

THE DANIEL FAST

The Daniel Fast is a partial fast in which some foods are restricted. This Biblically-based fast has become one of the most popular forms of fasting, perhaps because it is not as demanding or daunting as eating nothing for many consecutive days. Instead, the eating plan for the Daniel Fast is similar to a vegan diet (completely plant-based with no animal products), though somewhat more restrictive.

The Daniel Fast is based on the experiences of the prophet in Daniel 1 and Daniel 10. It seems that Daniel fasted frequently, with three of his experiences recorded in the book that bears his name. One was a normal fast (no food) as recorded in Daniel 9:3, when the prophet “set [his] face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes.” However, in the other two accounts Daniel engaged in a partial fast, abstaining from some food, but not all food.

In Daniel 1:12 we read that Daniel and his companions ate only “pulse,” which refers to foods from seeds, including vegetables, legumes and fruit. They also drank only water. This defines the Daniel Fast as a plant-based eating plan with the only beverage being water. No animal products are consumed, including fish, shellfish, dairy products or eggs.

In Daniel 10:3 the prophet tells us, “I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.” It is on the basis of this account that the Daniel Fast eliminates candy, desserts, and all kinds of sweeteners (even in recipes). All the food on the Daniel Fast is “natural,” which eliminates all man-made chemicals, artificial flavoring and coloring, food additives and preservatives, highly processed foods, and all stimulants, including caffeine.

Because Daniel was a Hebrew prophet, we know he also followed Jewish fasting principles. In preparation for Passover, the Jews removed all leavening products from their homes and did not include them in recipes. So during the Daniel Fast, all leavening products are eliminated, including baking powder, baking soda, and yeast found in breads and similar foods.

Finally, most people go on the Daniel Fast for a twenty-one day period because that’s what the prophet did, according to Daniel 10:2.

Foods to INCLUDE in your diet during the Daniel Fast:

- All fruits
- All vegetables
- All whole grains
- All nuts and seeds
- All legumes
- All quality oils
- Water
- Soy foods
- Condiments and cooking ingredients

Foods to ELIMINATE from your diet during the Daniel Fast:

- All meat and animal products
- All dairy products
- All sweeteners
- All leavened bread
- All refined and processed food products
- All deep-fried foods
- All solid fats
- All non-water beverages

Remember to read the label!

If you have questions about whether a certain food is permitted on the Daniel Fast, take a look at the ingredient list included on the label.

Use wisdom!

If you are elderly or have health issues, you might wish to consult with a physician before beginning the Daniel Fast. You can always create a modified version of this fast for your own use. Remember, ANY time or type of fasting combined with prayer can be effective. God will always honor the personal sacrifice you are making.