



DANIEL FAST

The Daniel Fast is a unique type of fast because you can eat, unlike a liquid fast where only water or juices are consumed. However, just because you can have food doesn't mean the Daniel Fast is easy.

Fasting, in any form, is difficult because you're doing battle physically and spiritually. However, there are steps you can take to strengthen yourself for the fight.

SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

1. Pray

Ask the Lord to reveal any unconfessed sin, unforgiveness, or rebellion in your heart. When God reveals it to you (and He will), confess your sin quickly and repent. Take time to get your heart ready for what God wants to do in and through you on this fast.

2. Read verses on fasting.

Take time to study passages in the Bible that have to do with fasting. It will help you gain insight on how people fasted, the ways God responded to people's prayers, and what God requires of His people on a fast. (*Isaiah 58, 2 Chron. 20:1-4, Ezra 8:21-23, Neh. 1:1-4, Est. 4:15-17, and Matt. 4:1-11*).

3. Buy a journal or use a notebook.

Use a journal or notebook for prayer requests, praises, and answers to prayer. Record what the Lord shows you through his word.

4. Write down prayer requests.

What do you want to see God do during your fast? Take time to identify your primary motivations for fasting. Record your prayer requests in your journal or on a separate piece of paper. Keep the list visible and pray over those needs throughout your fast. Make sure you include requests for others and not just your own requests.

5. Find a prayer partner.

It's important to have a trusted friend or family member who can be your prayer partner during your fast. Ideally, you should choose someone who is doing the fast with you, but it's certainly not a requirement. The key is to ask someone who will lift you up and keep you accountable. You will also keep them accountable.

PHYSICAL PREPARATION

1. Ease into the fast.

Reduce your intake of caffeine, meat, dairy, sugar, and processed foods. Doing so will help your body adjust to the Daniel Fast and also reduce the severity of any unpleasant side effects. Trust me, the temptation to eat everything you can't have on the fast will be **STRONG**, but splurging will only make the transition much more difficult. Also, it's a good idea to increase your water consumption before the fast begins.

2. Plan your meals for the first week.

The key to success with the food portion of the Daniel Fast is proper planning. It will save you time and help prevent the frustration of trying to decide at the last minute what to eat. Having a plan will also keep you from indulging in foods that don't fall within the Daniel Fast guidelines.

3. Make a grocery list for the first week.

Putting a list together before you go to the grocery store will make your shopping much more efficient.

4. Get your kitchen ready.

Make sure you have the proper appliances (ex. blender, cutting board, food processor, etc.) and utensils (ex. knives, spatula, garlic press, etc.) before embarking on this 21-Day adventure. When preparing recipes, having the tools you need will make everything much easier.

5. Prepare food ahead of time.

Look at the first week's recipes on your meal plan to find ways you can speed up food preparation and make it more efficient.

6. Cook and freeze meals.

Take a few hours the weekend before the fast begins and make a few meals. You'll really appreciate this step during the time of your fast.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Following are some of the most frequently asked questions about the Daniel Fast, separated into the following categories: ***Food, Beverages, and Miscellaneous.***

FOOD

1. Why isn't yeast allowed on the Daniel Fast?

In the Bible, yeast is often a symbol for sin, and God often required the Israelites to give up leavened bread (contains yeast) during certain times as a way of setting them apart from neighboring peoples. By not having yeast, we're making a statement against sin and that's in keeping with Jewish tradition by refusing to eat leavened bread as we seek the Lord. Yeast is also linked to unhealthy conditions in the body.

2. What about nutritional yeast since it's deactivated and not a leavening agent?

Whether or not to use nutritional yeast, which is an inactive form of yeast, is really matter of personal conviction. Some people may choose to have it, while others do not.

3. Can I have whole grain products?

Yes, whole grains are allowed, as long as the other ingredients are Daniel Fast friendly. The modern-day Daniel Fast is based on Daniel's fasting experiences, which involved denying himself certain foods while he sought the Lord in prayer. Scripture gives us *SOME* insight (Dan. 10:3) into what he ate and didn't eat.

4. Can I have bread? What about Ezekiel bread?

Whole wheat and whole grain breads, but the bread must be made without yeast or sugar (these are restricted on the fast). In other words, any bread needs to be unleavened, otherwise known as flatbread. Ezekiel bread is not allowed because it contains yeast.

5. Can I have protein powder on the Daniel Fast?

Yes, as long as the product falls within the Daniel Fast guidelines.

6. Is fish allowed on the fast?

No. Animal products aren't part of the Daniel Fast, including seafood. However, some people may choose to modify the guidelines for medical or nutritional reasons.

Whether or not to include fish is a matter between you and the Lord.

7. What about vegan (plant-based) products, such as veggie burgers, cheese, and mayonnaise?

It all depends upon how strictly you plan to follow the Daniel Fast. Some store-bought vegan products are better quality (and more nutritious) than others. Yes, you can have them, but ***I encourage you to find ones with the least amount of ingredients.***

Two things to keep in mind regarding store-bought vegan products:

1) Are all of the ingredients Daniel Fast friendly? Check the label to be sure.

2) Since one of the goals of the fast are to avoid highly processed foods is it a healthy choice? There are some vegan products that are better than others.

8. Can I have vinegar? What about apple cider vinegar and balsamic vinegar?

Apple cider vinegar and balsamic vinegar have many nutritional benefits, so some people may choose to include it on their fast. The idea of the fast is to deny yourself as an act of worship to the Lord. We don't want to be so legalistic about every single thing that we put into our mouths that we miss the whole point of the Daniel Fast, so I would encourage you to seek the Lord for direction.

9. What about honey or agave nectar?

No added sugars are allowed on the Daniel Fast, including agave nectar, honey, brown rice syrup, molasses, maple syrup, raw sugar, table sugar, and artificial sweeteners.

10. Can I have stevia or monkfruit?

Some people will use stevia on the fast since it's plant-based. Monk fruit is a similar type of situation. The decision of whether or not to use natural sweeteners (plant or fruit-based) is a matter of personal conviction.

11. Is coconut sugar allowed?

Coconut sugar is an added sugar. You could use unsweetened coconut flakes instead. Some people may disagree with that position and not see a problem with using it on the fast. *That's OK. Not everyone's fast will look the same. It's between you and the Lord.*

12. Can soy sauce be used on the fast?

Some people choose not to use soy sauce. Others don't have a problem with using it. A good substitute for soy sauce is Bragg's Liquid Aminos or Coconut Aminos.

13. Many canned items contain ascorbic acid or citric acid. Can I have these products?

On the Daniel Fast you should avoid additives, chemicals, and preservatives as much as possible. We all know that preservatives create systemic issues in our bodies. However, there are some ingredients in canned foods that are considered "natural" preservatives. Examples are salt, lemon juice, and ascorbic acid, which is a form of vitamin C. So, yes, foods with ascorbic and/or citric acid are allowed. However, keep in mind that fresh is always best. Frozen foods are next highest in nutrients, and then canned.

14. How many meals do I eat per day? Can I have snacks?

The number of times you eat throughout the day is a personal decision. Some people choose to eat three meals. Some might add a snack or two in between. Others may skip a meal to pray. There isn't a particular formula for the frequency of meals. ***Let God guide you as to what your fast should look like.***

15. What about portion sizes?

Sometimes you'll hear people say, "On a Daniel Fast, you can eat as much as you like because it's all healthy!" ***That's not true. Even though this is a partial fast, it's still a fast, which involves self-denial.*** I recommend that you let the Holy Spirit lead you in this area. The idea is to have enough food for sustenance and energy, but not so much that you are overeating.

16. Are salt and pepper allowed? What about herbs and spices?

Yes, you can use salt and pepper to flavor your food. Also, herbs and spices are allowed. However, you need to make sure any store-bought seasonings are Daniel Fast friendly. Read the ingredients list on the label to be sure. Watch for added sugar.

17. Can I have chocolate, cocoa powder, or cacao?

Unfortunately, no. All caffeinated products are restricted, including chocolate, unsweetened cocoa powder, and cacao. (***Your pastor really appreciates quality dark chocolate, I wish it was part of the Daniel Fast!***) Some people use carob powder as a substitute for unsweetened cocoa. It has a chocolate-like flavor but without the caffeine.

18. Is popcorn allowed?

Yes, as long as it's air or oil popped. No butter or cheese!

19. I'm worried about not getting enough iron on the fast since we can't have meat. What are vegan sources of iron-rich foods?

"Dried beans and dark green leafy vegetables are especially good sources of iron, even better on a per calorie basis than meat. Iron absorption is increased markedly by eating foods containing vitamin C along with foods containing iron"

Here are a few suggestions:

- Soybeans (edamame)
- Lentils
- Spinach
- Tofu

20. Can I have grits?

Grits are usually refined. They've have had the hull and germ removed, which means the grits have been stripped of most nutrients. However, stone-ground grits are allowed.

21. What about condiments like ketchup and mustard?

Most ketchup and mustard contain sugar, which isn't included in the Daniel Fast.

BEVERAGES

1. Can I have coffee?

Caffeinated products aren't part of the Daniel Fast. Even decaf coffee usually contains small amounts of caffeine. That being said, some people may choose to include decaf on their fast. It's really a personal decision and a matter between you and the Lord.

2. What about herbal and fruit tea? Decaf and green?

The main beverage on the Daniel Fast is water, so whether or not to include **herbal or fruit tea** is a personal decision. Some people choose to set tea aside for the fast, while others may decide to include it. Another reason teas are restricted is based upon Daniel's example in the Bible and the fact that he drank only water during his fasts (***Daniel 1:12 and 10:3***). For some people, having tea is a daily treat, so they may choose to give it up for a period of fasting as a sacrifice to the Lord. Perhaps this is not the case for you and maybe you might choose to include herbal tea on your fast. God will guide you and give you peace in the direction you need to go. Caffeinated products aren't a part of the Daniel Fast.

3. Can I have juice?

The recommended beverage on the Daniel Fast is water. You should drink it most of the time. Fruit juices (100%, unsweetened – read ingredients to make sure) CAN be used on the Daniel Fast, such to flavor recipes and occasionally as a drink.

4. What about sparkling water?

Yes, you can have regular (unsweetened) sparkling water, such as San Pellegrino or Perrier, on the fast.

MISCELLANEOUS

1. I have diabetes. Is it safe for me to do the Daniel Fast?

The Daniel Fast is an extremely healthy way of eating, and many people with diabetes have done the fast with success. However, you're free to modify the fast if you need to do so according to the specific needs of your body. Stay away from foods that are problematic and tend to spike your blood sugar levels.

If you have concerns about specific foods, consult a nutritionist or doctor. While the Daniel Fast does contain a good amount of carbohydrates, many foods also supply protein. One idea to increase protein content is to supplement with a plant based protein powder.

You don't have to follow the food guidelines exactly to get the physical and spiritual benefits of the fast. ***The most important thing is that you're committing the time to pray, so God will honor whatever sacrifices you can make.***

2. Will I experience any side effects?

Some people do experience side effects, such as bloating, headaches, fatigue, and muscle soreness as your body adjusts to the changes in your eating habits. Typically, these unpleasant symptoms will subside after the first few days. By the second week, many people feel a surge of energy once they've settled into the fast. *Note: Drinking water can help flush out your system and bring relief more quickly.*

3. I'm experiencing stomach distress from the beans and high-fiber foods. What can I do?

Yes, the increase in fiber while on the Daniel Fast can be problematic for people, so digestive enzymes can help. They help to break down food into nutrients so that our bodies can absorb them more easily.

4. Can I exercise and do weightlifting workouts during the Daniel Fast?

Yes, you can, but you may experience some weakness on the first few days of the fast. After that, your body should settle in, giving you more energy. You might want to supplement with plant-based protein powder for smoothies.

5. Are vitamins allowed on the Daniel Fast?

Yes. Vitamins, minerals, and supplements are fine.

Daniel Fast Food List

On the 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 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 as well. However, you may have 100% fruit juice on occasion (just don't overdo it).

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. (For an explanation on why it's excluded, see #1 under "Food" on FAQ page.)

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 foods (Sorry Southerners)

Basically all gas-station food. LOL 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.