

# THE DANIEL FAST - January 3 through 24, 2021

## GOAL OF THE FAST

**FASTING & PRAYER:** The goal in fasting is to become closer to God by voluntarily denying the demands of your flesh. Increase your prayer life during this time. Study the Scriptures with a new intensity. When the fast is completed, you should have a new spiritual strength from overcoming the cravings that usually control your life and keep you from dedicating yourself to God.

## BIBLICAL MODEL

Be sure to do a personal study of fasting. In the book of Daniel, chapter 10, Daniel describes a time of personal fasting and the dramatic results. Isaiah described God's chosen fast in Isaiah 58. Jesus fasted in the wilderness (Matthew 4:14) and spoke of the necessity of fasting for believers. It was a normal part of early Church life. Fasting represents one way we respond to the admonition throughout the Scriptures to die to our self will and not to accommodate the desires of the flesh. (Dan. 1:3-7; 3:1-30; 6:1-28; 10:1-3, 7-14,; & Isa. 58:3-12)

## FOLLOWING YOUR CONSCIENCE

The precise details of this fast are between you and God. In Romans 14, the apostle Paul describes how we should relate in love to one another in the manner of what we eat or choose not to eat. He says, "Each person is free to follow the convictions of his own conscience" (Romans 14, The Message, p. 331). If you fast often, you may need to turn up your fasting another level during this time. If this is your first fast, you may not be able to endure as many restrictions as someone else who fast frequently.

## ACCOUNTABILITY

You will probably be most successful with this fast if you make yourself accountable to a least one other person during this fast. You may want to form a group of from five to seven people who meet occasionally or by phone. Encourage one another. If someone falls and eats the wrong foods, do not condemn them.

**OVERVIEW OF THE FAST:** The Daniel fast drastically restricts normal food intake by cutting away many of the foods you COMMONLY eat to satisfy your appetite. Usually we gratify our flesh by eating what we want when ever we are hungry. During the Daniel fast' there will be a sense of hunger much of the time and a sense of sacrifice even when we eat. We recommend that you restrict yourself to only two meals a day, leaving a small hunger.

## TYPES OF FOOD INCLUDED

- Vegetables, preferably fresh or frozen, steamed and stewed with little or no seasonings.
- Vegetables such as potatoes, beans and rice will help provide substance.
- Fruit
- Water and sugar free fruit juice. Try to drink a minimum of eight glasses of water daily throughout the fast. This is very important.

## FOODS NOT INCLUDED

- Sugar and sugar products (i.e. desserts, soft drinks, etc.)
- Beverages that include caffeine (i.e. coffee, tea, etc.)
- Bread, grains (rice or corn are exceptions)
- Meats, fish, poultry, eggs, dairy products. butter

## SIDE EFFECTS

You may experience moderate to severe headaches for the first day or two as your body rids itself of caffeine, salt, sugar and various impurities.

## IMPORTANT EXCEPTIONS

Anyone with a medical condition related to eating or under the treatment of a physician must consult their doctor. Children especially small children, will have special needs that must be considered. Under these conditions, find some sacrifice in the area of food that can be made without endangering health. Also, if you have extreme difficulty with the fast, such as impairment of your ability to work at your job, you will have to make adjustments. Seek the Lord and discuss it with other Christians involved in the fast to find alternatives.