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BETHEL CATHEDRAL

21 Days OF FASTING AND PRAYER

JANUARY 1 - 21, 2025

7:00 AM & 7:00 PM DAILY

BROADCASTING LIVE



AT 7:30 PM DAILY



Scriptural Foundation

Daniel 1

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 compassion 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.

At the end of the ten days, they looked healthier and better nourished than any of the young men who ate the royal food. So the guard took away their choice food and the wine they were to drink and gave them vegetables instead.

Daniel 10

In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia, a revelation was given to Daniel (who was called Belteshazzar). Its message was true and it concerned a great war. The understanding of the message came to him in a vision. At that time I, Daniel, mourned for three weeks. I ate no choice food; no meat or wine touched my lips, and I used no ointments at all until the three weeks were over.

WHAT IS A DANIEL FAST AND WHY ARE WE DOING IT?

The Daniel Fast is a biblically based partial fast based on two accounts of the prophet Daniel's fasting experiences in Daniel 1 and 10. It was an outward symbol of an inward commitment he made to God. This is a spiritual discipline designed to connect you with God better.

As a church, we are fasting to deepen our relationship with God and to walk in step with His plan and purpose. The best way to do this is to redirect our food source. This is accomplished by substituting our regular food intake with Bible reading, praying, and journaling. The overall goal is to experience a genuine hunger for spending time with God.

Our food focus will be on fresh fruits, veggies, and whole grains. Make God's food a delight, not something to be endured. Every good and perfect gift comes from God, including fresh and wholesome foods. Learn new cooking techniques, new spices, new recipes. Each time you find a new food you love, give thanks. Make each day exciting as you venture out to new foods and undiscovered tastes. This may be the most fabulous foodie experience you have ever had!

VERY IMPORTANT! If you are pregnant, have any known medical conditions, or suspect such conditions, consult your doctor.

If you have health issues, you should always talk with your health professional before starting the Daniel Fast or any other major change in your diet. Also, be aware that as we age, we react differently to dramatic dietary changes. Fasting should never bring harm to the body, so medication should be continued.

It is important to recognize that if you have any condition which would prohibit you from taking part in the Daniel Fast, there are other options. Choose something from your daily routine (i.e., specific foods or beverages, television, other technology, etc.) and fast in that manner for the 21 days. The Bible references fasting in the context of restricting food for a spiritual purpose.

PREPARING OURSELVES FOR SUCCESS

Plan ahead! Write your menu and shopping list before you start the fast!

1. Start the diet by focusing on your faith. The Daniel Fast is a physical as well as a spiritual experience. Through prayer, you should ask for God's guidance and strength as you prepare to deny yourself and battle physical cravings.
2. Make your meals somewhat lighter for a few days leading up to your fast. It's an especially good idea to reduce your intake of caffeine if you drink coffee or caffeinated sodas daily. Avoid the "last supper" mentality by not eating large meals in the days leading up to the fast. This will create significant challenges in the first days of the fast.
3. **Be prepared for withdrawal symptoms.** Removing processed food filled with chemicals may cause withdrawal systems like fatigue, headaches, or muscle cramps. To avoid or limit these symptoms, drink at least eight glasses of water each day. Often, we do not understand just how much our body needs water, especially when fasting.
4. Keep your energy level high. To help keep your energy level high, be sure to eat enough protein-rich foods like beans and nuts (adult men need about 56 grams of protein per day, and adult women need about 46 grams of protein). Vitamin C and lemons can also help with the detoxification process
5. Stock your kitchen: The Daniel Fast limits many foods. Before you get started, stock your kitchen with fresh fruits and vegetables. The fast is difficult enough without running out of the foods you need to eat.
6. Plan, plan, plan. Write out your daily menu, including all meals and snacks, several days in advance. By being prepared, you can avoid the temptation of breaking the fast.
7. Don't give up. If for any reason, you eat something you shouldn't have during the fast, it is better to ask for forgiveness and continue than to stop the fast. *(This section adapted from hiphopena0on.com/danielfastprepara0ons)*

PREPARING TO END THE FAST

Just as we should prepare ourselves to go on the Daniel Fast, we should be careful how we end it. If you follow the guidelines carefully and then decide to end the fast with a big steak dinner with a heavy dessert, be prepared for your body to rebel! Plan your eating carefully for the first several days, gradually adding back the foods you have been avoiding. And, just maybe, along the way, you will have learned some new things about foods and healthy eating that you will want to adopt long term!

FOOD LIST

When purchasing food, READ LABELS. Avoid sugar. There are many different names for sugar—here are a few of them: barley malt, cane sugar, corn syrup, dextrose, fructose, glucose, high-fructose corn syrup, maltodextrin, sucrose. Also, avoid chemicals and artificial preservatives and other additives. Rule of thumb: For our purposes on the Daniel Fast, if you don't recognize it as a food, avoid it.

There are various interpretations of the Daniel Fast—what foods should be included or avoided. If you do some research on your own, don't be surprised to find little differences. They all agree on the primary components of fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and water.

Foods to include:

- All fruits (fresh, frozen, dried, or canned—without sugar added), unsweetened applesauce, and unsweetened apple butter. Beware that most dried fruits have added sugar; look for ones that are naturally sweetened.
- All vegetables (fresh, frozen, dried, or canned)
- All whole grains, including but not limited to whole wheat, brown rice, millet, quinoa, oats, barley, grits, whole wheat pasta, whole wheat tortillas, rice cakes, and popcorn.
- All nuts and seeds, including but not limited to sunflower seeds, cashews, peanuts, sesame seeds. Also, nut butter, including peanut butter, cashew butter, and almond butter. READ LABELS: Many nut butters, including “natural” ones, have added sugar. Find one that doesn't.
- All legumes. These can be canned or dried. Legumes include but are not limited to dried beans, pinto beans, split peas, lentils, black-eyed peas, kidney beans, black beans, cannellini beans, white beans, garbanzo beans (chickpeas).
- All quality oils including but not limited to olive, coconut, grapeseed, and sesame.

- Beverages: spring water, distilled water, or other pure waters*.
- Other: tofu, soy products (see note on tamari below), vinegar, seasonings, salt, herbs, and spices.
- Tamari sauce. This is a wheat-free soy sauce; soy sauce is typically 40-60% wheat. You should find tamari next to the regular soy sauce in the Asian food section of your market. Use it just like soy sauce.

Foods to avoid:

- All meat and animal products, including but not limited to beef, lamb, pork, poultry, and fish.
- All dairy products including but not limited to milk, cheese, cream, butter, and eggs.
- All sweeteners including but not limited to sugar, raw sugar, honey, syrups, molasses, cane juice, artificial sweeteners, agave, stevia
- All leavened bread, including Ezekiel Bread (it contains yeast and honey) and baked goods.
- All refined and processed food products including but not limited to artificial flavorings, food additives, chemicals, white rice, white flour, and foods that contain artificial preservatives.
- All deep-fried foods including but not limited to potato chips, French fries, six corn chips.
- All solid fats, including shortening, margarine, lard, and foods high in fat.
- Beverages including but not limited to coffee, tea, herbal teas, carbonated beverages, energy drinks, fruit juices*, and alcohol.

* Unsweetened non-dairy milk (soy, almond, rice, coconut, etc.) and unsweetened fruit juices may be used as ingredients, just not as beverages by themselves. For example, various kinds of milk or juices may be used in preparing smoothies as a meal and fruit juices may be used in salad dressings.

WHY DO WE FAST AT BETHEL CATHEDRAL?

- We fast to get clarity on our destiny
- We fast so that we can pray
- We fast to keep our body awake/alert
- We fast for signs and wonders
- We fast to invoke the very tangible presence of the Lord.
- We fast to enhance our prayer life
- We fast for miracles to take place
- We fast to overcome hypocrisy, righteous Living.

- We fast to keep from living a life of hypocrisy
- We fast to live a righteous life
- We fast to bring our fleshly ways (carnally minded) under subjection.
- We fast to prepare for the challenges of life
- We fast to empower us to conquer, kill and cure Unbelief
- We fast for deliverance

HOW DO WE FAST?

- With the right attitude
- With repentance and sincerity
- Asking the Lord to remove all hindrances
- With God's love activating effectively in our lives

YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO GOD

- Avoid distractions. This is a sacred time between you and God, so avoid secular television and radio programs.
- Start the diet by focusing on your faith. Worship God through sacrifice and love Him more than His gifts.
- Pray. Your days should be filled with unselfish prayer. During the fast, increase the frequency of your daily prayer time by a factor of three or more.
- Reserve time with God during the day by studying the Bible.
- Seek the Lord diligently for the answers to your prayers.
- Ask for God's guidance in your life.

YOUR MEALS

1. Make your meals somewhat lighter for a few days leading up to your fast. It's an especially good idea to reduce your intake of caffeine.
2. In the first Book of Daniel, the Prophet ate only Vegetables and fruit, and drink only water for Ten days. A short rundown of acceptable foods includes.

- ☐ All fruits and vegetables
- ☐ All legumes
- ☐ Whole grains
- ☐ Nuts and seeds
- ☐ Tofu
- ☐ Herbs and spices

3. There is also an agreed-upon list of food to avoid.
Keep in mind that no artificial or processed foods nor any chemicals are allowed in the Daniel Fast.

- ☐ All meats and animal products
- ☐ All dairy products
- ☐ All deep-fried foods
- ☐ All solid fats

SAMPLE MENU

Breakfast Options

- ☐ Oatmeal with fruit and nuts/seeds
- ☐ Apple or banana with natural peanut or Almond butter
- ☐ Fruit and vegetable juice or smoothie

Lunch Options

- ☐ Salad-raw vegetables topped with a variety of raw vegetables
 - Beans
 - Fruits
 - Avocados
 - Nuts and seeds
 - Simple dressings can be made with olive/grape seed oil, fresh lemon juice, and red wine/balsamic vinegar.
- ☐ Soup-vegetable, bean, lentil
- ☐ Lettuce wrap with hummus, bean or veggie filling
- ☐ Dinner leftovers

Snack ideas

- ☐ Raw Veggies and hummus
- ☐ Fruit (fresh or dried)
- ☐ Fruit and vegetable smoothies
- ☐ Nuts and trail mix
- ☐ Celery, apple, or banana with peanut or Almond butter