

Challenge verses:

Psalm 20:7 (NKJV)

⁷ Some *trust* in chariots, and some in horses; But we will remember the name of the LORD our God.

Psalm 16:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ You will show me the path of life; In Your presence *is* fullness of joy; At Your right hand *are* pleasures forevermore.

Setting the Bar

The Purpose of Fasting is to:

1. Draw close to the Lord

HOW?

James 4:7-10 (NLT2)

7 So humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

8 Come close to God, and God will come close to you. Wash your hands, you sinners; purify your hearts, for your loyalty is divided between God and the world.

9 Let there be tears for what you have done. Let there be sorrow and deep grief. Let there be sadness instead of laughter, and gloom instead of joy.

10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up in honor.

- a. Humble yourself. One of the reasons for fasting is to humble oneself.

Ezra 8:21 (NLT2)

²¹ And there by the Ahava Canal, I gave orders for all of us to fast and humble ourselves before our God. We prayed that he would give us a safe journey and protect us, our children, and our goods as we traveled.

b. Resist Temptation

Ephesians 2:1-4 (HCSB)

¹ And you were dead in your trespasses and sins

² in which you previously walked according to the ways of this world, according to the ruler who exercises authority over the lower heavens, the spirit now working in the disobedient.

³ We too all previously lived among them in our fleshly desires, carrying out the inclinations of our flesh and thoughts, and we were by nature children under wrath as the others were also.

⁴ But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love that He had for us,

b. Cleansing from sin through heartfelt confession and repentance.

James 4:9 (NLT2)

⁹ Let there be tears for what you have done. Let there be sorrow and deep grief. Let there be sadness instead of laughter, and gloom instead of joy.

c. Heartfelt praise, worship, and thanksgiving.

d. Reading and reflecting on His Word.

The Purpose of Fasting is to:

2. Develop a sensitivity to the Spirit of the Lord.



The Purpose of fasting is to:

3. Open our eyes to the needs around us and to develop a heart to find ways of meeting those needs;

Isaiah 58:6-7 (NKJV)

⁶ "Is this not the fast that I have chosen: To loose the bonds of wickedness, To undo the heavy burdens, To let the oppressed go free, And that you break every yoke?

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?