

21 Days of **PRAYER & FASTING**

RECONNECT WITH GOD



SHEFFIELD
CHURCH OF GOD

SPECIAL NOTE

If you have health issues, please be sure to contact your health professional for advice before committing to any fast including the Daniel Fast.

WHAT IS THE DANIEL FAST?

It's a biblically-based partial fast based on two accounts of the Prophet Daniel's fasting experiences (see Daniel 1 and 10) and typical Jewish fasting principles. The Daniel Fast eating plan is similar to a vegan diet with additional restrictions. See the Daniel Fast Food List on the next page for a more complete outline of foods to include and foods to avoid.

The Bible teaches us that we are a spirit, we have a soul and we live in a body. The Daniel Fast affects all three parts of us as we enter into a period of time for focused prayer and fasting.

The Body - Certainly, our bodies are affected as our diet changes, for some in very dramatic ways, during the Daniel Fast. Many men and women experience detoxing from caffeine, chemicals, and sugar. The symptoms are headaches, leg cramps, fatigue, and malaise. Most people lose weight during the Daniel Fast. And many report healings from diabetes, allergies, arthritis, and cancer.

The Soul - Frequently referred to as "the flesh" in the Bible, the soul is also significantly impacted during the Daniel Fast. The soul is the seat of our emotions, intellect, personality, and will, in the "soulish realm" where we experience cravings, frustration, anger ... and even happiness.

During the Daniel Fast, your soul may very well rebel against the dramatic change in your diet. Experiencing and winning this battle over the flesh is often one of the most powerful lessons of the Daniel Fast.

The Spirit - Our spirit is that born-again part of us that surrenders to God and then abides with the Father and the Son. Our spirit is filled with the Holy Spirit when we yield to Him. During the Daniel Fast, we want to put our spirit in charge of the other two parts of us. When our flesh is acting out with a craving, we take control of it with our spirit (Just as a parent, takes control of a rebellious child).

Fasting is always coupled with a spiritual goal. So during this time of fasting, you will want to focus on prayer, study, and meditation.

What if you have health issues?

Fasting should never bring harm to the body. And if you have concerns, be sure to consult your health professional before going on the Daniel Fast or making any significant dietary change.

WHAT IS FASTING?

Fasting is primarily the act of willingly abstaining from some or all food, drink, or both, for a period of time. An absolute fast has been defined as abstinence from all food and drink, except water for a specified period, usually a single day (24 hours), or occasionally longer. Jesus fasted for 40 days. A partial fast may exclude a particular food or drink, restricting only meat or favorite food. Others may eliminate an enjoyable activity such as television or video games for a period of time.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF FASTING?

The purpose of fasting is to take our eyes off the things of this world and instead focus on God. Fasting is a way to demonstrate to God and ourselves that we are serious about our relationship with Him. Fasting assists us in turning to God with our whole heart. It prepares us to hear his voice. That is why fasting, prayer, and reading scripture should be done together.

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IS FASTING BIBLICAL?

The simple answer is "yes." Fasting, however, isn't some "work" that is commanded by Christ or required by Scripture. That doesn't mean that fasting isn't recommended as a part of our spiritual growth. The Book of Acts records believers fasting before making important decisions (Acts 13:4; 14:23). Fasting and prayer are often linked together (Luke 2:37; 5:33).

WHY 21 DAYS?

There isn't anything magical about 21 days. We have chosen 21 days because psychologists tell us it takes to adopt a new habit. In addition to prayer and fasting, you are encouraged to read your Bible during this time. In 21 days, chances are Bible reading and fasting will become a permanent part of your Christian experience.

TYPES OF FASTS

Fasting in Scripture is almost always a fasting from food, but there are other ways to fast. Anything you can temporarily give up in order to better focus on God can be considered a fast (1 Corinthians 7: 1-5). What you decide to fast isn't nearly as important as focusing on God during the fast. Information on the Daniel Fast is included with this publication.

CHRISTIAN FASTING - A LIFESTYLE OF SERVANT LIVING

Christian fasting is more than denying ourselves food or something else of the flesh - it's a sacrificial lifestyle before God. Isaiah 58 tells us what a "true fast" is. It's not just a one-time act of humility and denial before God, it's a lifestyle of servant ministry to others. As Isaiah tells us, fasting encourages humility, loosens the chains of injustice, unties the chords of the yoke, frees the oppressed, feeds the hungry, provides for the poor, and clothes the naked.

FOODS TO INCLUDE IN THE 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.

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, 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, whole wheat tortillas, rice cakes, and popcorn.

All nuts and seeds, including but not limited to sunflower seeds, cashews, peanuts, sesame. Also, nut kinds of butter, including peanut butter.

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, cannellini beans, white beans.

All quality oils include but are not limited to olive, canola, grape seed, peanut, and sesame.

Beverages: spring water, distilled water, or other pure waters. Tofu, soy products, vinegar, seasonings, salt, herbs, and spices.

FOODS TO AVOID ON THE DANIEL FAST

All meat and animal products include beef, lamb, pork, poultry, and fish.

All dairy products including but are not limited to milk, cheese, cream, butter, and eggs.

All sweeteners including but are not limited to sugar, raw sugar, honey, syrups, molasses, and cane juice.

All leavened bread, including Ezekiel Bread (contains yeast and honey) and baked goods.

All refined and processed food products include artificial flavorings, food additives, chemicals, white rice, white flour, and foods that contain artificial preservatives.

All deep-fried foods including but are not limited to potato chips, french fries, corn chips.

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

Beverages including but are not limited to coffee, tea, herbal teas, carbonated drinks, energy drinks, and alcohol.

REMEMBER, READ THE LABELS!

