



SEVEN TIPS FOR OBSERVING THE
Daniel Fast

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The Daniel Fast

The concept of a Daniel Fast comes from Daniel 1:8-14, "But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way. Now God had caused the official to show favor and sympathy to Daniel, but the official told Daniel, "I am afraid of my lord the king, who has assigned your food and drink. Why should he see you looking worse than the other young men your age? The king would then have my head because of you." Daniel then said to the guard whom the chief official had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, "Please test your servants for ten days: Give us nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink. Then compare our appearance with that of the young men who eat the royal food, and treat your servants in accordance with what you see." So he agreed to this and tested them for ten days."

The background of the "Daniel Fast" is that Daniel and his three friends had been "deported" to Babylon when Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians had conquered Judah (2 Kings 24:13-14). Daniel and his three friends were put into the Babylonian court servant "training program." Part of the program was learning Babylonian customs, beliefs, laws, and practices. The eating habits of the Babylonians were not in complete agreement with the Mosaic law. As a result, Daniel asked if he and his three friends could be excused from eating the meat (which was likely sacrificed to Babylonian false gods and idols).

So, a Daniel Fast is eating only fruits and vegetables for a certain amount of time, abstaining from meat products. Some people use a Daniel Fast as a dieting method. Some people use a Daniel Fast instead of fasting from food entirely. The Bible nowhere commands believers to observe a Daniel Fast. As a result, it is a matter of Christian freedom whether to observe a Daniel fast.

Here at Relevant Church Inland Empire, we observe a 21 Day Daniel Fast to begin each year as we want to consecrate ourselves, intercede on behalf of others and our church, deepen our individual spiritual walks and honor God with our first fruits.

"Then the disciples of John came to Him, saying, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?" And Jesus said to them, "The attendants cannot mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them, can they? But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast." - **Matthew 9:14-15**

"So we fasted and sought our God concerning this matter, and He listened to our entreaty." - **Ezra 8:23**

- **Partial Fast (Daniel Fast)** - Daniel 10:3, "I did not eat any tasty food, nor did meat or wine enter my mouth, nor did I use any ointment at all, until the entire three weeks were completed." In this type of fast you give up a part of your regular diet for a time.
- **Complete Fast** - Complete fast of ½ meals a day. Many people skip breakfast and or lunch then take dinner for their fast.
- **Total Food Fast** - This often consists of only drinking water and juices for a fast. No food.
- **Total Fast** - No food. Only water.
- **Fast Other Than Food** - Many diabetics and others with eating disorders fast from a pleasure other than food. Television, movies, or a hobby while devoting themselves to prayer.

Set aside special times to pray even if it is only 5 minutes several times daily. Remember fasting is not about *earning* things from Him, but **learning** things from Him.

Fasting Scriptures:

1Kings 21:9

Matthew 6:16

Isaiah 58:4

Nehemiah 9:1

Mathew 6:1

Isaiah 58:6

Esther 4:3

Mark 2:18

Jeremiah 36:6

Esther 9:3

Mark 9:29

Jeremiah 36:9

Psalms 35:13

Luke 2:37

Daniel 10:2-3

Psalms 109:24

Acts 13:2

Joel 2:12

Isaiah 58:3

Acts 14:23

Matthew 4:2

If you have dietary or health concerns, please consult a physician before engaging in this activity.

7 Tips to Observing the Daniel Fast

1. Be specific

Daniel was not vague in his objection to the Babylonian diet. He defined the problem immediately. Daniel 1:8

- The king's food was against Jewish dietary laws.
- Daniel and his friends had vowed against wine.
- The king's food could have been offered up to idols/demons.

2. Fast as a spiritual commitment

The Daniel Fast involves a spiritual commitment to God. "Daniel proposed in his heart that he would not defile himself." Daniel 1:8

3. Reflect inner desire by external discipline

Many people have an inner desire for better health, but they can't discipline themselves to avoid junk food, and other foods that were not good for health. The physical health you seek from God may be more than an answer to prayer. Your physical health may be linked to any of the following factors:

- Your food choices.
- The level of your spiritual commitment, as reflected in constant prayer during the fast.
- Your time commitment. **If you determine to fast for a certain time, keep it.** For example, if you determine to fast ten days, don't stop on day nine.
- Your testimony is your commitment. Your fast is a statement of faith in God. You want God to heal your body. Faith is foundational to the Daniel Fast.

4. Pray to see sin's role in health or sickness

Read James 5:13-20 KJV:

¹³ Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms. ¹⁴ Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders

of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: ¹⁵ And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. ¹⁶ Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

Observations:

- **Illness is not always related to sin, but it can be.**
- Actions and attitude are important. James said, “are there any among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms.” **James 5:13**
- The sick person must call for the elders. **James 5:14**
- Sin *can* be something related to the cause of sickness. James 5:15
- Lack of health or healing *may* be the result of spiritual rebellion. **James 5:15**
- Lack of health or healing *may* be due to sin of wrong consumption, i.e. poor diet, drugs, pornography. **James 5:15**
- Repentance is linked to health. **James 5:16**
- Prayer alone may not gain healing, faith in God is the major factor. **James 5:15, 17-20**

5. Fast as a statement of faith to others

Daniel was making a statement of faith when he asked for only vegetables to eat and water to drink, then dared the overseer to compare the appearance of the four sons of Israel with the young men who ate the king’s food.

6. Fasting is always accompanied by prayer

You can pray without fasting, but you can’t fast without praying. Pray diligently throughout your fast, even if it’s just for a few moments. You’ll want to focus your prayers on specific matters such as family, strongholds, your marriage, sexual sins, etc. **(Read II Chronicles 7:14)**

7. Yield all results to God

Daniel said, "as you see fit, deal with your servants." Daniel 1:13

Remember...

- The Daniel Fast will lead to spiritual insight. "to those four young men God gave knowledge".
- The Daniel Fast is longer than one day. These young men fasted for ten days. **At Relevant Church, we typically fast for 21 days.**
- The Daniel Fast is a partial fast. They ate, but only vegetables and water.
- The Daniel Fast requires abstinence from party or junk foods.
- There is no indication that they ever began to eat the king's food.

Food guidelines for observing the Daniel fast or diet:

You have freedom in the Daniel Fast to modify it according to your personal physical and spiritual needs. You can modify these guidelines as you wish before the Lord. If you feel that it would be more productive for you spiritually or physically to avoid certain foods or spices, that would be great.

The main thing is to decide ahead of time how you are going to apply the Daniel Fast. Then stick to your commitment for the length of time you have decided to fast. Some people feel that it is good to make a permanent lifestyle change to the Daniel Fast. Daniel didn't do his "fast" for a limited amount of time. It was his lifestyle. Daniel asked for permission to avoid the king's delicacies over a ten day period. Then, if he was still healthy looking, he could continue his "diet." Daniel's reason for his "diet" are given in Daniel 1:8:

"But Daniel determined that he would not defile himself by eating the king's food or drinking his wine, so he asked the head of the palace staff to exempt him from the royal diet." (The Message Bible)

Therefore, you might decide that it is OK to eat meat. Or you may decide to avoid meats that are forbidden to the Jews, i.e. pork, etc.

Foods to Eat

- Whole Grains: Brown Rice, Oats, Barley
- Legumes: Dried Beans, Pinto Beans, Split Peas, Lentils, Black Eyed Peas
- Fruits: Apples, Apricots, Bananas, Blackberries, Blueberries, Boysenberries, Cantaloupe, Cherries, Cranberries, Oats, Figs, Grapefruit, Grapes, Guava, Honeydew Melon, Kiwi, Lemons, Limes, Mangoes, Nectarines, Papayas, Peaches, Pears, Pineapples, Plums, Prunes, Raisins, Raspberries, Strawberries, Tangelos, Tangerines, Watermelon
- Vegetables: Artichokes, Asparagus, Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Carrots, Cauliflower, Celery, Chili Peppers, Corn, Cucumbers, Eggplant, Garlic, Gingerroot, Kale, Leeks, Lettuce, Mushrooms, Mustard Greens, Okra, Onions, Parsley, Potatoes, Radishes, Rutabagas, Scallions, Spinach, Sprouts, Squashes, Sweet Potatoes, Tomatoes, Turnips, Watercress, Yams, Zucchini
- Seeds: Nuts, Sprouts
- Liquids: Spring Water, Distilled Water, 100% All-Natural Fruit Juices, 100% All Natural Vegetable Juices

Foods to Avoid

- Meat, because Daniel wouldn't want to take the chance of eating non-kosher meat or meat that was offered to idols.
- White Rice
- Fried Foods
- Caffeine
- Carbonated Beverages
- Foods Containing Preservatives or Additives
- Refined Sugar
- Sugar Substitutes
- White Flour and All Products Using It
- Margarine, Shortening, High Fat Products



I ate no pleasant food, no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.—**Daniel 10:3**



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