

21-Day Fasting Guide

Ash Wednesday, February 17th
Day of Dedication to the Lord.
Begin fast after Holy Communion.

“UNDERSTANDING FASTING”

Day 2 – Thursday, February 18th
Isaiah 58
God’s Kind of Fast

Day 3 – Friday, February 19th
Psalm 35 & James 4:6-10
Humble Yourself with Fasting

Day 4 – Saturday, February 20th
Matthew 6:16-21
Where’s Your Treasure?

Day 5 – Sunday, February 21st
Psalm 109:21-27
Acts 4:29-35
Weakened by Fasting for His Glory

Day 6 – Monday, February 22nd
Daniel 9 & 10
The Full Blessings of Fasting

Day 7 – Tuesday, February 23rd
Luke 2:36-38
A Life Devoted to Seeing Jesus

Day 8 – Wednesday, Feb 24th
Mark 2:18-20 & Matthew 25
Friends of the Bridegroom Do Fast

“SEEKING GOD”

Day 9 – Thursday, February 25th
Nehemiah 9 & Jeremiah 36:6
By His Holy Scripture with Fasting

Day 10 – Friday, February 26th
Jeremiah 29:10-13
With All of Your Heart

Day 11 – Saturday, February 27th
Daniel 9, 10 & John 15:15
Understanding God’s Will

“RESPONDING TO CRISIS”

Day 12 – Sunday, February 28th
Joel 2:12-19
Where Is Your God?

Day 13 – Monday, March 1st
2 Chronicles 7:13-15
What Can We Do Now?

Day 14 – Tuesday, March 2nd
Esther 4 & 5
Social Oppression

“EFFECTIVE MINISTRY”

Day 15 – Wednesday, March 3rd
Matthew 4:2 & Mark 9:17-29
Fasting Required for Effectiveness

Day 16 – Thursday, March 4th
Acts 13:1-4 & Acts 14:23
Releasing Leadership

“PRAY FOR HIS CHILDREN”

Day 17 – Friday, March 5th
Romans 15:5-7
John 17:20-26
The Unity of Believers

Day 18 – Saturday, March 6th
Colossians 1:9-12
Fully Pleasing to God

Day 19 – Sunday, March 7th
Philippians 1:9-11
Abound in Love & Discernment

Day 20 – Monday, March 8th
Ephesians 1:17-19
Revelation of Jesus & His Power

Day 21 – Tuesday, March 9th
Ephesians 3:16-19
Comprehending Jesus’ Love

**Break fast at Sundown
Wednesday, March 10th**
2 Thes 3:1-5 & Col 4:2-4
An Open Door for His Word – Jesus

Biblical Reasons to Fast

Below is a sample of the myriad of Scriptural examples we find on fasting and its purposes. Also included in this brochure is a “21-Day Fasting Guide” that explores these and other Scriptures relating to our purpose for fasting & prayer.

In Response to Crisis

- 2 Chronicles 7:13-15
- Joel 2:12-19
- Esther 4:3

As A Corporate Act of Worship & Repentance

- Nehemiah 9
- Joel 2:12-19
- 2 Chronicles 7:13-15

To Humble Oneself

- Psalm 35:13
- Psalm 109:21-27
- Daniel 9
- Joel 2:12-19

Seeking Revelation of God

- Jeremiah 36
- Daniel 9

To Prepare for Effective Ministry

- Matthew 4:2
- Mark 9:17-29
- Acts 13:1-4
- Acts 14:23
- Isaiah 58

Lent 2010



21-Day Corporate Fast

Wednesday, February 17th - Wednesday, March 10th

18-Day Daniel Fast

Wednesday, February 17th - Sunday, March 7th

3-Day Water Fast

March 7th, 8th, 9th - Rick Bonfim meetings

Lenten Fast

Thursday, February 18th - Easter Sunday, April 4th
(Fast as the Lord leads you for the rest of Lent.)

Sundays during Lent are traditionally NOT fasting days.
All suggested days assume sundown-to-sundown.

“Is this not the fast that I have chosen: To loose the bonds of wickedness, To undo the heavy burdens, To let the oppressed go free, and that you break every yoke?”

Isaiah 58:6 (NKJV)

Why should Christians fast?

Fasting is a Scriptural reality that has spanned the Old & New Testaments and all of Judeo-Christian history. Probably the most compelling answer to the question, “Why should Christians fast” is that both God the Father (in the Old Testament) and God the Son (in the New Testament) tell believers that they need to do it. There are, however, varying circumstances and desired-outcomes that should provoke one to fast.

See the back of this brochure for Scriptures about fasting. You will also find other useful information regarding fasting inside.

How (and What) should I fast?

The theologically black-and-white answer is to “abstain from eating until a predetermined amount of time (or event) has happened.” However, using Isaiah 58 to understand God's heart concerning fasting, and looking at Biblical examples of how, why, and when God's children fasted, many church leaders conclude that "denying fleshly desires (of any type)" are valid forms of fasting. This assertion is supported by the apostle Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit, who mentions abstaining from marital relations, and simply "beating down his body's desires", as forms of fasting and humbling oneself.

Most church leaders would tell you, "Ask the Lord what He wants you to abstain from, and for how long, and stick to it." Often times we are provoked to fast when we are not clearly hearing from the Lord. At those times, simply 'purpose in your heart' (Daniel 1:8) to devote this time to the Lord, and then choose that from which you are going to abstain and for how long.

For this particular time and purpose, we are calling believers to "A Daniel Fast" first, then to a "Water Fast", and then to continue fasting the remainder of Lent as you feel led.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Always consult a physician before starting a fast. Also, if you are taking medication that recommends being taken with food, please follow all medical recommendations. Young children and the elderly must get their physicians approval before fasting.

What is a Daniel Fast?

The Concept

In Daniel chapter one, Daniel asked his Babylonian captors if he and his three friends (Shadrach, Meshack, and Abednego) could be excused from eating the king's portions of meat and wine. Although most meat and wine were not in violation of Levitical law, partaking of anything that had been offered to idols was, and most likely, the king's portions had been "blessed" in the name of the Babylonian gods.

Instead of these portions, Daniel asked for “pulse to eat and water to drink.” 'Pulse' is historically defined as vegetables and herbs, with many believing this Hebrew word included fruit as well. *This is summarized as "No Meats".*



In chapter 10, verse 3, Daniel adds abstaining from "pleasant bread" to his already fasted-lifestyle for three full weeks as he was gaining revelation and understanding from the Lord. This is the reason why all processed sweeteners (white sugar and artificial ones), as well as enriched, bleached, and/or processed flour/grains/rice are not recommended. *This is summarized as "No Sweets".*

The Menu - "No Sweets; No Meats"

A traditional Daniel Fast is vegetables, fruit, and water. Fruit & Vegetable juices are acceptable. However, one should consider avoiding drinks that are not 100% natural juice, and that contain any additional sugars, carbonation, etc. It should also be noted that highly acidic fruits (and juices) can have a negative impact on your digestive system when no other food is present, and should either be avoided or watered down.

The Purpose

In chapter one, Daniel's purpose was to remain undefiled and devoted to the Lord. As a result, the Lord gave him and his friends wisdom, knowledge, and favor far beyond all around them. In chapters nine and ten, Daniel gains revelation from the Lord about the condition of his people and their captivity, and begins a fast. His prayer in chapter nine summarizes almost every scriptural purpose for fasting: he repents, humbles himself, asks for mercy, asks for strength, asks for understanding, and asks for the Lord to pay attention more closely to his prayers and requests.

Lifestyle or Fast?

Although many site Daniel's 10-day challenge to his captors as "a fast", some accurately point out that Daniel's choice of food and drink was his lifestyle as required by levitical law, and not "a fast". In chapter ten, Daniel states that abstaining from meat and wine, and pleasant bread was a part of his fast while seeking revelation from the Lord. Therefore, the concept of "A Daniel Fast" is not a theological assertion of whether Daniel was technically fasting all of the time, but a beautiful principle of setting oneself apart from the world in order to be devoted to seeking the Lord and His will. (Read Daniel 1:8)

What should I be doing while I fast?

Where we find fasting in the Bible, we also find the reading of Scripture, worship, gatherings, teachings, and prayer. Scripturally, fasting does not occur apart from prayer. **Fasting without prayer is just a diet.** Don't just diet – set apart special time for the Lord.

Be encouraged to gather with other believers (especially those who are joining in the fast) for times of prayer, Bible study, worship, and encouragement. There are numerous prayer gatherings, home groups, and special Lenten services going on through-out the fast.

What if I mess-up and break my fast?

Remember one of the key underlying purposes of fasting: "to humble yourself." Failure is almost as much a part of fasting as succeeding. There are no excuses. Let your failure humble you, and feel free to "beat yourself up a little" because of it, but then start back immediately, without condemnation, as if your fast was never interrupted. Don't let your lapse become an excuse to let your flesh win and end your race. **Keep on running!**

Is there any specific objectives for which we are praying & fasting?

In this brochure you will find a "21-Day Fasting Guide" that points you to specific purposes. We are asking believers to target our geographical region ("The Fort Smith River Valley"), their county, their city, their congregation, and the Bride & Body of Christ in our region as a whole (all believers) with our prayers during the first 21 days of this fast. During the remainder of the Lenten season, pray for yourself and your family.

Always be listening for “prayer concerns” from the Lord. He wants to show you for who and what to pray.

“...I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one.”

Ezekiel 22:30 (NKJV)