

Tips for the Daniel Fast

NO MEATS, TREATS OR SWEETS!

Fast with a Purpose

Before you begin, decide on the purpose of your fast. Otherwise, without a purpose, you will be merely dieting. So prayerfully consider the focus of your fast.



For example, what is your greatest need at this time in your life? Do you want to learn to trust God in a deeper and more consistent manner? Could your marriage be stronger? Do you have financial pressures? Do you have family members who don't yet know the Lord or have walked away from the Christian life?

Invest some quality prayer time and decide on a purpose for your fast. Then make a plan for your prayer and study time. Gather books and study materials to help feed your spirit and guide your quiet time.

Most men and women on the Daniel Fast find it helpful to journal during their consecrated time of prayer and fasting. Write expecting the Holy Spirit to partner with you as you seek a greater level of intimacy with your Father.

What is the Daniel Fast?

The Daniel Fast is a biblically based partial fast. It is a method of fasting that men, women and young people all over the world are using as they enter into the spiritual discipline of prayer and fasting.

There are two anchoring scriptures for the Daniel Fast. In Daniel 1 the Prophet ate only vegetables (that would have included fruits) and drank only water. So from these scriptures we get two of the guidelines for the fast:

1. Only fruits and vegetables
2. Only water for a beverage

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

3. No sweeteners and no breads

Another important guideline is drawn from Jewish fasting principles, where no leaven is used during the fast. 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 no artificial or processed foods nor any chemicals are allowed on the Daniel Fast.

When asked about the eating plan on the Daniel Fast, I often say it is a "vegan diet with even more restrictions."

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

The Daniel Fast for the body, soul and spirit

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 effected as our diet is changed, for some in very dramatic ways, during the Daniel Fast. Many men and women experience detoxing from caffeine, chemicals and sugar. The symptoms are most often 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 greatly impacted during the Daniel Fast. The soul is the seat of our emotions, intellect, personality and will. It is 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. **An important question to ask yourself . . .**

During your Daniel Fast you will have many times when you might want to "stretch the rules" a little bit. For example, even though the guidelines say we are to drink only water . . . you conclude that herbal teas are vegetables and water is water and therefore you will go ahead and drink herbal teas during the Daniel Fast.

But I encourage you to learn a powerful spiritual lesson by asking yourself (examining your heart) the question, "Why do you want the herbal teas?"

My guess is that the answer will be, "Well I just want them. I can't drink only water. I have to have something else."

The Daniel Fast teaches us to deny our "selves" and instead put our spirit in control over our flesh. As you plan your meals and eat your food, keep in mind that the definition of a fast is to deny food for a spiritual purpose.

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 major dietary change.

The Daniel Fast is a very healthy way to eat! So health professionals will support this eating plan, but might suggest a few modifications if you have health issues that need special attention. For example, pregnant and nursing mothers might get instructions to add fish, chicken and cheese into the Daniel Fast, but otherwise stay the course. Diabetics may need to add more carbohydrates or include chicken and fish. Also, those who are especially active either through sports, bodybuilding or vocation may need to slightly alter the eating plan.

I encourage you to check with your doctor . . . and by the way, being addicted to Snickers and Coke don't count as a special need!

How to study the Bible . . .

During your Daniel Fast you will spend time drawing closer to God and studying His Word. You may already be experienced in studying the Bible and have adopted methods that will work for you. But if you are like many who feel a bit lost then it's just them and a Bible, let me offer these tips.

Study Faith: A very powerful study is to get a concordance and look up the Scriptures about

"faith." Read and meditate each one and then ask yourself how it applies to you. Consider memorizing at least one of these verses each week.

Enter His Secret Place: During the Daniel Fast, study and meditate on Deuteronomy 28: 1-14; Psalm 34 and Psalm 91. Don't hurry through the Scriptures. But instead read the verses slowly and ponder them. Write down insights you gain during this time.

Study the Book of John: Use your Daniel Fast time to acquaint yourself with Jesus by getting to know Him from the Book of John. Read it over and over again paying attention to Christ's nature, His love for the Father and His love for you. Keep notes and choose a verse each week to memorize.

One of the most powerful lessons I ever learned . . .

took place when I was trying to gain greater understanding about our make up: we are a spirit, we have a **soul** and we live in a body. I wanted to know more of how that relates to my Christian life. It was a simple little exercise, but the revelation was amazing and has given me so much understanding!

The understanding I gained has also helped me so much during the Daniel Fast and when dealing with emotions and circumstances. I encourage you to take a few minutes to draw a little picture. Hopefully you too will gain much insight about yourself and our relation to the Spirit.

Step One: Get a sheet of paper and on the top half, draw three side-by-side stick figures. Under each of stick figures, name them as Spirit, Soul and Body. Now on the top of the paper, write your name. Take a couple minutes and think about this being a "portrait of YOU!" As simple as this is, this little drawing shows you as a **spirit**, a **soul** and a **body**.

Step Two: It is your spirit that is born-again when you accept Christ as your Savior. It's often

referred to as the "inner man" or "the new creation." Under the "spirit" figure, write the character qualities of the spirit. You can look up Galatians 5: 16-22 and see the nine fruits of the spirit. List them under your "spirit figure."

Step Three: The "soul" is also referred to as "the flesh." It is where our will, emotions and intellect reside. This is the part of us that we surrender to God to be transformed into the ways of Christ. Under the "soul" label, make a list of what comes out of the soul (i.e. anger, pride, jealousy, etc.).

Step Four: The "body" is like a puppet and subject to what the "spirit" or the "soul" cause it to do. The Word says that our body is the "temple of the Holy Spirit." Yet, too often we don't treat our bodies in this esteemed state. Our soul-man feeds it foods that are not good for it or we bring destruction to it.

During the Daniel Fast, we are putting our spirit in charge over our soul and our body. When our soul cries out, "I want that cup of coffee!" or, "I want that hamburger!" our spirit tells our soul to, "Sit down and behave. I am in charge. You can't have everything you want." This authority from our spirit can also take place when resentment, fear or jealousy try to take command in us. Again, we say choose the way of faith. We walk in the spirit as He is in the Spirit. Instead of resentment, we choose forgiveness. Instead of fear, we choose trust in God. Instead of jealousy, we choose thanksgiving. Instead of darkness, we choose His marvelous Light. Instead of death, we choose life.

Study this simple "portrait." Let it minister to you and bring truth to your spirit. And allow it to give you understanding as you continue through this period of prayer and fasting.

The Daniel Fast and Your Health

The purpose of the spiritual fasting is to consecrate (set aside) a specific period of time to draw closer to God to hear from Him. A powerful side benefit of the Daniel Fast is the improvement in health that most people experience.

The Daniel Fast is a plant-based eating plan with the only beverage being water. When the bodies that God designed and created are fed the good quality foods He created especially for it improvements in health result. The high fiber in the fruit, vegetables and whole grains cleanses the body and improves digestion. It's not uncommon for cholesterol levels to drop, for blood sugar levels to balance, for weight to be lost and for a general feeling of well-being to be experienced.

Anytime you make a significant change in your diet or exercise, consult your health professional. Also, if you have special health needs consider adjusting the eating plan to meet those requirements while maintaining the other restrictions for the fast.

Foods to include in your diet during the Daniel Fast...

All fruits: These can be fresh, frozen, dried, juiced or canned (watch for added sugar).

Apples
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
Mulberry
Nectarines
Oats
Olives
Oranges
Papayas
Peaches
Pears
Pineapples
Plums
Prunes
Raisins
Raspberries
Strawberries
Tangelos
Tangerines
Watermelon

Vegetables: These can be fresh, frozen, dried, juiced or canned (watch salt content).

Artichokes
Asparagus
Beets
Broccoli
Brussel 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
Black beans
Cannellini
Pinto beans
Split peas
Lentils
Black eyed peas
Green beans
Green peas
Kidney beans
Peanuts (includes natural peanut butter)
Beans
Lentils
Lupines
White
Peas
Seeds:
All nuts (raw, unsalted)
Sprouts
Ground flax
Cashews
Walnuts

Sunflower
Sesame
Almonds
Natural Almond Butter
Whole Grains:
Whole wheat
Brown rice
Millet
Quinoa
Oats
Rolled Oats
Plain Oatmeal- not instant
Barley
Grits (no butter)
Whole wheat pasta
Whole wheat tortillas
Plain Rice cakes
Popcorn (see recipe in FAQ's)

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
Small amounts of Sea Salt
Small amounts of Ezekiel Bread
Small amounts of Olive Oil
Spices (read the label to be sure there are no preservatives)

Foods to avoid on the Daniel Fast...

All animal products including all meat, poultry, fish...
White rice
White bread
All deep fried foods
Caffeine
Coffee (including decaf b/c contains small amount of caffeine)
Carbonated beverages
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

**If you have any known medical conditions or suspect such conditions, consult your doctor before beginning the fast.*