

# Let's Join in the 'Daniel Fast' for Lent

BY YONGYEUN LEE

“In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant food, no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled”  
(Daniel 10:2-3 NKJV).

Lent is a forty-day season of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving that begins on Ash Wednesday and ends at sundown on Holy Thursday. It's a period of preparation to celebrate the Lord's Resurrection at Easter. During Lent, we seek the Lord in prayer by reading sacred scripture; we serve by giving alms; and we practice self-control through fasting. We are called not only to abstain from luxuries during Lent but to a true inner conversion of heart as we seek to follow Christ's will more faithfully. We recall the waters of baptism in which we were also baptized into Christ's death, died to sin and evil, and began a new life in Christ. Many know of the tradition of abstaining from meat on Fridays during Lent, but we are also called to practice self-discipline and fast in other ways throughout the season. Contemplate the meaning and origins of the Lenten fasting tradition in this reflection.

## **Fasting is a practice and training of faith.**

During this Lent, I encourage all of us to participate in the “Daniel Fast.” Fasting safely and appropriately is one of the ways the Bible encourages believers to connect with and grow closer to God. It increases dependence on the power of the Spirit and proves that people do not live by bread alone. The Daniel Fast has grown in popularity following an endorsement from actor Chris Pratt in early 2019. This short-term fasting approach is based upon the prophet Daniel's dietary and spiritual experiences as recorded in the Book of Daniel in the Bible. It's a type of partial fast that focuses very heavily on vegetables and other healthy whole foods but leaves out any animal sources of protein. It's essentially a vegan diet without any sugars, refined carbs, caffeine, or alcohol. So what can you eat on the Daniel Fast then?

- Beverages: water, some fruit juice, unsweetened non-dairy milk
- Vegetables: all fresh, frozen, dried, juiced, and canned vegetables
- Fruit: all fresh, frozen, dried (with no added sugar), juiced, and canned fruit
- Whole grains: amaranth, barley, brown rice, buckwheat, bulgur, millet, Freekeh, oats, purple rice, wild rice, whole wheat, spelt, sorghum, rye, quinoa
- Beans and legumes: black beans, garbanzo beans, kidney beans, lentils, peanuts, pinto beans, split beans, black-eyed peas
- Oils: coconut, olive, sesame, etc., but not for deep-frying
- Nuts and seeds: almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, sunflower seeds, soy nuts, sesame seeds, hazelnuts, macadamia nuts, pecans, pumpkin seeds, pine nuts, pistachios, poppy seeds
- Unleavened bread, herbs, spices, and seasonings

- Meat is fundamentally not allowed. But if you are not a vegetarian or a legalist, I think it is possible to eat meat from clean animals based on Leviticus 11.

If you are looking for a healing breakthrough in body, mind, and spirit, you can read more about the Daniel Fast at <https://ultimatedanielfast.com/ultimate-daniel-fast-food-guidelines>.

A life of faith without sacrifice is not possible. It's also important to pray regularly when fasting.

For biblical figures and spiritual masters, fasting was a practice and training of faith. I hope that through the Daniel Fast, you will be healed and restored in your bodies, minds, and spirits and you will find new vitality in life.

Prayer: O Lord of Life, through Daniel's fast and prayer, let the evil power in us fall, and let the power of life heal and change our spirit, body, and soul, so that we will be reborn as new disciples of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

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## THE WESLEY FAST GUIDELINES

1. Be flexible and listen to the Holy Spirit. Don't get so caught up with the act of fasting itself that you forget why you're doing it in the first place.
2. Decide whether you're going to do a complete fast (water only), a no-solid-food fast that allows milk, juice, coffee and tea, a no-meat fast, or some other kind of fast. There are no fixed rules here but it's always good to try to keep the fast you set out to do. Some fasts are more difficult than others, and there will be times you may feel led to switch things up.
3. Plan on Friday as your regular fasting day, but use Wednesday and other days for additional fasting when you feel called to a time of deeper and more intense prayer. Remember, there's nothing "magic" about Friday. It's simply a historical day for fasting in many Christian traditions, largely because Jesus was crucified on a Friday. If for some reason another day of the week makes more sense for you, then fast on that day.
4. Only fast for more than one consecutive day after you've consulted with your doctor and only if you're sure you're physically able to handle it.
5. Make sure you drink plenty of water while fasting, no matter what kind of fast you choose.
6. The default Wesley Fast is observed from sundown Thursday till 3:00 Friday afternoon. Some Christians go till sundown on Friday. Do whichever you feel led to do in any given week.
7. Remember, there will be times when it makes sense to skip your Friday fast or move it to another day of the week. For example, if you have an opportunity to have lunch on a Friday with someone you've been wanting to connect with for a while, don't feel compelled to create an awkward situation by sticking to your fast. Just change your fast day that week. Guideline #1 applies here.