



ElevateChurch

21 Day Fasting Devotional

By Pastor Sheldon Riley

Day 1

Isaiah 44:3. For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, And floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, And My blessing on your offspring;

In the West Texas hot summers, there are moments when I can feel the dehydration of my body as the scorching sun shines down on me. It is at this moment that my body temperature rises and I can feel the weakness of my flesh. At that moment there is nothing better than a drink of cold ice water or to stand underneath a water hose and let the water run off of my head. It is an amazingly refreshing experience. Then it causes a feeling to come over me that allows me to continue on with the day.

There are so many times in our spiritual life that we feel like we can't continue, and God will bring an outpouring of His Spirit to our life to bring a refreshing to our spirit. As we stand in His outpouring, we begin to feel like we can make it, and now the journey of this life doesn't seem so overwhelming. Romans 8 says that we are more than conquerors through Him. His outpouring of His Spirit gives us the strength and confidence to continue this journey called life.

As you begin your fast today, don't allow your flesh to dictate the timing of your spiritual refreshing. It's coming and today marks the first step of God's outpouring on your life.

How are you feeling about your fast? _____

What are 3 things that you want God to reveal to you during your fast?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Day 2

Luke 3:16. John answered, saying to all, "I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

In the days prior to the Amazon world, receiving a package at the door was an exciting day. As you look through the window for the big brown truck to come to your house, the truck would bring disappointment because it didn't stop at your house. It would continue on to the neighbor's house. I'm sure you can still hear the sounds of disappointment that were made by your family, knowing that their package didn't arrive yet. They knew another day of waiting was upon them. The waiting just added to the expectation of the package finally being delivered and the expectation was worth the wait!

John the Baptist told everyone that they needed to repent and be baptized, but most importantly there would be another One coming that would baptize with the Holy Spirit. Repentance is necessary, and the baptism of the Holy Spirit is crucial for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. When we ask for forgiveness then we can have an expectation for the outpouring of His Spirit.

To be in the place of expectation, we must have a repentant heart. *I John 1:9. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us [our] sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* God is faithful to forgive and when He forgives we can have an expectation of the outpouring of His Spirit into our lives.

What are you experiencing during the fast? _____

What are you expecting God to do in your life? _____

Day 3

Ezekiel 39:29. 'And I will not hide My face from them anymore; for I shall have poured out My Spirit on the house of Israel,' says the Lord GOD."

I remember when my children were younger, and I would try to get them to follow me. Many times they would with no effort from me, except telling them to come with me. Although there were times when they were in a stubborn mood and did not want to listen, I would slowly walk away saying, "Okay, I'm leaving without you...". I would hide around the corner and peek around to see if they were coming. Most of the time they would see me peeking and they would laugh. The frustrating part was they still didn't come to me! So I would walk further away and be very quiet and stop looking at them. I would hide my face from them.

Disobedience causes God to hide His face. So often we get in the mindset of what we want to do and how we want to do it, but God has given orders, and He doesn't care about our opinions. He only cares about our obedience.

Obedience causes an outpouring of the Spirit of God. If you long for the outpouring of His Spirit, you need to check your obedience. The enemy is really masterful at making your opinion sound like the voice of God. If you're not seeing His face, you are not living in obedience. Obedience produces His outpouring. What are you experiencing?

How are you dealing with temptations of breaking your fast? _____

What are two things you need to work on to be obedient to God?

1. _____

2. _____

Day 4

Zechariah 12:10. " And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for [his] only [son,] and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.

It has been said time and time again, "if you want to get hurt, join a church". It's sad to say, but it is true. So often Christians forget what God has done in their life, and they seem to forget how to display the love and kindness God showed us.

When God pours out His Spirit, His grace and supplication is what shows His love and kindness. As a child of God we will always have people mistreat us, but it is how we react that will display the outpouring of God's presence in our lives. His love and kindness will cause us to love those that will emotionally pierce us.

I challenge you to display the loving and kind Spirit that God has poured into us to someone that is hurting today. We all know someone that is going through a difficult season. Maybe they have attacked you emotionally, but God's Spirit can still heal their brokenness through the outpouring that has occurred in your life.

How is your body feeling during the fast? _____

What are some ways you can display God's love and kindness to those around you?

Day 5

Matthew 13:43. "Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

At the end of every sports season, a champion is crowned. It is at that moment the fans cheer, a trophy is hoisted, and a banner is raised. Their names will go down in the history books that they are the ones that overcame every obstacle and every adversity during the season. The champion is crowned!

In our verse of the day, Jesus had just explained the difference between the good seed and the bad seed. Good seed produces wheat and bad seed would produce the tare. Interestingly enough a tare looks like wheat except there is no seed in it. It produces no fruit. Jesus taught that the tares would be picked and thrown into the fire and the wheat would be harvested.

At the end of this lifetime and when this world will be no more, there will be a moment when we as believers will celebrate with Jesus as champions. We will overcome this world because we have made a decision to follow the overcomer, Jesus Christ. We need to let everyone know that Jesus is the only way to become an overcomer. He who has ears, let him hear!

What part of fasting do you find the most difficult: Praying, Reading God's Word, or the Fast?

What has God given you strength to overcome? _____

Day 6

John 3:5. Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

We all have had the dreaded appointment to the DMV. The wait is going to be grueling, and most likely you are not going to be greeted with a smile. One of the requirements to receive what you need at the DMV is you will need two forms of identification. Even though you have a birth certificate, they will need another form of identification to make sure that you are qualified to receive the documentation that you are applying for.

The Kingdom of God is no different. Jesus said there are two things you will need to enter into the kingdom of God. First you must be born of the water. The first item is pretty simple, there is nothing we have to do about it, just be born into this world. The second step is all on us. We must be born in the Spirit. When we accept Jesus Christ as our Savior, we are born of the Spirit. Salvation is the key to enter into the kingdom.

What has God revealed to you during the fast? _____

Name two people that need to be born of the Spirit? _____

Day 7

Romans 8:9. But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.

Have you ever seen a garden that looks so beautiful and luscious, but as you closely examine the plants there is no fruit? So often it is a pollination problem that has occurred and the garden will eventually die out. There will be no proof that the garden never existed since there was no harvest.

Too often in the Christian realm, Christians walk more in the flesh and never produce the harvest of the Spirit. Why is that? Many times the flesh pleases man, but walking in the Spirit pleases God. Walking in the Spirit causes you to want to walk with other believers. Proverbs 27:17 says, "that iron sharpens iron", in other words as we walk with other believers we are spiritually cross pollinating; producing the fruit of the Spirit. Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control does not feed the flesh, it is all products of walking in the Spirit.

How has your flesh reacted to the first week of the fast?

Who are you walking with in the Spirit to cause you to produce the fruit of the Spirit?

Day 8

Acts 1:8. "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

For the most part of human history, people relied on their own human-power to get things done. Humanity started using water as a source of power to turn grindstones and then to mill grain. Today there are multiple power sources that cause human-power to be almost obsolete. It didn't take long to figure out that more could be done in this world if we didn't rely on our own power.

Jesus understood the task of reaching the world for His kingdom. As Jesus understood the frailty of mankind, He knew that a greater source of power was needed. The power of the Holy Spirit transcends all of the powers of the world combined. The power of the Holy Spirit gives you strength in all phases of life: physical, emotional, and spiritual.

As believers we need the power of the Holy Spirit, just like our body needs oxygen. The Holy Spirit is a power source that cannot be duplicated or replicated. To understand the fullness of God, we need to have the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

What experience have you had with the Holy Spirit during the fast?

How has the Holy Spirit impacted your life? _____

Day 9

I Corinthians 12:13. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body -- whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free -- and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.

I remember when I was young, all of the neighborhood kids would gather around and divide up into two teams and play cowboys and indians. Eventually one team would overcome the other team, and we would play again, until one day a third alliance would be formed, they called themselves raiders. And soon enough another alliance would be formed, and this would continue on until every team had been decimated by the divisions of each original team to the point that no team was ever effective any longer.

In today's day and age the body of Christ has also been divided. The diversity has caused a bitter taste of competition over individuals that Christ has called to be in one body. God never intended in multiple churches, He designed the church, the body of Christ.

It is so important to understand that freedom only comes when unity in Christ exists. To be one, we must love everyone and stop allowing the enemy to divide and conquer. Unity is the only team that Christians should desire to be on.

What has your prayer life been during the fast so far? _____

What is something you have allowed to divide you from other believers? _____

Day 10

Acts 10:38. "how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.

I can remember the days of elementary school years and the one thing that I loved and hated was recess. Yes recess! It was at this segment of the day that I loved it since we were not reading books and learning math tables, but I also hated it. I hated it because I was always the new kid, and I was a bigger kid and so often I would be the last to be chosen for all of the playground games. Once they knew me, I would soon not be the last one chosen, but it was always the dreaded part of recess at a new school. All I ever wanted was to be chosen, all I ever desired was to be wanted.

When God anointed Jesus with the power of the Holy Spirit, God had basically chosen Him. Jesus would be the first one to be chosen to be the carrier of the Holy Spirit, and to carry the assignment to deliver the Good News of Jesus throughout the world. To give hope to everyone the devil had oppressed.

When you gave your life to the Lord, He chose you, anointed you, selected you to be a vessel to carry His Spirit, and let everyone know His power to heal, save and deliver. You have been chosen to carry on the mission of winning the world for Jesus. The season that you are in right now in your life, you have been anointed for this moment!

What have you experienced during your fast so far? _____

How does it feel to know that God has chosen you? _____

Day 11

Joel 2:28. " And it shall come to pass afterward That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your old men shall dream dreams, Your young men shall see visions.

When I was around nine or ten years of age, I remember having a vision that I was standing in front of a group of people that appeared to be living in cardboard boxes. I'll never forget how excited I was in this vision. Fast forward about 20 years and I found myself in Brownsville, TX in a part of the most poverty stricken part of the United States of America. They called this part "tierra del paraíso" meaning the land of paradise. It was far from paradise. Many homes were made of cardboard boxes or rundown homes that had been repaired with cardboard. It was in that moment that a vision had become a reality.

When you experience an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, get ready for God to show you dreams and visions. These dreams and visions are not coming to scare you, but rather show you that God has a plan for your life. A plan for God to use you, bless you, and keep you.

If you will long for His outpouring, He will not only bring revelation to you, but He will also bring a refreshing to you. Seek God's outpouring of His Holy Spirit, and it will bring a new excitement in your life today!

Have you grown spiritually during the fast? _____

Have you experienced a dream or vision that God has given you? _____

Day 12

Acts 10:44. While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word.

One thing I have noticed throughout my life is that there are less and less people that are self motivated. It almost seems like this generation has settled for entitlement instead of initiative. God is desiring us to be self motivated believers that are taking an initiative in faith. Not waiting for the signs and wonders, but knowing the signs and wonders will follow. It is in our initiative that we will see the spontaneity of the Holy Spirit.

Peter had just preached the work, death, and resurrection of Jesus and basically wrapped up everything he was going to say, and the Holy Spirit fell on all of those that had heard the word. Peter had the initiative to speak about what Jesus had done, and Peter's initiative allowed the signs and wonders of the Holy Spirit to fall.

As we move closer to God, our initiative to draw closer to Him, allows His Spirit to cause an outpouring to all of those that are around us. God is desiring to move, and our initiation is His invitation to move in our lives. We need a move of God, and it is time for us to have a spiritual self motivation. The outpouring is waiting on us.

How has your physical body reacted to the fast? _____

What are areas of your life that you need to take an initiative in? _____

Day 13

I John 4:13. By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us,
because He has given us of His Spirit.

I remember when I was in high school, when a guy liked a girl, they would make it official by giving their class ring to each other. The girls would typically use tape on the ring so that the ring would fit and the guys would put her ring on a chain. It was a clear identifying act that the whole school would know that Johnny belonged to Susie. Then the school gossip would take place and next thing you know the relationship was solidified.

When we accepted Jesus as our Lord and Savior, He gave us His Spirit as a token of reminder not only for us, but for everyone else watching. Christ's Spirit living inside us is an internal witness to us that God is with us. The external witness of His Spirit is witnessed as people see a change in our daily lives. Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control all reflect God's Spirit living in us as the external witness.

How has your fast changed your walk with the Lord? _____

What fruit of the Spirit best represents you? _____

Why? _____

Day 14

I Thessalonians 5:19 Do not quench the Spirit.

You may find this comical, but in China, burping at the dinner table is the highest sign of flattery. Here in America we have been taught that it is not appropriate to burp aloud, not just at the dinner table, but anywhere, but belching is natural! It is a part of the eating process even dogs and cats will even belch after a good meal. There is nothing wrong with it, and yet it has been taught to be inappropriate behavior at the dinner table. If you feel the urge to belch, the belch should be suppressed and released into a napkin, and hidden so the world will not hear.

In our verse of the day, Paul is explaining to them that they are not to quench the Spirit, or in other words, they were not to suppress the moving of the Holy Spirit. It is sad to know that today to understand that the Spirit of God is desiring to move in our lives, but some people have been taught or been taught that it is inappropriate for the Spirit to move in our church services, work place, and even our homes. Because of incorrect teaching some have become so uncomfortable with the thought of the Spirit of God moving in their life they have suppressed the Spirit. But God still gets glory in the moving of the Spirit! When we allow the Spirit to move in our lives it is the highest flattery to God! He knows that we are well pleased. Learning to release His Spirit and not quench it does take time, but He longs for us to release Him in our lives.

What part of your fast is the most challenging today? _____

Do you allow the Spirit of God to move in your life? If so, how? _____

Day 15

Romans 8:26 Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

There are many times in life when we are confronted with real life situations that catch us off guard. We feel so unprepared, and we often have an overwhelming sense of falling short. There was nothing we could have done to prepare for it, and it has become our biggest reality of weakness. God knew it was coming, and He in all of His ultimate wisdom, prepared us by giving us the power and fullness of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is our guide through the darkened areas of our life. Wisdom and knowledge come from the Holy Spirit, who was there before time had ever begun. Our weakness is the exact place where the Holy Spirit is the strongest. This is why praying in the Holy Spirit becomes our greatest weapon over our weakness. The Holy Spirit knows the answer to our situation, and as we pray in the Spirit, the Holy Spirit is releasing the exact prayer needed for our moment of weakness.

Always remember that your weakness doesn't define you if you know the power over your weakness. Maybe it is a relationship that you don't know how to deal with: Pray in the Holy Spirit! Maybe it is a health issue: Pray in the Holy Spirit! Do you have a financial need- Pray in the Holy Spirit!

I pray that you have an outpouring of the Holy Spirit in your life today!

What has been your weakest moment of your fast? _____

How has the Holy Spirit given you strength in your weakness? _____

Day 16

Acts 9:17. And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit."

One of the most precious senses that most people have today is the ability to see. We often take our sight for granted until the moment that we lose that ability. Even if we lose sight for just a moment, it always causes a deep sincere appreciation of our ability to see. Because of our sight we are able to navigate around somewhat dangerous landscapes. We take things like knowing the exact moment to duck our head, or the very spot to place our step, for granted in our life.

When Ananias approached Saul, he spoke of Saul receiving his natural vision again, but when he was filled with the Holy Spirit, Saul also received his spiritual sight. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is an important step in our spiritual walk with the Lord. God wants to give us spiritual sight, and it comes through the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

How has the fast grown your relationship with the Lord? _____

Have you been baptized by the Holy Spirit with evidence in speaking in tongues? _____

If no, are you seeking the baptism of the Holy Spirit? _____

If yes, how often are you praying in the Spirit? _____

Day 17

John 14:26. "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

Have you ever gotten up out of your chair to go to the kitchen, only to forget what you went to the kitchen to get? You'll get frustrated and go sit back down, only to remember why. After you have made yourself comfortable again. We call it old age, but honestly it is because we have lost our focus on the one thing that we had full intention to do. It happens to all of us. Wouldn't it be nice to tell someone what you are about to do and if you forget they can remind you? As spirit-filled believers we have the ability to lean upon the Holy Spirit on things that we may forget.

I often hear people say that the reason they are afraid to witness to an unbeliever is that they are afraid that they will forget the scriptures, or they will need to answer someone's questions they don't know the answer to. The great thing about the Holy Spirit is this, if you have studied and read the Word of God, it is the Holy Spirit's job to bring to remembrance to you. When you have the Holy Spirit living inside of you, the Holy Spirit will bring to remembrance things that you have long forgotten, but God never forgets.

What has been a great moment you have had with God during your fast? _____

What has God brought back to your remembrance lately? _____

Day 18

Zechariah 10:1. Ask the LORD for rain in the time of the latter rain. The LORD will make flashing clouds; He will give them showers of rain, Grass in the field for everyone.

I remember when I was a young child and I would go to the grocery store with my mom. Going on Saturdays was always my favorite because Saturday was normally a sample day. We would go around the store picking up the groceries that we needed for the week. When we saw the sample lady I was always excited to try what they were serving. I remember times when my older brother would ask the worker if he could have a sample. She would always say yes, and I would just look at her. The individual handing out the samples would look at me and never ask if I wanted one too. My mom would eventually move on, and I would be upset that I didn't get a sample. The problem was not that there were not enough samples, the problem was that I did not ask for a sample.

The Prophet Zechariah is telling us that in the season of rain, you may not always get the rain, so you need to ask for the rain. The favor of God is often looked upon as unfair, but the fact is that most of the time God is willing, we just have not asked for it. Jesus would remind us that we have not because we ask not. It is so important that we vocalize to God our needs and desires that we have in our life. We need to learn that God has plenty, but many times we are the ones blocking our blessings because we haven't asked God.

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit is available for everyone. Are you asking for it, or watching everyone else receive what you desire for yourself? Ask for favor in the season of favor, and watch God show you His goodness!

How has your spiritual journey been during your fast? _____

What have you asked God for? _____

Day 19

Isaiah 32:15. Until the Spirit is poured upon us from on high, And the wilderness becomes a fruitful field, And the fruitful field is counted as a forest.

Throughout life there are moments that I call the “until” moments. Wait “until” dinner. Stay here “until...” Work here “until.” All of these “until” moments are some of the most frustrating moments in our lives. Waiting has never been a strong point in my life, and so God continually challenges me with the “until” moments. It is when the “until” moment has come to pass that I realize the goodness of who God really is. His timing is impeccable. God never shows Himself early, and God is never, ever late. He is always right on time.

Waiting on God shows our dependency upon Him. Our spiritual “until” moments truly define our dependency upon Him, and it reveals our faith towards Him. When was the last time you truly waited on God? Waited not just for a day, a week, or even a year, but you waited until He answered. You just patiently waited upon the Lord, and in His sovereign timing, He answered you. When God pours out His Holy Spirit, and you have waited for Him, He will take a barren spirit and cause it to be a fruitful spirit.

What has God shown you during the fast? _____

What “until” moments are you waiting on right now? _____

Day 20

Ezekiel 36:26. "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

We all know someone that when we see them, they turn a bad day into a good day. They bring so much joy into our lives, and just seeing them for a moment changes the outlook of our day. Like a sunbeam shining through on a dark cloudy day, you know that a change is about to happen.

When we have an encounter with God, He changes our outlook on our life. Our verse today speaks of changing our hardened heart into the heart that God had created in us. Life experiences cause us to become hardened and often change who we really are, and who we want to be. Often we become withdrawn and in a survival mode in life, but God didn't not create us to be withdrawn, He created us to be His children the light that shines through the darkness.

What God is doing in your life right now is greater than any hurt that you have ever received in your life. It is this time in your life that the old things need to be put away and grab hold of the new things God is creating in you today!

How has your prayer life been affected during the fast? _____

Have you experienced the new spirit that God is instilling in your life? _____

Day 21

Jeremiah 29:11. For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.

One of the most overwhelming things to think about is the future of our life. We only get one life here on earth, and we want to make the best life we can. Throughout life we get opportunities that get excited about our future, but not everything works out the way we plan it. It is in moments like this that stress and anxiety seem to overwhelm us and cause us to lose focus on what God has spoken over us.

Your future is not for you to worry about. For God said that He has already thought of it, and His plan is to bring you peace, a future and a hope. Nothing that God has thought about you brings stress and anxiety. The enemy will try his best to distract you from the purpose that God has thought towards you.

Your future is already planned and is already in the works. Enjoy the life that God has for you and don't allow the stress of life bring you down. You can do this life, God has already ordained your steps!

What is the greatest thing you have received during your fast? _____

What steps has God ordained today for you to take? _____
