

2021 FASTING GUIDELINES

LENT



RELINK, RELOAD AND RELAUNCH
OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.

40 DAY LENT FAST | February 17 - April 3



ABOUT LENT

LENT is a solemn religious observance in the Christian liturgical calendar that begins on Ash Wednesday and ends approximately six weeks later on Holy Saturday, the day before Easter Sunday. The purpose of Lent is the preparation of the believer for Easter through prayer, doing penance, mortifying the flesh, repentance of sins, almsgiving, and denial of ego. This event is observed in the Anglican, Eastern Orthodox, Lutheran, Methodist, Moravian, Oriental Orthodox, Reformed, and Roman Catholic Churches. Some Anabaptist and evangelical churches also observe the Lenten season.

The last week of Lent is Holy Week, starting with Palm Sunday. Following the New Testament story, Jesus' crucifixion is commemorated on Good Friday, and at the beginning of the next week the joyful celebration of Easter Sunday recalls the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

In Lent, many Christians commit to fasting, as well as giving up certain luxuries in order to replicate the account of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ's journey into the desert for 40 days; this is known as one's Lenten sacrifice. Many Christians also add a Lenten spiritual discipline, such as reading a daily devotional or praying through a Lenten calendar, to draw themselves near to God. The Stations of the Cross, a devotional commemoration of Christ's carrying the Cross and of his execution, are often observed. Many Roman Catholic and some Protestant churches remove flowers from their altars, while crucifixes, religious statues, and other elaborate religious symbols are often veiled in violet fabrics in solemn observance of the event. Throughout Christendom, some adherents mark the season with the traditional abstention from the consumption of meat, most notably among Lutherans, Roman Catholics and Anglicans.

Lent is traditionally described as lasting for 40 days, in commemoration of the 40 days Jesus spent fasting in the desert, according to the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, before beginning his public ministry, during which he endured temptation by Satan. Depending on the Christian denomination and local custom, Lent ends either on the evening of Maundy Thursday, or at sundown on Holy Saturday, when the Easter Vigil is celebrated





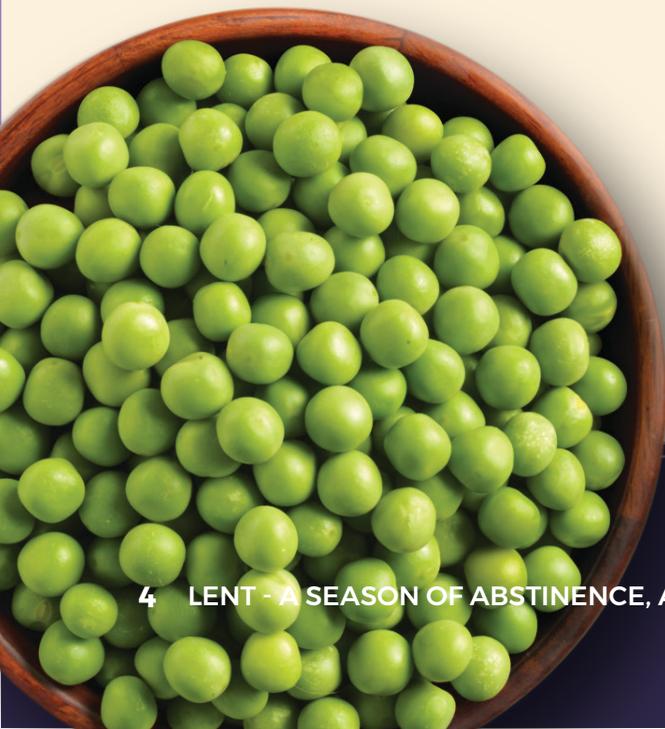
WHY DO WE FAST?

To “Fast” is a Christian’s voluntary abstinence from food for spiritual purposes.

It is evident that there are spiritual benefits to fasting and the maturing Christian must learn this discipline. Jesus said in Mark 9:29, “This kind can come forth by nothing but by prayer and fasting.”

Isaiah 58:6 offers God’s very own words about the effects of rightful praying and fasting. God outlines the purpose of our fast. He says, *“Is this not the fast that I have chosen: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, to let the opposed go free, and that you break every yoke?”*

In both passages the end result of rightful praying and fasting is liberation, healing and salvation. I believe that God wants us to be unencumbered with current or past bondage.



THE DANIEL FAST

excerpt from “Toxic Relief” by Don Colbert, M.D.

Daniel and three other Hebrew youths, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, were Jews in captivity, but in the kingdom of Babylon. They were greatly favored for their purity, and they were well educated and extremely gifted both mentally and spiritually.

When these four young men were captured and taken into the king’s palace to educate them in the ways of the Chaldeans, Daniel 1:5 states, “The king assigned them a daily amount of food and wine from the king’s table” (NIV). He planned to keep them on his own rich diet of meats, fats, sugary pastries and wine for three years. At the end of the three years they would be presented to the king.

However, verse 8 says, “But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine” (NIV). In other words, Daniel rejected the rich, temptingly delicious meats, wine and pastries of the royal court, perhaps because they did not meet the requirements of Jewish dietary laws or because these youths may have taken vows against drinking alcohol.





So Daniel made a request of the prince of the eunuchs. Verse 12 says, "Please test your servants for ten days: give us nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink" (NIV). The King James Version uses the word *pulse*. "*Pulse*" consisted of vegetables and grain, wheat, barley, rye, peas, beans and lentils.

Daniel and the three other Hebrew youths lived, what we would call, a fasted life for three years on the vegetarian diet of pulse while learning and studying in the king's court, and God honored their partial fast. We're told in verse 15, "At the end of the ten days they looked healthier and better nourished than any of the young men who ate the royal food" (NIV).

God tremendously favored their eating lifestyle decision and granted them favor, wisdom and insight far above anyone around them. In versus 18 - 20 (NIV) we read:

At the end of the time set by the king to bring them into his service, the chief official presented them to Nebuchadnezzar. The king talked with them, and he found none equal to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah; so they entered the king's service. In every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king questioned them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom.

Daniel knew what was healthy to eat, and he purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself. The Daniel fast eliminates rich foods such as meats, pastries, cakes, pies, cookies, alcohol and any other food that is tempting to the flesh.

Today, people are so bound to their flesh that they often cannot go one meal without eating some form of meat, something sweet, fatty or some other type of rich food. We must crucify our flesh daily and take up our cross and follow Christ. (See Matthew 16:24.) What better way to crucify our flesh than to follow Daniel's fasted lifestyle?





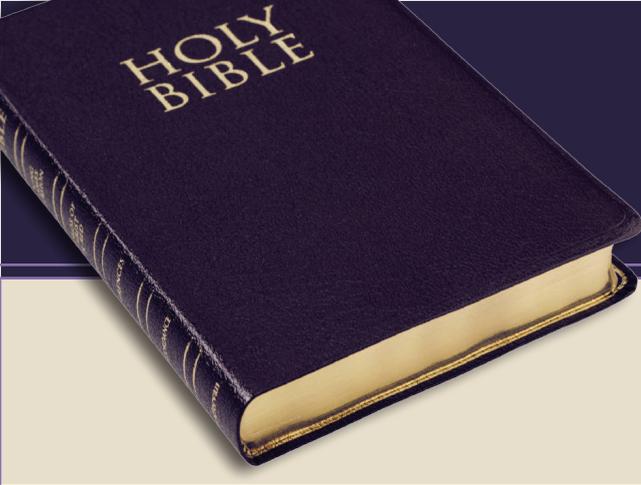
FASTING GUIDELINES

- ▶ Whole Grains, whole wheat and brown or wild rice (be sure there is no white rice in the wild rice), wheat/spinach wraps are ok but should be used in moderation.
- ▶ Legumes: Dried Beans, Pinto Beans, Split Peas, Lentils, Black Eyed Peas
- ▶ Fruits: Apples, Apricots, Bananas, Blackberries, Blueberries, Boysenberries, Cantaloupe, Cherries, Cranberries, Oats, Figs, Grapefruit, Grapes, Guava, Honeydew Melon, Kiwi, Lemons, Limes, Mangoes, Nectarines, Papayas, Peaches, Pears, Pineapples, Plums, Prunes, Raisins, Raspberries, Strawberries, Tangelos, Tangerines, Watermelon, and the list goes on. If you are using dried fruits, make sure they do not have added sugar.
- ▶ Vegetables: Artichokes, Asparagus, Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Carrots, Cauliflower, Celery, Chili Peppers, Corn, Cucumbers, Eggplant, Garlic, Ginger-root, Kale, Leeks, Lettuce, Mushrooms, Mustard Greens, Okra, Onions, Parsley, Potatoes, Radishes, Rutabagas, Scallions, Spinach, Sprouts, Squashes, Sweet Potatoes, Tomatoes, Turnips, Watercress, Yams, Zucchini, veggie burgers (if you are not allergic to soy) without the egg or cheese.
- ▶ Seeds, Nuts, Sprouts. Also nut butters including peanut butter without added sugars
- ▶ Liquids: Spring Water, Distilled Water, 100% All-Natural Fruit Juices, 100% All Natural Vegetable Juices (no sweetened drinks or sweetened fruit juice), honey is a natural sweetener which may be used in moderation
- ▶ All quality oils including but not limited to olive, canola, grape seed, peanut, and sesame.
- ▶ Natural herbs and spices

FOODS NOT ALLOWED

- ▶ Sugar and sugar products, refined sugar products (desserts, soft drinks, diet soda etc.)
- ▶ Wines, Alcoholic beverages
- ▶ Drinks including caffeine (coffee, dark teas, etc.), Non sweet green/herbal teas are ok
- ▶ Refined Bread, grains, and rice
- ▶ Meats, poultry, dairy products, eggs





SPIRITUAL GOALS

RELINK TO GOD...

- ▶ For revelation of who you are in Him
- ▶ For revelation of why you are here and what He created you to do
- ▶ For clarity in all areas of your life -mental, physical, financial, etc...
- ▶ For deliverance from any habits that don't honor Him.

RELOAD BY...

- ▶ Spending quality time with God daily – praying, reading and meditating on His word
- ▶ Taking time daily to just be quiet and still in His presence
- ▶ Journaling the things that the Holy Spirit is revealing to you and what you believe God is instructing you to do

RELAUNCH BY...

- ▶ Releasing all hurts – past and present and walking in forgiveness
- ▶ Speaking positive affirmations about yourself and about others
- ▶ Sharing your testimony of God's saving grace with those that may not know Him with hope of winning them to Christ
- ▶ Walking in your divine purpose

EVERYONE IS EXPECTED TO:

1. Participate in the New Lifestyle Fast
2. Participate in the prayer opportunities (6 AM Prayerline, Private Prayer)
3. Participate in the Daily Devotions
4. J.A.M. Join a ministry and use your gifts.
5. Consciously invite friends and family to worship service with a "Hope" of winning them to Jesus Christ.

PRAYER AND STUDY

Your goal in fasting is to develop a closer relationship with God by voluntarily denying your flesh. Fasting is a time of consecration from the things of the world to the things of God. First, fasting allows you to improve your communication with God through prayer and as your communication improves your relationship with God is strengthened. Thus, to effectively communicate with God you must have a strong prayer life. It is critical to increase your prayer time during a fast. Pray as often as possible, or do as the Scripture says and pray without ceasing. Carry yourself in a posture of prayer not only to ask of

God, but to hear from Him as well. Set aside certain specific times for prayer and journaling.



Here are some pointers that will also help:

- ▶ Take time to be quiet before the Lord and listen to the voice of the Spirit.
- ▶ Record in your journal what the Holy Spirit is revealing to you.
- ▶ Write down prayer requests.
- ▶ Write down revelation and insights given to you during the fast.
- ▶ Write down your praise reports.
- ▶ Write down any dreams and pray for the interpretation of them.

A second and powerful way to develop a closer relationship with God is to study the scriptures. The scripture is the very Word of God. To know God, you have to know His Word. In addition to prayer, during a fast, you should increase your time of studying His Word. Listen to Bible teaching tapes while you're driving, at work or at home to help you stay focused on God's Word. Try to saturate your atmosphere with the Word of God. When the fast is over, you should be spiritually renewed and

strengthened because you have more control over your flesh and intensified your commitment to God through prayer and study.

Please pray in your closets (isolation) and/or with a partner for 15 minutes twice each day, and maintain a posture of prayer throughout the day.



ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability is a powerful tool for success. You will probably be most successful with this fast if you make yourself accountable to at least one other person during this fast. Encourage one another. If someone falls and eats the wrong foods, do not condemn them. Help them start again. Walk in love and mercy. During this period, as you continually place your flesh under submission to your spirit, you will find increasing opportunities to reflect the character of God in your daily walk.

SPECIAL NOTE: For those with health issues, consult your physician for guidance and participation. You may not be able to participate in the Daniel fast, but alternative fasts may select one or more of the following fasts to participate in:

- ▶ A word fast (a refusal to speak any words that hurt, injure or cause fear, doubt, anger, strife, shame or guilt)
- ▶ A media fast - (a fast from media, TV, internet and radio in order to listen to the Bible on tape or listen to teaching tapes instead)
- ▶ A fast from harsh, critical words at home (This fast will help you as a mother or father to use language that is courteous, kind and uplifting

to children. It will help you as a husband or wife to speak only encouraging, uplifting words to your spouse.)

- ▶ A fast from gossip (Are you surrounded by gossip, criticism and negativity at work or with a social group? This fast helps you gain control over such deadly, toxic social environments. Simply refuse to listen to any gossip.)
- ▶ A financial fast (Purchase "The Power to Prosper: 21 Days to Financial Freedom" by Michelle Singletary).

Children may participate under parental supervision. Parents are encouraged to explain fasting to their children and solicit their commitment (i.e. ask them what are they going to fast - sugars, dessert, television, phone, etc.)



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 your 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. This is not a failure of will but is wisdom. Seek the Lord and discuss it with other Christians involved in the fast to find alternatives.

BREAKING THE FAST

At the conclusion of the fast, carefully introduce your “new” normal eating plan. Start with soft foods for at least one day and slowly introduce those foods that God is leading you to eat in your new dietary plan (notice those things/items that God has delivered you from.)



