

REFUGEE

C H U R C H

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Corporate Consecration Fasting Guide

Introduction to Fasting

Technically, fasting is abstaining from food, or not eating certain kinds of food over a period of time. Biblically, fasting is a deliberate abstinence from something for a spiritual purpose. For a believer, fasting is a form of self-denial for the sake of pursuing our relationship with God. Therefore, fasting can also be abstaining from activities that provide us with pleasure or entertainment for a period of time in order to focus our minds on spiritual things. It is a deliberate abstinence from something for a spiritual purpose. When we fast, we choose to break with our routine in order to draw closer to God. As such, fasting demands a deep level of commitment and sacrifice.

Fasting isn't just about what we put in our stomachs, but what we feed our souls and spirits as well. Two powers are vying for control when we fast: our human will, and the supernatural power of God. Fasting grinds on the flesh (Rom. 8:13) because the flesh fights against the Spirit (Rom. 8:5-8; Gal. 5:17). Realize that our flesh will fight back: grumpiness, headaches, stomach growling, thoughts drifting to food, getting cold, being tired from the toxins being released from your body. It takes work to get our flesh under submission! As the flesh weakens, we can become more and more sensitive to the Spirit and the things of God.

When we fast, we are following Jesus' example (Matt. 4:2). As we fast, we humble ourselves before the Lord, being very prayerful and meditating in the Word. This is a time to really devote ourselves to constant, consistent praying (1 Thess. 4:17). Fasting allows us to embrace our emptiness and need for God. Ultimately, fasting is waiting on God. Consecration through fasting is a way to press in, to break away from the "norm," quiet ourselves before God, and use our time to wait upon the Lord with greater intensity (Gal. 5:24).

Additionally, fasting has several benefits. It helps to root and ground us in faith to the promises of God (Eph. 3:17; Col. 2:7). It can sharpen and hone our spiritual sensitivity to the things of God. Fasting is beneficial for spiritual cleansing as well, as times of prayer and fasting can sever the spiritual bonds of addictions. Fasting also has medical and physical benefits that the medical community has recognized for centuries: fasting allows the digestive system to rest and allows the body to cleanse itself from toxins.

Fasting can bring about miraculous results (Gal. 6:8)! As we fast, we empty ourselves and weaken our flesh, that the power of God may be available to us in greater amounts. It is through fasting that God tends to reveal and release His supernatural power: God-inspired creativity (new ideas, God-given plans), His wisdom made available in certain situations, spiritual resources to endure and overcome, and even birth revival and unique outpourings of the Spirit's power!

Fasting isn't a spiritual requirement; there is no Scripture that DEMANDS believers to practice fasting. Also, practicing fasting doesn't make us better than anyone else, superior to other believers, nor more "spiritual" than others. Fasting is a choice to seek the Lord's face and His presence in a deeper way for a short season. It IS, however, a

spiritual discipline that, when practiced, helps us to grow in our relationship with the Lord.

Fasting and prayer brings us closer to God and also yields some long-term rewards. During this fast, we are expecting God to speak through His written Word, dreams, visions, Spirit-directed impressions, and God-inspired ideas. Some of the things that God is going to speak are going to be crucial and critical to our walk with the Lord, or instructions for closing the gaps in our lives this year, and even personal healing and deliverance.

An effective time of spiritual fasting and prayer requires determining in advance:

- Why am I fasting?

Determine the reason for your fast, what is your focus/reason for seeking the Lord?

Some Examples:

- *Freedom from addictions or besetting sins*
- *Provision/stewardship wisdom with financial troubles*
- *Victory over negative emotional feelings & habits*
- *Wisdom/to know God's will for major life decisions*
- *Physical healing*
- *Favor in a major Kingdom-/work-related venture*
- *Protection and victory in spiritual warfare*

As the Lord confirms in your heart and mind what this fast is for, write it down!

- How long should I fast?
- Decide that you WILL succeed!

TYPES OF FASTS

We must be led by the Spirit of the Lord as to what type of fast to go on and just how long the fast He is calling us to should last (Isa. 58:5a). However, we must apply wisdom and common sense to these decisions as well. Our loving God would not lead us to do something that could harm us or do real damage to the bodies He gave us to be good stewards of!

THE TOTAL/COMPLETE FAST

- The Total Fast is abstaining from ALL food and just drinking water.

- On this fast, you will not eat food, but will drink plenty of water.
- If you have never fasted, do not go on this fast for an extended length of time at first.
- Start out for a short period and then increase the length of your fasting time. A suggestion would be to try it first for one day.

NON-TOTAL/PARTIAL FAST

- A Partial Fast is abstaining from eating any food, but drinking water and fruit juices. Fruit juices contain a few calories but do have some nutritional value.
- You probably will not experience as much weakness on this fast because the body will be getting some nutrients.
- A benefit of this type of fast is that you may find that you will have more strength to pray effectively because the body is receiving some nutrients.

THE SYSTEMATIC FAST

- A Systematic Fast follows a system, i.e., abstaining from eating during certain awake hours, or abstaining from certain kinds of food, or certain kinds of pleasurable/entertaining activities for a period of time.
- For example, a person would fast for only a few hours each day, not eating food until a given hour. Some people choose to go to noon, others 3:00 p.m. or 6:00 p.m, or 7am to 7pm. You should be Spirit-led as to how long you should go.
- Water is permitted.
- The Daniel Fast is a kind of Systematic Fast. More information is provided in the section “Introduction to the Daniel Fast” below.
- The type of fasting of 1 Corinthians 7:5 is also a kind of Systematic Fast. However, the Scripture is clear that BOTH partners in the marriage have to agree to this fast. Additionally, the length of the fast must be agreed to by both partners and should be kept short so that the enemy cannot use temptation to wreck the marriage or any spiritual gains from the fast. If you have additional questions, you should consult your pastor for wisdom and guidance.

THE SUPERNATURAL FAST

- The Supernatural Fast is truly a supernatural experience.
- This fast is without food or drink of any kind.

- This fast should not be attempted unless you are divinely directed by the Lord to do so and in consultation with your pastor AND your physician

What to Expect during a Fast

PHYSICALLY

When you fast, your body detoxifies, or eliminates toxins, from your system. This can cause mild discomfort such as headaches and irritability during withdrawal from caffeine and sugars. And naturally, you will have hunger pains.

Limit your activity and exercise moderately.

Expect your sleep patterns to be thrown off, so take time to rest, or even nap when/if you can. Don't be too hard on yourself if your productivity comes only in spurts!

SPIRITUALLY

Expect to experience resistance from your own body, as well as the enemy, but expect to get to know the Lord better, and for His power to increase in your life.

Be ready for the Lord to speak to you! Purchase a little journal or notebook, or use your notes app on your phone to write down what the Spirit of God has spoken to you. Put the journal or notebook close to your bed to record the things He speaks to you during the night or during your prayer times. Take it with you to work or school so that you can capture whatever He wants to communicate to you during this time of consecration!

Tips for Fasting

- Pray as often as you can throughout the day or seek to increase the frequency of daily prayer time. Fasting does not work if you do not pray!
- Fast with a cause; never fast casually (hit-or-miss attitude).
- Unless it's a prayer partner, a spouse, or somebody who is supporting you during your fast, do not share that you are fasting with others. By talking about our fast to others, we risk losing any spiritual benefits that come from fasting (Matt. 6:16-18, NLT). Keep your fast to yourself, rather than seeking to use it as a way to impress others or get compassion for your struggle.

- If you don't already have an established daily quiet time with the Lord, then this is an excellent opportunity to do so. Starting your day with God is a habit that will support your faith and growing intimacy with the Lord.
- Integrate listening to praise and worship music before your Bible study time, after it, or as a part of your prayer time.
- Get away from the normal distractions (TV, social media, toxic conversations, internet surfing) as much as possible and keep your heart and mind set on seeking God's face. Avoiding these distractions will allow you to focus on your relationship with God.
- Reserve time in your daily schedule for Bible study.
- Do not push to extremes physically or spiritually.

Important Information

SPECIAL NOTES

If you have health issues, please be sure to contact your health professional for advice before committing to any fast including the Daniel Fast. If you would like a list of the foods included and excluded in the Daniel Fast to show your doctor, just copy the contents of the previous pages.

If you are already follow a plant-based diet (vegetarian or vegan), you can base your fast on giving up something important to you and focus on spending scheduled time with God. Examples would be TV, social media, sugars, caffeine, unhealthy/toxic speech. Another alternative would be to choose to do a Complete Fast (no food) from sun up to sun down, or 7am to 7pm.

PREGNANT WOMEN AND PEOPLE ON MEDICATIONS

Pregnant women, persons on medication, with ulcers, and those under a physician's care for diagnosed medical conditions, should consult their necessary doctor for recommended foods and drinks. You can still participate in the fast by eating and drinking very lightly or choosing something else to fast from as listed above.

PARENTS

Parents, please make sure you feed your children! Consider changing or altering their diet and eating habits to something light and nutritious during this time of fasting.

Include them in this time of consecration. Explain to them why we are fasting. Consider scheduling a time of family prayer and Bible reading that is separate from your own personal time.

If they are old enough, allow them to express what they also would like God to do regarding their own prayer requests on this fast.

BREAKING THE FAST

When the fast is over, you may want to consider beginning with very light foods, like vegetables. Start by drinking some fluids to relax your intestines before having eating. Drink fluids such as light juices, warm water or warm soup. Overdoing and over-indulging will do more harm than you think.

An Introduction to the Daniel Fast

We are embarking on is a biblically-based systematic fast known as the Daniel Fast. This fast, based upon Daniel 1, is for dedicating one's self to the Lord anew. However, each person should determine what area or need the Lord desires your renewed consecration/dedication in your life. Again, some biblical examples would be:

- *Spiritual warfare, victory over demonic oppression (Mark 9:29)*
- *Direction and protection (Ezra 8:21-23)*
- *Social justice and righteousness (Isa. 58)*
- *Guidance, protection, to hear God's voice (2 Chron. 20:3)*
- *Revelation/illumination (Acts 10:30)*
- *Courage, obedience, and wisdom (Esther 4:16)*
- *Confirmation of ministry direction (Acts 13:2-3)*
- *Physical healing (Psalm 35:13; 2 Sam 12:16)*
- *Emotional healing, deliverance from negative emotions/habits (Ps. 139:23-24)*
- *Deliverance from addictive behaviors and cycles (Heb. 12:1)*
- *Financial breakthrough or provision (Deut. 28:1-2)*
- *Revival, salvation for the lost (1 Sam 7:13; 2 Chron. 7:14; Joel 2:12-17)*
- *Favor in a major Kingdom-/work-related venture (Neh 1:4-2:8)*
- *Wisdom/to know God's will for major life decisions (Est 4:16; Acts 9:9)*

The Daniel Fast is a method of fasting that limits the food intake to what is pure/natural/healthier, while still focusing on consecrating one's self to the Lord through the spiritual discipline of prayer. There are two anchoring scriptures for the Daniel Fast.

In Daniel 1, Daniel and his friends ate only vegetables (that would have included fruits) and drank only water for ten days. This passage provides two guidelines for the fast:

- Only fruits and vegetables (they avoided foods that were processed or enriched)
- Only water for a beverage

Then, in Daniel 10 we read that Daniel ate no meat nor any rich foods (NLT) or meat, and he drank no wine for 21 days. So from this scripture, we get a third guideline:

- No sweeteners and no breads, no meat

Another important guideline is drawn from Jewish fasting principles, where no leaven is used during fasting. So that's why yeast, baking powder and the like are not allowed on the Daniel Fast.

Finally, with all the above puzzle pieces, we conclude that artificial or processed foods nor any chemicals are to be abstained from while on the Daniel Fast.

One of the great things about the Daniel Fast is that you are not limited to any specific *amount* of food, but rather to the *kinds* of food you can eat. The Daniel Fast is limited to vegetables (includes fruits) and water.

Be sure to read the ingredients on labels of prepared foods to make sure they only include Daniel Fast-friendly ingredients.

How to Prepare for the Daniel Fast

HOW TO PREPARE PHYSICALLY

Make your meals somewhat lighter for a few days leading up to your fast. Look at the list of recommended foods below and make plans on what to buy and how to grocery shop over the next few weeks.

Make some decisions about your time/daily schedule before starting the fast and figure out how to alter your routine in order to prioritize time for prayer and study of the Word. This is going to have to involve some sacrifices in order to prioritize time for God!

HOW TO PREPARE SPIRITUALLY

Prepare spiritually by confessing your sins to God. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal areas of weakness. Forgive all who have offended you and ask forgiveness of those you may have offended (Mark 11:25; Luke 11:4; 17:3-4). Surrender your life fully to Jesus Christ and reject the worldly desires that hinder you (Romans 12:1-2).

Start with a clear personal goal in addition to our corporate goals. Be specific. Why are you fasting? Do you need direction, healing, restoration of marriage or family issues? Are you facing financial difficulties? Ask the Holy Spirit for guidance and clarity to your purpose for your fast.

Make up in your mind that you WILL succeed, you WILL hear from the Lord, that you WILL experience breakthrough, revelation, and depth in your relationship with the Lord Jesus!

Recommended Foods and Important Information

During this fast, we are going to be abstaining from certain kinds of food. We want to eat right and avoid certain foods. This will produce dual results. The first is spiritual. It helps to produce a clear mind causing us to be light in the spirit and to be focused. The second is physical. It will help you to maintain a healthy life style.

Foods to avoid on the Daniel Fast

All animal products including all meat, poultry, fish...
White bread
White rice
All deep fried foods
Caffeine
Carbonated beverages
Coffee (including decaf b/c contains small amount of caffeine)
Energy drinks
Foods containing preservatives, additives
Refined foods
Processed foods
Food additives
Refined sugar
Sugar substitutes
Raw sugar
Syrups
Molasses
Cane juice
White flour
Margarine
Shortening
High fat products
Butter
All leavened breads
Baked goods
All dairy
Milk
Cheese
Yogurt
Cream
Eggs
Alcohol
Mayonnaise

Foods to include in your diet during the Daniel Fast

NOTE:

Please make sure to READ THE LABEL when purchasing packaged, canned or bottled foods. They should be sugar-free and chemical-free. Keep this in mind as you review this list of acceptable foods.

ALL FRUITS (These can be fresh, frozen, dried, juiced or canned (watch for added sugar))

Apples

Melons

Apricots
Avocados
Bananas
Berries
Blackberries
Blueberries
Boysenberries
Breadfruit
Cantaloupe
Cherries
Coconuts
Cranberries
Dates
Figs
Grapefruit
Grapes
Grenadine
Guava
Honeydew melons
Kiwi
Lemons

Limes
Mangoes
Melons
Mulberries
Nectarines
Oats
Olives
Oranges
Papayas
Peaches
Pears
Pineapples
Plums
Prunes
Raisins
Raspberries
Strawberries
Tangelos
Tangerines
Watermelon

ALL VEGETABLES (These can be fresh, frozen, dried, juiced or canned (watch salt content))

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
Peppers
Potatoes
Radishes
Rutabagas
Scallions
Spinach
Sprouts
Squashes
Sweet potatoes
Tomatoes
Turnips
Watercress
Yams
Zucchini

LEGUMES

Dried beans

Green beans

Black beans
Cannellini
Pinto beans
Split peas
Lentils
Black eyed peas
White peas

Green peas
Kidney beans
Peanuts
Beans
Lupines
Peas

SEEDS

All nuts (raw, unsalted)
Sprouts
Ground flax
Cashews
Walnuts

Sunflower
Sesame
Almonds
Natural Almond Butter

WHOLE GRAINS

Whole wheat
Millet
Quinoa
Oats
Rolled Oats
Plain Oatmeal- not instant
Popcorn (homemade)

Brown rice
Barley
Grits (no butter or sugar)
Whole wheat pasta
Whole wheat tortillas
Plain Rice cakes

LIQUIDS

Water (spring, distilled, filtered)
Unsweetened Soy Milk
Herbal (caffeine free) Tea
100% Fruit/Vegetable Juice (no added sugar)

OTHER

Tofu
Soy products
Herbs
Small amounts of Honey, Guava, or stevia
Small amounts of Sea Salt
Small amounts of Ezekiel Bread
Small amounts of Olive Oil
All quality oils including but not limited to olive, canola, grape seed, peanut, and sesame.
Spices (read the label to be sure there are no preservatives)

Resources for recipes

www.ultimatedanielfast.com

www.danielfast.wordpress.com

www.daniel-fast.com

www.caringcarrot.com

Common FAQ's

What about prepared foods?

Read the labels of all prepared foods. Remember the Daniel Fast is sugar-free and chemical-free. So, if you use any canned fruits, vegetables, packaged foods, or prepared sauces you must read the label to be aware about just what is in there.

What about pasta?

Make sure the label says whole grain pasta with no additives (watch for sugar). Whole grain pasta offers 7 grams of protein per serving (3/4 cup of dried pasta).

I know it says raw, unsalted nuts, but what about roasted nuts?

The goal would be to stick to raw, unsalted nuts. But these are harder to find so in a pinch just make sure you get plain roasted, unsalted nuts with no preservatives.

How do I get enough protein in my diet while on the fast?

The following are protein-rich foods that are allowed on the Daniel Fast... almonds, sunflower seeds, lentils, quinoa, brown rice, split peas, whole grains, and tofu.

What kind of peanut butter is allowed?

A natural peanut butter with no additives...watch for sugars including molasses. Smucker's creamy natural peanut butter has nothing but peanuts in it.

How can I identify whole grain foods?

Typically, if the ingredient lists "whole wheat", "rolled oats", or "whole corn" as the first ingredient, the product is a whole grain food item. Another way to identify whole grains in the foods you eat is to look in the nutritional facts information and check if the food item contains dietary fiber. If it contains a

significant amount, it most likely contains whole grains. "Wheat flour" is not a whole grain and therefore does not indicate a whole grain product.

What about salad dressing?

Olive oil and lemon or lime are an option.

Do I need to eat organic foods while on the fast?

No, but it is suggested because organic foods are produced without the use of feed or fertilizer of plant or animal origin and without employment of chemically formulated fertilizers, growth stimulants, antibiotics, or pesticides.

What about bread?

The bread should be prepared without yeast.

How much can I eat?

As long as they are the appropriate foods, we are recommending eating until satisfied with no limits.