

SUNDAY

JANUARY 4, 2025

AN INTRODUCTION TO FASTING

SCRIPTURE

"And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you." Matthew 6:16-18

THE HEART OF FASTING

Fasting is abstaining from certain or all foods for a period of time for the primary purpose of drawing near to God. As we do this, other rewards may follow.

Fasting is not for attention, unjust gain, self-sabotage, weight loss, or to bring God into alignment with my will.

"Though they fast, I will not hear their cry." Jeremiah 14:12

It may be done individually (Exodus 34) or corporately (1 Samuel 7). But must be done with a heart of seeking & humility.

"Then (after fasting) you will call, and the Lord will answer. You will cry for help, and He will say: 'Here am I.'" Isaiah 58:9

THE REWARD OF FASTING

God is not anti-incentive. We are offered rewards in this life & in Heaven.

God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. Hebrews 11:6

1/ God may reward you with favor.

Esther found favor with the king when she fasted.

2/ God may reward you with promotion.

Nehemiah was promoted from cup bearer to wall builder after fasting.

3/ God may reward you with deliverance.

Jesus told the disciples that some things only come out by fasting.

4/ God may reward you with guidance.

Israel fasted when in need of direction.

5/ God may reward you with personal revival.

Joel tells us to return to God with fasting.

6/ God may reward you with healing.

Hannah was healed while fasting.

7/ God may reward you with cleansing.

Isaiah says we will be like an ever-flowing spring when we fast.

8/ God may reward you with breakthrough.

Daniel received answers after 21 days of fasting.

9/ God will reward you with His presence.

James says God will draw near to us, when we draw near to Him.

THE PLAN FOR FASTING

1/ Before fasting...

You should determine why you are fasting.

You should determine what you are fasting.

You should determine how long you are fasting.

In the Bible, there are fasts that last one day, three days, seven days, 14 days, 21 days, & 40 days.

You should prepare your body for fasting.

Fools die for lack of wisdom. Proverbs 10:21

You should prepare your spirit for fasting.

We don't fast because we are mature. We fast to become mature.

You should prepare your schedule for fasting.

2/ During fasting...

You should expect physical affects.

You should expect spiritual affects.

3/ After fasting...

You should break the fast wisely.

You should break the fast believing.

Without faith, it is impossible to please God. Anyone who wants to come to Him must believe that God exists and that He rewards those who sincerely seek Him. Hebrews 11:6