

Fasting

Both the Old Testament and New Testament teach the value of fasting, which is abstaining from food or drink in order to focus on prayer and seeking God's will. Fasting is mentioned over 70 times throughout Scripture. In the Old Testament, there were two types of fasting: public and private. Both types offer great spiritual benefits.

Through many examples of people in the Bible who fasted, we do know that God grants supernatural revelation and knowledge through this practice. **Moses, Daniel, and even Jesus fasted! (Moses and Jesus fasted for 40 days in the presence of the Lord and under the control of the Holy Spirit.)** Scripture tells us that fasting will help us grow a more cherished relationship with Christ and will open our eyes to what He wants to teach us or what he wants us to do.

Scriptures About Fasting

Matthew 6:16-18 tells us what to do, how to act, why and the reward.

Matthew 6:16-18 - "16 Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. 17 But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; 18 That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly

Joel 2:12 - "Yet even now," declares the Lord, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;

Daniel 10:3 - I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.

Note: Daniel was old testament and did not anoint. The fast was for 21 Days.

Ezra 8:23 - So we fasted and implored our God for this, and he listened to our entreaty.

Isaiah 58:6 - "Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke?"

Acts 13:2 - While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."

Psalms 69:10 - When I wept and humbled my soul with fasting, it became my reproach.

Acts 14:23 - And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

Exodus 34:28 - And he was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments.

Nehemiah 1:4 - As soon as I heard these words I sat down and wept and mourned for days, and I continued fasting and praying before the God of heaven.

Fasting is one of the ways the Bible encourages disciples to grow closer to God. It increases dependence on the power of the Holy Spirit, and proves that man does not live on bread alone.

Trying to maintain God's laws and his identity as a Jew, Daniel ate just for a period of time in order to show that the God of Israel's ways was better than the self-indulgent ways of the Babylonians.

Daniel Fast in the Bible

The book of Daniel tells the story of the Israelites carried off into exile after many years of straying from God's ways, but mostly from the perspective of a handful of individuals. It also contains prophecy. **You have been studding in Sunday School.**

Daniel was one of the youths selected to be educated in the ways of the Babylonian court, the center of the Chaldean empire. He learned literature, another language, court etiquette, and many other skills that would make him useful to [Nebuchadnezzar](#). Daniel's diet first comes up in chapter one of the account of his life:

"But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the king's food, or with the wine that he drank. Therefore he asked the chief of the eunuchs to allow him not to defile himself" ([Daniel 1:8](#)).

Centuries before, God instituted rules for which foods were clean and unclean for Hebrews to eat, which the Chaldeans did not know or obey.

There are two important factors that went into Daniel's request to eat differently than everyone else in his group. First and foremost, he wanted to continue to obey the Lord's commands. Throughout the course of the book of Daniel, his commitment to the Lord is clear.

He prays even under threat of death.

He boldly interprets prophecy under the guidance of the Spirit of God, knowing it could anger the king.

What Is the Daniel Fast?

The Daniel Fast is a religiously inspired dietary plan based on the biblical story of Daniel, particularly the book of Daniel in the Old Testament. The fast is often undertaken by individuals or groups as a form of spiritual discipline, prayer, and seeking God's guidance.

The Daniel Fast typically involves abstaining from certain types of foods for a specified period, often 21 days. The first test in the bible was to fast for 10 days

If you are going too fast, there must guidelines for the fast that are derived from the [Bible](#), specifically [Daniel 1:8-14](#), where Daniel and his group chose to abstain from rich and lavish foods and only ate vegetables and drank water.

The chief eunuch had compassion for Daniel and his request to eat according to his principles, but he had concerns that the king would get mad when Daniel and his friends were less healthy because they were not eating approved food.

As a reply, Daniel gave a challenge to the Babylonian court. He said: “Test your servants for ten days; let us be given vegetables to eat and water to drink. Then let our appearance and the appearance of the youths who eat the king’s food be observed by you, and deal with your servants according to what you see” ([Daniel 1:13-14](#)).

The king’s men still ate meat and wine and were less healthy than Daniel and his friends. Sometime this fast is also used as a diet to get healthier and get closer to the Lord, at the same time. In the Bible, it lasted for ten days initially, and then it was implemented for a longer period of time.

During the Daniel Fast they typically avoid:

Meat and animal products: Including beef, poultry, fish, dairy, and eggs.

Sweeteners: Such as sugar, honey, and artificial sweeteners.

Leavened bread and processed foods: Participants usually stick to whole grains and avoid leavened bread.

Solid fats: Avoid fried foods and choose healthier fat sources like olive oil.

Beverages: Often, participants limit their beverage intake to water and herbal teas.

The emphasis is on consuming fruits, vegetables, peas, nuts, seeds, and whole grains. The Daniel Fast is not just about dietary restrictions; it also encourages prayer, meditation, and spiritual reflection.

This fast is a partial fast, meaning it does not require the individual to give up all food for a period of time, though some will abstain from eating. The Bible does not go into great detail about what specifically Daniel ate, though it does say Daniel and his groups consumed vegetables and water. The Daniel fast is built around this knowledge, an understanding of Levitical law, and clean foods.

Foods You Can Eat for the Daniel Fast

- **Vegetables:** all fresh, frozen, dried, juiced, and canned vegetables

- **Fruit:** all fresh, frozen, dried (with no added sugar), juiced and canned fruit

- **Whole grains:** amaranth, barley, brown rice, buckwheat, bulgur, millet, Freekeh, oats, purple rice, wild rice, whole wheat, spelt, sorghum, rye, quinoa

- **Beans and legumes:** black beans, garbanzo beans, kidney beans, lentils, peanuts, pinto beans, split beans, black-eyed peas
- **Oils:** coconut, olive, sesame, etc., but not for deep-frying
- **Nuts and seeds:** almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, sunflower seeds, soy nuts, sesame seeds, hazelnuts, macadamia nuts, pecans, pumpkin seeds, pine nuts, pistachios, poppy seeds
- **Unleavened bread, herbs, spices, and seasonings**
- **Beverages:** water, some fruit juice, unsweetened non-dairy milk

Foods to Avoid while on a Daniel Fast

- **Alcohol**
- **Added sugars:** any foods with added sugar are prohibited, such as agave, artificial sweeteners, brown sugar, cane juice, corn syrup, honey, sugar, molasses, etc.
- **Meat:** beef, bison, chicken, goat, lamb, pork, turkey, fish
- **Dairy:** butter, cheese, cream, milk, yogurt
- **Eggs** are prohibited
- **Yeast:** this includes all leavened bread
- **Refined grains:** white rice, white flour
- **Processed food:** any food with artificial flavorings, colorings, chemicals, additives, and preservatives are prohibited
- **Fried food:** corn chips, potato chips, French fries, fried vegetables (tempura) etc.
- **Solid fats:** butter, lard, margarine, shortening
- **Chocolate:** milk chocolate, semi-sweet, dark, syrup, cacao
- **Caffeinated drinks**

How to Partake in the Daniel Fast

To partake in the Daniel fast, select a period of time to only eat foods approved on the diet. This time can be only ten days, like in the Book of Daniel, or **thirty days, or any period of time the Holy Spirit leads**. It is possible to eat what is outlined in the diet for three meals a day. Some people may abstain from eating for a period of time or for certain meals.

Some important Bible verses to think about while fasting:

“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. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, 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” ([Matthew 6:16-18](#)).

“And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed” ([Acts 14:23](#)).

“Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control” ([1 Corinthians 7:5](#)).

“But he answered, ‘It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God’” ([Matthew 4:4](#)).

“So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God” ([1 Corinthians 10:31](#)).