

21 DAYS OF FASTING & PRAYER

MONDAY, MARCH 13TH - SUNDAY, APRIL 2ND



WHAT IS FASTING?

"So we fasted and earnestly prayed that our God would take care of us, and he heard our prayer."

Ezra 8:23 (NIV)

Fasting is a spiritual discipline where we abstain from certain foods or activities for a period to focus on God. Through the spiritual practice of fasting and prayer, we draw nearer to God, and we are transformed in our spiritual lives.

In Scripture, we see many examples of different types of fasts. There are examples where people limited food to certain types of food (Daniel 1:8-14; 10:2-3), fasted from food and water (Acts 9:9), or from activities. We even see examples of when Jesus fasted (Matthew 4:2). Fasting has a set time limit -- such as what we see in the book of Esther (Esther 4:16) -- and should have a clear purpose. We should inquire of the Lord for direction, insight, and wisdom surrounding the details of our fast.

In Scripture, we also see examples of fasting for repentance, to seek direction from the Lord, to break chains of spiritual bondage, to drive out demons, to worship the Lord, to ask for the Lord's intervention, and to mourn.

Through prayer and fasting we are strengthened in our spiritual walk.



NOTE FOR CHILDREN:

Fasting differs with age. Children should not participate in a full food restriction fast. However, they can still pray with their families daily, read the scriptures, and choose to avoid an activity or certain food or beverage. Some children decide with their families that on a certain day or time each week they will limit a certain food or activity. Some children decide they will avoid gum, chocolate, or a type of sweet or snack for Lent. Some choose to limit video games and tablets. Please discuss with your child and plan together.

When we come together in unity as a church to fast and pray together, it is powerful!

We have had many testimonies of answered prayer, breakthroughs, healings, and divine provision that have taken place during our fasts. People have shared that they felt closer to the Lord in new ways, and that their lives have been transformed.

We should approach a fast with expectation and intentionality, setting apart a specific time to grow closer to God and to pray. During that time, we should limit distractions and spend time with the Lord, focusing on our prayer points, worshipping, and reading Scripture. It is a time where we are drawing closer to God in consecration and in worship.

Here are some Scriptures for reference about fasting:

- Acts 13:2-3
- Esther 4:16
- Matthew 6:16-18
- Acts 14:23
- 1 Corinthians 7:5
- Exodus 34:28
- Luke 2:37
- 2 Samuel 12:16
- Jonah 3:5-9
- Isaiah 58:6-8

BEGINNING YOUR FAST

Begin your fast in prayer, and by choosing which fast you will participate in, either the **traditional Daniel Fast**, or a **modified Daniel Fast**. Remain with your choice during the entire time. Pray to the Lord and ask God to guide and empower you by His Holy Spirit, hear from heaven and answer prayers during this time of fasting and prayer. It is a special time of drawing near to God!

On the **traditional Daniel Fast**, you eat plant-based meals that are nutritious and delicious, while setting aside other foods as an act of worship and sacrifice to the Lord. The **modified Daniel Fast** allows you to also add fish or lean meat to your fast, as well as a few other items. There are several resources and recipes that you can explore online for ideas. Be sure to drink plenty of water during this time of fasting.

There are seven Scriptures per week, one for each day.

Each day spend time reading the devotional Scriptures of the day and praying your personal prayers and our corporate prayers outlined in this guide.

You may also wish to journal your experience, thoughts, and prayers during this time for later reflection.

Additionally, each week choose one day of the week to limit social media, TV, or another activity for that day. You can spend time reflecting on which one that you wish to let go of for that day to limit distractions. You can also map it out on your calendar or set an alarm on your phone to remind you. This can really help you stay on track!



Please note: Before beginning any fast, please check with your healthcare professional and follow their guidelines. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health practitioner for any questions you may have regarding a medical condition.

PRAYER GUIDE AND SCRIPTURE READING

WEEK 1 (March 13th - March 19th)

Prayer Focus:

- Pray for our church, lifting our Senior pastor and the entire Lea family as well as all MCBC staff, volunteers, ministries, ministry leaders, members, and their families.
- Pray for families and students, schools, and our communities.

Scripture Focus: Colossians 3:12-15 & Deuteronomy 11:18-19

Devotional Readings:

Day 1 (March 13th): Acts 2:42 & Joshua 1:9

Day 2 (March 14th): Isaiah 30:18 & Psalm 27:14

Day 3 (March 15th): Micah 7:7 & Romans 12:9

Day 4 (March 16th): Psalm 25:4 & Psalm 127:3-5

Day 5 (March 17th): Galatians 6:9 & Deuteronomy 31:8-9

Day 6 (March 18th): Jeremiah 29:12 & Romans 15:13

Day 7 (March 19th): Isaiah 40:31 & 1 John 5:11

WEEK 2 (March 20th - March 26th)

Prayer Focus:

- Pray for the nations, evangelism, and missions.
- Pray for social justice, the eradication of systemic racism, and the moral conscience of the USA.

Scripture Focus: Romans 10:13-15

Devotional Readings:

Day 8 (March 20th): 2 Corinthians 10:4-5 & Isaiah 58:6-12

Day 9 (March 21st): Matthew 4:1-11 & Amos 5:24

Day 10 (March 22nd): Matthew 11:28-30 & Micah 6:8

Day 11 (March 23rd): Psalm 9:9 & Psalm 37:28

Day 12 (March 24th): Psalm 35:9 & Matthew 22:37-40

Day 13 (March 25th): Matthew 28:19-20a & Luke 4:18-19

Day 14 (March 26th): 1 Corinthians 13 & Hebrews 6:10

WEEK 3 (March 27th - April 2nd)

Prayer Focus:

- Pray for the sick, shut in, and bereaved, as well as for healing, breakthrough, and refreshing in the Lord.
- Pray for renewed commitments to the Lord, revival, and restoration.

Scripture Focus: James 5:14-15 & Psalm 51:10

Devotional Readings:

Day 15 (March 27th): Jeremiah 17:14 & Psalm 91

Day 16 (March 28th): Romans 8:26-28 & Joshua 1:9-10

Day 17 (March 29th): Isaiah 53:1-5 & Psalm 103:2-5

Day 18 (March 30th): Isaiah 33:2 & Philippians 4:6-8

Day 19 (March 31st): 3 John 1:2 & Ephesians 6:10-18

Day 20 (April 1st): Luke 23:42-47 & Acts 2:38

Day 21 (April 2nd): Luke 24:1-9 & Isaiah 40:31

ADDITIONAL WEEKLY FAMILY SCRIPTURES FOR CHILDREN

In addition to praying and reading the weekly and daily devotional Scriptures with your family, we invite you to read and focus on these Scriptures with the children in your life. After reading, ask them questions from the text and encourage them to dialogue with you about what they learned. Repeat this a few times during the week. You may also have them retell what happened, make a video, or draw a picture of their favorite part. This will encourage them in Bible reading and help them to get excited in learning foundational scriptures found in the Gospels.

WEEK 1 (March 13th - March 19th)

Matthew 14:13-21 & Mark 10:13-16

WEEK 2 (March 20th - March 26th)

Matthew 21:1-11 & John 13:1-17

WEEK 3 (March 27th - April 2nd)

Matthew 26:17-30 & Luke 23:1-56



TRADITIONAL DANIEL FAST FOOD LIST

(From DanielFast.com)

The following list explains the categories of foods to eat and foods to avoid on the Daniel Fast. However, keep in mind that not every item may be listed here.



FOODS TO EAT:



Whole grains

Amaranth, barley, brown rice, buckwheat, bulgur, freekeh, millet, oats, purple rice, quinoa, rye, sorghum, spelt, teff, whole grain pasta, whole wheat, and wild rice.

Beans and legumes

Black beans, black-eyed peas, cannellini beans, garbanzo beans (chickpeas), great northern beans, kidney beans, lentils, peanuts, pinto beans, and split peas.

Nuts and seeds

Almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, hazelnuts, macadamia nuts, nut butters, peanuts (actually legumes but people think of them as nuts), pecans, pepitas (pumpkin seeds), pine nuts, pistachios, poppy seeds, walnuts, sesame seeds, soy nuts, sunflower seeds.

Vegetables

All vegetables are allowed (fresh, frozen, dried, juiced, and canned).

Fruit

All fruit is allowed (fresh, frozen, dried, juiced, and canned). However, any dried fruit shouldn't contain added sugar (check ingredients to be sure).

Oils

Oils (such as coconut, olive, and sesame, for example) are allowed but should be used minimally. For example, you can sauté foods in olive oil but avoid deep-frying them.

Other

Unleavened bread (Whole grain bread made without yeast, sugars, or preservatives)
All herbs, spices, and seasonings are allowed, including salt and pepper.

Beverages

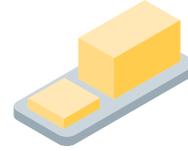
Water should be the main beverage on your Daniel Fast (distilled, filtered, sparkling, spring, and mineral water are allowed). However, you may have 100% fruit juice on occasion (just don't overdo it).

TRADITIONAL DANIEL FAST FOOD LIST

(From DanielFast.com)



FOODS TO AVOID:



Animal products

Meat (bacon, beef, bison, chicken, lamb, pork, and turkey), dairy, (butter, cheese, cream, milk, and yogurt), fish/seafood, eggs.

Added sugar

Agave nectar, artificial sweeteners, brown rice syrup, brown sugar, cane juice, corn syrup, honey, malt syrup, molasses, and raw sugar.

Yeast

Yeast (and, therefore, leavened bread) isn't part of the Daniel Fast.

Refined grains

White flour and white rice. (Only whole grains are allowed on the Daniel Fast. A whole grain product contains the entire grain kernel — the bran, germ, and endosperm.)

Processed food

Foods that contain artificial flavorings, chemicals, food additives, and preservatives.

Deep-fried food

Examples are corn chips, French fries, and potato chips. (Baked chips are acceptable if they don't contain restricted ingredients. Check the label for "baked" to be sure.)

Solid fats

Butter, lard, margarine, and shortening.

Chocolate

Milk chocolate, semi-sweet chocolate, dark chocolate, chocolate syrup, and cacao.

Caffeinated and alcoholic beverages

Alcohol, coffee, caffeinated tea, and energy drinks.

ENDING YOUR FAST

When you end your fast, avoid heavy or greasy foods. You may wish to take time to research best ways to end your fast that works for you, and to incorporate eating foods that are easy to digest while your body is getting used to your usual food again.

Spend time in prayer when you end your fast, reflect, and thank the Lord.

For the days after the 40 days of the Daniel Fast, leading up to Resurrection Sunday, you may wish to participate a partial extended fast.

Some may wish to continue the Daniel Fast or perhaps they may limit a certain food/drink or activity. Remain prayerful during this time leading up to Holy Week. It is truly a transformational and powerful time together during this corporate fast as a church community! Expect God to move in a mighty way and look forward to the powerful testimonies that will come.

ONLINE RESOURCES

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3729546/#:~:text=The%20modified%20Daniel%20Fast%20was,per%20day%20of%20additional%20protein.>

https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/how-to-fast#TOC_TITLE_HDR_13

<https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/daniel-diet#food-lists>

<https://ultimatedanielfast.com/pdf/DanielFastFoodList.pdf>

<https://danielfast.wordpress.com/2007/12/27/youth-special-diets-and-the-daniel-fast/>