

THINK FAST!

By Sarah Hanson

Fasting. I bet I can guess what your initial reaction is: “Starving myself for a day? My stomach hurts just thinking about it!”

OK, so maybe fasting causes your stomach some mild discomfort. But have you ever stopped to think about the purpose behind fasting? It’s more than just skipping out on food and drink. Fasting is an opportunity to humble ourselves before the Lord and serve others, often through donating fast offerings.

The Lord didn’t give this commandment to make us miserable. Instead, He asks us to fast so we can grow spiritually and think of others and their needs. Doctrine and Covenants 59:14 says, “This is fasting and prayer, or in other words, rejoicing and prayer.” Fasting is a cause for *rejoicing*! When we make that small sacrifice, we can forget ourselves and focus on the Lord—and feel happy while doing it!

Check out how fasting has blessed the lives of these youth.



FASTING STRENGTHENED MY TESTIMONY

My favorite experience with fasting involves a sweet elderly woman I home teach. She once had a stroke and ended up in the hospital. The doctors didn’t expect her to make a recovery and told us we should say our goodbyes.

We asked the ward to fast for her. I had already been fasting for her health and that I could accept God’s plan for her. Afterward, she made a miraculous recovery. It was a really special experience for me and strengthened my testimony a lot.

Michael D., 18, Minnesota, USA



I HAVE NEVER REGRETTED FASTING

Recently, my mom and I chose to fast on a weekday. We were fasting for my dad and that his heart would be softened towards the gospel of Jesus Christ.

This was the first time I’d ever fasted on a day other than Sunday, and I thought it would be really hard. It was actually the most spiritual fast I’ve ever had! As I tried to focus on my love for both my earthly father and my Heavenly Father, all thoughts of my rumbling stomach disappeared from my mind and I completely forgot my physical needs. I felt the Spirit testify to me that everything would be all right.

Not eating is sometimes hard because I love food! However, I’ve learned that if I simply get down on my knees and tell Heavenly Father, “I’m going to fast now, but I can’t do this on my own,” then His grace and Spirit can help me make it through the rest of the fast. Miracles do happen, and I can testify that I have never, ever come to the end of a fast and regretted it.

Merili R., 18, Minnesota, USA

*Fasting is more than just going without food—
it's an opportunity to grow closer to the
Lord and help others.*



THE MORE I FAST, THE EASIER IT BECOMES

I was really stressed about finals week at the end of the school year. I decided to fast and pray that I could prepare well and be successful in my finals. After the exams, I got my scores back and I had only missed one problem on each of my exams! I was super grateful for that.

This experience helped me feel like Jesus Christ cared about me and that He wanted me to do well in my life. He cares about what is important in my life, and it was important to me to do well in school. I felt like He was more connected to my life.

Fasting was hard for me when I first started, but it becomes increasingly easier the more I do it. I believe that if I fast, I will be able to receive the blessings that Heavenly Father has promised me for fasting.

Hannah J., 16, Minnesota, USA

FASTING ABOUT MY PATRIARCHAL BLESSING

When I was 15, I decided to get my patriarchal blessing. It was something I had wanted to do for a while, but I was nervous. Many of my friends told me it was one of the most spiritual things to ever happen to them. I wanted to make sure I did all I could to make it as special as possible.



When I asked my patriarch how I should prepare, I expected something huge, like “Go to the temple every day” or “Read the whole Book of Mormon this week.” Instead, he suggested I might fast the morning of my blessing. I didn’t totally understand the impact it would have, but I did as he asked, and as a result, my patriarchal blessing was a monumentally spiritual experience for me.

This experience taught me that fasting includes sincerely praying while sacrificing meals to express gratitude to God and bring Him closer to you. When I fasted that morning, I prayed that my heart would be open to the words of my blessing. I felt the Spirit so strongly as a result, and that made my experience very meaningful.

Lincoln S., 16, Arizona, USA



THE SMALL SACRIFICE IS WORTH IT

Last year, I damaged my ACL so badly that I had to get major knee surgery. When I found out the surgery was one of the most intensive knee surgeries, I was terrified! I asked for a priesthood blessing and fasted. My family members fasted for me too. My recovery ended up being smooth and quick, and I was so grateful for that.

Fasting can be hard, but for me, the blessings from fasting always outweigh the hunger. It’s a small sacrifice we get to make, and the blessings you receive from giving up two meals and donating fast offerings are totally worth it, no matter how inconvenient it seems.

In this world, we like instant gratification. But if you fast consistently and do other things while you fast, like read your scriptures or work on Personal Progress or Duty to God, you dedicate time to the Savior. As you’re consistent with that, you will be blessed. **NE**

Elaina K., 17, Washington, USA

HOW TO BOOST YOUR FASTING EXPERIENCE

1. Begin and end your fast with prayer.
2. Fast with a specific purpose or person in mind.
3. Attend fast and testimony meeting.
4. Donate a fast offering.
5. Be humble and happy as you fast!