

**FASTING SERIES**

**THE IMPORTANCE OF FASTING**

We are going to look at what the Word of God says about fasting. It is an important key in the Christian life and prayer. We will specially focus on different aspects of fasting in relation to prayer and the whole of the Christian life. What does His Word say about fasting? Turn to Gen. 3 where we see the serpent tempting the woman and the woman was with the man as they were standing there before the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Remember it was a physical tree. But God has given His Word and God Word says, "Don't eat of that tree. In fact, God has created many other trees in the Garden of Eden. It just like the devil makes you forget about the million of things that God has given and makes you focus on the one thing that you think God should do and has not done. There are hundreds and millions of ways that God has poured on us His love and blessing. God said I have given you every tree for food. And here is the silly old devil coming through the serpent and told Eve to look at that one single tree out of all the many, many other trees in the Garden of Eden. And here they are all paying attention to one insignificant little tree. And that is the way the devil is. That is the devil's nature. And I encourage you not to keep looking at those things that should be done and should have not been done. You must count your blessings one by one and then you would see what God has done. Don't forget the many blessings that He has given onto you. And when you look at one another and relate to one another don't look at the one tiny point in the other person that is the flaw or the character or weakness and forget about the other things that God has placed in his or her life. Each one of you is beautiful. Turn to one another and say I like you even though sometimes you are nasty I still like you because I see more good in you than any other things. That's the nature of God. God sees some things in your life that is

worth redeeming. He sent His Son all the way to redeem you and I. He saw something in us to make something beautiful out of all of our ugly confusion.

In the Garden of Eden, here was the woman with the man. And this is what the serpent said in Gen. 3:1 *Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman. "Has God indeed said, "You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?"* God did not say that. But the devil was trying through the serpent to get the attention of one tiny tree. And the woman said God has said that you shall not eat of this tree of knowledge of good and evil which is in the midst of the garden. The woman said God said don't eat and don't touch. She added to God's words. God just said don't eat. She said God said don't eat and don't touch. As usual, the snake always gets longer. In verse 6 *So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food.* Now the woman saw that the tree was good for food. Her appetite was drawn out. Her flesh came out. If you sin its because of your flesh. Her flesh got pre-eminence over the commandments of God. So, when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes. That means it must be quite a lovely looking fruit. Some fruits look very lovely; some fruits don't look very lovely. This was one of the fruits that look nice. And a desirable to make one wise.

Now that part was a deception. The devil told her this would make you wise. So, she reasoned within herself. Now observe how the sin came into the world. Her action followed. She saw, she liked it and she ate it. She acted on what she saw. She took that fruit and she bit it with her physical mouth. And the moment it entered her system it was not because of the fruit alone but the act of eating. Do you know sin came into the world by the mouth? The woman ate and her dumb husband was next to her didn't rebuke the devil. God said to them to take authority over everything, including that creep. He didn't take authority. He was standing there next to the woman. The woman took the forbidden fruit and gave it to her husband. The husband ate it and sin came in immediately. Sin came into the world through the act of eating. The act of eating caused disobedience to God's command. It was a natural command broken. It was a spiritual command broken. God says that I have given this command to prove your obedience to Me. So, sin came into the world through eating. The organ of eating has been an opening for sin to come into the world.

Many thousands of years later Jesus came along the scene. He came to redeem the world. When He started His ministry, the same old devil came to Jesus and he has not changed through the ages. And Jesus has fasted for 40 days and 40 nights without food. Jesus had fasted, spent His time with God and the 40 days fast was over. Here comes the devil, now through the 40 days of fasting He was also tempted. Now at the conclusion, He was still tempted. And this is where the devil came in Lk. 4:2 *Being tempted for forty days by the devil. And in those days He ate nothing, and afterwards when they had ended, He was hungry.* He was physically hungry and here comes the devil, the same devil. It was the different place and a different time and with a different person but it was the same temptation. He told Jesus to turn these stones into bread and eat them. It was the same temptation of the physical body. For some of you the devil will come while you are in the wilderness praying 40 days and 40 nights. After the end of your 40 days and 40 nights, you come out looking like a piece of bamboo. The devil comes and says turn this stone into a hamburger. It was the same temptation, but for some of you he may have to refine his temptation. Some of you God told you to fast. And then you came and the devil said turn this strings into spaghetti.

I remembered the first time I fasted 3 days and 3 nights without food and water. The Lord told me to do it. I was in a small town in the Baptist church there. The Lord told me to fast 3 days and 3 nights. I had the impression coming. Now I want to make it clear to you that the Lord did not appear to me in a vision. He did not send a thunderbolt down and said to me to fast. He did not send an angel to me, unroll the scroll and say, "Thus says the Lord of heaven, fast." He did not say all these things to me. He did not give me a dream about fasting. All I had was a tiny still small voice inside my heart that says fast 3 days and 3 nights. You know what I did. I was young in the ministry I said, "Devil get thee behind me." You know the Lord can be persuasive but if you choose not to obey Him, He is not going to hang on your back forever. But if you keep on resisting Him He will move off. I am talking about the Holy Spirit wanting to bring you into something and if you refuse, He won't push you, He leads you but He won't push you. And there was another Baptist brother and he was staying in the church with me. He was from a town further down. He used to come and spent the weekend in the church where we had meetings. He used to seek the Lord together with me. And he was staying in the same dormitory with me in the church, when I said no to the Lord, I did not want to obey that. I have never done it before and I know that it's going to take

some determination to pull through that kind of fast after all the nice food around. And it happened that the chef was a super cook. When I said no to the Lord, the Lord went over to this brother and the Lord whispered in his spirit to fast for 3 days and 3 nights. He had that impression and it came to him. One of us had to do it. I want you to know that if you don't obey God, God is going to get somebody else. Nobody is indispensable. God can choose His own people. If you are not going to obey God and receive blessing God is going to choose somebody else. He was going to obey God. He came down and the first thing his eyes fell on was the fried rice. He succumbed to that delicious fried rice and that was the end of the fast. How sad the Lord must be. He was trying to get us to do simple things like that. He had to struggle with us. When he gone down and ate the fried rice I was still upstairs in my dormitory room. When he disobeyed the Lord, the Holy Spirit came back upstairs and said, "Fast 3 days and 3 nights." So I checked within myself and asked, "Is that you Lord?" I heard the answer, "Yes." You want me to fast 3 days and 3 nights?" "Yes." So I came downstairs and I saw the same fried rice, but something held me back. I sat down with them and I said, "The Lord told me to fast 3 days and 3 nights. I want you brothers and sisters to help me." The moment I said that, the brother who was eating his fried rice almost got choked. He was repenting away to the Lord and finally we all got it and said to him that he was the one who was supposed to fast. And I decided to obey God and all of them supported me. And it was during the third day I was weak; no water, no food touched my lips. They used to come and pray over me. And that was in that time of my fast that I had the vision of the two mountains that I used to share about.

When the devil comes, he always attacks you in the area of your flesh. When Jesus Christ was facing the devil, the devil said, "Turn these stones into bread." The first Adam was in the garden with all the lovely fruit trees. He was tempted by the devil to eat. He ate and he fell. The second Adam Jesus Christ came He was in the wilderness, He was tempted, He did the opposite thing He fasted, and He came out victoriously. Fasting will deal with your flesh. Let me emphasize that unless you have victory over your flesh you will not be able to demonstrate victory in your ministry, in your life, in any other areas of your life. Unless a man or woman takes authority over their own bodies, how can they take authority over other people's bodies and command sickness to come out? Unless you overcome your own flesh you can never overcome the flesh the devil may work in others. Unless you overcome the flesh, the world and the devil in your own body, you cannot overcome the flesh, and the world in other people. So, Jesus Christ knew the

importance of fasting. He knew how important fasting works to the success of His whole ministry. You do not find that God told Him to fast. You only find that God told Him to go into the wilderness. Fasting was His personal decision He made with God. He knew that the way and the things of the Spirit are through the avenues of fasting. It's the opposite way from the Garden of Eden.

And there is a place in the perfect will of God where you will never enter unless you fast. Every one of us got the will of God in our life. The perfect will of God for your life, the reason why you are born into this world, the reason why God made you, you even before the foundation of the world He knew you before you knew Him. In the total will of God for your life there is an area of the perfect will of God that you will never enter into unless you overcome the flesh with fasting in your life. Lets say, this dark blue carpet here represents the will of God for your life. But as long as you never learn fasting in your life, you will always be down here, year after year after year. And there will be many times in your personal Christian life that you will always wonder why can't you enter further. There will be something inside your spirit that says, "I know there must be something more to my life than this. I know that there is something more that God is asking me to do before I meet Him face to face. But I don't know how to go about it. I don't know how to enter into it." Brethren the only way to enter into the divine perfect will of God in your life is to fast. When you fast, you began going into that area. You are moving into that realm of the perfect will of God that God wants you to have in your personal life. There is no other way you can enter into the fullness of the perfect will of God unless you learn the secrets of fasting and praying.

Jesus Christ was perfect. He was perfect in spirit, soul and body. But yet, He has to do the same things. He was our Savior and our example. He has to do the same things that we have to do. He has the perfect soul and body and yet He has to fast. The bible tells us here in Lk. 4:1 *Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness.* He was filled with the Spirit. John baptized Jesus in the Jordan River the Baptist. He came out from the Jordan the Spirit of God came down on Him like a dove descending resting upon His whole being He was filled with the Holy Spirit. And the first thing the Holy Spirit told Him go into the wilderness. Isn't that amazing? That the first thing the Holy Spirit says - go into the wilderness. You would expect after you are filled with the Holy Spirit you would say, "Here I come where is the ministry?" And this is

where many people failed to realize that that's not enough. When you are filled of the Holy Spirit, remember that the power of the Spirit of God on your life is to change you first. It is to enable you to overcome your flesh. And let me say this too your flesh is your greatest enemy, even greater than the devil. The devil is nothing. Heb. 2:14 tells us He has destroyed the devil. It's your flesh that is your worse enemy. So, this flesh of ours has to be dealt with. So there, the Holy Spirit anointed Jesus and sent Him into the wilderness. Let me tell you why He went into the wilderness. He went into the wilderness to overcome His own flesh. He had a flesh to be dealt with. Somebody says, "I thought that Jesus' flesh wouldn't sin." The bible says in Hebrews He was tempted like you and I in every way. Heb. 4:15 *For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are yet without sin.* Notice that He was in all points tempted. And every temptation that comes to the Christian comes through the flesh. Jesus was in a body of flesh. The devil tempted Him. The first task that Jesus had when the Spirit came on Him was to demonstrate the overcoming of the flesh.

Let me give you another verse Rom. 8:3 *For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh.* Let consider this for a moment. *What the law could not do.* Why did the Old Testament people failed? It is because the law did not overcome the flesh. Look carefully Rom. 8:3 *For what the law could not do.* That is talking about the Old Testament. *For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh.* The law could not deal with the flesh only the Spirit can. Only the law of the Spirit of life can overcome the flesh not the letter of the law. And so, the reason why Jesus received the filling of the Spirit was to overcome the flesh in His life. That was His first task Let's continue reading *God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh.* Jesus had to go through those temptations but blessed be God He did not fall. So here He was in the Jordan; He received the Holy Spirit coming upon Him and His first task was to overcome the flesh in His life. And how did He overcome the flesh? The best way to overcome the flesh is through fasting. That is why only you and you alone are responsible in that area which nobody else can do for you. No amount of intercession by other people, no amount of laying on of hands by other people on you, is going to overcome the flesh in your life, which you are responsible. And the bible exhorts us to discipline the flesh. Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit overcame His flesh through fasting and praying. If you have the Holy Spirit He enables you. The power of the Holy Spirit sustained Him for 40 days and 40 nights. Did He feel hungry? He did at the end of the fast the bible tells He felt hungry. But what made Him do it? His body cried out in hunger

but Jesus overcame the flesh. He will not allow the flesh to rule Him. He will not allow the flesh to tell Him what to do in His life. You read all over in the New Testament that we are to deal with the flesh. All the problems they have in the church in the New Testament was because of the flesh. How nice to get rid of the flesh. There is a way, by fasting and praying.

Notice in Lk. 4:1 the Holy Spirit did not tell Jesus to fast. It only says that He was led into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. It did not say that He was led into the wilderness to fast. Even a cross reference of Mark and a cross reference of Matthew 4 will tell you that He was led or He was driven into the wilderness in order to be tempted. It did not say that He was led inside in order to fast. Then the question is, why did He fast? Jesus knowing the laws of the Spirit knew that the only way to deal with the flesh, to chasten the flesh and our soul is through fasting. So by His own choice He chose to fast. And He fasted for 40 days and 40 nights, which I do not recommend that you start there. Don't try to be a hero. Some people are desperados. They think that they can jump. The bible never says to ump in faith. The bible says walk by faith not by sight (II Cor. 5:7.) So you walk you do not jump.

I heard of one brother who was formerly in the Baptist ministry, though now he is in the independent ministry. He is in Singapore. He was so hungry for God that he tried the desperado tactic. So, he went on a liquid fast for 40 days and 40 nights. First day he got on well, one week passed after about two and a half weeks he just black out and instead of the Lord coming in glory he had the ambulance coming in siren. The next moment he woke up, he thought that he was in glory. But he looked around he saw that he was in hospital. He tried the desperado tactic and he failed. Now please be balance. We are talking about the importance of fasting here. Jesus Christ was fasting 40 days and 40 nights and notice what happened at the end of the fast. In Lk. 4:14 after He overcame the devil *Then Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit.* Then in verse 16, He went into the synagogue. Verse 18 he says *The spirit of the Lord is upon Me.* The anointing was there. There is a difference between receiving the filling of the Spirit and receiving the power of the Spirit. The filling of the Spirit enables you to overcome the flesh. The first thing you must do is overcome the flesh. When you overcome the flesh in your life then you can overcome the devil and all his works. When Jesus overcame the flesh in His life doesn't mean He had no more temptation. He had temptation from time to time. But He lived a

disciplined fasted life. When Jesus Christ returned from the fast great power was on Him to exercise authority over the devil. The power of God is free bought for us by Jesus but the power of God will not be released on unsanctified flesh. The prophecy of Joel says that the Spirit of God will pour out on all flesh. But let me tell you those flesh are the flesh that is subjected to Christ. If the flesh did not subject to Christ, the Spirit of God will not come on those flesh because if He does He will kill you. The power will kill you if it is unsanctified. So, in His mercy, He withholds that power until we overcame the flesh. So, when the power comes on us we won't die but rather the power will flow through us to bless others. So there is a key of fasting and praying. The key to going into the perfect will of God is in fasting and praying. After the time of fasting you will find Jesus demonstrate great power, great authority because He fasted.

Lets look at Paul when he was converted you know what he did in Acts 9. The first experience of the Lord was fasting and praying. Acts 9:9 *And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank.* For three days, Paul fasted without food, without water. He was in such a condition, stunned by the revelation of Jesus and the first thing he did in his ministry was not to cast out devils. The first thing he did in his ministry was not preaching. The first thing that he did in his ministry after he was born again was to fast and pray. He sought God with fasting and praying. And when fasting and praying comes, the Lord comes. As I was reading this Holy Bible and came across this fact, I asked God, "Lord, why is it that in the early church they seem to have more demonstration than the present church? Remember nothing comes without sowing in the Spirit. They sowed in the Spirit. They dedicated themselves to the things of God and God moved. Let me show you, you just concentrate on the book of Acts and some of the miraculous things that God did simply because they fasted. The early church was a fasting church. I think today's church is not fasting enough. Today's church sounds like eat, drink and be merry and then be buried. The early church seems to be fasting and praying all the time. I am saying that the whole church of Christ needs more fasting and praying. We are doing less and less of it when we should be doing more in these last days.

So here, in the book of Acts one of the greatest ministries that ever arose in the New Testament was the apostle Paul. He wrote one third of the New Testament. Think of the anointing of God on his life. But he started fasting and praying. I have never met a man of God used mightily by God today who has not learned fasting and

praying. Yet, I am surprised that people are not taught to fast today. It is so important and yet it is a mystery why many Christians are not taught to fast. They fasted not because they are taught not, for the doctrine of fasting comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. So, we have Paul fasting and every time they are in trouble, they fasted. Every time they are not in trouble, they also fast.

Lets look at Acts 10:44 *While Peter was still speaking these words, "the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word.* These people were not even born again. And it was the first time they heard the gospel. Imagine a miracle took place. They were born again and baptized in the Holy Spirit in the same moment. That was a power anointing that God put. Peter did not even have time to lay hand. In fact being a Jew with the Gentiles, he probably wouldn't think of doing that. But there is more than just a sovereign act of God. Some time people just take the word *sovereign* and abuse it. They say God is sovereign. But what they are saying is that God does it whenever He feels like it. That is misuse and an abuse of the term, the sovereignty of God. God is sovereign but there is something that He asked us to do and says, "If you do it I will bless you." I said wouldn't it be nice if this same anointing comes when the presence of God just fills the atmosphere and people who are not born again just born again they didn't even have time to pray the sinners prayer. The preacher was still preaching and the Gentiles got born again and get baptized in the Holy Spirit. We could lead millions to Christ that way. The altar wouldn't have space to contain them if they came forward if that kind of anointing comes. The Holy Spirit helped me see what Cornelius did. Look at the price he paid for the revival in his home. If you want God to send revival to your home, fast and pray. If you have been praying for your home to be changed and nothing seems to be happening fast and pray. Cornelius was fasting and praying his whole life. In chapter 10:2 *a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always.* He was a very devout man but he was not born again. An angel came to him. When he saw the angel he said, "What is it Lord?" The angel said in verse 4 *Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God.* But this passage didn't say that he fasted but I want you to read on. When Peter came to his house Cornelius said this to him in verse 30 *So Cornelius said, "Four days ago I was fasting until this hour and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing.* That was the angel of God. Cornelius was a man of fasting and praying even though he did not know God. But one thing is marvelous is this. The angel told him even though he was not born again your prayers and your alms have come before God. But he was not born

again so what did God do? God sent him the gospel. He was so hungry for God that he was like a magnet that the gospel had to come to him. If you would fast, pray, and seek God sincerely you would see a greater demonstration of the power of God in your family, in your home fellowship, in the meetings that you minister.

Turn to Acts 12:5 *Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayers was offered to God for him by the church.* Constant prayer means that they had round the clock prayer without food continually praying. When Peter was released, he went to the house they were still praying. They went deep into the things of God. They dug deep into the realm of the Spirit. And God sends an angel. Why didn't God send more angels today? People are not fasting and praying like they should. They should get hungry for God, get on their knees before God, pray and fast onto the Lord. He will make you powerful in the prayer closet. Now they did not just fast and pray when they were in trouble. It seems to be a regular thing. I don't want to give you the impression that they fast and pray whenever they are in trouble. No, they were a church that has a disciplined fasting and praying.

Acts 13:1-2 *Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers; Barnabas, someone who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord and fasted.* See the word fasting there. If you think that only in the Old Testament there was fasting, you are wrong. The New Testament has a lot to say about fasting. I once asked God, "Lord, why did you use Paul so much?" The Lord referred to the book of Corinthians where Paul says that he was in fastings often. He was a man who fasted and prayed and that is why his ministry was powerful in God. Here we have, there was nothing going wrong in the church of Antioch. Everything was going right. Everything was fine and they still fasted. Don't just fast because something goes wrong. Don't just fast when the crisis of the problem hits you. You must make a practice of fasting even when everything is going well, like clock work. Here the church was growing everything was going fine people were being blessed and they had tremendous unity together. Yet in verse two *As they ministered to the Lord and fasted.* They fasted because they love Him. They fasted because they dedicated themselves to Him. It was a regular habit to them to fast and seek God. It was a doctrine in the early church but somewhere in the Dark Ages the habit and discipline of fasting was lost. We have to get back the doctrine of fasting and praying.

Let me cross reference to other scriptures in I Cor. 7 even though it seems as if Paul was talking about another subject. Verse 5 *Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer.* Here he is not talking about a crisis, a problem, he is talking about a continual fasting and praying. And through experience, I find that it is better to have a regular fast where you seek God and love God and minister to Him than to have desperado attempts. Although according to your needs, at times you can go for those. But you must be a regular faster and a man of prayer. God wants more of that.

II Chron. 20:1 *It happened after this that the people of Moab with the people of Ammon, and others with them besides the Ammonites, came to battle against Jehoshaphat. Then some came and told Jehoshaphat, saying, "A great multitude is coming against you from beyond the sea, from Syria; and they are in Hazazon Tamar (which is En Gedi). And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the Lord and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. They were facing a big giant national problem. The army that came against them was more than they could match. Militarily speaking they were no match for the Moabites. They knew if they fight with carnal weapons they would lose. But the weapons of our warfare are not carnal they are mighty in God. They are not carnal weapons. So Jehoshaphat said, "Lets everybody fast, lets seek God." In that kind of situation, if they didn't seek God, they would also die. So, it's better to seek God. They have not much choice. When the problem surround you like a mountain – go on a fast, seek God with all your heart.*

It seems some of the biggest mountains moved in my life when I fasted. Sometimes, you have done all you can. You have confessed the Word. You have put on the armor of God, you are standing on the Word and the mountain doesn't seem to move. You asked, "What more can I do? Let me tell you, fast and pray. Some times, I got down on my knees and I told God, "Lord, I am not going to move from here for food or anything else until I hear from You." I said either the mountain move or I am staying here. See the mountain seems to be immovable but sooner or later, one has to move. So, the devil comes to you. You come against it: stand firm, fast and pray.

The mountain surrounded them. "What shall we do Jehoshaphat?" All his military officers said, "Jehoshaphat, bad news, terrible news; we all better prepare our funeral services." "No, there is a way, fast and pray." When they fasted, they sought God. It was for their lives. The Spirit of God came down, not by might, not by power but by My Spirit. But you prepare yourselves for the Spirit of God to come down. When the Spirit of God came down the Spirit of God said, "The battle is not yours it is Mine." And in the end, Jehoshaphat said praise God we received the answer. How did they receive? Through fasting and prayer. And when they fasted and they prayed the bible tells us in II Chronicles that they sent the singers in front of them. Instead of sending their soldiers with swords they sent the singers and the singers playing the harps sang, "Bless the Lord. He is merciful, His loving kindness remains forever." All the enemies got confused the Bible says in II Chron. 20 that God send ambushes that all they have to do is worship God, rejoice in God. They fasted they prayed and they praised. By the time the worship service ended, the devil also was finished. Isn't it better to spend your time in the presence of God? Don't lean on your own understanding; don't lean on your own strength. Turn to the Lord with fasting and praying and He will hear you. Fasting is the key to the impossible. If you have ever faced a situation that is classified impossible, there is one special key that God gives: the key of fasting and praying.

The disciples asked Jesus in Matt. 17, "Why could we not cast that demon out?" Why couldn't we cast the demon out when You have given us authority (Matt. 10)? We are supposed to have authority but it is not working. What shall we do?" Jesus said, "This kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting. You guys are eating too much. In other words, you also got a lot of unbelief inside you. And because of your unbelief, it's blocking the power of God from manifesting. Fast and pray." Unbelief is caused by an unrenewed soul.

The bible tells us in the book of Psalms that fasting chastens the soul. The Psalmist says, "I chasten my soul with fasting." Fasting deals with the soul so that God could deal with your life. Fasting and prayer will draw grace from God. You have heard the grace message: God gives grace to the humble. The bible in the study of humble and humility you will find the humility and fasting goes together. And fasting and prayer is so powerful even though you and I may not be good or worthy enough. You are not as bad as king Ahab. You know king Ahab was a bad king. Jeroboam was the first king of the Israelites of the Northern kingdom. Solomon's son

Rehoboam was in the southern kingdom of Judah. Jeroboam was an evil king; he did wickedness by worshiping the golden calf, and the bible said all the kings after him did evil. Then it came to king Omri who did more evil than all the kings before him. Then after Omri, it came to king Ahab. It says king Ahab was the most terrible of all the other kings; never before was there a terrible king like him. So surely, you are not as bad as Ahab. You know what happened? Let me turn you to the book of II Kings the old Ahab hard-hearted, terrible king that he was. I Kg. 21:21 When Ahab was guilty of stealing his neighbor's vineyard. Elijah came to him and told him a prophecy saying *I will bring calamity on you.* And verse 25 says, *There was no one like Ahab who sold himself to do wickedness in the sight of the Lord, because Jezebel his wife stirred him up. She was as bad. And he behaved very abominably in following idols.* And verse 27 was a surprise. *When Ahab heard those words, that he tore his clothes and put on sackcloth on his body, and fasted.* I want you to know that God honors the law of fasting so powerfully. Here was someone so wicked and none of us could reach up to his kind of wickedness. But when he fasted and prayed the Lord said to Elijah in verse 29 *See how Ahab has humbled himself before Me? Because he has humbled himself before Me, I will not bring the calamity in his days.* God has said earlier that He will bring calamity in his days. I will not bring calamity in his days but in the days of his son. Just to show you how powerful the law of fasting and praying can be, even for a wicked guy like Ahab. Elijah must have said to Ahab, "Ahab, God says the calamity will no more be on you because He saw your fasting." When he heard that the judgment was on his son instead of praying for his son, he went on and did wickedly. I bring that to show you the great respect that God has for fasting and prayer. Fasting and praying work against impossible situations. God will release His power on your life when you fast. Fasting will release the power of God in your life.