

WHAT IS FASTING

Biblical Fasting is giving up specific food and drink for a specified number of days (and could be) for a particular purpose. While others fast because there may be a need or a Corporate "call to fast" they are joining, I fast from a perspective of pursuit and revelation- hearing God's voice clearly and our flesh subdued by Him that He may increase in us- John 3:30. Fasting, prayer and reading God's Word go hand in hand. When you fast, also pray for God's purpose and plan for your life to be revealed. Fast and pray about every major decision in your life. Simply put, Fasting is a way to conquer the physical (natural realm) and open the door to the supernatural in your life. When you deny your body from its natural/typical desires, you feed your spirit and grow closer to the Lord. You're opening the door for the Unseen to be manifested in the seen! (Matthew 6:10)

"When you fast, you are open to God. Your spiritual capacity to hear and receive is increased."

"Fasting gives you breakthroughs in difficult situations because it draws from the power of God."

-Myles Munroe

WHY FAST

Matthew 6- Jesus gave us important insight into living in the Kingdom as children of God. He addressed three specific disciplines a believer must live by: giving, praying and fasting.

Jesus said, "When you give" . . . "when you pray" . . . "when you fast."

He made it clear that Fasting, like giving and praying, was to be a regular practice or a given part of Kingdom life.

DANIEL FAST- 21 Days

While there are several other types of Fasting, we will only delve into Daniel Fast- a type of Fasting that's common to many. It is the most frequently used example of a partial fast, and the book of Daniel, chapter 10, clearly describes it. The Daniel Fast is a type of fast that abstains from all kinds of meat, sweets, bread (carbohydrates), dairy, and other than water, any caffeinated drink, including drinks containing alcohol, for a specific period (Daniel 10:2-3). The easiest way to think of this fast is to eat vegetables and fruits and drink only water. One important thing to note about Daniel Fast is that you are not limited to a specific amount of food but rather to the kind of food you can eat.

But remember, you are fasting, NOT feasting!

Daniel 1:12: "Please test your servants for ten days, and let them give us vegetables to eat and water to drink."

Daniel 10:3: "I ate no pleasant food, no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled."

GUIDELINES

How to Begin

Although Fasting is a discipline or practice that doesn't necessarily require a goal (other than consecration to God), we can count on its benefits, such as seeing results on personal goals we set for ourselves or our corporate body such as Ekklesia (church) or parachurch or charitable groups. So, in this regard, you can:

- ***Start with a clear goal*** for yourself or your group.

Be specific. Why are you fasting? Do you need direction, healing, or restoration of marriage or family issues? Are you facing financial difficulties? Do you need to lose weight?

- ***Ask Holy Spirit*** for guidance

- ***Pray*** daily and read the Bible

How to spiritually prepare

- Intentionally set a rendezvous with God

- Confess your sins to God.

- Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal areas of weakness or hidden sins.

- Forgive all who have offended you Mark 11:25

- Ask forgiveness from those whom you may have offended - Luke 11:4; Luke 17:3-4

- Consecrate your life wholly to Christ and reject worldly desires that try to hinder you -Romans 12:1-2

What to Expect: When you fast, your body detoxifies, eliminating toxins from your system. This can cause irritability and mild discomfort, such as headaches during withdrawal from caffeine, sugars and other food or drinks

you usually intake. And naturally, you will have hunger pains. Limit your activity and exercise moderately. Take time to rest. Fasting brings about miraculous results. You are following Jesus' example when you fast. Spend time listening to worship music. Pray as often as you can throughout the day. Get away from the usual distractions as much as possible and keep your heart and mind set on seeking God's face and pursuing His heart.

How to End Your Fast: Don't overeat when coming to the end of your fast. Gradually start eating solid (meat). Eat small portions only or "snack" on solids.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

> Is fish considered meat?

Fish is considered pareve, meaning it's neither a meat nor a milk dish. It is kosher and passes the Hebrew practice of eating. Daniel Fast is widely practiced according to Jewish tradition & culture. I have considered eating fish because, according to Jewish culture, fish is NOT considered an animal. If you have questions or are in doubt, listen to your conviction and the leading of Holy Spirit. For more information, google Fasting and Hebrew eating practices :)

> What if I have a medical condition?

Consult your doctor before starting any fast. Decide together what is possible. If your health condition prohibits you from fasting food, try fasting something else and concentrate on prayer and Bible study. With Daniel Fast though, it will help you health-wise. But then again, be wise. Seek God before you do anything.

> I forgot and ate something I wasn't supposed to. Do I need to start again? I don't think so unless you just want to. Think of Fasting as a marathon, not a sprint. Conquering "king stomach" is complex, but you'll make it. Don't give up! We don't operate in legalism. We live by grace and under grace, so we don't abuse it either!

> Do I still exercise while fasting?

For most people, moderate exercise is OK. With Daniel Fast, you should be OK. But it is best always to know your limits. Consult your doctor if you have to.

> What if I have a manual labor job? With Daniel Fast, you still eat, only NOT the food you're accustomed to eating regularly. If your job is physically taxing,

try a partial fast that'll allow you to still get enough nutrition to perform your job. Again, it's on a case-to-case basis. You know you!

> Can my husband and I still be intimate during the fast? Read 1 Corinthians 7:2-5, especially verse 5, which says, "Do not deprive one another (of sexual relations) EXCEPT WITH CONSENT, for a time; that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer." Scripture allows this for Fasting and prayer, BUT only with mutual consent.

WHAT TO EAT DURING DANIEL FAST

All fruits. These can be 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, mangoes, nectarines, oranges, papayas, peaches, pears, pineapples, plums, prunes, raisins, raspberries, strawberries, tangelos, tangerines, watermelon, star fruit, rambutan.

All vegetables. These can be fresh, frozen, dried, juiced or canned. Vegetables include but are not limited to artichokes, asparagus, beets, broccoli, Brussels 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, squashes, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, turnips, watercress, yams, zucchini,

NOTE: veggie burgers are an option if you are not allergic to soy.

All whole grains, including but not limited to whole wheat, brown rice, millet, quinoa, oats, barley, grits, whole wheat pasta, zucchini pasta, whole wheat tortillas, rice cakes and popcorn.

All nuts and seeds, including but not limited to sunflower seeds, cashews, peanuts, and sesame.

Note: Nut butter, including peanut and almond butter, **MUST BE ALL NATURAL.**

All legumes. These can be canned or dried. Legumes include but are not limited to, dried beans, pinto beans, split peas, lentils, black-eyed peas, kidney beans, black beans, cannelloni beans, and white beans.

NOTE: if canned, make sure there are no additives such as sugar

All quality oils, including but not limited to olive, grape seed, sesame, and avocado.

Beverages: spring water, distilled water or other pure waters. Rice Milk, Soy Milk, fresh squeezed juices or 100% natural juices WITHOUT artificial sweetener.

NOTE: Honey; natural gava; monk fruit, raw sugars, stevia or any natural-based sweetener

Other: tofu, soy products, vinegar, seasonings, salt, herbs and spices.

REMEMBER: READ THE LABELS! No chemicals or artificial flavoring/seasoning.

WHAT NOT TO EAT DURING DANIEL FAST

All meat and animal products, including but not limited to beef, lamb, pork, poultry and all wild game meat.

All dairy products, including but not limited to milk, cheese, cream, butter

All sweeteners including but not limited to sugar, syrups, and cane juice.

All leavened bread and baked goods.

All refined and processed food products, including but not limited to artificial flavorings, food additives, chemicals, white rice, white flour, and foods that contain artificial preservatives.

All deep-fried foods, including but not limited to potato chips and corn chips.

All solid fats, including shortening, margarine, lard and foods high in fat.

Beverages: All carbonated beverages, energy drinks, and alcohol, including but not limited to *coffee,** tea, **herbal teas

*Coffee: Coffee is a bean; unless you grind it, pre-ground coffee has added chemicals for a longer shelf life. Coffee does have natural caffeine content, so we recommend limiting your intake during Daniel Fast. There is a process to decaffeinate coffee NATURALLY, but you must read the labels.

** Tea/Herbal Teas: Decaffeinated vs. Caffeine-Free on labels. Decaffeination on teas suggests a chemical process, while Caffeine-Free suggests a natural process. How does all that work? I don't know. Have questions or doubts? Listen to your conviction and be led by the Holy Spirit. No judgment. No condemnation. Again, we live by grace and under grace. We don't abuse!

FOOD IDEAS

You may choose one from the list.

Breakfast

Oatmeal

1 cup oatmeal (not instant) with 1/4 cup chopped apples, 2 Tbs. raisins, 1 Tbs. chopped walnuts and a pinch of cinnamon

Smoothie

1 cup calcium-fortified unsweetened soymilk, one small banana, 1/2 cup frozen berries of choice, 2-3 ice cubes; whip in blender 10 almonds or 20 pistachios

Lunch

Flatbread with Salad

3 cups fresh baby spinach topped with 1/2 cup sliced strawberries, segments of 1 small orange, 2 Tbs. Toasted sliced almonds, 1 1/2 tsp. olive oil and apple cider vinegar to taste

1 whole-wheat flatbread

Quick Mediterranean Platter

1 medium sliced tomato, one small sliced ball of pepper, 1/4 cup pepperoncini, five large olives, 1/3 cup hummus

1 1/2 oz. whole-wheat flatbread

Easy Veggie Soup

Simmer 1 cup chopped vegetables (such as scallions, carrots, and greens), 1/2 cup white beans and herbs to taste in 2 cups vegetable broth

1 baked sweet potato, 1 tsp. olive oil, rosemary or other herb to taste

Dinner

Pasta

2 cups whole-grain pasta

1 serving Easy Pasta Sauce

Easy Pasta Sauce:

Saute 1/2 cup each diced bell pepper, onion, and one clove chopped garlic in 1 Tbs. olive oil.

Stir in 1 (14.5 oz) can of tomato sauce plus herbs, salt and pepper to taste; simmer for 30 minutes. (Makes six servings).

Pineapple-Cashew Rice

Heat 1 tsp. olive oil in pan; lightly brown 1/4 cup drained crushed pineapple (no syrup); stir in 3/4 cup cooked brown rice, 2 Tbs. chopped cashews; top with fresh chopped cilantro to taste

1 1/2 cup steamed broccoli or snow peas

Corn, Black beans and Avocado

3 cups chopped romaine, 3/4 cup each canned corn and black beans, 1/3 of an avocado, 1/4 cup fresh chunky salsa and lime wedges

Snacks

3 cups air-popped popcorn

1 small tangerine/mandarin orange

1 whole-grain flatbread

1 1/2 tsp. natural nut butter

Mango Smoothie:

Blend 1 cup calcium-fortified unsweetened soymilk with 1/2 cup chopped, frozen mango, plus optional dash of cardamom

8 large olives

1/2 large whole-grain pita

1/2 cup chickpeas with a sprinkle of salt and 1 tsp. olive oil, roast at 375°F for 45 minutes, stirring often

Trail Mix:

1 Tbs. each raisin or chopped dates, chopped dried apple, unsalted nuts and sunflower seeds