

FASTING GUIDE

New Beginnings 21-Day Daniel Fast
January 2 – January 23, 2021

**Note: Please consult your physician or health care professional before making changes to your diet.*

What is Fasting?

Fasting is an opportunity for Christians to practice self-discipline and sacrifice by refraining from certain behaviors and focusing their attention on God. This practice has been modeled across scripture, as there are countless biblical figures that fasted and prayed in order to hear from the Lord. For example, in the Old Testament, Moses fasted when he went up to Mount Sinai to receive instruction from the Lord. Exodus 34:28 (NKJV) says, “So he was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights; he neither ate bread nor drank water. And He wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments.” As Moses fasted, he received important insight from God that would become the foundation of our faith! Likewise, in the New Testament, Jesus himself began His ministry by a period of prayer and fasting. While He was in the wilderness tempted by the devil, Matthew 4:2 notes that Jesus fasted and was able to access the strength needed to resist the enemy. These are only a few of the many instances that suggest the importance of fasting as a way to facilitate a deeper spiritual connection. Although abstaining from food is the most common form of fasting, there are many other ways to fast. An individual can choose to abstain from TV, Social Media, specific purchases, or anything that can potentially distract them from earnestly seeking God.

What is the Daniel Fast?

The Daniel Fast is a type of spiritual fast that comes from two biblical accounts when the Prophet Daniel abstained from certain foods. The first account comes from Daniel 1:8-21 when Daniel along with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, participated in a ten-day fast from the King’s choice meats and wine that went against their dietary restrictions. Instead, they requested to be tested for ten days and only brought vegetables to eat and water to drink. At the end of their fasting period, they not only looked healthier than all of the men that ate the King’s food, but Daniel 1:17 (NKJV) says, “As for these four young men, God gave them



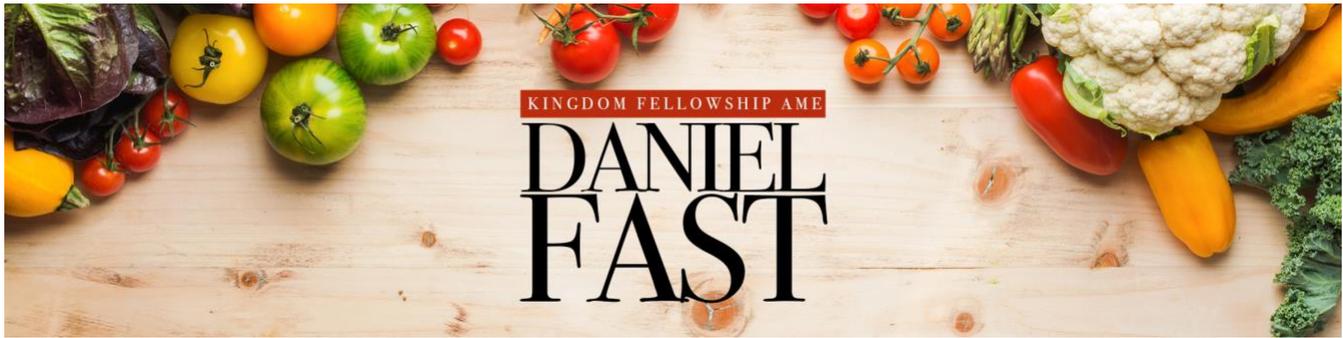
knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.” The second biblical account comes from Daniel 10:1-14 when Daniel fasted again, but this time for 21 days. In order to hear from God and receive understanding about a vision he received, Daniel refrained from eating meat and drinking wine. As a result of his fasting, an angel was sent to interpret his vision. Unfortunately, the angel faced opposition on his way to Daniel for 21 days and was therefore detained. However, when he finally makes it, the angel tells Daniel in Daniel 10:12 (NKJV) “from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words.” Daniel’s fasting and sacrifice initiates the contact he has with the angel. In both instances, Daniel turns down his traditional comforts of certain foods and wine to demonstrate his dependence on God. Currently, we engage in the 21-Day Daniel fast to similarly focus our attention on God and outwardly demonstrate our dependence on Him.

How to Fast?

Before embarking on the 21-Day Daniel Fast, it is important to prepare ourselves mentally, physically, and spiritually. Be mindful that the Daniel fast is not intended to be a form of dieting, and all participants are encouraged to consult their primary care physicians to ensure that it is safe to make these dietary changes. Consider preparing your meals in advance to maximize your focus, time, and energy. The objective of fasting is not only to eliminate things from your daily routine, but to also replace them with prayer. Use this extra time and attention to read the Word of God, listen to worship music, or write in a prayer journal. As you fast, try to be as consistent and committed as possible. However, if you break your fast by accident or even miss a few days, don’t give up! Get right back to your fasting objectives and ask God for help as you move forward.

Daniel Fast Guidelines

There are many ways to practice the Daniel Fast. What you choose to abstain from is between you, God, and your healthcare provider. However, please find below a list of the most common foods that people abstain from when undertaking the Daniel Fast. Remember to read the nutrition facts and labels on the foods you purchase to make sure they do not contain ingredients you are trying to avoid:



Foods to avoid on the Daniel Fast¹

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

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

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

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

All refined and processed foods 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, French fries, corn chips.

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

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

Foods to include during 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 butters 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 including but not limited to olive, canola, grape seed, peanut, and sesame.

Beverages: spring water, distilled water or other pure waters.

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

¹ Adapted from: <https://www.bethanychurch.tv/fasting-guidelines>