



PRAYING, FASTING and STUDYING

As we prepare ourselves as a body for this season of Lent, we feel it is imperative that in the midst of our busy lives that we see to become closer to God. We understand that Lent is the period of 40 days which comes before Easter in the Christian calendar. Beginning on Ash Wednesday, Lent is a season of **reflection and preparation** before the celebrations of Easter. By observing the 40 days of Lent, we replicate Jesus Christ's sacrifice and withdrawal into the desert for 40 days. Lent is marked by fasting, both from food and festivities.

Why 40 days? 40 is a significant number in Jewish-Christian scripture:

- In Genesis, the flood which destroyed the earth was brought about by 40 days and nights of rain.
- The Hebrews spent 40 years in the wilderness before reaching the land promised to them by God.
- Moses fasted for 40 days before receiving the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai.
- Jesus spent 40 days fasting in the wilderness in preparation for his ministry.

This season of prayer, fasting, and studying will be used to bring us into reflection, preparation, and rededication to the call God has placed on us as individuals and as a church.

As we enter into this season please understand that **THE MOST IMPORTANT TOOL IN PRAYER IS LISTENING FOR GOD'S DIRECTIONS FOR OUR LIVES!**

PRAYER

A humble heart and a mind open to Jesus is what He expects, and the Holy Spirit will do the rest. (Romans 8:26, 27).

WHY SHOULD WE PRAY?

We pray because we love God.
We pray to worship God for who He is.
We pray to say thanks to our Father.
We pray to God to praise Him.
We pray to petition God.
We pray to confess our sins.
We pray to intercede for others.
We pray against the enemies of God.
We pray to listen to God.
We pray to resist temptation.
We pray because He directs us to pray.

FASTING

WHY SHOULD I FAST?

Fasting and Prayer combined can bring about a transformational revival- in you, the nation, the world... it can be a very powerful tool in seeking God.

The ultimate purpose of the fast is not you and what you seek, but God. Fasting is a true way to sacrifice for God and humble oneself to Him (Psalm 35:13; Ezra 8:21). Fasting is an act of worship and honoring.

WHAT IS A FAST?

A fast is a period of abstaining from something; denying self from a desire. There are multiple types of fasts, which we will address.

HOW SHOULD WE PREPARE FOR A FAST?

SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

- Pray before you fast. Ensure that you communicate with God and seek His guidance regarding your fast.
- Ask God to help you to examine your heart, detect and repent any unconfessed sins.

PHYSICAL PREPARATION

- Consult a doctor before fasting, in order to ensure that all of your vitals are stable.
- If you have severe medical maladies you should definitely have professional supervision while fasting.
- Decrease the amount of food that you eat a couple of days prior to the fast starting in order to prepare your mind, stomach, and appetite for less food.

TYPES OF FASTS

The best way to choose the appropriate fast is to follow the lead of the Holy Spirit. Pray purposefully in identifying God's purpose and direction in your fast. His direction is the only thing that will make the fast meaningful and significant.

- **PARTIAL FAST** – abstain from food for a set time; eat a simple meal of bread & water; sacrifice a certain food.
- **DANIEL FAST** - abstains from delicacies, meats, and wines and focuses on fresh foods such as fruits and vegetables **NO FOOD FAST** - abstains from all food, including milk (protein) and only drinks liquids and water
- **PROGRESSIVE FAST** – Which is a combination of the partial fast and the Daniel fast. You will add different foods, delicacies, meats, and wines, and other focuses each week. Your aim is to replace those items that have been removed with something that is spiritually fulfilling such as praying or studying.

STUDY

Spend additional time meditating on God's Word, before and during the fast.

Most people only read the bible but they do not study it.

There is a big difference. Reading is just reading. But studying is getting deep into the scriptures & putting some work into it to really study what it is saying.

The first thing to know about reading or studying, is that very often when you attempt to read or study the bible, the enemy will send every distraction possible to prevent you from reading or studying effectively. You will get more phone calls, text messages, emails & visitors when you attempt to pray, read or study the bible than at any other time! Therefore, before prayer, reading or studying the bible, or getting into worship, you really need to turn off your phone, internet, etc. and lock the door! Perhaps put up a sign that says "DO NOT DISTURB". Tell everyone in the house that you are entering your private time with Jesus & to leave you alone until you come out of your prayer closet or room.

There will also be attempts of your flesh to become sleepy or distracted, or the enemy could send sleepiness. You may want to consider verbally rebuking any sleepiness & distractions of the carnal flesh & distractions of the enemy before you begin or as soon as you notice any distraction.

When reading or studying the bible, you need to always start with prayer & end with prayer.

When studying the bible, read slowly! Think about what you are reading. Make sure you understand each & every word. Do not be in a hurry! Look up every word that you are not 100% sure that you understand. Look in a dictionary for words that you do not know the definition of. Write down what speaks to you.

Foods to include In Your Diet during:

The Daniel Fast

One of the great things about the Daniel Fast is that you are not limited to any specific amount of food, but rather to the kinds of food you can eat. The Daniel Fast is limited to vegetables (includes fruits) and water.

All fruits. These can be fresh, frozen, dried, juiced or canned. Fruits include but are not limited to apples, apricots, bananas, blackberries, blueberries, boysenberries, cantaloupe, cherries, cranberries, figs, grapefruit, grapes, guava, honeydew melon, kiwi, lemons, limes, mangoes, nectarines, oranges, papayas, peaches, pears, pineapples, plums, prunes, raisins, raspberries, strawberries, tangelos, tangerines, watermelon.

All vegetables. These can be fresh, frozen, dried, juiced or canned. Vegetables include but are not limited to artichokes, asparagus, beets, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots,

cauliflower, celery, chili peppers, collard greens, 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 are an option if you are not allergic to soy.

All whole grains, including but not limited to whole wheat, brown rice, millet, quinoa, oats, barley, grits, whole wheat pasta, whole wheat tortillas, rice cakes and popcorn.

All nuts and seeds, including but not limited to sunflower seeds, cashews, peanuts, sesame. Also nut butters including peanut butter.

All legumes. These can be canned or dried. Legumes include but are not limited to dried beans, pinto beans, split peas, lentils, black eyed peas, kidney beans, black beans, cannellini beans, white beans.

All quality oils including but not limited to olive, canola, grape seed, peanut, and sesame.

Beverages: spring water, distilled water or other pure waters.

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

Foods to avoid on the Daniel Fast

All meat and animal products including but not limited to beef, lamb, pork, poultry, and fish.

All dairy products including but not limited to milk, cheese, cream, butter, and eggs.

All sweeteners including but not limited to sugar, raw sugar, honey, syrups, molasses, and cane juice.

All leavened bread including Ezekiel Bread (it contains yeast and honey) and baked goods.

All refined and processed food products including but not limited to artificial flavorings, food additives, chemicals, white rice, white flour, and foods that contain artificial preservatives.

All deep fried foods including but not limited to potato chips, French fries, corn chips.

All solid fats including shortening, margarine, lard and foods high in fat.

Beverages including but not limited to coffee, tea, herbal teas, carbonated beverages, energy drinks, and alcohol. Please make sure to **READ THE LABEL** when purchasing packaged, canned or bottled foods. They should be **sugar-free** and **chemical-free**. Keep this in mind as you review this list of acceptable foods.

Dates	Day	Scripture	Prayer Focus	Fasting	Mental Fast
2/26/2020	WED	Matthew 1-3	Church		
2/27/2020	THU	Matthew 4-6	Community		
2/28/2020	FRI	Matthew 7-9	Growth Spiritually		
2/29/2020	SAT	Matthew 10-Matthew 12	Growth Physically		
3/1/2020	SUN	Take a Break	Growth Financially		
3/2/2020	MON	Matthew 13-Matthew 14	Discipleship		
3/3/2020	TUE	Matthew 15-Matthew 16	Leadership		
3/4/2020	WED	Matthew 17-Matthew 18	Focus		
3/5/2020	THU	Matthew 19-Matthew 20	Vision		
3/6/2020	FRI	Matthew 21-Matthew 22	Faith		
3/7/2020	SAT	Matthew 23-Matthew 24	Children		
3/8/2020	SUN	Take a Break	Youth		
3/9/2020	MON	Matthew 25-Matthew 26	Adults		
3/10/2020	TUE	Matthew 27-Matthew 28	Ministries		
3/11/2020	WED	Mark 1-Mark 3	Sick		
3/12/2020	THU	Mark 4-Mark 6	Homeless		
3/13/2020	FRI	Mark 7-Mark 9	Cripple		
3/14/2020	SAT	Mark 10-Mark 12	Mental Illness		
3/15/2020	SUN	Take a Break	Love		
3/16/2020	MON	Mark 13-Mark 14	Forgiveness		
3/17/2020	TUE	Mark 15-Mark 16	Peace		
3/18/2020	WED	Luke 1-Luke 3	Hope		
3/19/2020	THU	Luke 4-Luke 6	Elevation		
3/20/2020	FRI	Luke 7-Luke 9	Church		
3/21/2020	SAT	Luke 10-Luke 12	Community		
3/22/2020	SUN	Take a Break	Growth Spiritually		
3/23/2020	MON	Luke 13-Luke 14	Growth Physically		
3/24/2020	TUE	Luke 15-Luke 16	Growth Financially		
3/25/2020	WED	Luke 17-Luke 18	Discipleship		
3/26/2020	THU	Luke 19-Luke 20	Leadership		
3/27/2020	FRI	Luke 21-Luke 22	Focus		
3/28/2020	SAT	Luke 23-Luke 24	Vision		
3/29/2020	SUN	Take a Break	Faith		
3/30/2020	MON	John 1-John 2	Children		
3/31/2020	TUE	John 3-John 4	Youth		
4/1/2020	WED	John 5-John 6	Adults		
4/2/2020	THU	John 7-John 8	Ministries		
4/3/2020	FRI	John 9-John 10	Sick		
4/4/2020	SAT	John 11-John 12	Homeless		
4/5/2020	SUN	Take a Break	Cripple		
4/6/2020	MON	John 13-John 14	Mental Illness		
4/7/2020	TUE	John 15-John 16	Love		
4/8/2020	WED	John 17-John 18	Forgiveness		
4/9/2020	THU	John 19-John 20	Peace		
4/10/2020	FRI	John 21	Hope		
4/11/2020	SAT	1 Corinthians 15	Elevation		
4/12/2020	SUN	It's Easter!	Church		