

Daniel Fast

Through the Daniel Fast we can modify our eating habits in order to focus on spiritual disciplines like Scripture reading and meditation, prayer, and silence before God. A fast humbles us before God. The Bible says: ***“I humbled myself with fasting”... Psalm 35:13. “My knees are weak through fasting, and my flesh is feeble from lack of fat-ness”. Psalm 109:24 (NKJV)***

Jesus expects us to practice fasting. Consider, **Matthew 6:16– 17** ***“Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face.”***

Fasting was a way of life for all the men and women of faith in the Bible. Anna, a widow, served God with ‘fastings and prayers day and night’ (Luke 2:36-38). Daniel, from whom we get the name of the fast, fasted for twenty-one days as recorded in Chapter 10. That’s where we get the length of the fast. In Chapter one, Daniel ate only vegetables and things that grow naturally like beans, nuts, fruit, etc.

But the real reason is not the food, the diet, the restrictions, weight loss - it is drawing close to God, seeking Him with our whole heart! Reading His word. Praying. Interceding for others. Humbling ourselves before Him. Great breakthroughs happen when God’s people pray and fast. We encourage all members to participate at some level. You may have to rearrange your schedule a little bit, but it will be worth it!

What is the Daniel Fast?

The Daniel Fast is a healthy, 21-day fast, based on the Old Testament story of Daniel, who rejected the king's rich food in order to honor God's best for him and his friends. Daniel's request was not about a diet plan; rather, he understood God wanted him to live a healthy lifestyle so he could serve God no matter where he was located. Healthy living requires faith as the foundation, trusting that God's way is the best way, while following his prescription for your health.

“At the end of the ten days they looked healthier and better nourished than any of the young men who ate the royal food. So, the guard took away their choice food and the wine they were to drink and gave them vegetables instead.” **Daniel 1:15-16**

NOTE: If you are on medication, consult your physician before commencing an extended fast.

Practical Insight About Our Fast

Fasting is a way to demonstrate that we are serious with God. Fasting helps us gain a new perspective and a renewed reliance upon God. Anything given up temporarily, in order to focus all our attention on God can be considered a fast (*1 Corinthians 7:1-5*). Fast as the Lord would lead you. Some may not be able to fast from food due to medical restrictions.

DO NOT FAST IF YOU HAVE MEDICAL DIETARY RESTRICTIONS WHICH PREVENT YOU. CONTACT YOUR PHYSICIAN BEFORE BEGINNING ANY TYPE OF FAST

Devotions

■ Day 1

Scripture for meditation:

“Now set your heart and your soul to seek the LORD your God.” 1 Chronicles 22:19

Thought:

Set your heart (Hebrew: Nathan) This word ‘set’ means “to give”. When you set your heart to seek the Lord you are giving your heart, yourself, wholly, completely to Him. What a great way to start Day 1 of praying and fasting. Seek the Lord!

Prayer:

Lord I give my heart and soul completely to You. I seek You without reservation!

■ Day 2

Scripture for meditation:

“O God, You are my God; early will I seek You; my soul thirsts for You; my flesh longs for You in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water.” Psalm 63:1

Thought:

We can go to the faucet or fridge any time for a drink. For the Psalmist and much of today’s world water is a precious commodity. The verse above talks about a spiritual thirst that we need to have for God.

Prayer:

God, I want to be thirsty for you. Let me come to Jesus today and drink! ... Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. John 7:37 Let me find in You mysatisfaction.

■ Day 3

Scripture for meditation:

“Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed.” Mark 1:35

Thought:

We always seem to be in a hurry. There is so much noise; so many distractions. If we are going to hear God clearly we have to get into a place of solitude and silence. We must make the effort to have a quiet time and quiet place with our Father like Jesus did.

Prayer:

God give me the desire to spend quality time with You in a place free from distractions and noise. Let me hear Your still, small voice.

■ Day 4

Scripture for meditation:

If you memorize Scripture regularly the Holy Spirit will use those verses to speak to you. You will also be able to meditate on Scripture whether you have your Bible or not. I know you always have your phone.

Take some time tonight to learn a verse of Scripture before you go to bed. Repeat it over and over out loud. Write it out several times. There are many good tips online for memorizing Scripture.

■ Day 5

Scripture for meditation:

“But it is good for me to draw near to God; I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, that I may declare all Your works.” Psalm 73:28 (NKJV)

Thought:

Drawing near is a prerequisite for declaring His works (witnessing).

Prayer:

God let my seeking result in bearing witness to Your grace. Let me share Jesus with people this new year.

■ Day 6

Scripture for meditation:

“And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. I will be found by you, says the Lord.” Jeremiah 29:13-14

Thought:

Am I seeking the Lord but not with ‘my whole heart?’

Prayer:

God, increase my passion for You. Give me whole-hearted devotion.

■ Day 7

Scripture for meditation:

“The LORD is good to those who wait for Him, to the soul who seeks Him.” Lamentations 3:25

Thought:

I have not always been a ‘dog person.’ I am now; our black lab Annie has won my heart. I have learned to watch her eyes. They never look away from me. She will wait until I give her a treat or throw the ball. Amazing patience! I seem to want to be ‘good’ to her.

Waiting involves humility, trust, and confidence that God will hear even though He may be silent. Don’t quit seeking Him.

Prayer:

God, let me trust You even when you don’t answer my prayer right away.

Devotions

■ Day 8

Fasting can make a huge difference. Combining prayer with fasting is powerful. Here are a few prayers that help me. Pray them as you begin your day. They are taken from Scripture. Look up the verse and make it your prayer.

- Lead me today by Your Word and don't let any sin control me. Psalm 119:133
- Give me the words and freedom to speak your truth to others today. Ephesians 6:19-20
- Open the hearts of people to believe the good news. Acts 16:14

■ Day 9

If you have been depressed or discouraged for a long time it becomes hard to believe your situation will change. Read Psalm 126 today and ask God to deliver you and make you dream again!

Notice some of the things that result from being delivered from captivity:

Dreaming
Laughing
Singing
Witnessing

■ Day 10

Depression is very common. The Bible gives us insight as to where it comes from. Read and meditate on the following verse:

Proverbs 12:25 (NKJV)

"Anxiety in the heart of man causes depression, but a good word makes it glad."

Worry causes depression. Good news brightens things up. Words of encouragement make people glad. Try to speak an encouraging word to someone today. Meditate on the following verses too:

Isaiah 50:4

Psalm 94:19

1 Peter 5:6-7

■ Day 11

The Bible app YouVersion is one of the most popular apps in the world. (To date, it's been downloaded to more than 350 million devices!) Isaiah 41:10 was the most searched for verse in the Bible for 2018.

Isaiah 41:10 (NKJV)

Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.

What a great promise! Jesus promises to always be with us. He lives in us. We have His life! Meditate on the truths in this verse today. Thank God for His promises!

Devotions

■ Day 12

We are over half way through the Daniel Fast. How are you doing? Are you sticking to your plan? Here are some suggestions if you are getting weary. Here is some encouragement for those who are missing chocolate or desserts like I am!

1. Listen to your favorite songs.
2. Listen to a dramatized version of the Bible.
3. Call up a friend and ask them to pray with you.
4. Think: "I am blessed to be able to seek the Lord; I am His child."

Action step: Make a list of all the blessings God has given you in 2018. Ask Him to remind you. If 2018 has been hard thank Him anyway.

■ Day 13

Do you ever feel like you are not making much progress? One of my favorite stories from Scripture is the feeding of the 5,000. It is recorded in all four gospels. Jesus had miraculously fed the multitude and the people wanted to force Him to become their king. He left to pray and the disciples started across the sea in a boat.

They were rowing against the wind. They weren't making much progress. Jesus sees them. Here is Mark's record:

Mark 6:47-48 (NKJV)

47Now when evening came, the boat was in the middle of the sea; and He was alone on the land.

48Then He saw them straining at rowing, for the wind was against them. Now about the fourth watch of the night He came to them, walking on the sea, and would have passed them by.

Jesus sees you straining and getting nowhere. See Him! Don't let Him pass by...

■ Day 14

Spend some time today praying for other people. Make a list of those who are on your heart. Begin to intercede for them. Mention their names to God.

Intercession puts you before God on behalf of someone else. He is looking for intercessors. You stand in the gap. You may be the only person praying for your friend. Here are some verses to meditate on.

1 Timothy 2:1

Romans 8:26-27

Isaiah 59:16

Ezekiel 22:30

Devotions

■ Day 15

Before Jesus ascended to heaven He instructed the disciples to make disciples of all nations. Read the following Scriptures and fill in the key thought from each gospel writer. Then pray for the people you know who need Jesus.

- Matthew 18:18-20 _____
- Mark 16:15-16 _____
- Luke 24:46-48 _____
- +John 21:21-22 _____

■ Day 16

Has the Lord ever used you to lead someone to Jesus? What if each one of us lead someone to Christ this year! Make a prayer list of people who need Jesus from day 15. List their names below. Spend time in prayer for them. If you don't know any lost people then pray God will lead you to some!

| | | |
|-------|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |

■ Day 17

The following are prayer requests from Scripture for those who are unsaved. Spend some time reading the texts and praying the sample prayers.

[John 6:44] Father, in the Name of Jesus I pray that you would draw _____ to you.

[2 Cor. 4:4] Father, block Satan's influence in _____ and open his/her eyes.

[Romans 6:23] Father, I pray that _____ would receive the free gift of eternal life.

[John 8:24] Jesus, I pray that _____ would not die in their sins, but would be saved.

[Eph. 2:8-9] Lord God, grant genuine faith to _____ and help them trust Jesus.

[Luke 19:10] Lord Jesus, You said that you came to seek and save the lost. Please seek _____.

[2 Cor. 6:2] Lord, stir up _____ out of complacency and indifference.

■ Day 18

Has the Lord convicted you of any changes you need to make for this year? Sins you should forsake? Things you should do? List them below and ask Him to help you remain faithful this year. Meditate on the verse below about faithfulness.

| | | |
|-------|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |

Devotions

“Most men will proclaim each his own goodness, but who can find a faithful man?” Proverbs 20:6 (NKJV)

Be that faithful man or woman this year!

■ Day 19

Temptations are bound to come this year. Below are some verses to help you overcome them. Read them and thank the Lord for victory over them.

1 Cor. 10:13 2 Thess. 3:3 Matthew 6:13 Matthew 26:41
James 1:12 2 Peter 2:9 Hebrews 2:18

Action step: Memorize at least one of these verses. Pray it back to the Lord. Use it this year.

■ Day 20

This is the second to last day of the Daniel fast. You have almost made it through! List some things below that you have learned while on this fast. Put a check mark beside the ones you want to continue doing throughout the year.

| | | |
|------------------------------|--|--|
| Reading the Bible each day ✓ | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

■ Day 21

This is our final day. Spend some time thanking the Lord. Thank Him in advance for all that He will do though you this new year.

Spend some time praying for your Church and all of God’s local churches in the world. Pray that His kingdom would come and His will would be done in each one of them.

We are part of the Body of Christ. Some believers are being persecuted for their faith as you read this last devotional. Spend some time today and throughout the year praying for the persecuted Church worldwide. Some websites are listed below:

<https://www.persecution.com/>

<https://www.opendoorsusa.org/christian-persecution/>

Thank you for joining us in seeking the Lord through the Daniel Fast!

Food List

Try not to get too hung up on what you should and shouldn't eat. The most important part of the Daniel Fast is that you deny yourself physically so that you may seek the Lord in prayer and grow closer to Him. Your fast may look a little different than someone else's, and that's fine. Some people may need to be stricter than others in their food choices so that their fast is a sacrifice for them. These food guidelines are meant a guide, not a rulebook. They are given to help you create boundaries for your fast.

Foods to Enjoy on the Daniel Fast

All fruit - fresh, frozen, dried, juiced, or canned. Fruits include, but are not limited to:

- Apples
- Apricots
- Bananas
- Blackberries
- Blueberries
- Boysenberries
- Cantaloupe
- Cherries
- Cranberries
- Figs
- Grapefruit
- Grapes
- Guava
- Honeydew melon
- Kiwi
- Lemons
- Limes
- Mangos
- Nectarines
- Oranges
- Papayas
- Peaches
- Pears
- Pineapples
- Plums
- Prunes
- Raisins
- Raspberries
- Strawberries
- Tangelos
- Tangerines
- Watermelon

All vegetables - fresh, frozen, dried, juiced, or canned.

- Artichokes
- Asparagus
- Beets
- Broccoli
- Brussel Sprouts
- Cabbage
- Carrots
- Cauliflower
- Celery
- Chili Peppers
- Collard Greens
- Corn
- Cucumbers
- Eggplant
- Garlic
- Ginger Root
- Kale
- Leeks
- Lettuce
- Mushrooms
- Mustard Greens
- Okra
- Onions
- Parsley
- Potatoes
- Radishes
- Rutabagas
- Scallions
- Spinach
- Sprouts
- Squash
- Tomatoes
- Turnips

Food List

Watercress
Yams
Zucchini

If you are not allergic to soy, veggie burgers are also an option.

All wholegrains

Amaranth
Barley
Brown rice
Grits
Millet
Oats
Popcorn
Rice Cakes
Quinoa
Whole Wheat

All nuts & seeds

Almond Butter
Almonds
Cashews
Macadamia nuts
Nut Butter
Peanuts
Pecans
Pine nuts
Pumpkin seeds
Sesame seeds
Sunflower seeds
Walnuts

All legumes - canned or dried

Black beans
Black eyed peas
Cannellini beans
Garbanzo beans (chickpeas)
Great northern beans
Kidney beans
Lentils
Pinto beans
Split peas

All quality oils

Avocado
Coconut
Grapeseed
Olive
Peanut
Sesame
Walnut

Beverages

Distilled water
Filtered water
Spring water

Other Foods

Coconut milk
Herbs
Pepper
Rice milk
Salt
Seasonings
Spices
Soy milk
Soy products
Tofu
Unsweetened almond milk
Unsweetened coconut flakes

Food List

Foods to Avoid on the Daniel Fast

All meat & animal products

Bacon
Beef
Buffalo
Eggs
Fish
Lamb
Pork
Poultry

All dairy products

Butter
Cheese
Cream
Eggs
Milk
Yogurt

All sweeteners

Agave nectar
Artificial sweeteners
Brown rice syrup
Cane juice
Honey
Molasses
Raw sugar
Stevia
Sugar
Syrups

All refined & processed food products - artificial flavorings, chemicals, food additives, preservatives, white flour, and white rice.

All deep-fried foods - corn chips, French fries, and potato chips.

All solid fats - lard, margarine, and shortening.

Beverages - alcohol, carbonated drinks, caffeinated coffee, energy drinks.

Healthy Snacking

The following is a list of healthy snack options. All of the snacks are combination snacks, including a protein, fat and/or fiber food with a carbohydrate food.

- Nuts, such as pecans, almonds, cashews and a piece of fruit/veggies
- Guacamole with sliced veggies
- Nut butters with fruit or veggies
- Hummus with sliced veggies
- Fruit salad (no added sugar)
- Oatmeal with nuts
- Fruit smoothie
- Bean dip and veggies
- Olives and crunchy chickpeas
- Apples or Pears

“Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”

1 Corinthians 10:31



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