

THE GREAT LENT

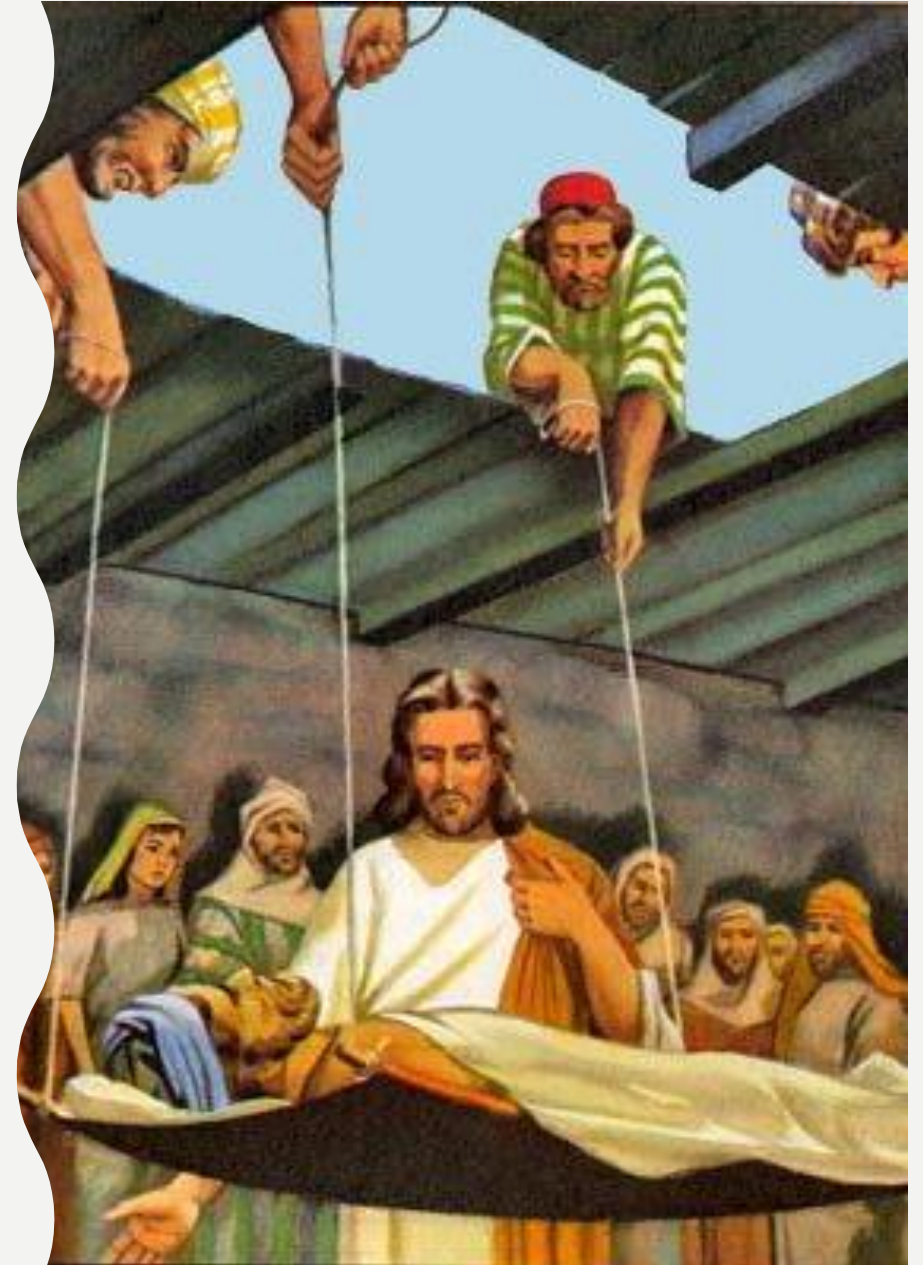
THE FOUR FRIENDS

- Then they came to Him, bringing a paralytic who was **carried by four men**.⁴ And when they could not come near Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was. So when they had broken through, they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying.

⁵ When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven you.”

..... He said to the paralytic,¹¹ “I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.”¹² Immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all.

Mark2:1-12



PRE-LENT SUNDAY

- Today ,the Gospel reading was from St Matthew chapter 6 :1-18
- In this part we can find those friends who can bring us in the presence of God so we can have the healing from our spiritual paralysis.
- Our spiritual Paralysis might be paralysis of living according to God's word, or paralysis of doing good, or paralysis of serving others or loving them.
- Think about someone who have four limbs paralysis, how he lives and how his life seems to be?

WHO ARE THE FOUR FRIENDS?

- 1 - Fasting
- 2 - prayer
- 3 - God's word (The Bible)
- 4 - Giving to poor (Charitable deeds) serving God



THE FIRST FRIEND

FASTING



WHY FASTING?

Because:

- **1-Fasting was the first commandment.**

When man broke it ,he lost his close relation with God. So when we fast we renew our relation with God .



WHY FASTING?

2- Physical obedience brings spiritual release of blessings

- **There is a connection between what we do physically and what happen spiritually.**
- **Example** :Victory over the Amalekites

¹¹ And so it was, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.

The power was not in the hand , it was in obedience of God's order .

Example : samson . He had his power through obedience of God . When he broke his commitment with God(which was a physical action) , he lost this power and this special blessing.



WHY FASTING?

- The same concept with (Metania) when we bow down and worship God , It defeat the enemies and release a spiritual power .
- The sign of the cross , it has the power of protection and cast out all evil thoughts.
- **Example:** Fasting is like the medication you do not see what is its ingredient but you take it believing it has the power to heal the disease.



WHY FASTING?

- So our obedience to God's commandment of fasting brings unseen blessings and spiritual power that we do not see because our fight is against unseen world.
- **Here is what God said about fasting and its spiritual action**

In Mark 9:29, Jesus said "This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting." it is a physical action has unseen power over Satan and all his acts against us.

So fasting is not a diet change ,it is a spiritual commandment and has to be associated with other actions like fasting of mind, heart, tongue, thoughts, ... And through practicing those actions we receive unseen blessings and strength.

WHY FASTING

- **Christ's Example to Be Followed**

Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for **he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin.**

1 Peter 4:1



WHY FASTING?

- 3- Obeying the commandment is a sign of true love.

He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.”

John 14:21

If you love your wife without showing that in actions , It is a questionable love?!



FASTING IS THE HONEY MOON BETWEEN ME AND MY GOD

- ⁸ “When I passed by you again and looked upon you, indeed your time *was* the time of love; so I spread my wing over youand entered into a covenant with you, and you became Mine,” says the Lord GOD. Ezekiel 16:8
- Fasting is the time when we prepare ourselves for our wedding to our lord Jesus Christ on the cross.
- You and me as a bride to our lord Jesus Christ need fasting and prayer to spend more time with him ,to know him more ,to love him more , to have this personal relation with him so we may leave all earthly interests seeking him alone.



WHY FASTING?

- **Fasting is the right way to be crowned**
- And also if anyone competes in athletics, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. Timothy 2:5
- ²⁴ Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain *it*. ²⁵ And everyone who competes *for the prize* is temperate in all things. Now they *do it* to obtain a perishable crown, but we *for* an imperishable *crown*. Therefore I run not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as *one who* beats the air. ²⁷ But I discipline my body and bring *it* into subjection. *1 Corinthians 9:24-27*



WHY FASTING?

BECAUSE

- It was the first commandment.
- Physical actions bring spiritual release.
- Example to be followed.
- Sign of true love
- The way to be crowned



MAKE A CHAMPION FOR HEAVEN

- And the LORD visited Hannah, so that she conceived and bore three sons and two daughters.

Meanwhile the child Samuel grew before the LORD. | Samuel 2:21



**THE SECOND
FRIEND**

PRAYER



PRAYER



Prayer is a great weapon, a treasure that is not emptied, a richness never falls, a quiet port .. It is the source and the foundation of innumerable blessings .

.. it is strong ... but more powerful than the power itself “
(St. John the golden tongue).

* "Prayer is the key to heaven ... By its power it can do everything .. It is the protection of our souls ... the source of all virtues
It is the ladder to which we ascend to God ... the work of the angels ... is the base of faith" (St. Augustine).

FASTING AND PRAYER **(SYNERGISTIC ACTION)**

**Are broad spectrum medication and
have a very powerful action :**

- 1- cast out demons. = cast out my sins and evil thoughts.
- 2- raised Elijah to heaven = raise me to the heaven and give me power to live kingdom of God on earth.”
- 3-saved Daniel from the lions’ den. = saves me from all harms.



FASTING AND PRAYER

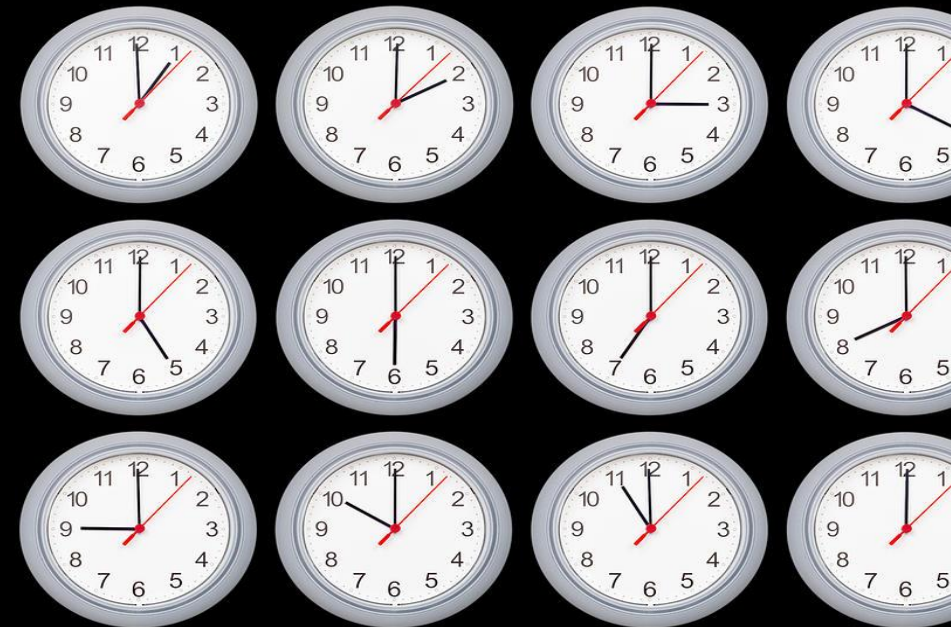
- 4 - through them Moses received the Law and Commandments written with the finger of God. = By them I can hear God's voice and live his word.
- 5 - through them God had mercy on Nineveh = lord have mercy on me.
- 6 - through them the Apostles preached the name of God to all nations and made them Christians = through them my service will be strong and many people will return to God .



EXERCISE

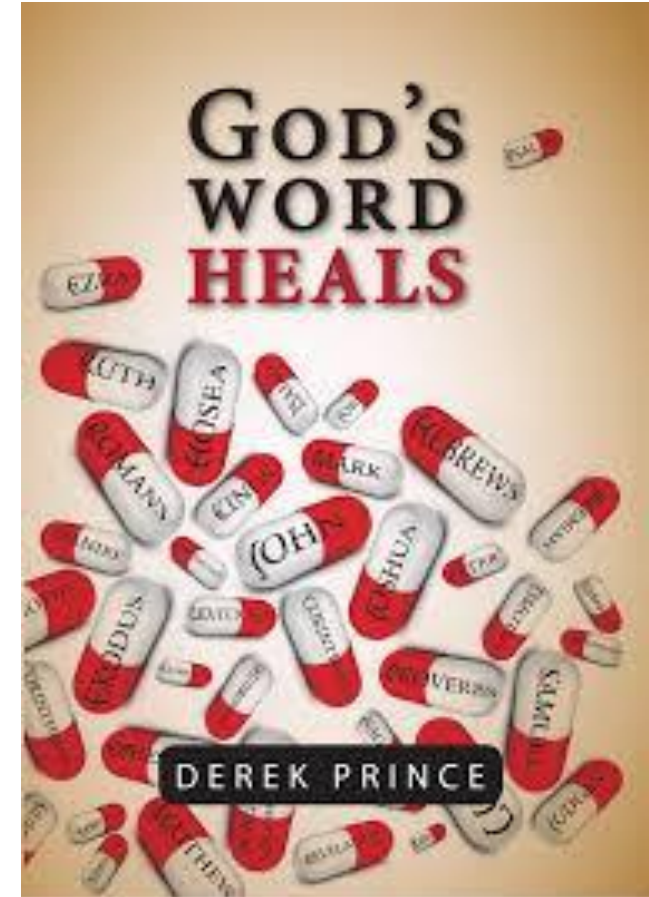


Lord Jesus Christ Son of God,
have mercy on me a sinner



THE 3RD FRIEND

GOD'S WORD



GOD'S WORD

- ⁶³ It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing.

The words that I speak to you are spirit, and *they are life*. John 6:63

¹⁶ All Scripture is given by *inspiration of God*, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.

Timothy3:16

Bible school message: Read it- do it – live it



GOD'S WORD



- **²² But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.**
James 1:22
- It is like when you only buy the medication but you do not take it or take it whenever you like.

FASTING OPENS OUR EYES TO UNDERSTAND GOD'S WORD

- In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks. ³ I ate no pleasant food, no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.
- ¹⁰ Suddenly, a hand touched me, which made me tremble on my knees and on the palms of my hands. ¹¹ And he said to me, “O Daniel, man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you.”
- Then he said to me, “Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard. Daniel 10:1-12



THE 4TH FRIEND

**GIVING TO
THE POOR**



GIVE TO THE POOR

- “Is this not the fast that I have chosen:
To loose the bonds of wickedness,
To undo the heavy burdens,
-
- ⁷ Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
And that you bring to your house the poor who
are cast out;
-
- When you see the naked, that you cover him,
And not hide yourself from your own flesh?

Isaiah 58:6,7



WHEN YOU GIVE

-Give from your needs:

- Ex : the widow woman (all what she had)

Give from your time, health, heart,

-Give something precious:

Ex: Ibrahim

Hannah

Because when God give, he gave his only beloved son for our salvation.



WHEN YOU HAVE THESE FOUR FRIENDS DURING THE LENT JOURNEY

- ***You and me will have the healing of our paralysis.***
- ⁸ Then your light shall break forth like the morning,
Your healing shall spring forth speedily,
And your righteousness shall go before you;
The glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.
- ⁹ Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer;
You shall cry, and He will say, 'Here I *am*.'

Isaiah 58:8,9

