



FASTING

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PRAYER

The background features a faint, repeating pattern of hands in a prayer position, with fingers pointing upwards and palms facing each other. The hands are rendered in a light, sketchy style, creating a sense of spiritual atmosphere. The overall color palette is warm, with shades of beige, cream, and light brown.

Psalm 27:8

My heart has heard you say, "Come and talk with me."
And my heart responds, "Lord, I am coming."

Matthew 6:16-18

And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. 17 But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, 18 that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

Definition of Fasting - to Fasten

The original meaning in prehistoric Germanic was "hold firmly," and the sense evolved via "have firm control of oneself," to "hold oneself to observance" (compare Gothic fastan "to keep, observe," also "to fast")

Luke 5:33-35

And they said to him, "The disciples of John fast often and offer prayers, and so do the disciples of the Pharisees, but yours eat and drink." 34 And Jesus said to them, "Can you make wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them? 35 The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and **then they will fast in those days.**"

The background features a faint, repeating pattern of hands in a prayer position, rendered in a light, sketchy style. The hands are arranged in a row, with the fingers pointing upwards and the palms facing each other. The overall color palette is soft and warm, with a gradient from light yellow to light blue.

1. Fasting to Put God First

Proverbs 3:9-10

Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the **first**fruits
of all your produce

10 then your barns will be filled with plenty,
and your vats will be bursting with wine.



Matthew 6:33

But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness,
and all these things will be added to you.

1 Samuel 4:1-10

Now Israel went out to battle against the Philistines. They encamped at Ebenezer, and the Philistines encamped at Aphek. 2 The Philistines drew up in line against Israel, and when the battle spread, Israel was defeated before the Philistines, who killed about four thousand men on the field of battle. 3 And when the people came to the camp, the elders of Israel said, "Why has the Lord defeated us today before the Philistines? Let us bring the ark of the covenant of the Lord here from Shiloh, that it may come among us and save us from the power of our enemies..."

5 As soon as the ark of the covenant of the Lord came into the camp, all Israel gave a mighty shout, so that the earth resounded. 6 And when the Philistines heard the noise of the shouting, they said, "What does this great shouting in the camp of the Hebrews mean?" And when they learned that the ark of the Lord had come to the camp, 7 the Philistines were afraid, for they said, "A god has come into the camp." And they said, "Woe to us! For nothing like this has happened before. 8 Woe to us! Who can deliver us from the power of these mighty gods?"

These are the gods who struck the Egyptians with every sort of plague in the wilderness. 9 Take courage, and be men, O Philistines, lest you become slaves to the Hebrews as they have been to you; be men and fight.” 10 So the Philistines fought, and Israel was defeated, and they fled, every man to his home. And there was a very great slaughter, for thirty thousand foot soldiers of Israel fell. 11 And the ark of God was captured, and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, died.



***“An army which carries the ark before it is invincible..”
Marcus Brody - Indiana Jones: Raiders of the Lost Ark***

1 Samuel 7:3-5

During that time all Israel mourned because it seemed the Lord had abandoned them. Then Samuel said to all the people of Israel, "If you want to return to the Lord with all your hearts, get rid of your foreign gods and your images of Ashtoreth. Turn your hearts to the Lord and obey him alone; then he will rescue you from the Philistines." 4 So the Israelites got rid of their images of Baal and Ashtoreth and worshiped only the Lord...

5 Then Samuel told them, "Gather all of Israel to Mizpah, and I will pray to the Lord for you." 6 So they gathered at Mizpah and, in a great ceremony, drew water from a well and poured it out before the Lord. They also went without food all day and confessed that they had sinned against the Lord. (It was at Mizpah that Samuel became Israel's judge.)

13 So the Philistines were subdued and didn't invade Israel again for some time. And throughout Samuel's lifetime, the Lord's powerful hand was raised against the Philistines.

The background features a faint, light-colored illustration of three hands in a prayer position, palms facing each other, set against a soft, light blue and white gradient. The overall aesthetic is clean and spiritual.

2. Fasting to Curb Our Draw into a Hedonistic Culture

1 Samuel 4:15-18

Now Eli was ninety-eight years old and his eyes were set so that he could not see. 16 And the man said to Eli, "I am he who has come from the battle; I fled from the battle today." And he said, "How did it go, my son?" 17 He who brought the news answered and said, "Israel has fled before the Philistines, and there has also been a great defeat among the people. Your two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God has been captured." 18 As soon as he mentioned the ark of God, Eli fell over backward from his seat by the side of the gate, and his neck was broken and he died, for the man was old and heavy.

Deuteronomy 28:47-48

Because you did not serve the LORD your God with joyfulness and gladness of heart, because of the abundance of all things, 48 therefore you shall serve your enemies whom the LORD will send against you, in hunger and thirst, in nakedness, and lacking everything. And he will put a yoke of iron on your neck until he has destroyed you.

Psalm 37:3-5

- 3 Trust in the Lord, and do good;
dwell in the land and befriend faithfulness.
- 4 Delight yourself in the Lord,
and he will give you the desires of your heart.
- 5 Commit your way to the Lord;
trust in him, and he will act.

Joel 2:12-14

12 “Yet even now,” declares the Lord, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;

13 and rend your hearts and not your garments.”

Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster.

14 Who knows whether he will not turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind him, a grain offering and a drink offering for the Lord your God?

Joel 1:8-9, 13

8 Weep like a bride dressed in black,
mourning the death of her husband.

9 For there is no grain or wine
to offer at the Temple of the Lord

13 Dress yourselves in burlap and weep, you priests!

Wail, you who serve before the altar!

Come, spend the night in burlap,
you ministers of my God.

For there is no grain or wine
to offer at the Temple of your God.

1 John 2:15-16

Do not love this world nor the things it offers you, for when you love the world, you do not have the love of the Father in you. 16 For the world offers only a craving for physical pleasure, a craving for everything we see, and pride in our achievements and possessions. These are not from the Father, but are from this world.

Philippians 3:17-21

Join together in following my example, brothers and sisters, and just as you have us as a model, keep your eyes on those who live as we do. 18 For, as I have often told you before and now tell you again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. 19 Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things. 20 But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

The background features a faint, light-colored illustration of several hands in a prayer position, with fingers pointing upwards and palms facing each other. The hands are arranged in a row, creating a sense of collective prayer or devotion. The overall color palette is soft and warm, with a gradient from light yellow to light blue.

3. Fasting to Seek God for Breakthroughs

2 Chronicles 14:2-12

Asa did what was pleasing and good in the sight of the Lord his God. 3 He removed the foreign altars and the pagan shrines. He smashed the sacred pillars and cut down the Asherah poles. 4 He commanded the people of Judah to seek the Lord, the God of their ancestors, and to obey his law and his commands. 5 Asa also removed the pagan shrines, as well as the incense altars from every one of Judah's towns. So Asa's kingdom enjoyed a period of peace. 6 During those peaceful years, he was able to build up the fortified towns...

8 King Asa had an army of 300,000 warriors from the tribe of Judah, armed with large shields and spears. He also had an army of 280,000 warriors from the tribe of Benjamin, armed with small shields and bows. Both armies were composed of well-trained fighting men.

9 Once an Ethiopian named Zerah attacked Judah with an army of 1,000,000 men and 300 chariots. They advanced to the town of Maresah, 10 so Asa deployed his armies for battle in the valley north of Maresah. 11 Then Asa cried out to the Lord his God,

“O Lord, no one but you can help the powerless against the mighty! Help us, O Lord our God, for we trust in you alone. It is in your name that we have come against this vast horde. O Lord, you are our God; do not let mere men prevail against you!”

12 So the Lord defeated the Ethiopians in the presence of Asa and the army of Judah, and the enemy fled.

2 Chronicles 16:1-12

In the thirty-sixth year of the reign of Asa, Baasha king of Israel went up against Judah and built Ramah, that he might permit no one to go out or come in to Asa king of Judah. 2 Then Asa took silver and gold from the treasures of the house of the Lord and the king's house and sent them to Ben-hadad king of Syria, who lived in Damascus, saying, 3 "There is a covenant[a] between me and you, as there was between my father and your father. Behold, I am sending to you silver and gold. Go, break your covenant with Baasha king of Israel, that he may withdraw from me..."

4 And Ben-hadad listened to King Asa and sent the commanders of his armies against the cities of Israel, and they conquered Ijon, Dan, Abel-maim, and all the store cities of Naphtali. 5 And when Baasha heard of it, he stopped building Ramah and let his work cease. 6 Then King Asa took all Judah, and they carried away the stones of Ramah and its timber, with which Baasha had been building, and with them he built Geba and Mizpah. 7 At that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah and said to him: "Because you relied on the king of Aram and not on the Lord your God, the army of the king of Aram has escaped from your hand.

8 Were not the Cushites and Libyans a mighty army with great numbers of chariots and horsemen? Yet when you relied on the Lord, he delivered them into your hand. 9 For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him. You have done a foolish thing, and from now on you will be at war.”

10 Then Asa was angry with the seer and put him in the stocks in prison, for he was in a rage with him because of this. And Asa inflicted cruelties upon some of the people at the same time...

11 The acts of Asa, from first to last, are written in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel. 12 In the thirty-ninth year of his reign Asa was diseased in his feet, and his disease became severe. Yet even in his disease he did not seek the Lord, but sought help from physicians.

1 Maccabees 3:18

But Judas said: "Many are easily hemmed in by a few; in the sight of Heaven there is no difference between deliverance by many or by few;

19 for victory in war does not depend upon the size of the army, but on strength that comes from Heaven.^a

20 With great presumption and lawlessness they come against us to destroy us and our wives and children and to despoil us;

21 but we are fighting for our lives and our laws.

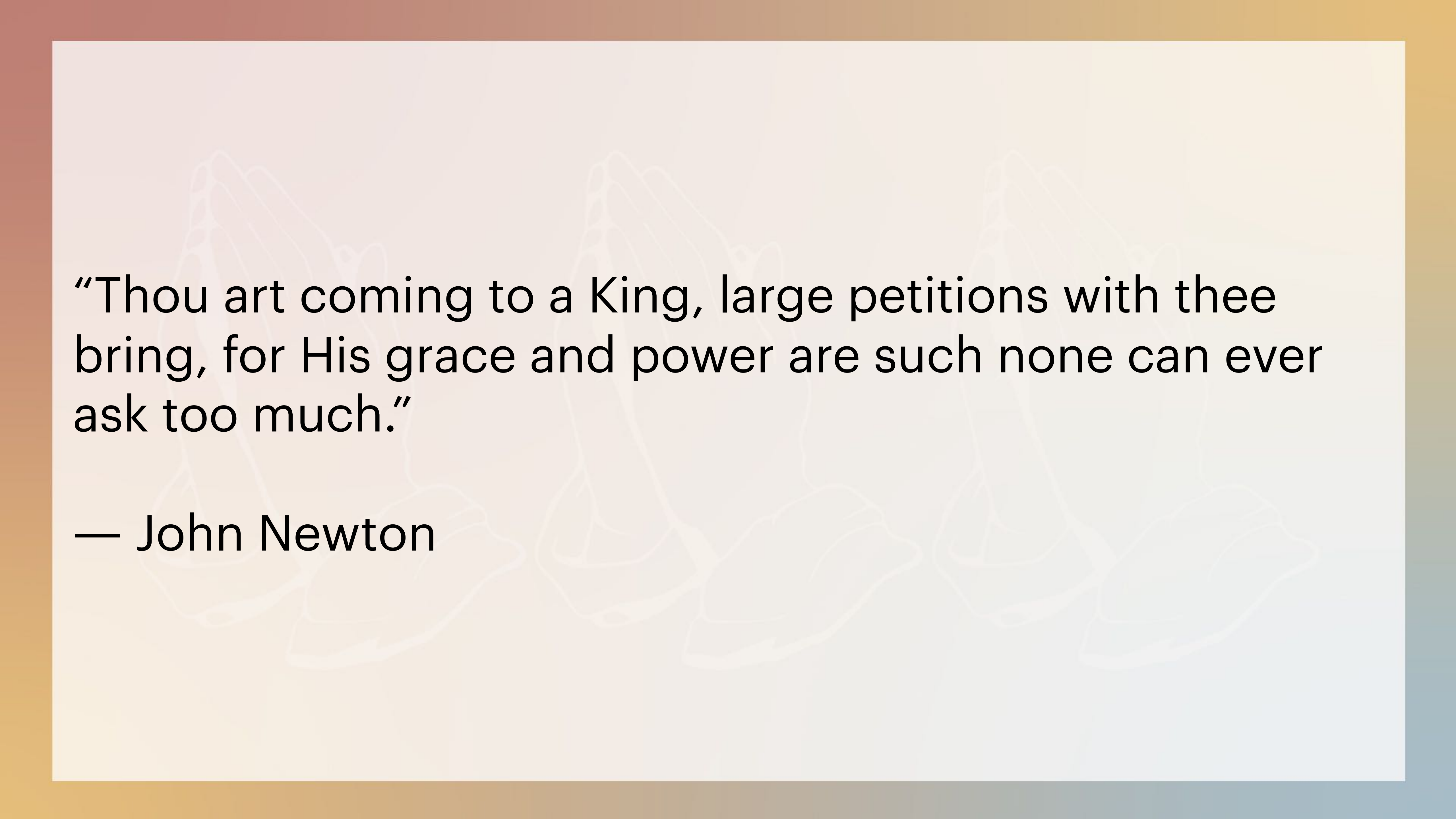
22 He* will crush them before us; so do not fear them."

46 * Thus they assembled and went to Mizpah near Jerusalem, because formerly at Mizpah there was a place of prayer for Israel.c

47 That day they fasted and wore sackcloth; they sprinkled ashes on their heads and tore their garments.

53 How shall we be able to resist them unless you help us?"

54 Then they blew the trumpets and cried out loudly.

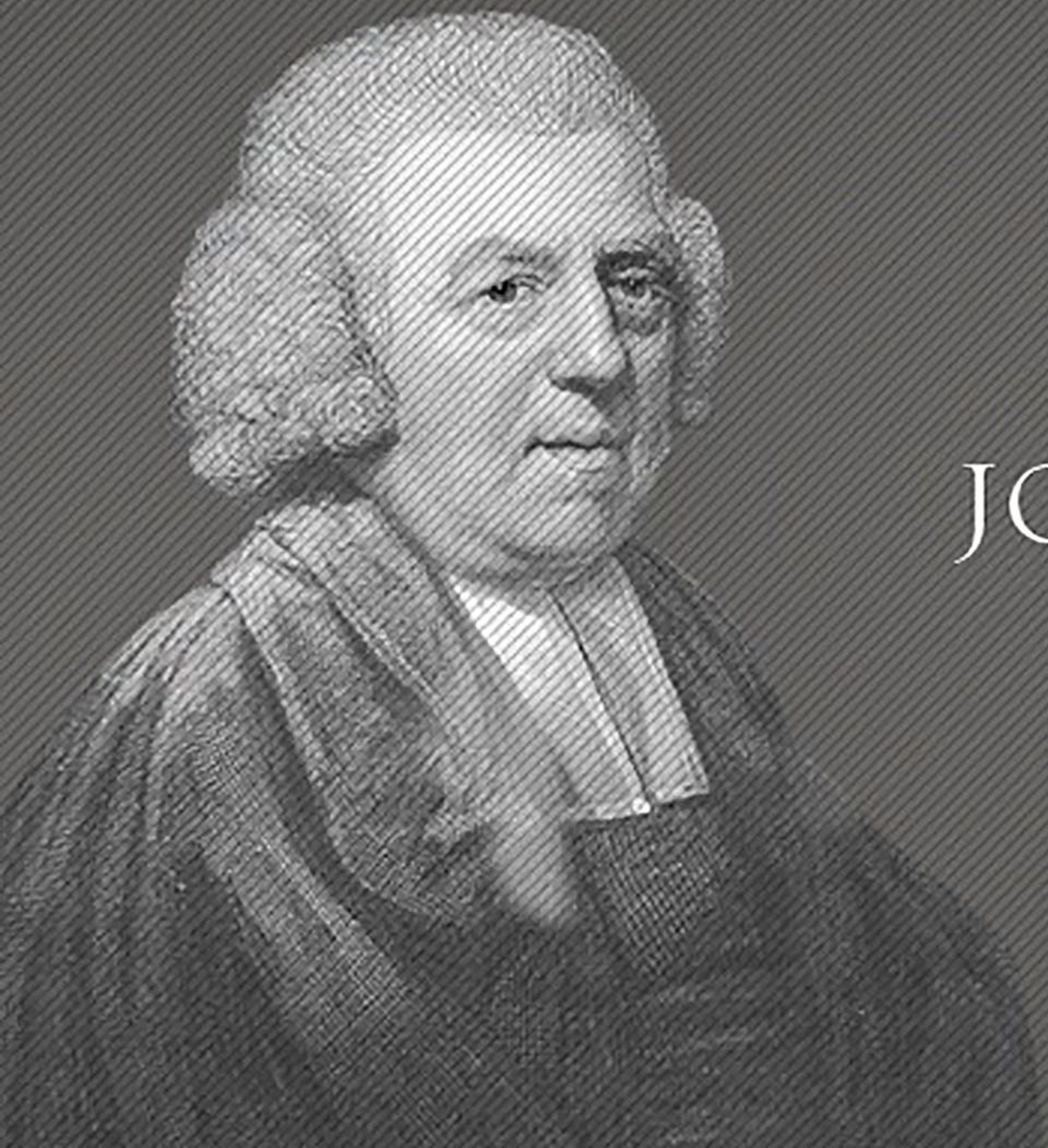
The background of the slide features a faint, light-colored illustration of four hands clasped together in a prayerful gesture. The hands are arranged in a row, with the fingers of each hand interlaced with the hands next to it. The overall tone is soft and spiritual, complementing the religious text.

“Thou art coming to a King, large petitions with thee
bring, for His grace and power are such none can ever
ask too much.”

— John Newton

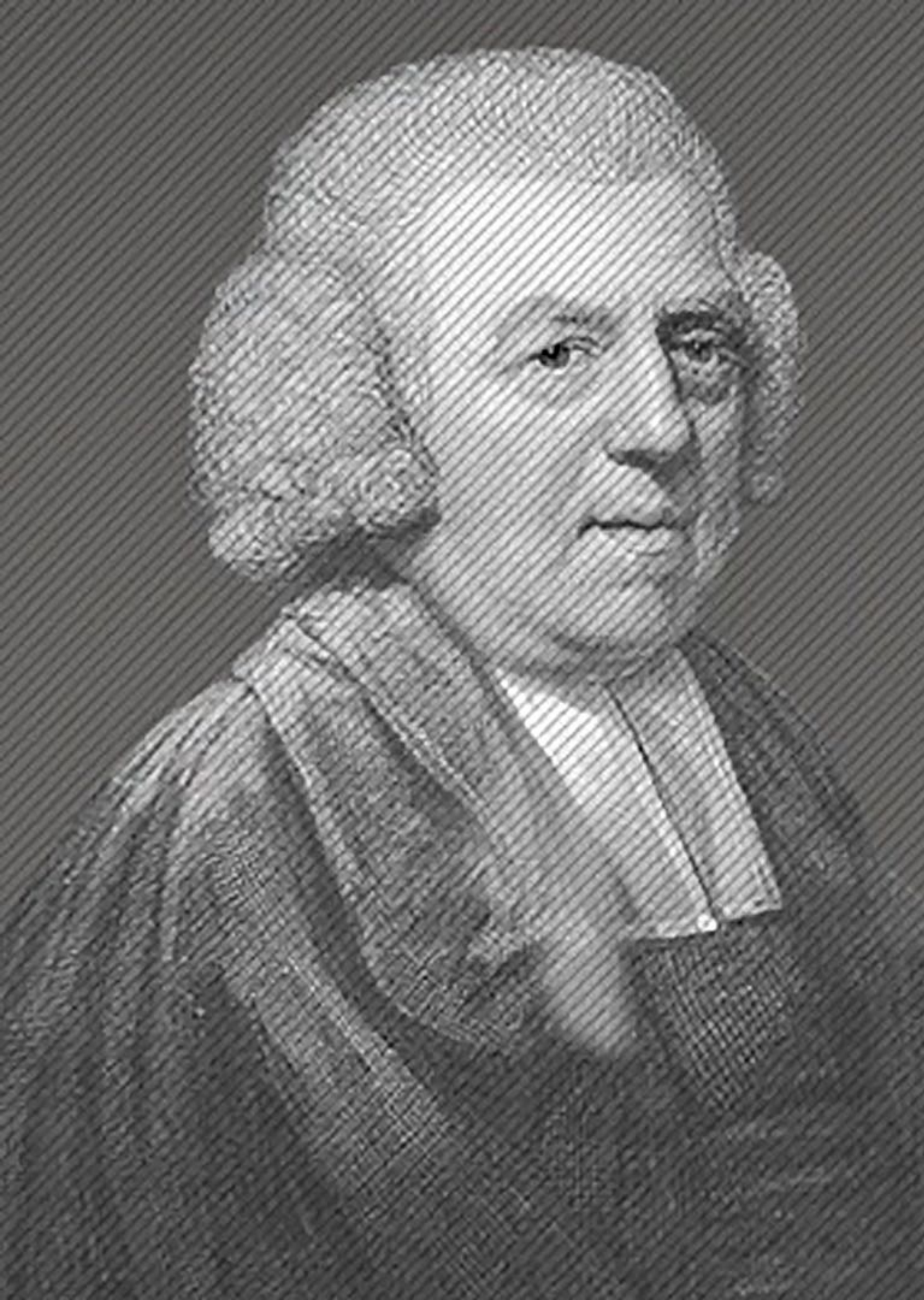
James 5:16-18

The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. 17 Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. 18 Then he prayed again, and heaven gave rain, and the earth bore its fruit.



JOHN NEWTON

1725-1807



"In the same way, we should go to the throne of God's grace and present petitions that express honorable views of the love, riches, and bounty of our King."

-John Newton

“I have heard farmers talk about the way to know a good horse. It will serve me to illustrate the way to tell a good Christian. Some horses when they get into the traces pull, and when they feel the load move they work with all their might, but if they tug and the load does not stir, they are not for drawing any longer. There is a breed of really good horses in Suffolk which will tug at a dead weight, and if they were harnessed to a post, they would pull till they dropped though nothing stirred...”

...It is so with a lively Christian. If he is seeking a great favor from God, he prays, whether he gets it or not, right on: he cannot take a denial; if he knows his petition to be according to God's will and promise, he pleads the blood of Jesus about it; and if he does not get an answer at once, he says, "My soul, wait"—wait! a grand word—"wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him."

-Charles Spurgeon

John 21:3-8

Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will go with you." They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing. 4 Just as day was breaking, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. 5 Jesus said to them, "Children, do you have any fish?" They answered him, "No." 6 He said to them, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in, because of the quantity of fish...

7 That disciple whom Jesus loved therefore said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment, for he was stripped for work, and threw himself into the sea. 8 The other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, but about a hundred yards off.



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PRAYER



Genesis 25:28

Isaac, who had a taste for wild game, loved Esau, but Rebekah loved Jacob.