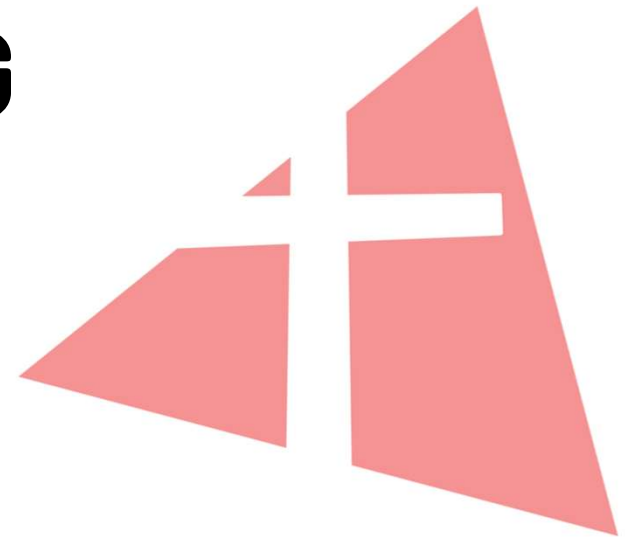


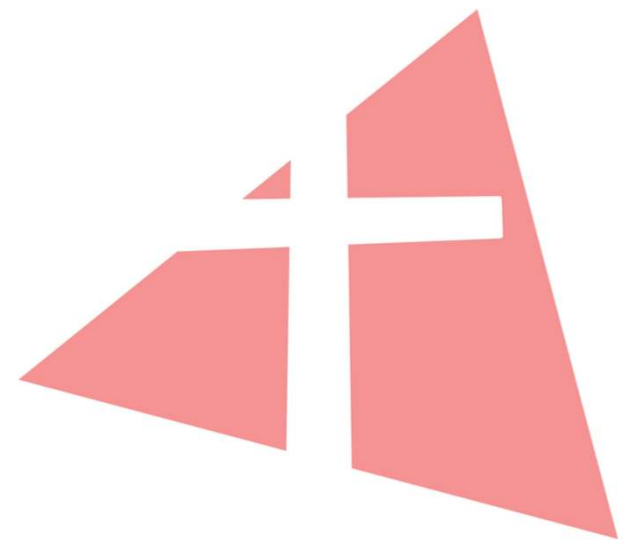
# **PRAYER & FASTING**

**February 23<sup>rd</sup> 2020**



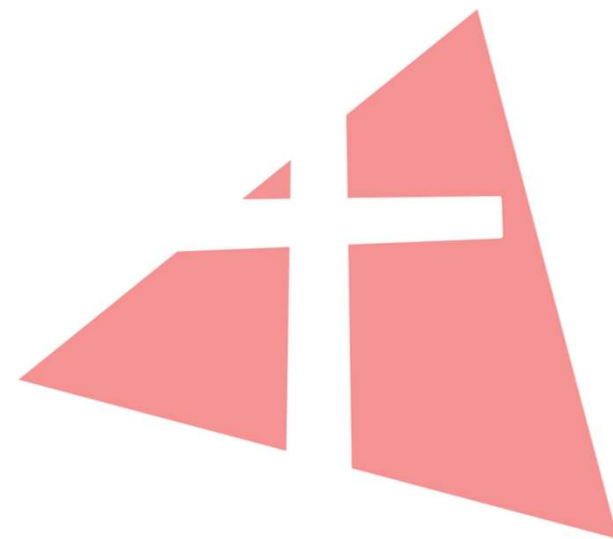
# OUR SERIES

○ Prayer



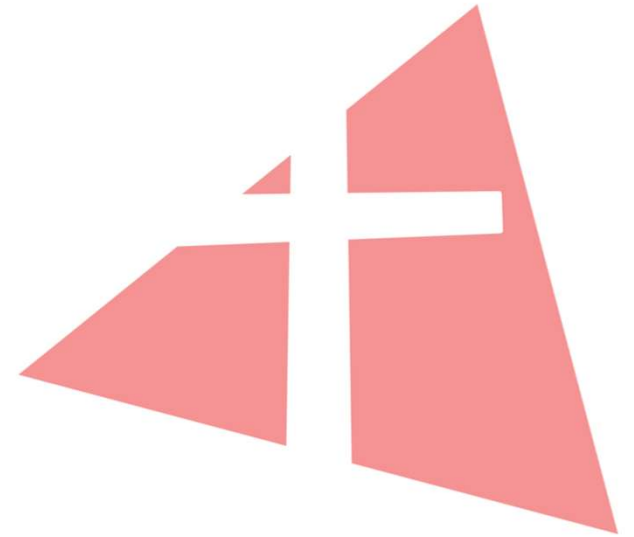
# TOPIC TODAY

○ Prayer & Fasting



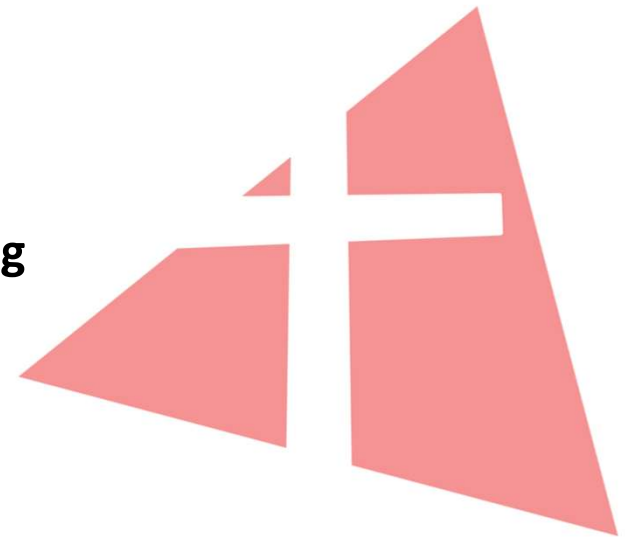
# MOST COMMON MISCONCEPTION

- Fasting makes our prayers more powerful



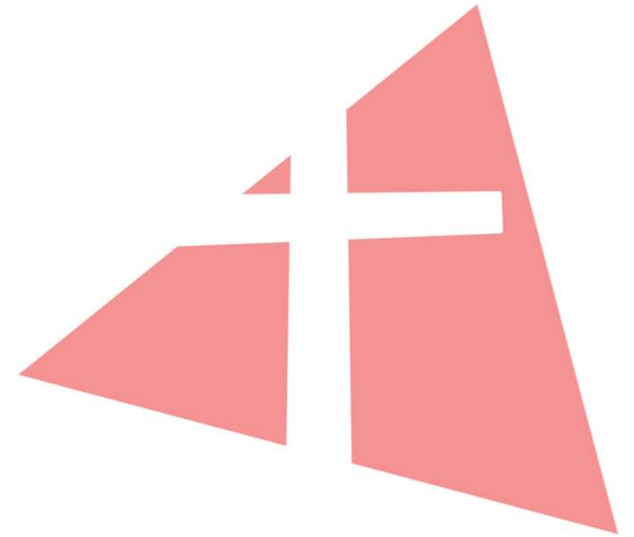
# BIBLICAL FASTING

- **Fasting doesn't make our prayers more powerful**
- **Fasting makes us more sensitive to God's voice**
  - We pray more in line with God's will
  - Our prayers become more effective
- **If we are not fasting for God's glory we are not biblically fasting**



# A BIBLICAL EXAMPLE

- **Nehemiah**
  - The nation of Israel was in exile

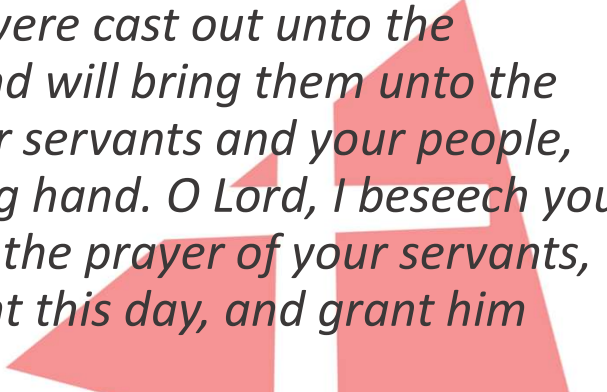


# NEHEMIAH

*Nehemiah 1:1-11 The words of Nehemiah the son of Hacaliah. And it came to pass in the month Chislev, in the twentieth year, as I was in Shushan the citadel, That Hanani, one of my brothers, came, he and certain men of Judah; and I asked them concerning the Jews that had escaped, who were left of the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem. And they said unto me, The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great distress and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire. And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven, And said, I beseech you, O LORD God of heaven, the great and awesome God, that keeps covenant and mercy for them that love him and observe his commandments: Let your ear now be attentive, and your eyes open, that you may hear the prayer of your servant, which I pray before you now, day and night, for the children of Israel your servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against you:*

# NEHEMIAH

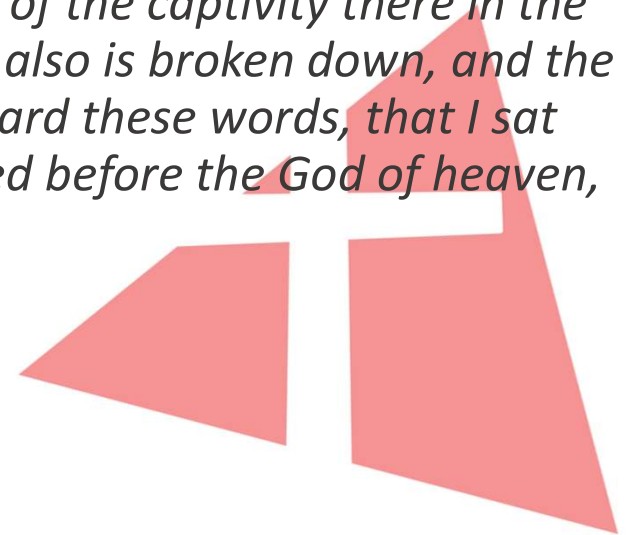
*both I and my father's house have sinned. We have dealt very corruptly against you, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the ordinances, which you commanded your servant Moses. Remember, I beseech you, the word that you commanded your servant Moses, saying, If you transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations: But if you turn unto me, and keep my commandments, and do them; though some of you were cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, yet will I gather them from there, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set my name there. Now these are your servants and your people, whom you have redeemed by your great power, and by your strong hand. O Lord, I beseech you, let now your ear be attentive to the prayer of your servant, and to the prayer of your servants, who desire to fear your name: and prosper, I pray you, your servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man. For I was the king's cupbearer.*





# WHAT CAUSED NEHEMIAH TO PRAY AND FAST?

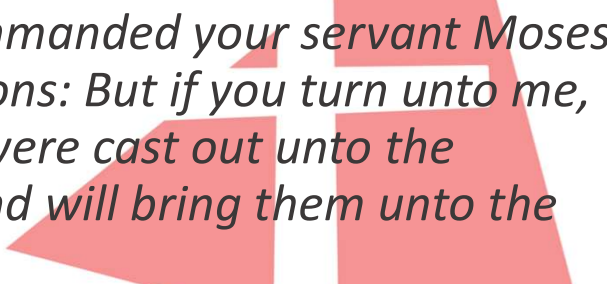
*Nehemiah 1:3-4 And they said unto me, The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great distress and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire. And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven,*



# WHAT WAS THE GOAL OF HIS PRAYER?

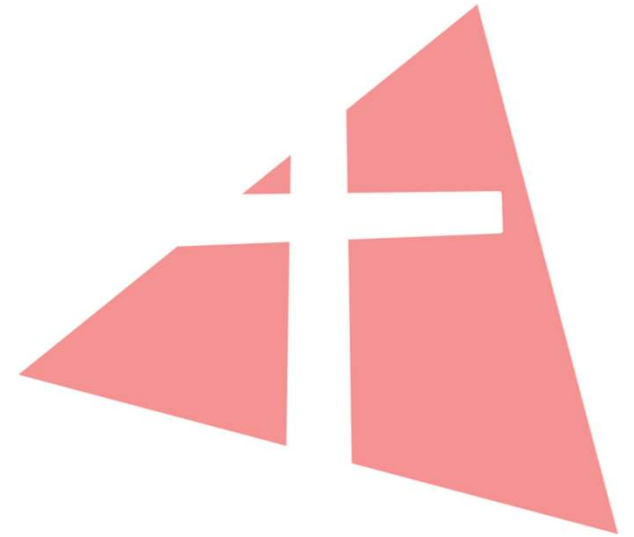
*Nehemiah 1:6-7 Let your ear now be attentive, and your eyes open, that you may hear the prayer of your servant, which I pray before you now, day and night, for the children of Israel your servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against you: both I and my father's house have sinned. We have dealt very corruptly against you, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the ordinances, which you commanded your servant Moses.*

*Nehemiah 1:8-9 Remember, I beseech you, the word that you commanded your servant Moses, saying, If you transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations: But if you turn unto me, and keep my commandments, and do them; though some of you were cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, yet will I gather them from there, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set my name there.*



# WHAT WAS THE RESULT?

- The wall was built



# ANOTHER EXAMPLE

## ○ Daniel

*Daniel 1:1-21 In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god. And the king spoke unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's descendants, and of the princes; Young men in whom was no blemish, but handsome, and skilful in all wisdom, and gifted in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the language of the Chaldeans. And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's food, and of the wine which he drank: so training them three years, that at the end of that time they might stand before the king.*

# DANIEL

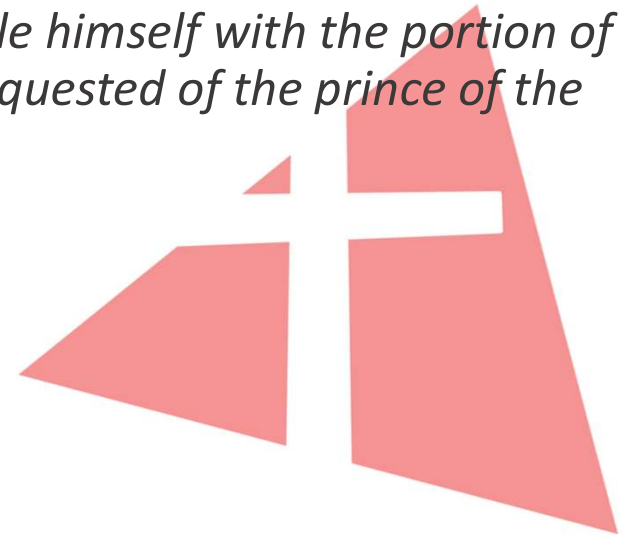
*Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: Unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names: for he gave unto Daniel the name of Belteshazzar; and to Hananiah, of Shadrach; and to Mishael, of Meshach; and to Azariah, of Abednego. But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's food, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself. Now God had brought Daniel into favor and kindness with the prince of the eunuchs. And the prince of the eunuchs said unto Daniel, I fear my lord the king, who has appointed your food and your drink: for why should he see your faces worse looking than the young men who are of your age? then shall you make me endanger my head to the king. Then said Daniel to Melzar, whom the prince of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, Test your servants, I beseech you, ten days; and let them give us vegetables to eat, and water to drink.*

# DANIEL

*Then let our countenances be looked upon before you, and the countenance of the young men that eat of the portion of the king's food: and as you see fit, deal with your servants. So he consented to them in this matter, and tested them ten days. And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared better and fatter in flesh than all the young men who did eat the portion of the king's food. Thus Melzar took away the portion of their food, and the wine that they should drink; and gave them vegetables. As for these four young men, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams. Now at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in, then the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. And the king spoke with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore stood they before the king. And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm. And Daniel continued even unto the first year of king Cyrus.*

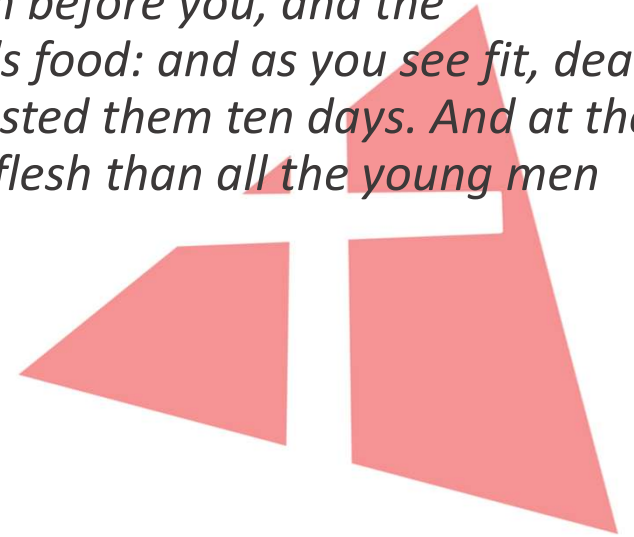
# WHAT CAUSED DANIEL TO FAST?

*Daniel 1:8 But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's food, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.*



# WHAT WAS THE FOCUS OF HIS FASTING?

*Daniel 1:12-15 Test your servants, I beseech you, ten days; and let them give us vegetables to eat, and water to drink. Then let our countenances be looked upon before you, and the countenance of the young men that eat of the portion of the king's food: and as you see fit, deal with your servants. So he consented to them in this matter, and tested them ten days. And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared better and fatter in flesh than all the young men who did eat the portion of the king's food.*

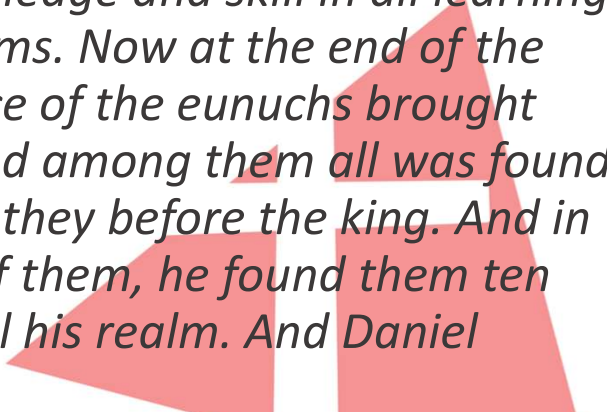




# WHAT WAS THE RESULT?

*Daniel 1:16 Thus Melzar took away the portion of their food, and the wine that they should drink; and gave them vegetables.*

*Daniel 1:17-21 As for these four young men, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams. Now at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in, then the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. And the king spoke with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore stood they before the king. And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm. And Daniel continued even unto the first year of king Cyrus.*



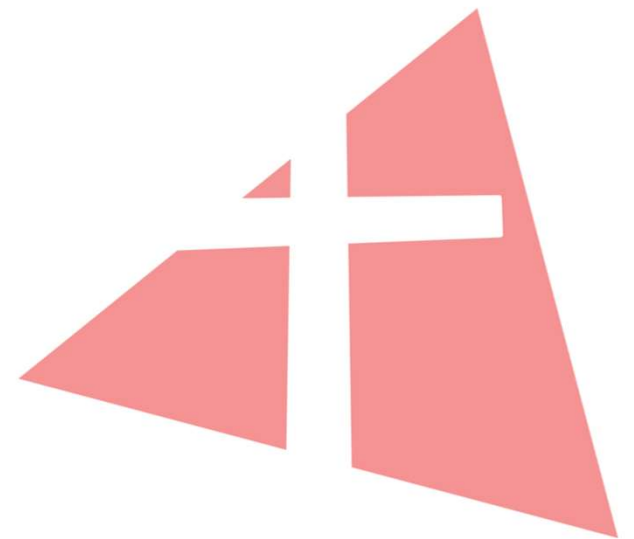
# DANIEL

- Hated sin
- Had courage to stand up for God
- Got more influence for God's Glory



# ANOTHER EXAMPLE

○ Esther



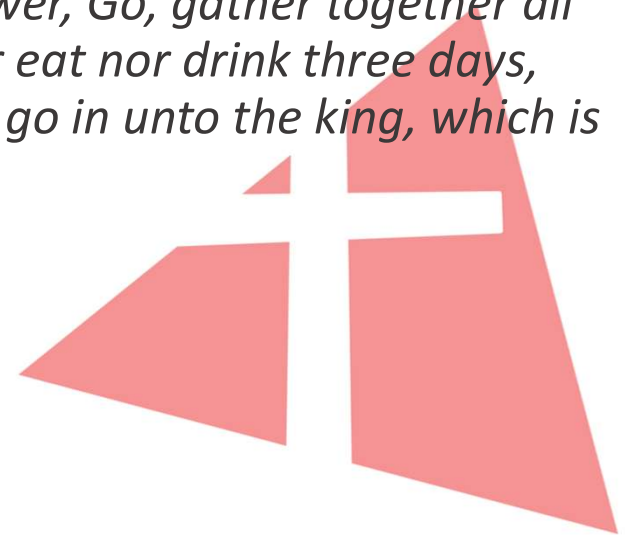
# ESTHER

*Esther 4:13-14 Then Mordecai commanded to answer Esther, Think not to yourself that you shall escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews. For if you altogether hold your peace at this time, then shall relief and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but you and your father's house shall be destroyed: and who knows whether you are come to the kingdom for such a time as this?*



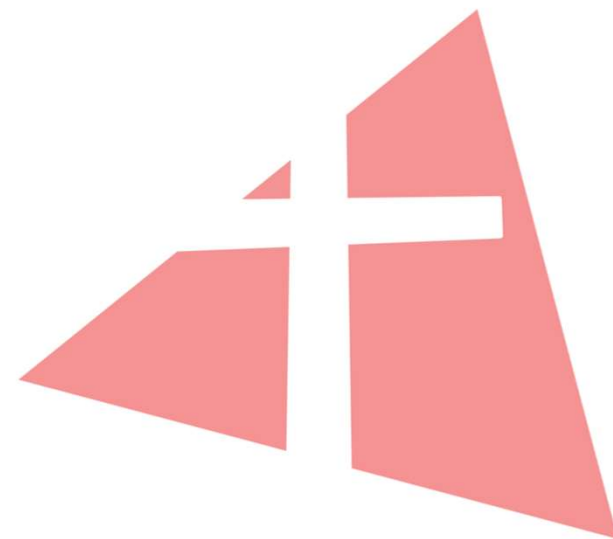
# ESTHER

*Esther 4:15-16 Then Esther told them to return Mordecai this answer, Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish.*



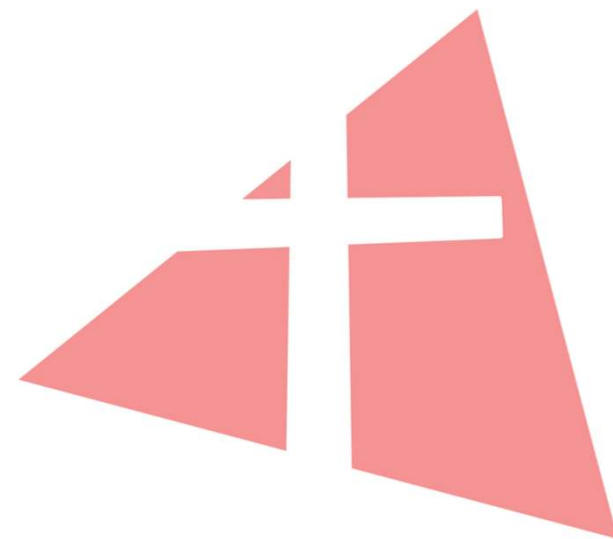
# WHAT CAUSED HER TO PRAY?

- Injustice



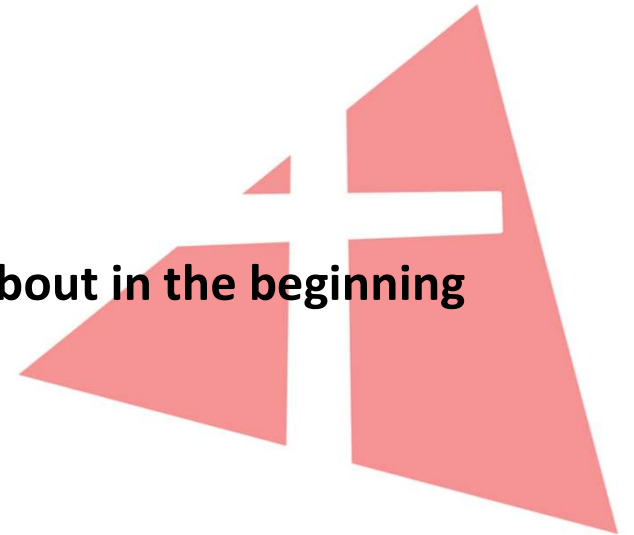
# WHAT WAS THE RESULT?

- God's deliverance



# WHAT DID THEY HAVE IN COMMON?

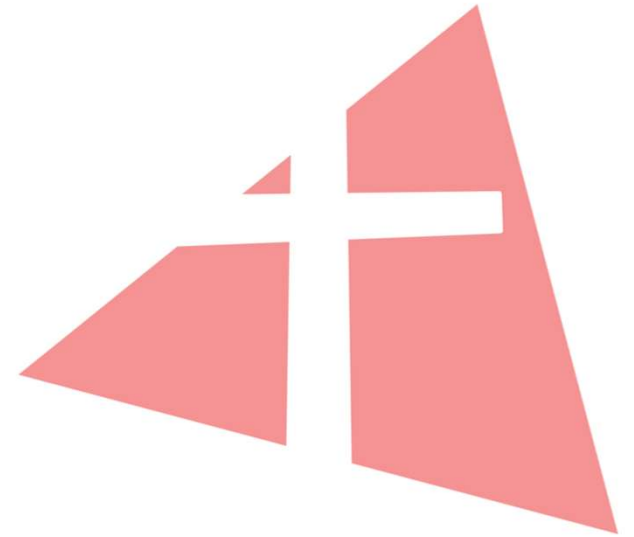
- **They fasted**
- **They had a Godly reason for fasting**
  - Mourning over sin
  - Mourning over injustice
  - Crying out for God's intervention (but for His Glory)
- **God used them to change the very thing they were troubled about in the beginning**





# WHAT ABOUT US?

- **Godly prayer is often motivated by ungodliness**
  - Mourning over sin
  - Mourning over injustice
  - Crying out for God's intervention (for His Glory)
- **God can use us to change the very thing we mourn over**



# IN CONCLUSION

- Fasting preceded by hatred for sin can be very powerful

