

# 8

## LIVING A LIFE OF FASTING & PRAYER

*Pastor Jean Lim's Own Experiences*

Since saving me in 1977 and powerfully setting me free a year later, the Lord by His grace has called me into a life of prayer. At first I thought that prayer was the norm of Christian life. I was also led to fast practically every day. Actually, no one taught me to fast. **I fasted because the presence of God was so real and so satisfying to me that I would rather skip my meals than lose the presence of God.** I really enjoyed spending time in His presence.

After the Lord supernaturally delivered me from condemnation, demonic harassment and paralysing fear, I found myself going around to pray for people who were sick and bound. At that time, I didn't realise what I was doing but to my surprise, I saw the mighty power of God at work. People got saved and healed of their sickness and infirmities. God set them free.

**Even before I was properly trained in a Bible college, I was thrust into the ministry of healing and deliverance.** People who were sick and bound would just come to my house to ask for prayer. Having been so miraculously set free by the Lord, I had the faith to believe God for others. **Through trial**

**and error, I learned about deliverance and spiritual warfare.**

**God was so real. The enemy was real too.** I remember the enemy trying to stop me from embarking into the healing and deliverance ministry. Every time I prayed for people, the enemy would come and physically attack me at night. At first it was so scary. It was a time of great testing. **The enemy was pressuring me to stop praying and ministering.** I had no one to turn to for help except God. I prayed and prayed but still the attacks continued. I even thought of shifting house. I was so pressured that I actually thought of stopping.

**Then I began to fast more.** One day I decided that I was not going to stop praying for people. I just could not be bothered with the enemy. **To my great relief, the enemy stopped attacking.** I did not even notice when the attack stopped. Praise God, He never fails.

During that time, I really began to confess and repent of all my sins, over and over again. I had been wondering why God did not come and help me though I had prayed and prayed. **Then I realised that the Lord was actually teaching me about spiritual warfare (Judges 3:2b) and the reality of the enemy,** that as a child of God, I should not fear the enemy but exercise the authority He has given to me.

*Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. (Luke 10:19)*

**It was easier to fast in the early days but as I got serious with God, fasting became a bit difficult.** When I first began to do a 3-day water fast, I really suffered. The first and second days were no problem. Then, always on the second night, I would feel giddy and unable to sit up properly. I felt like vomiting, then I felt weak. My whole stomach churned. When

I began to vomit, I felt so sick. It was as if my whole stomach was going to come out. All I could do was lie down. On the third day, I would feel better.

I said I would never fast three days again. But when I encountered another difficult situation, I resolved to attempt once more although I dreaded the second night. **Later, I realised that I was actually going through deliverance during the fast.** I noticed that whenever I did a 3-day fast, I always saw major breakthroughs in my life.

In Bible college, I decided to fast twice a week, on Wednesday and Friday. I thought that if I disciplined myself to fast twice a week, doing a 3-day fast would be much easier. All I needed to do was also fast on Thursday. Every day, we had to mark the meal sheet to let the cook know whether we would be eating. So week after week, I just marked that I would be fasting Wednesday and Friday.

Initially, my fellow students kept telling me to eat. They would say, “Why are you forever fasting? Don’t be so super-spiritual. Don’t be in bondage.”

And I would say, “You have no choice but to be spiritual. After all, God is Spirit.”

*“God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.” (John 4:24, NKJV)*

*But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. (1 Cor 2:14)*

**There are a lot of obstacles when you want to fast. However, I just continued fasting.** It was only towards the end of the college year that I suddenly realised from the meal sheet that most of the students had also marked Wednesday and Friday for fasting. I was overjoyed! I had not even noticed when they started to fast. They had all been discouraging me but in

the end, joined me in fasting instead. **I really praise God for the power of fasting.**

Once, during a 3-day fast, someone phoned me. I was so excited that I ran all the way down to the hall to take the call. As I reached the telephone, I suddenly felt weak and fell down to my knees. It took me quite some time to stand and pick up the receiver. I thank God He then gave me the strength to continue.

**Given a choice, nobody wants to fast.** Why? Because food is essential to man's survival. The minute a person wakes up, the first thing he thinks about is food. It is natural for one to eat. I too enjoy good food. **But it is essential that we fast. God expects us to fast and pray.**

Initially, I only attempted 3-day fasts. Although deep in my heart, I knew that I should fast more, I thought it was a lot already. To do 7 days was rare for me. Whenever I heard people saying they were on 40-day fast, I always asked them, "Why so long? Why don't you do 3 full days instead? Forty days is really too long."

At one stage, I travelled around the nation conducting 3-days fast to help churches break through in the Lord. Most pastors wanted their churches to be blessed but all sorts of excuses were given when a 3-day fast was suggested. Some pastors said some people could not even skip a meal a day, so how could they fast one day? To fast 3 days would be impossible. With much persuasion, a 3-day fast would eventually be proclaimed. Of course, during the fast, some gave up half-way and afterwards regretted it. **But others went through the whole 3 days and got really excited. Powerful testimonies came from those who really fasted.**

At such times, I was forced to fast. I couldn't very well teach people to fast while I myself continued to eat. In a way, I

really thank God for giving me no choice. **Fasting was good for my spiritual life.** I became more sensitive to God. I felt lighter, and the word of God became more exciting. The presence of God was increasingly tangible.

**The more I study the word of God on fasting, the more I am convinced of its importance.** Look at what is happening around the world as the enemy destroys multitudes through violence, sickness and disease. Deception is creeping subtly into churches and Christian homes. In the natural, it looks helpless and hopeless. In God, there is always hope but what are we supposed to do? Fast and pray. **We must use the ultimate weapon the Lord has given to us against the enemy.**

### **Semarak Revival Centre Birthed Through Fasting & Prayer**

When the Lord stirred me to move on and start a church in Semarak, **I prepared myself with 7 days of fasting and prayer.** I thought it would be more effective if others joined me. It would also be easier to fast together as a group. **When I called for 7 days fasting and prayer for Semarak, I was surprised that quite a number of people responded.** The people took turns to pray day and night at the Prayer House, Kuala Lumpur. Most of them slept in the hall. When they felt tired or weak, they lay down and took a nap, waited upon the Lord or read the Bible aloud corporately.

**We did the first 3 days of the fast on water and the remaining 4 days on clear *ikan bilis* (anchovies) soup at night.** Somehow, when you fast, the days seem to be longer than usual. The mind would just wander and think of food. There were times when we waited for evening to come just so we could break fast and drink some clear soup.

**After the fast, we experienced really powerful breakthroughs.**

The Lord just brought the people together. We heard testimony after testimony of the faithfulness of God. **The most wonderful blessing was that the Lord provided the building we needed for the church, a corner shoplot.**

Every time I visited the Prayer Centre (it was only the land then), I had to pass a place called Semarak. It was a new township with banks, a school, hostels, medical clinics, supermarkets, eating places, shops, petrol kiosks, etc. **The one building missing was a church, the building of utmost importance.** I drove around, praying and claiming the place for the Lord. I said, “Lord, please lead Your people here to start a church.”

It never occurred to me that I was the one the Lord had in mind. I spoke to a few pastors, encouraging them to start a work there but I was not convincing enough. I even was impressed to claim a particular building for the Lord. **It was with much prayer and fasting that I suddenly realised that the Lord was actually leading me to claim a building to start a church.** I thought to myself, “This is crazy. I am not called to start a church. I am called to travel the nation to raise a prayer movement for the Lord.” At the time, I was still a pastor in Full Gospel Assembly, Kuala Lumpur, seconded to the NECF as Prayer Secretary for the nation.

I was at a prayer conference in Jerusalem when Cindy Jacobs invited me to sit beside her. During the time of prayer after the meeting, I asked her to pray for me. **She began to prophesy over me instead. The first thing she said was, “The Lord will use you to raise a powerful, praying church for Him.”**

Taken aback, I interrupted her, “What?”

Cindy said, “Look here, Jean, I’m prophesying. Let me finish first.”

When I came back from Jerusalem, I forgot about the prophecy.

One day, I was praying with my elder's wife, Mrs. Koh, in her house talking about prayer and mourning about the lack of prayer in churches. How there are more activities than there are prayers. Suddenly, she told me, "Who knows, one day the Lord may use you to raise a praying church for Him." I thought this must be the confirmation.

One week later, I was on the way to visit the Doulos ship with the Acting Secretary-General of NECF, talking about prayer. Then he said the same thing, "Maybe the Lord will use you to raise a praying church."

When the Lord wants you to do something, He makes sure He speaks to you loud and clear. I was telling the Lord that I was more interested in seeing the Prayer Centre established because the building was not up yet. Then **I suddenly realised that God is the Big Boss. He has the last say.**

That was when I went on the 7-day fast, inviting others to fast with me. I prayed, "God, if You really want me to start a church, You would have to provide me with a building, the corner shoplot we had been claiming for You."

One morning, I decided to pray at the Prayer Land. A godly couple wanted to come along and when I mentioned the building we had been claiming, they wanted to take a look at it. They requested the brother who was driving the car to call the owner to open the premises for us. Thank God for mobile phones. The couple not only saw the premises, they bought the premises, praise the Lord!

**The brother was so stunned. In all his Christian life, he told me, he had never seen a miracle such as this.** I remember we drove to a nearby coffee shop for a drink and while there, the couple wrote out a cheque as a deposit for the premises.

I thought to myself, “This is moving too fast. How can someone buy premises costing more than RM350,000 just like that?” The very next day, another buyer called to offer the owner a much higher price. Thank God we had already closed the deal.

The owner told us it was so strange that every time they put up a “For Sale” sign, it would fall down the next day. Twice, they had taken deposits for the building and almost sold it but feeling no peace, they had called off the deals.

**“Now I know why,” she said, “God had reserved it for a church.”**

The couple handed the keys to me. “All yours,” they said. “You can start a church here.”

Praise God, He is a miracle-working God. When He calls you to do something, He will provide. All you need to do is fast and pray. I kept thanking Him for His miracle.

**“Lord,” I prayed, “if You can provide the building, money is no problem to You for renovations. You know I don’t have time to raise money but You are the provider, so now You will have to provide all the finance.”**

We needed more than RM100,000 for air conditioning, wiring, PA system, musical instruments, etc. What better thing to do than to use our ultimate weapon?

After that first miracle, doing another fast was easier. This time, we fasted 10 days (10 days because the disciples had waited 10 days in the upper room). **Again we gathered at the Prayer House to fast and pray and seek the face of God.**

The Lord provided for every detail from totally unexpected sources. The very first day of the fast, while I was waiting upon the Lord, a sister handed me ten RM1,000 bills and whispered into my ear, “Please don’t let my husband know about it.”

**Every time we needed to pay for something, the money**



**would come.** I remember we were short of RM12,000 needed the next day to pay the air-con man. Another sister who was fasting and praying with us handed me a cheque for just that amount. Her husband did not know that she had set aside the amount for the Lord's use. She also said, "Please don't tell my husband."

*But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. (Phil 4:19)*

God provided everything. In fact, He gave us surplus. We had more than enough money for the renovations.

When I was told we needed money for musical instruments, I asked them how much.

"RM25,000," they said.

"Why so much?" I said. "Try to get something cheaper." I then went away to minister for a few days. A brother called up looking for me. (If only I can tell you who he is but he had told me not to let anyone know. He was the last person I expected to contribute.) **When he asked me what the church needed, I didn't dare say instruments costing RM25,000.**

I merely said, "If you want to give, maybe a piano will do."

"I thought you are a woman of great faith," he told me. "Why only ask for a piano? I can give more than that."

I told him, "If God has impressed you to give, then just give. Don't ask me for the amount how much."

"Okay," he said. "I will give you RM25,000."

"Where did you get the money?" I asked. "Are you sure you want to give RM25,000?"

**"Don't you know that I have a big God?" he retorted.**

Semarak Revival Centre is now more than four years old, and this brother is yet to attend any service in the church. After giving the money, he settled overseas.

Praise the Lord, through fasting and prayer, He provided us

with the building and the finances for renovation. **The next important thing to do was to fast and pray for the people joining me.** When you start something new, a lot of people get excited and want to be part of it. **What I wanted was not large numbers, but people chosen by God.**

So what did we do? We proclaimed another 10-day fast when we moved into the building. We stayed in church all those 10 days to fast and pray. **By the end of the 10 days, God had performed the miracle.** The people whom I expected to stay suddenly decided to leave. At first, I was quite disappointed. Then the Lord reminded me why we were fasting. I thanked Him for answering our prayer. All glory to God in the highest.

God is really a miracle-working God. When you fast and pray, God will work miracles. Why? Because He is just waiting to manifest His power and glory. Vast resources in heaven are waiting for us to claim them. People get disappointed when they do not see the finance coming in and, in the end, they give up. Why? Because they said God told them to do something but they looked not to God but to man for their supply.

The Bible says, “**God shall supply all your need**”, not man (Phil 4:19). We are to look to Jesus.

*Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. (Heb 12:2)*

**God has vast resources which He is waiting to release to us.** Our enemy, the god of this age (2 Cor 4:4) wants to hinder the flow of provision for us because he is all out “to steal, and to kill, and to destroy (John 10:10)”.

Daniel fasted 21 days before the archangel Gabriel finally reached him. If an archangel of God can be hindered and needed Daniel to fast and pray, how much more do we need

fasting and prayer?

*I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled. (Dan 10:3)*

**Oh people of God, if only you would resolve to do God's work in God's way and not man's way.** You will see greater results and abundance of supply. Start fasting and praying. You will see the mighty power of God at work not only in finance but also in everything you do for God.

Although a captive in Babylon, Daniel became such an influential man. Daniel could have moaned and groaned about his captivity but Daniel knew that he had a great and mighty God and that they were in captivity because of their sins. Daniel did not take God for granted. **He knew the secret of prayer and fasting.** When he read the book of Jeremiah and realised that the end of their 70 years of captivity had come, Daniel set his face "unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes" (Dan 9:3).

If Daniel looked at the circumstances, he would have been discouraged. People get discouraged, give up and never see breakthrough because they never set their face toward God when praying. They pray for help but keep looking at the negative situation. No wonder the situation does not change. Only God can change the situation. **When you fast and pray, don't look at the circumstances.** That is what the enemy wants you to do but don't be deceived. Lift up your eyes and turn to God, and you will see that deliverance will come from Him.

*I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.*

*My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth. (Ps 121:1-2)*

Even as a young captive in Babylon, Daniel fasted. **His fasting and prayer gave him favour with God and with man.** Daniel was powerful because God brought him into favour and goodwill (Dan 1:9).

God not only gave Daniel wisdom over the affairs of Babylon but also gave him the power to tell the king his dream and interpret it. Can you imagine anyone dreaming a dream, forgetting what it was about and then pestering you to tell him what he himself had dreamt, otherwise he would cut you into pieces? That was what king Nebuchadnezzar demanded (Dan 2:1-5).

Thank God, Daniel knew that God is a God of the impossible. Once again, he turned to God and God revealed the king's dream and its interpretation to Daniel.

Daniel served four empires and seven kings. **He lived till a ripe old age, still serving God with fasting and prayer. His fasting affected even the heavenly realms.** He was made the third ruler of Babylon.

From young, Daniel had honoured and served God with fasting and prayer. Such a life led him also to interpret the writing on the wall for king Belshazzar, Nebuchadnezzar's son (Dan 5:26-28), shut the mouth of the lions (Dan 6:22; Heb 11:33), gave him revelation about end times and made him prominent.

Daniel lived above reproach. They could find no fault in him except that they could not stop him from praying to God. When commanded not to pray, he just went home and openly prayed three times a day.

*Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime. (Dan 6:10)*

I can tell you countless testimonies of miracles, healings and victories that God gave us when we turned to Him and sought His face with prayer and fasting.

**You too can experience the reality, power and anointing of God if only you would learn the secret - fasting and prayer - and begin to act on it.**

Of course, you must fast and pray with the right motive. God sees the heart.

### **Let's pray together**

Dear Lord Jesus, thank you for speaking to me about the importance of fasting. Thank you for this ultimate weapon You have given to me against the powers of the enemy. **I now know that fasting and prayer are essential for my Christian life.** Thank you for the encouragement You have given me regarding fasting.

Please forgive me for not taking fasting seriously and having made food my life. I acknowledge my sins of indulgence and prayerlessness. Please forgive me. I repent of my sins and renounce them.

**Give me the grace and the power to fast and pray like never before.** I want to have Your kingdom come and Your will done in my life, my family, my church, my nation and the nations around. **Through fasting, I want to be set free from all bondage and experience a personal breakthrough in my life.**

Please help me to subdue my flesh so that my spirit will grow strong. It is my desire to be more sensitive to you.

I know that You are coming so soon and I want to be prepared and ready for Your coming. I do not want to live in defeat but in victory. Please help me fulfil Your will in my life. I thank You, Lord Jesus. Amen.