> While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.”
> — *Acts 13:2*

Book: New Testament / Acts
Topics: fasting, Holy Spirit, Prayer, Spirit, worship

Interpretation:
Acts 13:2 gives us a glimpse of how the *Holy Spirit* was working in those days, calling and setting some of them apart for the work of evangelism. In this passage, we see the Lord through the Holy Spirit declaring that *Barnabas and Saul* would be separated to do the work to which they had been called.

This verse is very important for Christians today, as it shows us the importance of allowing the Holy Spirit to guide our lives and our decisions, especially when it comes to matters that directly relate to the work of God.

The importance of fasting and prayer

In this passage, we see how the disciples were fasting and praying to the Lord before the Holy Spirit spoke to them and indicated that Barnabas and Saul were to be separated for the work to which they had been called. This teaches us the importance of taking time to pray and fast, as these actions allow us to draw closer to God and hear His voice more clearly.

Reflections on God's calling

In many cases, God's call can be confusing and difficult to understand. Often we wonder if we are doing the right thing and if we are following the right path in our lives. This verse shows us that even though God's plans are mysterious and unknown to us, we can be confident that He has a purpose for our lives and He will lead us in the right direction if we allow Him to do so.

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Attention! This is one of the possible interpretations based on the comments of famous theologians, which may differ from each other. If the interpretation is taken from other languages, then there may be a distortion of meaning when translating the language. *Matthew 7:7-8*

> So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.
> — *Acts 13:3*

Book: New Testament / Acts
Topics: fasting, blessing, Prayer

Interpretation:
The Bible verse *Acts 13:3* tells of a significant moment in Christian history when the *Holy Spirit* spoke to the church in Antioch calling *Paul and Barnabas* to ministry. After a long day of prayer and fasting, the church commissioned the two men to begin a new mission in the name of the Lord.

Doing God's will through prayer and fasting

Prayer and fasting are two spiritual disciplines that have to do with our communication with God and our desire to do His will. Both practices involve personal sacrifice and giving up physical needs in order to focus on spiritual things.

Fasting involves depriving yourself of necessities other than food, such as your phone or television. While prayer is a conversation with God that includes praise, confession of sins, and supplication.

Transferring authority through the laying on of hands

The Bible also tells us about the laying on of hands that was performed on Paul and Barnabas. This practice is found many times in Scripture as a way to impart blessings, healing, the Holy Spirit, and the power of God.

We must remember that the laying on of hands does not guarantee the healing or blessing we desire from God, but rather it is faith that is exercised above all else. But by this act we acknowledge that our help comes from the Lord, not from our own strength.

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> I ate no choice food; no meat or wine touched my lips; and I used no lotions at all until the three weeks were over.

> — *Daniel 10:3*

Book: Old Testament / Daniel
Topics: fasting, food, wine

Interpretation:
The Book of Daniel is part of the Old Testament and is considered one of the most important texts in Jewish and Christian literature. In this context, verse 10:3 is particularly significant, as it reflects the prophet *Daniel's* attitude toward a difficult situation and fasting.

This verse is part of the story of Daniel's heavenly visitation, during which he receives a series of divine messages. Daniel's fast lasts three weeks, during which he abstains from delicacies, meat, wine, and even incense. It is a common practice in Jewish culture, abstaining from certain pleasures in order to achieve a deeper connection with God.

Why did Daniel fast for three weeks?

According to the biblical narrative, Daniel spent approximately three years in exile in Babylon. In chapter 10 of the Book of Daniel, the prophet prays to God, asking Him to grant him greater wisdom and understanding of His plans for his people. Although God answers immediately, Daniel decides to fast for three weeks to fulfill God's will and prepare for His messages.

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> Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my attendants will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish.
> — *Esther 4:16*

Book: Old Testament / Esther
Topics: fasting

Interpretation:

In the verse, *Esther* asks *Mordecai* to gather with all the Jews in Susa and asks them to fast for her for three days and three nights. Fasting was a common practice in ancient times that was used as a way to demonstrate devotion and repentance to God, it was also used as a means to seek God's help in difficult situations or to ask for His protection.

Fasting is an expression of faith and trust in God. Esther was willing to risk her life to save her people, she knew that without God's help this task would be impossible. Faith in God prompted her to make this decision. She put herself in the hands of the Lord so that He would do whatever was necessary to save his people.

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> Moses was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights without eating bread or drinking water. And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant—the Ten Commandments.
>
> *— Exodus 34:28*

Book: Old Testament / Exodus
Topics: fasting, bread, covenant, law, nearness, Word of God

Interpretation:
Exodus is one of the most important books of the Bible. It tells the story of the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt led *by Moses*. This verse describes the time when Moses spent 40 days and 40 nights on Mount Sinai with the Lord. During this time, Moses fasted and received the Ten Commandments from God on stone tablets.

Why did Moses fast for forty days?

Fasting is a spiritual practice. In the biblical context, fasting is associated with an act of sacrifice and devotion to God. Moses chose to fast for forty days to demonstrate his devotion to God. By abstaining from food and drink, Moses sought a deep connection with the divine.

The importance of the Ten Commandments

The Ten Commandments were given to Moses by God Himself and written on stone tablets. They represent a list of universal principles and values ??that have profoundly influenced how people

understand and build their relationships with God and each other. The Ten Commandments include such precepts as loving God above all else, honoring parents, and prohibiting murder, stealing, lying, and adultery.

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> So we fasted and petitioned our God about this, and he answered our prayer.
> — *Ezra 8:23*

Book: Old Testament / Ezra
Topics: fasting, Prayer

Interpretation:
Ezra 8:23 is an encouraging verse that talks about how God hears and answers the prayers of His faithful followers. In this verse, Ezra and his followers fast and cry out to God for help with a specific matter. At the end of the fast, God listens to them and favors them.

This verse reminds us that *prayer* is a powerful tool we can use to connect with God and receive help in times of need.

Fasting is a common spiritual practice in many religions, including Christianity. In this verse, believers fast for a specific situation, and their fasting is part of their prayer. Fasting can help us focus on our prayer goal and become more aware of our dependence on God.

While there are no magic formulas that guarantee our prayers will be answered, this verse shows us that *prayer and fasting* can be effective ways to connect with God.

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> Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every

> yoke?
> — *Isaiah 58:6*

Book: Old Testament / Isaiah
Topics: fasting, neighbor, slavery

Interpretation:
Fasting is mentioned in the Bible as a form of worship and seeking God. However, in many cases, fasting has been misunderstood and reduced to simply abstaining from food, without considering its true purpose. In *Isaiah 58:6*, we are reminded that fasting is not just a religious practice, but has a deeper and more meaningful purpose.

Fasting that pleases God

Isaiah 58:6 speaks of fasting that is God's choice. God is not so much concerned with abstaining from food, but with the impact fasting can have on our lives and the lives of others. God wants us to fast to free ourselves from the bonds that separate us from Him and to help those who are oppressed by the heavy yoke of unrighteousness.

Untie the bonds of evil

God wants us to use fasting as a tool to free ourselves from the sin and wickedness that darken our spiritual lives. Fasting gives us the opportunity to deeply examine our lives, evaluate our actions, thoughts, and motives, and commit to changing those things that are displeasing to God. During fasting, we devote our full attention to prayer and meditation, which allows us to know God more deeply and have a personal relationship with Him.

Free ourselves from the burden of oppression

In addition to loosening the bonds of evil, fasting can also help us to free those who are oppressed by injustice and oppression. Fasting helps us gain a clearer perspective and the courage to defend the oppressed and fight for their freedom. It can also be an opportunity to donate some of our money or time to help those in need.

Break every yoke

Finally, *Isaiah 58:6* reminds us that fasting can also help us break every yoke that separates us from God and prevents us from achieving our purpose in life. Fasting helps us overcome the temptations of sin, addictions and other bad habits that prevent us from living life to the fullest.

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> “Even now,” declares the Lord, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning.”
> *— Joel 2:12*

Book: Old Testament / Joel
Topics: fasting, conversion, heart, sadness

Interpretation:
In *Joel 2:12* we can find God’s call to His people to turn to Him with all their hearts. This verse invites us to consider the importance of conversion and repentance in our lives.

The word *“return”* means to turn back or return. Spiritually, conversion involves a change in attitude and behavior that separates us from sin and brings us closer to God. Conversion is not only an act of faith, but an ongoing process that requires commitment, effort, and persistence.

Conversion begins with repentance, a deep feeling of pain and sorrow for our sins. Repentance leads us to admit that we have failed and that we need God’s forgiveness. This pain and crying are necessary for us to change our ways and be transformed by God.

The call is to return to God with all our hearts. This means that our conversion must be complete and sincere. We cannot simply change our appearance or our actions, but we must change our minds and our hearts. Total conversion involves total surrender to God and unconditional surrender.

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> Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry.

> — *Luke 4:1-2*

Book: New Testament / Luke
Topics: fasting, devil, Jesus, temptation

Interpretation:
The Gospel of Luke tells us that after *Jesus* was baptized in the Jordan, He was led by *the Holy Spirit* into the wilderness. This passage in *Luke 4:1-2* is a significant moment in the life of Jesus and has great symbolic significance in Scripture because it shows us what happens when we follow a divine calling and how we can cope with the challenges that come our way.

Why was Jesus led into the wilderness?

After His baptism, Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness where He would undergo a series of trials. These trials were designed to strengthen His faith and prepare Him for His public ministry. Jesus spent forty days in the wilderness, fasting and resisting the temptations of the devil. This was a key period of spiritual growth for Jesus, preparing Him for the trials He would face in His public ministry.

Fasting

In the Bible, fasting is a way to humble ourselves before God and seek His will. Jesus fasted to prepare for His public ministry and to demonstrate His complete dependence on God.

Like Jesus, we can fast to seek God's will for our lives and strengthen our relationship with Him. Fasting can be a powerful tool for renewing our focus on divine things and turning away from worldly distractions.

The temptation of Satan

Satan tempted Jesus three times, offering Him power, wealth, and security. Each time, Jesus resisted the temptation by quoting Scripture and refuting Satan's lies.

Temptation is a common theme in the Bible, and it is presented as Satan's way of trying to lead people astray from God's path. Temptation can take many forms, such as lust for power, greed, or lust. Jesus shows us that by trusting God and His word, we can resist temptation and live a life pleasing to God.

What can we learn from Jesus' experience in the wilderness?

Jesus' experience in the wilderness teaches us several valuable lessons. First, it shows us that even in our most difficult moments, the Holy Spirit is present with us and will guide us through trials. Second, it shows us that trials and temptations are normal in our spiritual lives and that we can withstand them with God's help. Third, it shows us that it is through trials and hardships that we develop our relationship with God and prepare ourselves for the difficulties we will face in the future. Finally, it shows us that after trials, there is a great reward waiting for us if we remain faithful to God.

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> When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full.
> — *Matthew 6:16*

Book: New Testament / Matthew
Topics: fasting, humility, reward

Interpretation:
We find many examples of fasting in the Bible, both in the Old and New Testaments. In the Old Testament, fasting was a common practice during times of distress to gain salvation from God or protection from enemies. In the New Testament, *Jesus* fasted for forty days in the wilderness before beginning His public ministry.

In *Matthew 6:16*, *Jesus* teaches that we should avoid excessive displays of boasting while fasting. Jesus encourages His followers to fast in a way that is for the glory of God, not for human approval.

Hypocrisy in fasting

Jesus warns His followers not to act like hypocrites when they fast. Hypocrites fast to gain the approval of others, but their true intention is to seek personal glory, not divine approval. In fact, hypocrites fast for the sole purpose of showing off their fasting by changing their faces and presenting a facade of sadness and suffering.

Humility in fasting

In his teaching on fasting, Jesus emphasizes the importance of maintaining humility while doing it. Fasting is an essential spiritual practice, but the most important thing is to do it sincerely, without exaggeration or seeking attention from others. Instead of presenting yourself to others with a sad and worn out face, true fasting should be an expression of humility and submission to God.

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> But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.
> — *Matthew 6:17-18*

Book: New Testament / Matthew
Topics: fasting, Father, reward

Interpretation:
Fasting is an important practice in Christianity, used to show devotion, repentance, and humility before God. However, *Jesus* warned His followers in *Matthew 6:17-18* that they should not display their fasting publicly or seek the admiration of others. Instead, fasting is an opportunity to connect with God in secret.

Why is it important to fast in secret?

Fasting in secret allows the true intention behind the practice to remain pure, uninfluenced by the opinions or attention of others. Rather than seeking praise or sympathy, fasting in secret allows the practice to become a personal experience between the individual and God.

Furthermore, fasting in secret can also protect people from the temptation of pride and vanity. When people seek recognition for their sacrifices, they risk falling into the trap of ego and ultimately becoming distracted from the true purpose of fasting.

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