FASTING

"SO WE FASTED AND PETITIONED OUR GOD ABOUT THIS, AND HE ANSWERED OUR PRAYER." EZRA 8:23

WHAT IS FASTING?

The purpose of fasting is to redirect our hunger toward God. To fast is to choose to abstain from food, drink, sleep, or something else for the sake of some special spiritual purpose. It is a way to humble oneself before God and make time for intensified prayer and focus.

SOME SPIRITUAL REASONS & BENEFITS OF FASTING (WITH SCRIPTURE REFERENCES):

Truly humble ourselves before God (Ezra 8:21; James 4:8-10; 2 Chronicles. 7:14)

Learn how to depend on God for strength (Mathew 17:21; Isaiah 40:31)

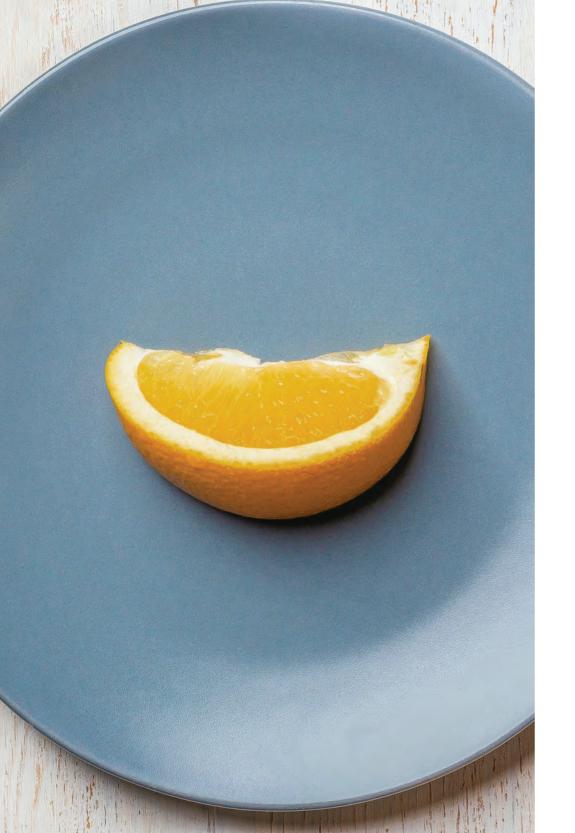
Ask for supernatural intervention from God (2 Samuel 12:16; Acts 14:23)

Help us hear and respond better to the Spirit of God (Luke 4:1; Ephesians 6:18-19)

Obtain supernatural protection and provision (Ezra 8:21-23)

Prepare for a special task or assignment (Exodus 24:12-18; Luke 4:1, 14)

Make more time for prayer to get closer to God (Matthew 6:16; Mark 2:20)



"SO I TURNED MY ATTENTION TO THE LORD GOD TO SEEK HIM BY PRAYER AND PETITIONS, WITH FASTING..." DANIEL 9:3

Fasting helps us yield to the Holy Spirit collectively and individually. It allows God to renew our personal strength and faith, and it transforms prayer into a more personal and powerful experience. On a practical, physical level, fasting can help you focus, detoxify, and re-prioritize. This is helpful to both your body and your spirit.

(Many of us take part in a "Daniel Fast," a Biblical fast from the life of Daniel that focuses on eating mostly fruits, vegetables, and nuts, cutting out things like processed foods, meat/dairy, and sugar.

*Examples of other things you could fast are: sugar, coffee, media, alcohol, one meal a day, or a certain time of your day usually dedicated to something else.

7 BASIC STEPS TO SUCCESSFUL FASTING AND PRAYER

BY BILL BRIGHT

STEP1: Set Your Objective

Why are you fasting? What specific results do you desire to get (personally and for your family and/or community)?

STEP 2: Make Your Commitment

What will you fast (food, TV, entertainment...)? How long will you fast for (one meal, one day, once a week)? How much time each day will you devote to prayer and God's Word?

STEP 3: Prepare Yourself Spiritually

Repentance is the foundation of fasting. Confess your sins, seek and give forgiveness, ask for the Spirit to fill you. (Ephesians 5:18)

STEP 4: Prepare Yourself Physically

If fasting from food, eat smaller meals before starting a fast. Limit exercise and activity, rest more, drink more, and focus your thoughts. Avoid caffeinated drinks and limit acidic juices (orange, tomato).

STEP 5: Put Yourself on Schedule

Set aside quality time to spend with God for reading Scripture, meditating, singing, inviting Him into different areas of your life.

STEP 6: End Your Fast Gradually

When you end a fast from food, begin eating gradually with small, light portions.

STEP 7: Expect Results

Expect God to reward you for your obedience to His Word. You will experience a heightened awareness of His presence and He will give you fresh, new spiritual insights. Your confidence and faith in God will be strengthened and you'll see answers to you prayers.