indulgence; stability begins before the fast.
2. **One day before:** Write down a commitment or promise you want to renew during this fast. Pray for strength to live it out.
3. **During the fast (Days 1–4):**
 - Hydrate with water and electrolytes.
 - Perform balance + leg-strength movements daily.
 - Journal about integrity and reputation.
 - Meditate on scriptures of trust and consistency.
4. **Breaking the fast:** Begin with broth and

soft-cooked vegetables. Reintroduce protein gradually (fish, eggs, beans). Avoid processed foods for 24 hours.

Movement Plan: Building Stability

Lower-body strength is the body's anchor. A weak foundation leads to collapse. This mirrors the life of integrity: strong legs allow you to stand firm when the world pushes against you.

Daily Routine (25–30 minutes)

Morning Balance & Strength (10–12 minutes):

- Standing hamstring stretch (20–30 sec per leg).
- Squats (2×10–12).
- Heel-to-toe balance walk (2×20 steps).
- Side leg raises (2×10 each side).
- Calf raises (2×12–15).

Walking (12–15 minutes):

- Steady, even pace.
- Focus on upright posture, shoulders back, chest lifted.
- Pray with each step: *“Lord, keep me steady.”*

Day 4: Gentle walking only + stretches.

The Inner Work of Guarding Your Name

Guarding your name does not mean protecting your image at all costs. It means cultivating character so that your reputation is a reflection of truth.

- **Heart (Spirit):** Integrity flows from love for God. Guard your name by seeking to please Him, not people.
- **Mind (Focus):** Integrity is consistency. Think about areas where you've wavered. Commit to alignment between belief and behavior.
- **Hands (Action):** Integrity is lived in habits. Guard your name by doing the small things faithfully — showing up on time, honoring commitments, speaking truth gently but firmly.

Journaling Prompts for Integrity

1. What does my name currently represent to those closest to me?
2. Where have I failed to live consistently with my words?
3. What one area of my life most needs guarding right now?
4. How can I strengthen my “foundation” so that

pressure does not topple me?

Spiritual Insight: Stability in Balance

Balance is not about never moving but about realigning when you waver. No one lives perfectly steady — we all stumble. But just as balance training teaches your body to recover when tipped, integrity teaches your life to realign when tempted.

Guarding your name is not about never failing but about quickly returning to truth, confession, and restoration.

“The godly may trip seven times, but they will get up again.”
(Proverbs 24:16, NLT)

Practical Alignment: Heart, Mind, Hands

- **Heart (Spirit):** Begin each day with a prayer of alignment: *“Lord, make me upright before You today.”*
- **Mind (Focus):** Reflect on a commitment you’ve made. Write one action step to follow through.
- **Hands (Action):** Perform the leg-strength routine daily — a reminder that stability is built in small, consistent actions.

Closing Word for Fast 3

Guarding your name is not about pride but about witness. Your reputation is the currency of influence. When

people hear your name, may they think: steady, faithful, trustworthy, true.

“Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.” (Matthew 5:16)

As you finish this fast, remember: integrity is not built in grand gestures but in daily faithfulness. Stand steady. Guard your name. Live upright.

Your third milestone is complete. The next step of the journey will challenge you to embrace something that feels counterintuitive: **rest**.

CHAPTER 4

Resting Into Strength

“COME TO ME, ALL you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.”

— Matthew 11:28

Our culture glorifies busyness. Productivity, output, and hustle are praised, while rest is treated as laziness. But Scripture flips the script: rest is not optional — it is essential. In fact, without rest, even the strongest bodies and the most faithful hearts eventually break down.

This fourth fast is about reclaiming rest. Not just physical rest, but whole-person rest — a rest that renews body, mind, and spirit. If you stood firm in renewal, built strength through authenticity, and steadied yourself in integrity, now God calls you to stop striving and trust Him to sustain.

Why Rest? Why Now?

By the fourth fast, many participants notice the weight of the journey: hunger feels familiar, but fatigue can begin to creep in. This is why the principle here is rest.

- **Spiritually**, rest is trust. It means believing that God’s work is not dependent on your constant effort.
- **Mentally**, rest is release. It means unclenching your thoughts and giving yourself permission to breathe.
- **Physically**, rest is recovery. Muscles repair, the nervous system resets, and the body heals itself most deeply in stillness.

“In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength.” (Isaiah 30:15)

Rest is not weakness — it is wisdom.

The Sabbath Pattern

From the beginning, God wove rest into creation. Six days He worked, but on the seventh, He rested (Genesis 2:2–3). Not because He was tired, but to set a pattern for His people.

Jesus reaffirmed it: *“The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.”* (Mark 2:27). Rest is not a rule to restrict, but a gift to restore.

This fast invites you to rediscover Sabbath — to step away from striving, to slow your pace, to breathe again.

Scriptural Anchors for Rest

- *“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.” (Matthew 11:28)*
- *“Be still, and know that I am God.” (Psalm 46:10)*
- *“He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul.” (Psalm 23:2-3)*
- *“In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat – for he grants sleep to those he loves.” (Psalm 127:2)*

How to Prepare for the Fourth Fast

1. **Two days before:** Reduce stimulants (caffeine, sugar) to prepare for calm. Eat balanced meals with plenty of vegetables.
2. **One day before:** Go to bed early. Spend time in quiet reflection.
3. **During the fast (Days 1-4):**
 - Hydrate and rest.
 - Gentle stretching + slow walking only.
 - Prioritize extra sleep if possible.
 - Journal about trust and release.
4. **Breaking the fast:** Reintroduce food slowly, starting with broth and cooked vegetables. Use the

first meal as a thanksgiving moment.

Movement Plan: Restorative Focus

Unlike the strength-building chapters, this fast calls you to **gentle movement** only – stretching and slow walking. The point is recovery, not exertion.

Daily Routine (20 minutes)

Morning Stretch (10 minutes):

- Child's pose (30 sec).
- Shoulder rolls (10 forward, 10 back).
- Seated forward fold (20–30 sec).
- Neck stretch (20 sec each side).

Walking (10 minutes):

- Slow, reflective pace.
- Focus on breathing: inhale deeply, exhale slowly.
- Pray with each breath: “Be still... *and know.*”

Day 4: Rest completely or take only a light stroll.

The Inner Work of Rest

Rest is more than stopping work. It is choosing to trust.

- **Heart (Spirit):** Rest means releasing control and

believing God is working while you pause.

- **Mind (Focus):** Rest means silencing the inner critic that equates worth with productivity.
- **Hands (Action):** Rest means practicing restraint — not over-scheduling, not forcing exercise, not rushing meals when refeeding.

“Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labor in vain.” (Psalm 127:1)

Journaling Prompts for Rest

1. Where am I still striving instead of trusting God?
2. What does true Sabbath look like in my life?
3. How does my pace reflect my trust — or lack of trust — in God?
4. What burden am I carrying that I need to set down during this fast?

Spiritual Insight: Rest as Resistance

In a culture of endless hustle, rest becomes a radical act of resistance. Choosing to rest says:

- My worth is not in my output.
- My God sustains me even in stillness.
- My spirit is renewed when I stop performing.

Fasting deepens this insight because hunger itself becomes rest from self-reliance. You are reminded, hour by hour, that you live not by your own strength, but by God's provision.

Practical Alignment: Heart, Mind, Hands

- **Heart (Spirit):** Begin each day with a breath prayer: "Lord, I rest in You."
- **Mind (Focus):** When tempted to fill every moment, pause for one full minute of silence. Let your thoughts settle.
- **Hands (Action):** Replace one scheduled task this week with intentional stillness: a nap, a quiet walk, or prayerful reflection.

Closing Word for Fast 4

Rest is not wasted time. It is where renewal takes root, where strength consolidates, and where integrity is preserved. Without rest, even the strongest foundation cracks.

"He says, 'Be still, and know that I am God.'" (Psalm 46:10)

As you complete this fast, receive rest as a gift, not a weakness. Let your body heal, your mind settle, and your spirit exhale.

Your fourth milestone is complete. Next, you will step into gratitude and legacy, learning to respect the shoul-

ders you stand on.

CHAPTER 5

Honoring the Shoulders We Stand On

“REMEMBER YOUR LEADERS, WHO spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.”

— Hebrews 13:7

No one arrives at renewal alone. Every milestone you’ve reached so far has been built on the shoulders of others: parents, teachers, pastors, mentors, friends, even generations of faithful disciples who carried the torch before you.

This fifth fast is about **gratitude and legacy**. It calls you to recognize the people who made your journey possible, to honor their sacrifices, and to live in such a way that others may one day stand on your shoulders.

Gratitude strengthens perspective. When you honor those who came before you, you resist the illusion of self-sufficiency and cultivate humility that makes you teachable.

Why Gratitude and Legacy Matter

- **Spiritually:** Gratitude keeps the heart soft. Pride isolates; gratitude unites. Honoring those before you keeps you connected to the larger story of God's people.
- **Mentally:** Gratitude shifts focus from what you lack to what you've received. It reframes hardship as part of a larger inheritance.
- **Physically:** This fast focuses on **upper-body strength and posture** — a physical reminder to stand tall and strong, carrying yourself as one who bears a legacy.

"We are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses."
(Hebrews 12:1)

Scriptural Anchors for Gratitude and Legacy

- *"Honor your father and your mother."* (Exodus 20:12)
- *"Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you."* (Hebrews 13:7)
- *"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders."* (Hebrews 12:1)
- *"Give thanks in all circumstances."* (1 Thessalonians 5:18)

How to Prepare for the Fifth Fast

1. **Two days before:** Reflect on the people whose influence has shaped you. Make a gratitude list. Eat normally with whole foods.
2. **One day before:** Contact one mentor, friend, or family member to express thanks. Hydrate well and pray for humility.
3. **During the fast (Days 1–4):**
 - Water + electrolytes.
 - Practice posture + upper-body strength routine.
 - Journal about legacy and influence.
 - Pray by name for those who carried you.
4. **Breaking the fast:** Begin with broth and vegetables, add protein slowly, and prepare a “gratitude meal” to share if possible.

Movement Plan: Standing Tall in Legacy

Strong shoulders represent both honoring what you’ve received and preparing to carry what others will need.

Daily Routine (25–30 minutes)

Morning Upper-Body + Posture (10–12 minutes):

- Shoulder rolls (10 forward, 10 back).

- Wall push-ups (2×10).
- Seated rows (with band, 2×10).
- Overhead reach and hold (20 seconds).
- Posture hold against wall (30 seconds).

Walking (12–15 minutes):

- Steady pace with shoulders back and head lifted.
- As you walk, pray in gratitude: “Thank You for those who carried me here.”

Day 4: Gentle stretching and posture holds only.

The Inner Work of Gratitude

Gratitude reframes every part of the journey:

- **Heart (Spirit):** Gratitude draws you back to worship. Everything you have is a gift.
- **Mind (Focus):** Gratitude reframes struggle. Even pain often came through people who taught, refined, or lifted you.
- **Hands (Action):** Gratitude is not just felt; it’s expressed. Write notes. Speak words. Serve someone as repayment for the investment made in you.

Journaling Prompts for Gratitude and Legacy

1. Who are the people whose faith, love, or sacrifice

shaped my journey?

2. How can I actively honor them this week?
3. What legacy am I building for those who come after me?
4. How does gratitude shift the way I see my struggles?

Spiritual Insight: Shoulders and Weight

Every generation shoulders weight so the next can climb higher. Some shoulders bore joy, others carried wounds, but all contributed to where you stand.

When you fast, you step into solidarity with their sacrifice. Hunger teaches you dependence, just as those before you depended on God. Gratitude prevents entitlement and helps you steward the inheritance of faith well.

“By the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect.” (1 Corinthians 15:10)

Practical Alignment: Heart, Mind, Hands

- **Heart (Spirit):** Begin each day with a prayer of thanks for one person who shaped you.
- **Mind (Focus):** Write down a story or memory of someone whose influence still echoes in your life.
- **Hands (Action):** Reach out to one person with gratitude — a text, letter, or call.

Closing Word for Fast 5

Respecting the shoulders you stand on keeps you humble and connected. Gratitude steadies your heart, strengthens your posture, and builds a legacy worth passing on.

“Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” (1 Thessalonians 5:18)

As you complete this fast, remember: you are part of a chain of grace. Others lifted you; now you lift others.

Your fifth milestone is complete. Next, in Chapter 6, you will explore the theme: **Lift Others or You Don’t Lead** — discovering that true influence is not about climbing higher but about raising others with you.

CHAPTER 6

Lift Others, or You Don't Lead

“CARRY EACH OTHER’S BURDENS, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.”

— Galatians 6:2

True leadership is not measured by how high you climb, but by how many you lift along the way. The world tells us to accumulate power, protect influence, and seek followers. But Jesus redefined leadership as service. To lead is to lift.

This sixth fast is about shifting focus outward. Renewal (Ch. 1), strength (Ch. 2), integrity (Ch. 3), rest (Ch. 4), and gratitude (Ch. 5) have prepared you. Now you are strong enough to carry. Now your name is trustworthy enough to influence. Now your posture is tall enough to reach down and raise others.

Why Lifting Others Matters

- **Spiritually:** Leadership without service is empty. Jesus said, *“The greatest among you will be your servant.”* (Matthew 23:11).

- **Mentally:** Serving others shifts perspective. It frees you from self-absorption and fills your mind with purpose beyond your own struggles.
- **Physically:** This fast emphasizes **resistance training with pushing/pulling motions** — a reminder that strength is not just for holding yourself up, but for lifting others.

“We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves.” (Romans 15:1)

Scriptural Anchors for Servant Leadership

- *“Carry each other’s burdens.” (Galatians 6:2)*
- *“The greatest among you will be your servant.” (Matthew 23:11)*
- *“Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.” (Philippians 2:4)*
- *“Encourage one another and build each other up.” (1 Thessalonians 5:11)*

How to Prepare for the Sixth Fast

1. **Two days before:** Reflect on who God has placed in your life to serve. Write down two names. Eat balanced meals.
2. **One day before:** Pray for those individuals by

name. Hydrate well and prepare your heart to focus outward.

3. During the fast (Days 1–4):

- Water + electrolytes.
- Resistance training (outlined below).
- Journaling: reflect on how you use your strength to serve others.
- Perform one act of encouragement daily.

4. Breaking the fast: Begin with broth and vegetables, then add lean protein. If possible, share your first meal with someone — even virtually.

Movement Plan: Lifting Strength

The body mirrors the principle: lifting, pushing, and pulling are movements of service. These exercises remind you that strength is given not for hoarding, but for sharing.

Daily Routine (25–30 minutes)

Resistance & Service Movements (12–15 minutes):

- Wall push-ups (2×10).
- Band or towel rows (2×10).
- Chair dips (2×8–10).

- Modified deadlift with body weight or light resistance (2×8–10).

Walking (12–15 minutes):

- Moderate pace, imagining carrying someone else's burden as you walk.
- Pray for strength to bear with others' weaknesses.

Day 4: Gentle walking + light stretches only.

The Inner Work of Lifting Others

- **Heart (Spirit):** Service is an act of worship. When you lift others, you reflect Christ.
- **Mind (Focus):** Service reshapes perspective. Burdens feel lighter when carried together.
- **Hands (Action):** Service is practical. A note of encouragement, a shared chore, a listening ear — these are the real lifts of leadership.

“By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” (John 13:35)

Journaling Prompts for Servant Leadership

1. Who in my life needs lifting right now?
2. What gift, skill, or strength has God given me that I can use to serve others?

3. How do I react when service is inconvenient or unnoticed?
4. What does it look like to carry someone else's burden this week?

Spiritual Insight: Carrying Weight Together

Lifting others is not about solving their problems but about sharing the weight. Just as one person alone may not lift a heavy load, together burdens become bearable.

When you fast, you experience weakness — a perfect reminder of dependence. When you feel hungry, tired, or lightheaded, let it remind you: *this is how others feel under their burdens too*. Your compassion deepens as you enter their pain.

“Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.” (Romans 12:15)

Practical Alignment: Heart, Mind, Hands

- **Heart (Spirit):** Each morning, pray: “Lord, show me someone to serve today.”
- **Mind (Focus):** Pause once daily to ask: “Whose burden am I noticing right now?”
- **Hands (Action):** Use your body intentionally: carry groceries for someone, write a letter, or encourage a co-worker. Tie service to movement.

Closing Word for Fast 6

If you do not lift others, you do not lead. Influence is not about titles but about love in action. The strength you are gaining — physically, mentally, spiritually — is not just for you. It is for the people God has placed around you.

“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace.” (1 Peter 4:10)

As you complete this sixth milestone, remember: every rep, every step, every pang of hunger has prepared you to bear burdens. Leadership is love lived out.

Your sixth milestone is complete. In Chapter 7, you will learn the discipline that preserves integrity: **Keep Your Word or Lose Your Worth.**

CHAPTER 7

Integrity That Holds

“LET YOUR ‘YES’ BE yes, and your ‘No,’ no; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.”

— Matthew 5:37

Words are powerful. They can inspire or wound, build up or tear down. But words lose their weight when not matched with follow-through. Integrity is not only about telling the truth — it is about keeping your word. Without it, trust erodes, influence fades, and leadership collapses.

This seventh fast calls you to **consistency in commitment**. It is about enduring when it would be easier to give up, finishing what you started, and living in such a way that people can trust your promises.

Why Consistency Matters

- **Spiritually:** God is faithful, and His people are called to reflect His faithfulness.
- **Mentally:** Consistency creates stability. Broken commitments create chaos.

- **Physically:** Endurance training builds the capacity to hold steady under strain — just as keeping your word builds endurance of character.

“The one who endures to the end will be saved.” (Matthew 24:13)

Endurance proves authenticity.

Scriptural Anchors for Consistency

- *“Let your ‘Yes’ be yes, and your ‘No,’ no.”* (Matthew 5:37)
- *“The integrity of the upright guides them.”* (Proverbs 11:3)
- *“Let us not grow weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.”* (Galatians 6:9)
- *“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.”* (2 Timothy 4:7)

How to Prepare for the Seventh Fast

1. **Two days before:** Reflect on commitments you’ve made — to God, family, church, work. Where have you kept your word? Where have you failed? Eat balanced meals.
2. **One day before:** Write down one specific promise you will recommit to keeping. Hydrate well and

sleep early.

3. **During the fast (Days 1–4):**

- Hydrate + electrolytes.
- Endurance-focused movements (outlined below).
- Journaling about integrity and consistency.
- Pray for strength to endure — both physically and spiritually.

4. **Breaking the fast:** Start small with broth and vegetables. Progress to protein (fish, eggs). Break the fast slowly, keeping the commitment to discipline.

Movement Plan: Endurance and Holding Steady

This chapter emphasizes **sustained holds and controlled reps** — symbolic of keeping commitments over time.

Daily Routine (25–30 minutes)

Morning Endurance & Stability (12–15 minutes):

- Wall sit (30–45 sec × 2).
- Plank hold (30–45 sec × 2).
- Slow squats (2×10, controlled).
- Step-downs from a stair (2×8 each leg).

Walking (12–15 minutes):

- Brisk pace with endurance intervals: 3 minutes brisk, 2 minutes recovery.
- Repeat 3–4 times.
- Pray with each step: *“Strength to endure.”*

Day 4: Light walk + posture stretches.

The Inner Work of Keeping Your Word

Your word is your worth. When you keep it, people trust you. When you break it, trust is hard to rebuild.

- **Heart (Spirit):** Reflect God’s faithfulness. He has never broken His promises; imitate His character.
- **Mind (Focus):** Resist excuses. Consistency means following through even when inconvenient.
- **Hands (Action):** Honor commitments in small daily choices — finishing a task, honoring time, speaking truth gently but firmly.

“God is not human, that he should lie, not a human being, that he should change his mind.” (Numbers 23:19)

Journaling Prompts for Consistency

1. What promises have I kept that built trust? What promises have I broken that weakened it?

2. Where do I feel tempted to quit early?
3. How can fasting teach me to endure commitments when I want to give up?
4. Who in my life needs to see consistency from me right now?

Spiritual Insight: Endurance as Integrity in Motion

Endurance is not glamorous. It is quiet, steady, often unseen. But it proves character. Just as a wall sit tests the legs, keeping your word tests the spirit. The longer you hold, the more it burns — but the more it builds.

Integrity works the same way. It burns in the moment of temptation but builds unshakable trust over time.

Practical Alignment: Heart, Mind, Hands

- **Heart (Spirit):** Begin each day praying: “*Lord, make me faithful in my promises today.*”
- **Mind (Focus):** When tempted to give up, repeat Galatians 6:9: “*Do not grow weary in doing good.*”
- **Hands (Action):** Keep a visible reminder (calendar, sticky note, journal) of one commitment you are honoring this week.

Closing Word for Fast 7

Keeping your word is not about perfection — it is about endurance. It is about holding steady when it hurts, stay-

ing true when tempted to quit, and living faithfully so that your name is trusted.

“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.” (2 Timothy 4:7)

As you complete this seventh milestone, remember: every hold, every step, every prayer was a training ground for integrity. You are proving trustworthy, one promise at a time.

Your seventh milestone is complete. In Chapter 8, you will explore the stewardship of influence: **Earn Every Ounce of Your Influence.**

CHAPTER 8

Stewarding What Is Sacred

“WHOEVER CAN BE TRUSTED *with very little can also be trusted with much.*”

— Luke 16:10

Influence is a sacred trust. It is not a title, a platform, or a shortcut to power. True influence is earned — ounce by ounce — through faithfulness, humility, and the daily decisions that shape how others experience your leadership.

This eighth fast is about **stewardship of influence**. It challenges you to examine how you use the credibility you’ve built, and whether you are stewarding it for self-promotion or for service. If the previous fast taught you to keep your word, this fast teaches you to invest your influence wisely.

Why Stewardship of Influence Matters

- **Spiritually:** Leadership is accountability. Every word, every action, every decision affects others. Influence is not ownership but stewardship.

- **Mentally:** Influence shifts perspective. It demands maturity, self-control, and responsibility.
- **Physically:** This fast focuses on **compound movements** — full-body exercises that require coordination, strength, and balance — mirroring how influence requires integration of all parts of life.

“Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.” (Matthew 5:16)

Scriptural Anchors for Stewardship and Influence

- *“Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much.” (Luke 16:10)*
- *“Let your light shine before others.” (Matthew 5:16)*
- *“Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant.” (Matthew 20:26)*
- *“By their fruit you will recognize them.” (Matthew 7:16)*

How to Prepare for the Eighth Fast

1. **Two days before:** Reflect on where God has entrusted you with influence (family, work, church, community). Eat clean, balanced meals.
2. **One day before:** Write down one area of influence

you want to steward better. Pray for wisdom.

3. During the fast (Days 1–4):

- Water + electrolytes.
- Full-body compound movements (outlined below).
- Journaling: reflect on influence as stewardship, not ownership.
- Practice one act of influence for good each day (encouragement, generosity, advocacy).

4. **Breaking the fast:** Start with broth and soft vegetables, then move to protein-rich meals. Reflect on how physical renewal mirrors the wise use of influence.

Movement Plan: Compound Stewardship

Compound movements require multiple muscles working together. They mirror how influence touches multiple areas of life — it must be coordinated and controlled.

Daily Routine (25–30 minutes)

Full-Body Stewardship Routine (12–15 minutes):

- Squat-to-press (light resistance, 2×8).
- Push-up + shoulder tap (2×6–8).

- Forward lunge + reach (2×6 each leg).
- Deadlift (bodyweight or light resistance, 2×8).

Walking (12–15 minutes):

- Brisk pace with pauses: every 5 minutes, stop to reflect on one person you influence.
- Pray: “Lord, help me steward this influence well.”

Day 4: Gentle walking + stretches only.

The Inner Work of Stewardship

Influence is earned, not assumed. It is fragile — easily lost if misused.

- **Heart (Spirit):** Stewardship begins in humility. Recognize influence as God’s gift, not your possession.
- **Mind (Focus):** Stewardship requires clarity. Reflect on how your choices ripple outward to affect others.
- **Hands (Action):** Stewardship is practical. Use your actions — big or small — to build others up, not yourself.

“Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.” (1 Corinthians 4:2)

Journaling Prompts for Influence

1. Where has God entrusted me with influence (family, work, church, community)?
2. How have I used that influence selfishly? How have I used it faithfully?
3. What small act of integrity or service can expand my influence this week?
4. How can fasting help me remember that influence is stewardship, not ownership?

Spiritual Insight: The Weight of Trust

Influence is weight. Carried well, it strengthens communities and glorifies God. Carried poorly, it crushes both leader and followers.

When you fast, you feel weight differently. Hunger weakens you; exercise strains you. But you also learn that discipline allows you to carry more than you imagined. In the same way, disciplined stewardship of influence allows you to bear weight without collapse.

“By their fruit you will recognize them.” (Matthew 7:16)

Practical Alignment: Heart, Mind, Hands

- **Heart (Spirit):** Pray: *“Lord, let my influence reflect Your character, not my pride.”*
- **Mind (Focus):** Before any decision, pause and ask: *“Who will this choice affect, and how?”*

- **Hands (Action):** Perform one small, intentional act of influence this week — encouragement, advocacy, or generosity.

Closing Word for Fast 8

Influence is not a crown to wear but a trust to bear. Earn every ounce of it with humility, service, and faithfulness.

“Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much.” (Luke 16:10)

As you complete this eighth milestone, remember: the weight you carry is not for yourself but for others. Steward it well.

Your eighth milestone is complete. In Chapter 9, you will confront the deepest foundation of all: **Truth Is Non-Negotiable.**

CHAPTER 9

Truth That Cannot Be Shaken

“THEN YOU WILL KNOW the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

— John 8:32

Truth is the bedrock of leadership, discipleship, and life itself. Without truth, influence is manipulation. Without truth, service is pretense. Without truth, renewal is a façade.

This ninth fast calls you to embrace truth in its full weight: truth in your words, truth in your motives, truth in your actions. It is the capstone of the journey, the principle that secures all others. If you have learned to stand firm, live authentically, guard your name, rest wisely, honor legacy, lift others, keep your word, and steward influence, you are now ready to live anchored in truth.

Why Truth Cannot Be Compromised

- **Spiritually:** God is truth. *“I am the way and the truth and the life.”* (John 14:6). To compromise truth is to compromise Him.

- **Mentally:** Lies corrode clarity, integrity, and trust. Living in truth frees the mind from double-speak and hidden shame.
- **Physically:** Truth is posture — standing tall, unbent, unbroken. This fast emphasizes **alignment exercises** — training the body to stand straight, as a metaphor for standing in truth.

“The integrity of the upright guides them, but the unfaithful are destroyed by their duplicity.” (Proverbs 11:3)

Scriptural Anchors for Truth

- *“Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” (John 8:32)*
- *“Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.” (John 17:17)*
- *“Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.” (1 Corinthians 13:6)*
- *“Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor.” (Ephesians 4:25)*

Truth is not negotiable because it is not ours to bend. It is God’s gift, God’s Word, and God’s way.

How to Prepare for the Ninth Fast

1. **Two days before:** Reflect on areas where you’ve compromised truth — in words, actions, or si-

lence. Eat balanced meals.

2. **One day before:** Write down one truth you will live more boldly. Pray for courage.

3. **During the fast (Days 1–4):**

- Water + electrolytes.
- Alignment-based movements (outlined below).
- Journaling about truth and freedom.
- Confess one hidden lie, fear, or mask before God.

4. **Breaking the fast:** Eat simply and honestly. Use your first meal as a celebration of truth and gratitude.

Movement Plan: Alignment with Truth

Physical alignment reflects spiritual alignment. Just as posture determines balance, truth determines stability.

Daily Routine (25–30 minutes)

Alignment & Core Stability (12–15 minutes):

- Wall posture hold (30–45 sec × 2).
- Plank with shoulder taps (2×10).
- Side plank (20 sec each side).

- Glute bridge (2×10).
- Bird-dog (2×8 each side).

Walking (12–15 minutes):

- Upright posture, slow deliberate pace.
- As you walk, pray: *“Lord, align me with Your truth.”*

Day 4: Gentle walking + posture holds.

The Inner Work of Truth

Truth is costly. Lies promise comfort, but truth demands courage. Yet without truth, no other principle holds.

- **Heart (Spirit):** Truth frees the soul. Confession is the doorway.
- **Mind (Focus):** Truth clears fog. No double-speak, no hidden agenda.
- **Hands (Action):** Truth is lived. Actions aligned with words build credibility.

“Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.” (John 17:17)

Journaling Prompts for Truth

1. Where in my life have I compromised truth for comfort or approval?
2. What truth about myself do I resist facing?

3. How can fasting train me to live in honesty even when it hurts?
4. Who in my life needs me to speak truth in love right now?

Spiritual Insight: Straight Paths

Proverbs says: *“In all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.”* (Proverbs 3:6). Truth straightens what deceit bends. It clears what lies tangle.

During this fast, hunger teaches honesty. Your body cannot lie about emptiness. It forces you to face reality. In the same way, God calls you to walk in reality, no matter how uncomfortable.

Truth is the only path that leads to freedom.

Practical Alignment: Heart, Mind, Hands

- **Heart (Spirit):** Begin each day with confession — tell God the truth about your fears and sins.
- **Mind (Focus):** Catch yourself in small exaggerations or excuses. Replace them with honesty.
- **Hands (Action):** Perform one courageous act of truth this week — a confession, a boundary, a conversation.

Closing Word for Fast 9

This final milestone brings the journey full circle. Renew-

al began in surrender, but it finds completion in truth. Without truth, all the previous steps collapse. With truth, they hold.

“Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.” (1 Corinthians 13:6)

As you complete this ninth fast, celebrate not only endurance but freedom. Truth has set you free.

This closes the *Millstones to Milestones* 18-month journey of fasting, movement, and spiritual renewal. But the true journey continues daily: live in truth, lift others, guard integrity, rest wisely, and honor God in body, mind, and spirit.

THE INTEGRATED JOURNEY

18 Months of Renewal

EIGHTEEN MONTHS. NINE FASTS. Countless prayers, movements, and reflections. What began as a single step into the wilderness has become a complete journey of renewal — body, mind, and spirit.

This is not simply a fasting plan or an exercise routine. It is a training ground for whole-life transformation. Each fast has been a milestone, each movement a reminder, each principle a call to deeper integrity. Together, they form a rhythm for leaders, disciples, and seekers to live fully aligned: with God, with others, and with themselves.

The Nine Fasts: A Recap

1. Elul – Stand Firm

- *Theme:* Conviction and preparation.

- *Focus:* Stretching + walking.
- *Lesson:* Build firm foundations.

2. Kislev – Be Real or Be Forgotten

- *Theme:* Authenticity and light.
- *Focus:* Core strength + intervals.
- *Lesson:* Live in the light without fear.

3. Tevet – Guard Your Name Like Gold

- *Theme:* Integrity and credibility.
- *Focus:* Balance + lower-body strength.
- *Lesson:* Protect your witness.

4. Purim I – Rest or Break Down

- *Theme:* Trust and hidden victory.
- *Focus:* Upper-body strength + posture.
- *Lesson:* Strength flows from rest.

5. Passover – Respect the Shoulders You Stand On

- *Theme:* Gratitude and legacy.
- *Focus:* Resistance training.
- *Lesson:* Honor those who carried you here.

6. Shavuot – Lift Others, or You Don’t Lead

- *Theme:* Empowerment and service.
- *Focus:* Partner-inspired lifts + carries.
- *Lesson:* Leadership multiplies when you lift others.

7. Av – Keep Your Word or Lose Your Worth

- *Theme:* Consistency and endurance.
- *Focus:* Holds + controlled reps.
- *Lesson:* Integrity is endurance in action.

8. Yom Kippur – Earn Every Ounce of Your Influence

- *Theme:* Stewardship and accountability.
- *Focus:* Compound movements.
- *Lesson:* Leadership is stewardship, not ownership.

9. Purim II – Truth Is Non-Negotiable

- *Theme:* Uncompromising truth.
- *Focus:* Alignment & stability exercises.
- *Lesson:* Integration leads to freedom.

The Physical Transformation

This journey was not about punishing the body but renewing it. Over 18 months, you have:

- Activated **autophagy and cellular renewal** through regular 96-hour fasts.
- Built **progressive strength and balance** through simple, sustainable movements.
- Improved **cardiovascular health** with brisk walking and intervals.
- Preserved and developed **lean muscle** through resistance and compound training.
- Integrated **body, mind, and spirit** through posture, endurance, and whole-body circuits.

The progression is deliberate: from stretching and walking to compound strength and full-body circuits. By the end, your body is not only leaner and stronger, but more resilient and sustainable.

The Spiritual Transformation

At every stage, the physical mirrored the spiritual:

- Stretching became a reminder to prepare.
- Core work symbolized truth at the center.
- Balance reflected credibility.
- Rest postures mirrored trust.
- Resistance training honored legacy.
- Partner lifts embodied service.
- Endurance holds taught integrity.
- Compound work symbolized stewardship.
- Circuits embodied truth and integration.

Each movement became prayer. Each fast became testimony. Each milestone pointed to Christ.

The Mind's Renewal

Do not overlook the mind. Research confirms what Scripture already promised: fasting sharpens clarity, stabilizes mood, and strengthens discipline. The regular rhythm of fasting and journaling has trained you to pause, reflect, and align your thoughts with God's truth.

The Journey Beyond 18 Months

This book closes, but the rhythm continues. The nine fasts form a cycle you can repeat every 18 months — or adapt into a lifelong rhythm.

- **Physically:** Continue progressive movement, adding weights or longer walks as strength grows.
- **Spiritually:** Choose one principle of the Selfless Edge™ to focus on each month between fasts.
- **Relationally:** Teach others this rhythm, multiplying renewal in your community.

Remember: this journey is not about perfection but about perseverance. Each fast, each movement, each prayer is one more milestone that transforms millstones into testimonies.

Closing Word

At the heart of this journey is a simple truth: you were made whole. Body, mind, and spirit are not separate compartments but one life, entrusted by God. Renewal is not about one area thriving while others suffer, but about all being aligned under His will.

So continue. Fast. Move. Pray. Lift. Guard. Steward. Speak truth. And above all — love.

Because in the end, the body will fade, the mind will quiet, but the spirit will rise. And the witness of your life will remain.

The truth wins out. Always.

APPENDIX A

How to Fast Safely & Effectively

FASTING IS ONE OF the oldest disciplines in the history of God's people. Moses fasted before receiving the law (Exod. 34:28). Esther called her people to fast before standing before the king (Esth. 4:16). Jesus Himself fasted forty days in the wilderness before His public ministry (Matt. 4:1-2). Today, science affirms what Scripture has always shown: fasting renews both body and soul.

This appendix is designed to help you fast with wisdom, confidence, and expectancy.

1. Cognitive & Emotional Benefits of Fasting

Modern research confirms that fasting in the **72–96 hour window** triggers extraordinary changes in the brain and emotions:

- **Mental Clarity:** When glucose reserves are depleted, the body produces ketones that fuel the brain more efficiently than sugar, improving focus

and clarity.

- **Neuroprotection:** Extended fasting stimulates **autophagy** (cellular “self-cleaning”), protecting neurons from damage and slowing cognitive decline.
- **Mood Stability:** By lowering inflammation and balancing neurotransmitters like dopamine and serotonin, fasting reduces anxiety and stabilizes emotions.
- **Resilience:** Regular fasting strengthens willpower, training the mind to delay gratification and endure hardship — essential traits for spiritual leaders.

In short, fasting clears mental fog, calms emotional storms, and strengthens the capacity for godly decision-making.

2. Alignment with God’s Will

While the body rests from food, the spirit awakens to God. Fasting is not a hunger strike to force His hand; it is a discipline that **tunes the heart to His voice**.

- **Isaiah 58:6** — True fasting loosens the chains of injustice.

- **Acts 13:2-3** — The early church fasted and prayed before sending out missionaries.
- **Hebrews 12:1-2** — Fasting helps us throw off what hinders so we can run with perseverance.

When we fast, idols surface. Pride is exposed. Control is tested. In emptiness, God speaks more clearly: *“Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God”* (Matt. 4:4).

3. Renewal & Detoxification

Physically, fasting allows the body to reset at a cellular level:

- **Autophagy (Cellular Cleansing):** Begins around 24–36 hours, reaching its peak near 72–96 hours, removing damaged proteins and toxins.
- **Immune Reset:** Research led by Dr. Valter Longo (USC) shows multi-day fasts stimulate stem cell regeneration and reboot parts of the immune system.
- **Metabolic Health:** Fasting improves insulin sensitivity, reduces visceral fat, and lowers markers of inflammation.
- **Cardiovascular Renewal:** Lowers triglycerides,

blood pressure, and risk factors for heart disease.

Spiritually, this renewal mirrors Paul's words: "*Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day*" (2 Cor. 4:16).

4. The Sweet Spot: 96 Hours Every Other Month

While short fasts (24–48 hours) bring benefits, research and biblical practice show that **96 hours (4 days)** offers a unique depth of renewal:

- **At 24 hours:** Glycogen stores deplete; fat-burning begins.
- **At 48 hours:** Growth hormone rises; autophagy accelerates.
- **At 72–96 hours:** Stem cell regeneration and immune renewal peak; mental clarity sharpens.

Why every other month?

- It's long enough to sustain real transformation, yet frequent enough to build rhythm.
- It gives the body and spirit time to recover between fasts.

- It avoids the burnout of over-fasting while maintaining consistency over 18 months.

This rhythm is sustainable, biblical in spirit, and medically sound for most healthy adults.

5. Practical Guidance for Each Fast

1. **Hydrate Well:** Drink plenty of water; add electrolytes (sodium, magnesium, potassium) if needed.
2. **Rest:** Avoid heavy exercise; light walking and stretching are best.
3. **Create Space:** Block time for prayer, Scripture, and journaling. Fasting without prayer is just dieting.
4. **Break Wisely:** Reintroduce food gently — broths, fruit, lightly cooked vegetables — before heavier meals.
5. **Seek Counsel:** If you are pregnant, diabetic, underweight, or on medication, consult your doctor before extended fasting.

6. Fasting as Renewal, Not Punishment

Fasting is not about punishing the body. It is about re-calibrating the whole person to God. It sharpens the mind, steadies the emotions, detoxifies the body, and aligns the soul with Christ.

Practiced every other month for 96 hours, fasting becomes a rhythm of grace. It is a declaration that we do not live by bread alone but by the presence, promises, and power of God.

In these days of prayer and fasting, you are not merely abstaining from food. You are rehearsing death and resurrection — emptying yourself so that God can fill you with His Spirit.

Final Word:

When done wisely, fasting is one of the most powerful tools for leadership renewal. It heals the body, humbles the heart, and aligns the church with God's will. In this, fasting becomes not deprivation but participation in the life of Christ — a rhythm of renewal for leaders, congregations, and generations to come.

APPENDIX B

Daily Rhythm for Each Fast

APPENDIX B: THE DAILY Rhythm of a 96-Hour Fast

Fasting is not simply abstaining from food. It is stepping into the wilderness with Jesus. It is stripping away the illusions that sustain us — food, comfort, distraction, image — and exposing the soul to God’s burning presence.

When you commit to a 96-hour fast, you are entering a sacred rhythm where heaven and earth overlap. This is more than a health practice. It is an invitation to deeper renewal in Christ.

Day 1 – Emptying (The Wilderness Begins)

Theme: Exposure

- *Scripture Anchor:* Matthew 4:1-2 — “Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted...”

- **Reflection:** On the first day, hunger stirs your restlessness. The flesh whispers for satisfaction. This is not weakness — it is unveiling. You are being stripped of illusions.
- **Practice:** Journal the cravings and fears that surface. Do not shame them — name them. Pray: *“Lord, show me who I am without my comforts.”*
- **Symbol:** The desert wind — you are being led by the Spirit, not by appetite.

Day 2 – Fire of the Mind (The Battle of Voices)

Theme: Illumination

- **Scripture Anchor:** Matthew 4:3–4 — *“Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.”*
- **Reflection:** The second day intensifies mental noise. Old memories surface, doubts press in, inner dialogue grows loud. This is the fire that burns away false thoughts.
- **Practice:** Sit in silence for 20 minutes, allowing every thought to pass through you without clinging. Repeat the prayer: *“Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.”*

- **Symbol:** The flame — truth purifies lies. The mind is becoming light.

Day 3 – Darkness & Revelation (The Night of the Soul)

Theme: Descent

- *Scripture Anchor:* Psalm 42:7 — “Deep calls to deep in the roar of your waterfalls.”
- **Reflection:** By the third day, the body grows weak and the emotions raw. This is the night of the soul — where despair may whisper, “*This is pointless.*” But in that darkness, the deepest truths are born. God is preparing revelation.
- **Practice:** Write a confession letter — to God, to your church, or to yourself. Speak aloud what you have feared to admit. Burn or bury the page as a symbol of release.
- **Symbol:** The night sky — stars only appear in darkness.

Day 4 – Renewal & Union (The Dawn of Resurrection)

Theme: Union

- *Scripture Anchor:* John 6:35 — “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry.”
- **Reflection:** On the fourth day, weakness opens to strength not your own. The Spirit carries you. Hunger fades into clarity. This is the threshold of union — when Christ Himself becomes your bread.
- **Practice:** Break bread with gratitude, even if only spiritually at first. Take communion if possible. Declare: “Christ is my sustenance. His Word is my food. His presence is my life.”
- **Symbol:** The dawn — resurrection always follows death.

The Hidden Pattern of the 96 Hours

- **Day 1 – Wilderness:** Stripped of illusion.
- **Day 2 – Fire:** Purification of the mind.
- **Day 3 – Night:** Death of pride and control.
- **Day 4 – Dawn:** Union with Christ.

This is not accidental. The 96-hour fast is a microcosm of the gospel: cross, burial, resurrection.

Why 96 Hours Matters

Four days represents completeness — the four corners of the earth, the four winds, the four living creatures around God's throne (Rev. 4:6–8). Ninety-six itself reduces ($9+6=15 \square 1+5=6$), a number tied to *humanity* — reminding us fasting is the return to full humanity, unmasked and restored in Christ.

Every other month, the rhythm builds: stripping, purifying, dying, rising. Over eighteen months, this becomes not a diet of the body but a transformation of the soul.

Final Exhortation

When you enter a 96-hour fast, you are not simply abstaining from food — you are stepping into a living rehearsal of death and resurrection. You are allowing God to dismantle false structures and rebuild you as a temple of His Spirit.

Do not fear the emptiness. Do not resist the silence. Do not flee the night. The dawn is coming.

APPENDIX C

Selfless Edge™ Leadership Principles

THE SELFLESS EDGE™ IS a framework of 49 principles that shape leadership marked by humility, integrity, and truth. They are divided into five sections, moving from foundations to legacy. Each principle is a lens to examine your leadership during the fasting journey.

Section I: Foundational Leadership Intelligence (Principles 1–9)

Theme: Building the Core of Wisdom (Head/Spiritual Authority)

These nine principles form the bedrock of leadership. Without them, nothing else can stand. They call leaders to study, humility, awe, and mentorship.

1. Deep Study Is Your Advantage

Leaders who study deeply draw on reservoirs of wisdom when quick fixes fail. Scripture, history,

and disciplined learning build credibility and resilience. Depth outlasts trends.

2. Listening Is a Superpower

Most leaders underestimate the power of listening. To listen well is to give dignity, uncover truth, and build trust. Listening twice as much as you speak multiplies your influence.

3. Speak to Lead

Words shape culture. When leaders speak with courage and clarity, people find direction. Silence at the wrong time confuses, but truth spoken at the right time transforms.

4. Trust Your Gut

God often speaks through sanctified intuition. Discernment sharpened by Scripture and prayer helps leaders sense when to act or pause. Ignoring that inner nudge often leads to regret.

5. Lead with Awe

A leader who loses awe loses perspective. Wonder at God's creation, His people, and His Word keeps pride in check and joy alive. Awe fuels humility.

6. Humility Fuels Growth

Arrogance stops learning. Humility admits there is always more to learn and room to grow. Leaders who bow low are the ones God raises high.

7. Lead with Joy

Joy is not optional; it is contagious strength. A leader rooted in joy can sustain others in dark times. Without joy, leadership becomes mechanical and burdensome.

8. Check Your Motives

Every action must be filtered through motive. Am I building God's kingdom or my own reputation? Motive reveals whether leadership is selfless or self-serving.

9. Mentorship Multiplies Wisdom

True leaders reproduce themselves in others. Mentorship is slow, but it multiplies influence far beyond one lifetime. Leaders who refuse to mentor ensure their work dies with them.

Section II: Leadership Through Self-Mastery (Principles 10–19)

Theme: The Discipline Behind Influence (Heart/Emotional Intelligence)

Leadership without self-mastery collapses. These ten principles teach restraint, energy stewardship, and the power of thoughtful responses.

1. Think Clearly, Lead Clearly

Confused thinking produces confused leader-

ship. Clarity requires slowing down, organizing thoughts, and aligning with God's Word before giving direction.

2. Speak with Care

Words can cut or heal. Wise leaders pause before speaking, weighing tone and impact. Careful speech preserves unity and prevents unnecessary wounds.

3. Ask Smart Questions

The best leaders are relentless question-askers. Smart questions reveal motives, uncover blind spots, and help teams own the solution instead of waiting for orders.

4. Respond, Don't React

Reacting is emotional impulse; responding is thoughtful leadership. Leaders who pause before acting build stability and trust.

5. Dig Deeper

Surface answers rarely solve lasting problems. Leaders who dig below symptoms to causes lead transformation, not just quick fixes.

6. Reject Excess

Leaders easily get trapped by accumulation — of possessions, titles, or recognition. Simplicity frees leaders to focus on mission rather than image.

7. Restraint Builds Stamina

The ability to hold back, say no, and endure hardship gives leadership longevity. Those who burn too hot too fast rarely finish the race.

8. Steward Your Energy

Leadership requires managing not only time but energy. Leaders who guard their energy rhythms can give their best consistently, rather than sporadically.

9. Say Less, Mean More

Brevity and weight carry more than long speeches. Leaders known for concise but meaningful words are remembered long after the meeting ends.

10. Keep Humor in Check

Humor can unify, but sarcasm can wound. Leaders must learn when humor lifts and when it cuts. The right word in the right moment builds trust.

Section III: Character Is Destiny (Principles 20–29)

Theme: Ethical Strength as Foundation (Head + Heart)

This section shifts from inner mastery to outward credibility. True influence is built on character — patience,

kindness, justice, and relational integrity.

1. Practice Patience

Impatience creates shallow roots. Leaders who practice patience endure storms and give others space to grow.

2. Lead with Kindness

Kindness is not weakness. It is strength under control. It disarms enemies, builds loyalty, and reflects the heart of Christ.

3. Honor the Ladder

Respect must go in every direction — up, down, and sideways. Honor those who came before, those beside you, and those following after.

4. Find Purpose in Pain

Pain is inevitable, but wasted if not processed. Leaders who find purpose in suffering lead with empathy and resilience.

5. Start with the Mirror

Transformation begins with self-examination. Leaders who refuse the mirror often repeat their failures.

6. Trust Is Your Currency

Leadership is built or broken on trust. Without it, titles are meaningless. With it, influence multiplies.

7. Welcome Criticism

Criticism, though painful, refines leaders. When received with humility, it becomes a tool for growth instead of a wound.

8. Choose Justice

Neutrality in injustice is complicity. Leaders who stand for justice, even when unpopular, reflect God's character.

9. Teach to Grow

Teaching multiplies influence. When leaders teach, they reinforce their own learning and empower others.

10. Relationships Matter

No mission succeeds without relationships. Leadership divorced from love creates empty movements.

Section IV: From Inner Authority to Outer Impact (Principles 30–39)

Theme: The Art of Influence (Hands/Leadership Impact)

These ten principles deal with execution — how leaders carry the load, remain calm, and multiply impact without ego.

1. Own the Outcome

Blame-shifting erodes credibility. Leaders who take responsibility, even when others fail, earn lasting respect.

2. Stay Calm

Crisis reveals leaders. Calmness in storms stabilizes teams and reminds them that God, not panic, rules the moment.

3. Use Ancient Wisdom

Innovation matters, but timeless wisdom carries weight. Scripture and history keep leaders grounded amid shifting trends.

4. Focus and Master It

Leaders who scatter attention accomplish little. Mastery comes from focused effort on what matters most.

5. Crave Less, Lead More

Leaders driven by craving recognition or power inevitably harm others. Contentment frees leaders to focus on serving.

6. Shrink the Ego

Ego consumes. Leaders who shrink their ego create space for others to grow and for God's glory to shine.

7. Skip the Spotlight

When leaders hog attention, the mission dies with

them. True leaders push others into the spotlight.

8. Stay Teachable

A leader who stops learning starts declining. Teachable leaders remain fresh, adaptable, and fruitful.

9. Invite Counsel

Leaders who isolate themselves are vulnerable. Wise leaders seek counsel and build accountability.

10. Carry the Load

Leadership is not about avoiding hard work but sharing it. Leaders who shoulder burdens inspire others to join them.

Section V: Transcendent Leadership (Principles 40–49)

Theme: Influence That Outlasts You (Integration: Head + Heart + Hands)

The final section calls leaders to legacy. These principles go beyond success and focus on impact that endures long after the leader is gone.

1. Assume the Best

Cynicism kills unity. Believing the best about peo-

ple creates cultures of trust and encouragement.

2. Speak the Truth

Truth, spoken with love, sets people free. Avoiding it creates chains of fear and silence.

3. Make Peace a Priority

Leaders who prioritize peace heal wounds and build bridges. Division never advances God's kingdom.

4. Study Calmly

Wisdom grows in unhurried learning. Calm study gives clarity that frantic leadership misses.

5. Think Precisely

Sloppy thinking produces sloppy leadership. Precision prevents harm and strengthens credibility.

6. Ask Well, Answer Better

Leaders who know how to draw out others through questions — and respond thoughtfully — multiply wisdom in the room.

7. Add Value First

Give before expecting return. Leaders who serve without strings create trust and influence.

8. Teach to Lead

Leadership multiplies when others are trained to lead. Teaching ensures the mission outlives the leader.

9. **Chase Truth, Always**

Truth is the compass. Leaders who chase it relentlessly remain grounded even in storms.

10. **Surrender the Spotlight**

The final test of leadership is release. Leaders who let go of recognition point the glory back to God and ensure the mission endures.

How to Use This Appendix

- **During each fast:** Focus on the any principles in the table below tied to that fast.
- **Over 18 months:** Work through all 49 principles as a leadership checklist.
- **With your team:** Assign principles for group discussion and accountability.

The 49 principles remind us that leadership is not about authority or image — it is about selfless influence. Each fast will sharpen one edge, but together they form a leadership culture that turns millstones into milestones.

Appendix C Cross-Reference: Fasts, Commandments & Principles

Fast	Selfless Edge™ Commandment	Core NT Anchor	Related Principles (from the 49)
1. Elul – Preparing for Renewal (Aug 25–29, 2025)	<i>Stand Firm or Fall Flat</i>	1 Cor. 15:58	1. Deep Study Is Your Advantage • 4. Trust Your Gut • 6. Humility Fuels Growth • 8. Check Your Motives
2. Kisleiv – Light in Darkness (Nov 20–24, 2025)	<i>Be Real or Be Forgotten</i>	Matt. 5:16	2. Listening Is a Superpower • 5. Lead with Awe • 7. Lead with Joy • 9. Mentorship Multiplies Wisdom
3. Tevet – Guard the Witness (Dec 20–24, 2025)	<i>Guard Your Name Like Gold</i>	1 Pet. 2:12	10. Think Clearly, Lead Clearly • 11. Speak with Care • 12. Ask Smart Questions • 19. Keep Humor in Check
4. Purim (Adar II) – Rest & Hidden Victory (Feb 28–Mar 3, 2026)	<i>Rest or Break Down</i>	Matt. 11:28	13. Respond, Don't React • 15. Reject Excess • 16. Restraint Builds Stamina • 17. Steward Your Energy • 18. Say Less, Mean More
5. Passover (Nisan) – Honor the Witnesses (Mar 30–Apr 3, 2026)	<i>Respect the Shoulders You Stand On</i>	Heb. 12:1–2	20. Practice Patience • 22. Honor the Ladder • 23. Find Purpose in Pain • 25. Trust Is Your Currency
6. Shavuot – Spirit for Service (May 19–23, 2026)	<i>Lift Others, or You Don't Lead</i>	Acts 1:8	21. Lead with Kindness • 24. Start with the Mirror • 26. Welcome Criticism • 28. Teach to Grow • 29. Relationships Matter
7. Av – Integrity in Mourning (Jul 20–24, 2026)	<i>Keep Your Word or Lose Your Worth</i>	Matt. 5:37	30. Own the Outcome • 31. Stay Calm • 33. Focus and Master It • 35. Shrink the Ego • 36. Skip the Spotlight
8. Yom Kippur (Tishrei) – Stewarding Influence (Sep 29–Oct 3, 2026)	<i>Earn Every Ounce of Your Influence</i>	1 Cor. 4:2	32. Use Ancient Wisdom • 34. Crave Less, Lead More • 37. Stay Teachable • 38. Invite Counsel • 39. Carry the Load
9. Purim II (Adar II) – Truth Wins (Mar 20–24, 2027)	<i>Truth Is Non-Negotiable</i>	John 8:32	40. Assume the Best • 41. Speak the Truth • 42. Make Peace a Priority • 48. Chase Truth, Always • 49. Surrender the Spotlight

APPENDIX D

The Nine Fasts at a Glance

THIS APPENDIX GIVES YOU a simple overview of all nine 96-hour fasts across the 18-month journey. Each fast and its biblical month, builds upon the last, progressively renewing **body, mind, and spirit**.

Fast 1 – Elul (Stand Firm or Fall Flat)

- **Theme:** Conviction & Preparation
- **Body:** Stretching and brisk walking to reset the foundation of health.
- **Mind:** Mental clarity through fasting; journaling on stability and courage.
- **Spirit:** Holding firm in faith (Heb. 10:23); preparing to walk into renewal.

Fast 2 – Kislev (Be Real or Be Forgotten)

- **Theme:** Authenticity & Light
- **Body:** Core strengthening and walking intervals; learning stability from within.
- **Mind:** Facing hidden fears; training discipline in thought patterns.
- **Spirit:** Living as children of light (Eph. 5:8); embracing transparency before God and others.

Fast 3 – Tevet (Guard Your Name Like Gold)

- **Theme:** Integrity & Witness
- **Body:** Balance training and lower-body strength; standing steady under pressure.
- **Mind:** Reflecting on reputation, consistency, and credibility.
- **Spirit:** Guarding your witness (Prov. 22:1); letting your light shine (Matt. 5:16).

Fast 4 – Purim I (Rest or Break Down)

- **Theme:** Trust & Hidden Victory
- **Body:** Upper-body strength and posture work; learning strength through rest.
- **Mind:** Practicing quiet reflection; surrendering control.
- **Spirit:** Entering God's rest (Isa. 30:15, Matt. 11:28); victory through surrender.

Fast 5 – Passover (Respect the Shoulders You Stand On)

- **Theme:** Gratitude & Legacy
- **Body:** Resistance training with bands or household weights; carrying the load responsibly.
- **Mind:** Remembering those who paved the way; gratitude journaling.
- **Spirit:** Honoring the witnesses (Deut. 32:7, Heb. 12:1); passing faith to the next generation.

Fast 6 – Shavuot (Lift Others, or You Don't Lead)

- **Theme:** Empowerment & Service
- **Body:** Partner-inspired lifts, carries, and shared movement; building strength for others.
- **Mind:** Praying for and encouraging others during walks.
- **Spirit:** Carrying each other's burdens (Gal. 6:2); Spirit-filled leadership that multiplies.

Fast 7 – Av (Keep Your Word or Lose Your Worth)

- **Theme:** Integrity & Endurance
- **Body:** Endurance holds (wall sits, planks) and slow, controlled reps; training consistency.
- **Mind:** Practicing perseverance; reflecting on promises kept and broken.
- **Spirit:** Integrity as endurance (Matt. 5:37); letting trustworthiness define your witness.

Fast 8 – Yom Kippur (Earn Every Ounce of Your Influence)

- **Theme:** Stewardship & Accountability
- **Body:** Compound movements (squat-to-press, lunges, loaded carries) to maximize efficiency.
- **Mind:** Reflecting on stewardship of time, influence, and resources.
- **Spirit:** Shepherding influence as a trust (1 Cor. 4:2); accountability before God.

Fast 9 – Purim II (Truth Is Non-Negotiable)

- **Theme:** Integration & Truth
- **Body:** Full-body circuits combining strength, balance, endurance, and posture.
- **Mind:** Embracing clarity; aligning thought, word, and action.
- **Spirit:** Standing in truth (John 8:32, Rev. 19:11); living wholly integrated lives.

Closing Note

Each fast is a milestone — physically strengthening the body, mentally sharpening the mind, and spiritually aligning the soul. Together, they form an 18-month journey

of whole-life renewal: from millstones of regret to milestones of transformation.

APPENDIX E

Group Study & Unity Practices

FASTING IS DEEPLY PERSONAL, but it is also profoundly communal. The early church fasted and prayed together before making major decisions (Acts 13:2–3). Jesus promised that where two or three gather in His name, He is there with them (Matt. 18:20). Renewal is never meant to be walked alone.

This appendix equips groups — whether families, small groups, or entire congregations — to experience the nine fasts as a shared journey. Each practice touches **body, mind, and spirit**, creating unity through shared rhythm.

1. Shared Calendar Rhythm

- **Body:** Mark the nine fasts (every other month) on a group calendar. Commit to joining in, even if not everyone can complete the full 96 hours. Encourage group walks or stretching meetups during fasting days.

- **Mind:** Share one reflection or journaling insight per week in a group chat, email, or short call.
- **Spirit:** Begin and end each fast with prayer together — in person, or virtually. Use communion as a communal marker of God’s sustaining presence.

2. Small Group Practices

1. Confession Circles

- **Body:** Sit together in a circle; begin with a moment of silent breathing to center yourselves.
- **Mind:** Each person answers honestly: *Where do I struggle most to live authentically?*
- **Spirit:** End with prayer over each person, laying hands or speaking words of blessing.

2. Scripture Chain

- **Body:** Stand together; each person reads one verse from Appendix F aloud while the group remains on their feet.
- **Mind:** As verses are read, connect them as a chain — how do they build on each other?
- **Spirit:** After each verse, all respond: “Lord,

make us one.”

3. Shared Silence

- **Body:** Sit in comfortable stillness for 5–10 minutes.
- **Mind:** Meditate on one phrase from that fast’s theme (e.g., *Stand Firm, Truth Wins*).
- **Spirit:** Invite the Spirit to surface hidden fears, pride, or wounds. Share what surfaced afterward.

3. Leadership Team Practices

1. Cross-Pulpit Preaching

- Invite leaders from other congregations or fellowships to share the pulpit during fasting months.
- **Body:** Travel, hospitality, and shared meals become acts of unity.
- **Mind:** Hearing new perspectives challenges pride and expands understanding.
- **Spirit:** Modeling reconciliation publicly becomes a living testimony.

2. Joint Service Projects

- **Body:** Work shoulder to shoulder — feeding the poor, cleaning a neighborhood, serving at a shelter.
- **Mind:** Reflect on how service disrupts old patterns of division.
- **Spirit:** Unity grows when hands are dirty together for God's glory.

3. Leadership Dialogues

- **Body:** Gather around a table — one posture of equality.
- **Mind:** Share failures, lessons, and hopes openly.
- **Spirit:** Pray blessings over one another's ministries, not just your own.

4. Reflection Questions After Each Fast

Use these questions in groups to deepen the journey:

1. What did God reveal to me about myself during this fast?
2. Where did I feel resistance — in my body, my

thoughts, or my spirit?

3. How does this fast's theme challenge the culture of our church?
4. What one action will we take together before the next fast to live this out?

5. The HUG Path for Groups (Heal, Unify, Grow)

- **Heal Together** — through confession, repentance, and forgiveness circles.
- **Unify Together** — through shared worship, meals, and mission projects.
- **Grow Together** — by multiplying leaders, empowering new voices, and training others to guide small groups.

Closing Word

Unity is not automatic. It is cultivated — through prayer, fasting, confession, service, and worship. The nine fasts are designed not just for individuals but for the body of Christ to experience together.

As you fast, stretch, pray, walk, and serve in unity, re-

member: the goal is not simply survival of a fast, but transformation of a people. When the church heals together, unifies together, and grows together, the world sees Christ more clearly.

“Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.” (Eph. 4:3)

APPENDIX F

Scriptures for Prayer & Fasting

ANCHORING THE NINE FASTS *in the Word – Old and New*

1. Elul – Preparing for Renewal (Stand Firm or Fall Flat)

- **OT:**

- **Deuteronomy 31:6** — “Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid... for the LORD your God goes with you.” (**chazaq** = be strong, stand firm)
- **Psalms 40:2** — “He set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand.” (**kun** = establish, make firm)

- **NT:**

- Hebrews 10:23 — “Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.”

- 1 Corinthians 15:58 — Stand firm, immovable.

Prayer Prompt: *“Lord, establish me firmly in You, not in myself.”*

2. Kislev – Light in Darkness (Be Real or Be Forgotten)

- **OT:**

- **Isaiah 60:1-2** — “Arise, shine, for your light has come... darkness covers the earth, but the LORD rises upon you.” (**or** = light)
- **Psalms 36:9** — “In Your light we see light.”

- **NT:**

- Matthew 5:14-16 — You are the light of the world.
- 2 Corinthians 12:9 — Power made perfect in weakness.

Prayer Prompt: *“Father, strip away my shadows and let me shine with Your light.”*

3. Tevet – Guard the Witness (Guard Your

Name Like Gold)

- OT:

- **Proverbs 22:1** – “A good name is more desirable than great riches.” (**shem** = name, reputation)
- **Exodus 20:7** – “You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God.” (**shem** = name, reputation, honor)

- NT:

- 1 Peter 2:12 – Live such good lives... glorify God.
- Philippians 2:14–16 – Shine like stars.

Prayer Prompt: “Guard my name, Lord, as I guard Yours.”

4. Purim I (Adar II) – Rest & Hidden Victory (Rest or Break Down)

- OT:

- **Exodus 33:14** – “My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.” (**nuach** = rest, settle down)
- **Isaiah 30:15** – “In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your

strength.”

- **NT:**

- Matthew 11:28-30 — I will give you rest.
- Mark 4:39 — Quiet! Be still.

Prayer Prompt: “Lord, I enter Your *nuach*, Your rest.”

5. Passover (Nisan) – Honor the Witnesses (Respect the Shoulders You Stand On)

- **OT:**

- **Deuteronomy 32:7** — “Remember the days of old; consider the generations long past.”
- **Exodus 12:26-27** — Teach your children the meaning of the Passover.

- **NT:**

- Hebrews 12:1-2 — Surrounded by a cloud of witnesses.
- 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 — Do this in remembrance of Me.

Prayer Prompt: “Lord, I honor the generations who carried faith to me.”

6. Shavuot – Spirit for Service (Lift Others, or You Don’t Lead)

- OT:

- **Numbers 11:29** – “I wish that all the LORD’s people were prophets and that the LORD would put His Spirit on them!”
- **Isaiah 61:1** – “The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor.”

- NT:

- Acts 1:8 – You will receive power.
- Acts 2:17 – I will pour out my Spirit on all people.

Prayer Prompt: “Spirit of God, empower me not for pride, but to lift others.”

7. Av – Integrity in Mourning (Keep Your Word or Lose Your Worth)

- OT:

- **Numbers 30:2** — “When a man makes a vow to the LORD... he must not break his word but must do everything he said.” (**neder** = vow, promise)
- **Psalms 15:4** — “[The righteous] keeps an oath even when it hurts, and does not change their mind.”
- **NT:**
 - Matthew 5:37 — Let your yes be yes, no be no.
 - John 21:17 — Lord, You know I love You.

Prayer Prompt: “Lord, restore my credibility when I have failed to keep my word.”

8. Yom Kippur (Tishrei) – Stewarding Influence (Earn Every Ounce of Your Influence)

- **OT:**
 - **Ezekiel 34:2-4** — Condemnation of shepherds who only cared for themselves.
 - **Jeremiah 23:4** — “I will place shepherds over them who will tend them.”
- **NT:**
 - 1 Corinthians 4:2 — Those given a trust must

prove faithful.

- John 10:11 — The good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.

Prayer Prompt: “God, influence is a trust. Teach me to shepherd, not to control.”

9. Purim II (Adar II) – Truth Wins (Truth Is Non-Negotiable)

- **OT:**

- **Psalm 25:5** — “Guide me in Your truth and teach me, for You are God my Savior.” (**emet** = truth, reliability)
- **Zechariah 8:16** — “Speak the truth to each other, and render true and sound judgment.”

- **NT:**

- John 8:32 — The truth will set you free.
- Revelation 19:11 — The Rider is called Faithful and True.

Prayer Prompt: “Lord, make me fearless in speaking emet, Your truth.”

How to Use These Scriptures

- **Pray Them:** Speak OT + NT verses aloud as a dialogue across the Testaments.
- **Journal Them:** Write the Hebrew key words (e.g., *chazaq*, *or*, *shem*, *nuach*, *neder*, *emet*) in your journal with their meanings.
- **Memorize Them:** One OT + one NT verse per fast.
- **Preach Them:** Show your groups how Jesus fulfills what Torah and Prophets began.

APPENDIX G

Sample Prayers & Confessions

FASTING IS NOT ONLY about silence before God — it is also about speaking truth in prayer. These sample prayers are not scripts to be repeated mechanically, but starting points to help you put words to your heart.

1. Elul Fast – Preparing for Renewal

Personal Prayer:

“Lord, I confess the ways I have stood firm in control instead of in Christ. I repent of fear, pride, and misplaced loyalty. Teach me to stand firm in You alone.”

Corporate Confession:

“Father, we confess as a church that we have often demanded loyalty to leaders and institutions instead of to Christ. Forgive us. Teach us to stand on Your Word, not our pride.”

2. Kislev Fast – Light in Darkness

Personal Prayer:

“Lord, I confess the masks I wear — the image I try to protect. Shine Your light in my shadows. Make me real.”

Corporate Confession:

“God, we confess that we have hidden behind image and reputation. We have covered weaknesses instead of confessing them. We choose authenticity over appearance.”

3. Tevet Fast – Guard the Witness

Personal Prayer:

“Father, let my life honor Your Name. Guard me from hypocrisy. Protect my witness in the eyes of my neighbors and my children.”

Corporate Confession:

“Lord, we confess that we have damaged Your witness through division, secrecy, and pride. Restore our credibility. Let our good deeds shine for Your glory.”

4. Purim Fast (Adar II) – Rest & Hidden Victory

Personal Prayer:

“Jesus, I am weary. I lay down my burdens. I trust that

even in hiddenness, You are at work. Teach me to rest in You.”

Corporate Confession:

“Father, we confess that we have mistaken exhaustion for faithfulness. We have driven people instead of refreshing them. We embrace Your Sabbath rest.”

5. Passover Fast – Honor the Witnesses

Personal Prayer:

“Lord, thank You for those who carried the faith before me. Keep me humble, grateful, and mindful of the shoulders I stand on.”

Corporate Confession:

“God, we confess that we have dishonored the sacrifices of those before us through division and pride. Forgive us. Teach us to honor their faith and carry it forward with humility.”

6. Shavuot Fast – Spirit for Service

Personal Prayer:

“Spirit of God, fill me. Teach me to lift others, not control them. Show me how to multiply voices, not silence them.”

Corporate Confession:

“Lord, we confess that we have hoarded influence and guarded pulpits. Forgive us. We commit to lift others, empower the young, and multiply leaders.”

7. Av Fast – Integrity in Mourning**Personal Prayer:**

“Father, I confess the promises I have broken. Forgive me. Restore my integrity and teach me to keep my word.”

Corporate Confession:

“God, we confess as a body that we have broken trust through failed promises and authoritarian culture. We lament our failures. Restore integrity to Your people.”

8. Yom Kippur Fast – Stewarding Influence**Personal Prayer:**

“Lord, influence is not mine to own. It is Yours to steward. Forgive me where I have misused authority. Teach me to shepherd, not control.”

Corporate Confession:

“Father, we confess that we have treated Your people as possessions. We have demanded loyalty instead of stewarding trust. Cleanse us. Reset us as faithful stewards of

Your flock.”

9. Purim Fast (Adar II) – Truth is Non-Negotiable

Personal Prayer:

“Jesus, You are the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Expose lies in me. Give me courage to walk in truth, no matter the cost.”

Corporate Confession:

“Lord, we confess that we have hidden behind half-truths and tolerated deception. Forgive us. We commit to truth without compromise, for only truth sets us free.”

Closing Prayer for the Whole Journey

“Father, turn our millstones into milestones. Heal the wounds of division. Break the grip of authoritarian culture. Renew us with integrity, humility, and love. May these fasts draw us closer to Christ, and may our unity testify to the world that Jesus is Lord. Amen.”

APPENDIX H

Resources for Further Growth

FASTING IS NOT THE finish line. It is the beginning of a renewed way of life. If this journey has awakened your hunger for deeper growth, these resources will help you continue. They are organized into spiritual, leadership, and unity pathways.

1. Spiritual Formation Resources

- **Scripture References on Fasting & Renewal**

- Isaiah 58 – True fasting that loosens chains of injustice.
- Matthew 4:1–11 – Jesus’ 40-day fast in the wilderness.
- Acts 13:2–3 – Fasting before sending out missionaries.
- Joel 2:12–13 – Returning to God with fasting and

weeping.

- **Books on Spiritual Practices**

- *Celebration of Discipline* by Richard Foster – Classic guide on fasting, prayer, and other disciplines.
- *The Spirit of the Disciplines* by Dallas Willard – How spiritual practices form Christlike character.
- *God's Chosen Fast* by Arthur Wallis – A biblical and practical exploration of fasting.

- **Prayer Tools**

- Prayer journals and daily examen practices (Ignatian tradition) for reflection.
- Breath prayers rooted in Scripture (e.g., “Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me”).

2. Leadership & Integrity Resources

- **Selfless Edge™ Materials**

- *The Cross of Selfless Leadership* – Exploring the Ten Commandments of Selfless Leadership.

- **Leadership Books (General & Church-Focused)**

- *The Servant Leader* by Ken Blanchard & Phil Hodges – Biblical leadership through service.
 - *Emotionally Healthy Leader* by Pete Scazzero – How emotional maturity sustains spiritual leadership.
 - *Canoeing the Mountains* by Tod Bolsinger – Adaptive leadership for uncharted territory.
 - *Leaders Eat Last* by Simon Sinek – Secular but insightful on servant leadership in organizations.
- **Accountability Tools**
 - Peer mentoring groups for ministers and elders.
 - Financial transparency practices for congregations.
 - Leadership audits focused on credibility and integrity.

3. Unity & Reconciliation Resources

- **Biblical Studies**
 - John 17 – Jesus' prayer for unity.

- Ephesians 4 – Unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.
- 1 Corinthians 1 – No divisions among you, but perfectly united in Christ.
- **Books on Unity & Healing**
 - *Disunity in Christ* by Christena Cleveland – Understanding and overcoming divisions.
 - *Making Peace with the Past* by Desmond Tutu (sermons & writings on reconciliation).
 - *One Body, One Spirit* by George T. Montague – Charismatic unity in the New Testament.
- **Practical Unity Practices**
 - Hosting joint prayer and worship nights across fellowships.
 - Cross-pulpit preaching and mission collaborations.
 - Shared service projects that break down walls.

4. Scientific Studies on Fasting & Health

- **Neuroscience & Metabolism**

- Dr. Valter Longo (USC): Studies on fasting, autophagy, and immune system reset.
- National Institute on Aging: Research on intermittent and prolonged fasting's effect on longevity.
- New England Journal of Medicine (2019 review): Cognitive and metabolic benefits of fasting.

- **Recommended Articles & Lectures**

- “Fasting: Molecular Mechanisms and Clinical Applications” (Cell Metabolism, 2017).
- TED Talks on fasting and longevity by leading researchers.

These studies confirm what Scripture has always known: fasting renews the body, mind, and spirit.

5. Practical Tools for Continuing the Journey

- **Suggested Rhythm:** Repeat the 96-hour fast every 2–3 months, as a rhythm of repentance and renewal.
- **Small Group Adaptation:** Form fasting cohorts who walk the journey together for accountability.

- **Journaling Guide:** Continue daily reflection using prompts like:
 - “What is God asking me to release today?”
 - “Where do I need to speak truth in love?”
 - “How can I lift someone else instead of myself?”
- **Digital Tools:**
 - Fasting apps (for tracking hours and hydration).
 - Shared Google Docs or WhatsApp groups for communal journaling.

Final Word

The purpose of these resources is not to overwhelm you with more to do, but to remind you that renewal is a rhythm, not a one-time event.

Fasting clears the noise. Scripture grounds your steps. Leadership frameworks provide accountability. Science affirms what God designed. And unity becomes possible when we put truth and humility first.

The nine fasts are only the beginning. May these resources help you live into a lifetime of milestones.

APPENDIX I

Refeed Protocol: Safely Breaking a 96-Hour Fast

FASTING IS ONLY HALF the journey. The way you **re-enter eating** after a prolonged fast is just as important as the fast itself. Done correctly, refeeding restores balance, supports digestion, and helps you retain the benefits of fasting. Done poorly, it can cause discomfort, bloating, or even serious health risks.

This appendix provides a clear, step-by-step guide for breaking a **96-hour fast** safely and effectively.

Why Refeeding Matters

After four days without food, your digestive system is in a sensitive state. Enzymes, stomach acid, and gut motility have slowed down. Jumping straight into heavy meals can overload the system.

Gradual reintroduction of nutrients allows the body to adjust.

Electrolytes and hydration help prevent fatigue or dizzi-

ness.

Protein and gentle fiber help rebuild muscle and regulate blood sugar.

Step 1 – The First 6–12 Hours (Gentle Awakening)

Goal: Restart digestion slowly.

Begin with **clear liquids and broths** (chicken, vegetable, or bone broth).

Add **steamed or lightly cooked vegetables** (zucchini, spinach, carrots).

Avoid raw cruciferous vegetables, dairy, or beans at this stage.

Sip water with electrolytes to stabilize hydration.

Suggested foods:

1 cup broth every few hours.

Soft-cooked zucchini, carrots, or spinach.

Unsweetened coconut water (for potassium).

Step 2 – The Next 12–24 Hours (Light Nutrition)

Goal: Introduce gentle proteins and fats.

Add **eggs, fish, or yogurt** in small portions.

Continue with cooked vegetables and add a small portion

of fruit (berries, melon).

Avoid heavy grains, fried foods, alcohol, or sugar.

Suggested foods:

2 scrambled eggs with spinach.

Small portion of baked fish with zucchini.

Plain Greek yogurt with a handful of berries.

Step 3 – The Following 24 Hours (Balanced Meals)

Goal: Resume normal meal structure.

Add **lean meats, legumes, whole grains.**

Continue prioritizing vegetables and hydration.

Keep portions moderate and chew slowly.

Suggested foods:

Grilled chicken with quinoa and broccoli.

Lentil soup with olive oil.

Brown rice with roasted vegetables.

Step 4 – Return to Full Rhythm (After 48 Hours)

By now your body should be fully adjusted.

Resume normal healthy meals.

Prioritize **protein at each meal** to support muscle recov-

ery.

Avoid binge eating — remember, fasting is not a license to indulge recklessly.

Key Safety Notes

High-Risk Groups: Those with diabetes, eating disorders, pregnancy, or serious medical conditions must only fast/refeed under medical supervision.

Refeeding Syndrome: Though rare for healthy people, prolonged malnutrition can cause dangerous shifts in electrolytes. This is why broth, electrolytes, and slow progression are non-negotiable.

Mindful Eating: Eat slowly, stop before fullness, and use meals as a spiritual practice of gratitude.

Spiritual Reflection on Refeeding

Breaking a fast is symbolic: it represents moving from emptiness to fullness, from surrender to renewal.

“Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.” (Matthew 4:4)

As you eat, remember that food is a gift, not a master.

Use refeeding as a chance to give thanks for provision, community, and God’s sustaining presence.

Summary – 96-Hour Refeed in 4 Stages

0–12 hours: Broth + cooked vegetables.

12–24 hours: Add eggs, fish, yogurt, soft fruits.

24–48 hours: Balanced meals with grains, legumes, lean meats.

After 48 hours: Resume full nutrition, with focus on protein + whole foods.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

J. A. Tomlinson is a strategic leader, systems architect, and unapologetic advocate for character-first leadership. With decades of experience leading finance transformations and building enterprise forecasting systems, he is best known for bringing clarity to complexity—without losing sight of the people at the center of every solution.

But Jason's leadership journey didn't begin in a boardroom. It began before dawn, seven days a week, delivering newspapers from a dusty Honda CR-V while juggling college classes and odd jobs. Those early mornings taught him something no textbook could: faithfulness matters. Showing up early, working hard, and doing the right thing—even when no one's watching—still works.

Today, Jason combines strategic clarity with relational warmth and deep moral conviction. He believes leadership is stewardship, spreadsheets can be sacred, and influence without integrity is just noise. Whether mentoring an intern, advising a CFO, or leading a discipleship group, he brings the same steady presence and Kingdom-first mindset.

He listens before he speaks. He builds trust before scaling systems. And he measures success not just by outcomes—but by the growth and transformation of the people around him.

His latest work, *The Cross of Selfless Leadership*, introduces *The Selfless Edge™ Leadership Framework*—a transformative system designed to help organizations raise up leaders anchored in character, clarity, and lasting impact. From boardrooms and nonprofits to churches and classrooms, *The Selfless Edge* equips individuals and teams to lead with purpose and leave a legacy.

Equal parts strategist, mentor, and spiritual guide, Jason's mission is simple: to build leaders who don't just perform—they transform. His vision is to see a new generation of selfless leaders—defined not by titles or trophies, but by service, substance, and Kingdom influence.

He still drinks his coffee black, reads the newspaper in print, and holds a firm belief: wisdom, like joy, is best when shared.