

FASTING: WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT

*But Daniel made up his mind that he would not defile himself
with the king's choice food or with the wine which he drank; –Daniel 1:8*

Fasting is eating sparingly or abstaining from food altogether, either from necessity or desire. In medical terms, fasting is the detoxification of the body through the restriction of food.

Spiritual fasting entails setting aside activities as well as reducing the intake of food and replacing these activities with the exercise of prayer and preoccupation with spiritual concerns. The *New Testament (NT)* word which is translated “fasting” literally means one who has not eaten, one who is empty.

Three types of fast are generally recognized:

- An *absolute fast*, in which there is total abstinence from food and liquids in all forms.
- A *normal fast*, in which there is no intake of food for a prescribed period of time, though there may be an intake of liquids.
- A *partial fast*, in which the diet is limited, though some food is allowed.

The context of fasting is prayer. Fasting should conform to the same conditions as prayer: unostentatious quietness before God, arising out of gratitude, expressing thanksgiving, and grounded in faith, as a means of spiritual growth.

FASTING GUIDELINES

The fast Mount Moriah will undertake is a progressive, partial fast based on the Daniel Fast. (see below and the following page). There are two options for participating in the fast: Level 1 and Level 2. You may choose to engage at either of the levels based on your physical circumstance and/or spiritual need.

Level 1 Fast

Days 1 - 40 (March 2 – April 10)

Daniel Fast plus baked or broiled fish, turkey or chicken (maximum 6 oz.)

Level 2 Fast (Standard Church Fast)

Days 1 - 30 (March 2 - March 31)

Daniel Fast plus baked or broiled fish, turkey or chicken (maximum 6 oz.)

Days 31 - 40 (April 1 – April 10)

Daniel Fast only, No Meats (discontinue fish, turkey, and chicken)

DANIEL FAST FOOD LIST

Foods to Have:

All Fruits: apples, apricots, avocados, bananas, berries, blackberries, blueberries, boysenberries, breadfruit, cantaloupe, cherries, coconuts, cranberries, dates, figs, grape- fruit, grapes, grenadine, guava, honeydew melons, kiwi, lemons, limes, mangoes, melons, mulberry, nectarines, oats, olives, oranges, papayas, peaches, pears, pineapples, plums, prunes, raisins, raspberries, strawberries, tangelos, tangerines, watermelon, etc. (Canned, Fresh or Frozen)

All Vegetables: artichokes, asparagus, beets, broccoli, brussels sprout, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, chili peppers, corn, cucumbers, eggplant, garlic, gingerroot, kale, leeks, lettuce, mushrooms, mustard greens, okra, onions, parsley, any peppers, any potatoes, radishes, rutabagas, scallions, spinach, sprouts, squashes, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, turnips, watercress, yams, zucchini, etc. (Canned, Fresh or Frozen)

All Whole Grains: brown rice, oats, rolled oats, oatmeal, barley, corn, popcorn, wheat, etc.

Legumes: dried beans, pinto beans, split peas, lentils, black eyed peas, green beans, green peas, peanuts, kidney beans, cannellini beans, black beans, etc. Grain legumes include beans, lentils, peas and peanuts. (Canned, Fresh or Frozen)

Seeds: all nuts, natural peanut butter, natural almond butter, sprouts, ground flax, etc.

Liquids: spring water, distilled water, filtered water, 100% all-natural fruit or vegetable juices

Oils: All quality oils including olive, canola, grape seed, peanut, and sesame

Other: Tofu, soy products, vinegar, seasonings, salt, herbs, and spices.

Foods to Avoid:

All meat and animal products, all dairy products, all sweeteners, all leaven bread (including Ezekiel Bread), All refined and processed foods, All deep-fried foods, all solid fats, all coffee, tea, herbal teas, carbonated beverages, energy drinks, etc.

Preparing for your fast:

While fasting you may not consume any caffeine, sugar or sweeteners of any kind. You should not have anything artificial. This may cause many to experience the same feelings associated with detoxing. Consume as much water as possible.

The primary nature of this fast is **spiritual**, however, it does include adjustments to one's daily diet.

Therefore, Mount Moriah Church strongly encourages

you to consult your personal physician prior to engaging in the fast.

Everyone is encouraged to consult their physician prior to beginning the fast.

ENDING THE FAST

Every undertaking in life requires a good start and an even better finish. As we conclude our 40 day fast, how we come off of the fast is of supreme importance. Just as the fast began with a plan, it is best to end the fast with a plan as well. The information following is intended to share some practical and portable principles that will prepare you to conclude the fast and continue its results.

Pause to praise and thank God. Pace yourself

- If you have gone 24 hours or longer with only water to drink you do not want to suddenly introduce a heavy meal into your stomach. Begin with a little fruit, and some "light" (easy to digest) foods.
- If you have gone 24 hours or longer consuming water only, you should try to avoid meats, dairy products, and any fats or oils for a week or more. Re-introduce them very slowly and in small amounts. If you choose to disregard this advice, please be careful to consume these items in small amounts and at a very slow pace. You should not immediately return to what was your normal consumption. By now, whether you realize it or not, you nor your body is the same. You and your body have changed during the fast. Returning to your previously normal eating routine may shock your body, spirit and mind. The ultimate consequence could be that you end up worse after the fast than you were before the fast in physical, mental and spiritual health.
- Realize your stomach is smaller now, so eat lightly. Stop eating before or no later than the moment you feel full. If you were raised to eat everything on your plate, you have just three options: 1) prepare or order smaller portions, 2) eat what you can and save the rest for later or 3) eat what your stomach will allow and consider yourself excused.
- As a general rule and especially during the first week after the fast, try to stay away from starches like white pastas, white rice, or white bread. Wheat pasta, brown rice and whole wheat bread, including Melba toast, are much better for you if you choose or feel the need to consume these food items.
- It might be wise to start with a little soup, something thin and nourishing such as vegetable broth made from onion, celery, potatoes, and carrots. Fresh fruits such as watermelon and cantaloupe might also be suggested as you start your post-fast eating.
- In terms of resuming any sort of exercise routine, the advice is the same. Start out slowly, allowing time for your body to re-adjust to its usual regimen.

Continue to practice a healthy lifestyle.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

This forty-day journey of prayer and fasting is under-girded by your Mount Moriah Prayer Ministry. Should you desire personal encouragement along the way, please reach out to us via e-mail or by submitting a request on our website.

Min. Audrey Banks Thomas
MMBC Prayer Ministry
prayer@mountmoriahnow.org

Bibliography and Recommended Readings

Bailey, Boyd. *Two Minutes in the Bible® Through Revelation: A 90-Day Devotional*
Blackaby, Henry and Richard. *Experiencing God Day-By-Day*
Chambers, Oswald. *My Utmost for His Highest*
Hudson, Trevor. *Pauses for Lent: 40 Words for 40 Days The Pursuit of God*
Lea, Claybon. *Forty-Day Fast.*
Lucado, Max. *When God Whispers Your Name*
Murray, Andrew. *The Deeper Christian Life and The Lord's Table*
Nouwen, Henri J. M. *In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership*
Spurgeon, C. H. *Morning and Evening: Daily Readings*
Tiegreen, Chris. *The One-Year Hearing His Voice Devotional*
Gregory, Susan. *The Daniel Fast*
Holy Bible
Download *Bible Gateway* app and listen on your smart device

Recommended Music
Christian only
