



CORPORATE

FAST

**“ ‘Even now,’
declares the
LORD, ‘return to
me with all your
heart, with fasting
and weeping and
mourning.’ ”**

Joel 2:12

How do you fast?

There are many ways to fast.

Fasting should always be a response to the prompting of the Holy Spirit, not a current fad and certainly not to please others or to meet a goal. Remember, the purpose of fasting is to give up in order to have more focus on God in prayer.

As a church, if you have never fasted we are recommending doing a Daniel Fast or a soul fast. **The Daniel fast** is found in the book of Daniel. According to Daniel 1, the results were: (v. 17) learning, skill, wisdom, spiritual understanding, favor, and better appearance! (v. 19) In Daniel 10, the fast resulted in answered prayer and spiritual insight. (vv. 11-12)

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.



Here is a guide to the Daniel Fast:

Foods to Eat:

In the first Book of Daniel, the Prophet ate only vegetables and fruit, and drank only water for 10 days. A short rundown of acceptable foods include:

- **All fruits:** Apples, apricots, bananas, cherries, grapes, lemons, limes, peaches, pineapples, strawberries, watermelon, etc.
- **All vegetables:** Asparagus, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, corn, cucumbers, lettuce, mushrooms, onions, potatoes, spinach, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, veggie burgers, etc.
- **All legumes:** Dried beans, pinto beans, split peas, lentils, black-eyed peas, kidney beans, black beans, cannellini beans, white beans.
- **Whole grains:** Whole wheat, brown rice, millet, barley, oats, quinoa, grits, whole wheat pasta, whole wheat tortillas, rice cakes, popcorn, etc.
- **Nuts and seeds:** Sunflower seeds, cashews, peanuts, sesame, nut butters (including peanut butter).
- **Quality Oils:** Olive, canola, grape seed, peanut, and sesame.
- **Tofu:** Tofu, soy products.
- **Herbs and spices:** Vinegar, seasonings, salt, herbs, spices.
- **Some Beverages:** Natural fruit juices, spring water, distilled water, other pure waters.

Foods to Avoid:

Conversely, there is also an agreed-upon list of foods to avoid. Keep in mind that no artificial or processed foods nor any chemicals are allowed in the Daniel Fast.

- All meats and animal products: Beef, lamb, pork, poultry, fish, etc.
- All dairy products: Milk, cheese, cream, butter, eggs, etc.
- All deep-fried foods: Potato chips, French fries, corn chips, etc.
- All solid fats: Shortening, margarine, lard, foods high in fat.
- Sugar
- All leavened bread
- Refined and processed food: Artificial flavorings, food additives, chemicals, white rice, white flour, foods that contain artificial preservatives.
- Some Beverages: Coffee, tea, herbal teas, carbonated beverages, energy drinks, and alcohol.

Several different types of fasting are also appropriate:

Soul Fast: This fast is a great option if you do not have much experience fasting food, have health issues that prevent you from fasting food, or if you wish to refocus certain areas of your life that are out of balance. For example, you might choose to stop using social media or watching television for the duration of the fast and then carefully bring that element back into your life in healthy doses at the conclusion of the fast.

Partial Fast: Abstain from certain types of food such as soft drinks, coffee, sweets, desserts, and only eat fruits or vegetables. A partial fast can also include a liquid diet during which time the individual drinks only fruit drinks and water. A partial fast could also mean that you have only water. It involves abstaining from eating any type of food in the morning and afternoon. This can either correlate to specific times of the day, such as 6:00 am to 3:00 pm, or from sunup to sundown.

Selective Fast: This type of fast involves removing certain elements from your diet. One example of a selective fast is the Daniel Fast, during which you remove meat, sweets, and bread from your diet and consume water and juice for fluids and fruits and vegetables for food.

Other kinds of Fasts: Any activity that takes time and keeps you from having time to focus on God in prayer can be sacrificed for Him. Some people are addicted to exercise and need to give that up to devote that time to God. Some have a habit of going to certain restaurants or shops. Focus on prayer during the time you would ordinarily spend with these activities.

What is Your Physical Condition?

There are some people who can't fast because of health reasons. A diabetic person should try another form of fasting. A person who takes certain medicines should consult a physician if there are any questions. Young children should do a media fast instead of a fast that involves food - older children should be guided by their parents. Any healthy adult can fast. What we call "hunger" is really appetite. We have been taught to clean our plates, and if we miss three square meals a day with snacks in between, we'll "starve."

A healthy body can go long periods of time without solid food. However, liquids, such as water and fruit juices, should be available.

Fasting can actually be beneficial to your health. Prepare for the fast by eating smaller meals than usual. During the fast, you will feel hunger pangs after half a day or so, but this is not real hunger. Your stomach has been trained through years of conditioning to give signals of hunger at certain times.

Your stomach is like a spoiled child and does not need indulgence but discipline. You are to be the master of your stomach, not its slave. If you drink coffee, tea, or soft drinks, you may experience headaches and need to slowly move toward a complete fast that could require days of preparation as you move away from caffeine.

During the fast, you may experience weakness. Simply rest and pray, and you will be fine. End your fast with a light meal of fruits and vegetables, and then you can eat more as you go.

What is your Spiritual Condition?

This is the most critical question of the fast. Preparation for a meaningful fast begins with repentance and confession. Do not expect God to violate His own will about the prayers He will hear.

- Confess any and all unconfessed sin in your heart that the Holy Spirit brings to your attention. (Psalm 66:18, Isaiah 59:2).
- Seek forgiveness from all whom you have offended and forgive all who have hurt you. (Mark 11:25, Luke 11:4, 17:3-4)
- Ask God to fill you with His Spirit so that He will sustain you. (Ephesians 5:18, 1 John 5:14-15, John 4:32-34)
- Begin your time of fasting and prayer with an expectant heart. (Hebrews 11:6)
- Hunger and thirst for righteousness. (Matthew 5:6)
- Do not underestimate spiritual opposition. (Galatians 5:16-17)
- Remember that fasting is feasting as you “feed” on God’s presence and will.

What Kind of Fast Should I Do?

As mentioned earlier, there are many different types of fasts. Prayerfully choose a fasting method that you can maintain for **14 days, from January 18th – 31st.**

Only those who have fasted for shorter periods and know how their bodies react to the process of fasting should enter into these fasts.

Schedule Suggestion

Morning: Begin the day with prayer and fasting. Read and meditate on God's Word, preferably on your knees. Invite God's Spirit to fill you with His presence. Let Him know that all you desire in life is His good pleasure. Pray for God's vision for your life, your church, country, and beyond.

Noon: Return to prayer and God's Word. Take a short prayer walk. Spend time in intercessory prayer for our church, our county, and our world. Pray for our church staff. Pray for the lost people you know.

Evening: Find a quiet place alone to be with the Lord. If others are fasting, join them in prayer. If you are married, pray with your spouse for God's will to be done in your marriage and in your family. Pray that God would be your one desire.

Conclusion

Remember to focus completely on God and use this time to enjoy His presence. Outwardly you may be doing the same things you would normally do, but inwardly you are rejoicing and praising God that He is your sustenance. You will be surprised at how fasting will draw your attention to God. As you step out in faith and try it, you'll learn how to grow in prayer and fasting. If you call attention to your fasting, people will be impressed and, as Jesus said, that will be your reward. You are fasting for greater and deeper rewards. Surrender your will to Him. We will fast and pray!

January 18

Please Remember Me

READ

Genesis 40:1-23 Genesis 35:8-9, Genesis 41:1-57

Genesis 40:14, 23, "And please remember me and do me a favor when things go well for you. Mention me to Pharaoh, so he might let me out of this place. ... Pharaoh's cupbearer, however, forgot all about Joseph, never giving him another thought."

Genesis 41:41, "Pharaoh said to Joseph, I hereby put you in charge of the entire land of Egypt."

THINK

Do you ever feel overlooked or forgotten? Maybe you wonder why your talents and abilities go unnoticed by others. Not so with God! He is the One who gifted you uniquely to fulfill His plans and purposes. Sometimes, though, our timing doesn't align with God's. Therefore, it's important to remember that His delays are NOT His denials!

So it was with Joseph. After being sold into slavery by his own brothers, he was falsely accused of a crime and thrown in prison. Gifted by God to interpret dreams, he helped two fellow inmates understand what they'd dreamt. When one was released, he asked, "Please remember me." Yet two years passed, and Joseph was still in the slammer! Finally, his former inmate remembered him and summoned him to interpret Pharaoh's dreams. In God's timing, he so impressed Pharaoh that he was put second in charge of all of Egypt!

As your Creator, God can and will use you to do amazing things. So, be patient because it'll happen at just the right time!

PRAY

Heavenly Father, Thank You for gifting me in unique ways. Help me remain patient and remember that Your delays are NOT denials. Your timing is always perfect. Amen.

January 19

Stay Focused

READ

Genesis 42:1-45:15

Genesis 42:6-7, “Now Joseph was the governor of the land, the person who sold grain to all its people. So, when Joseph’s brothers arrived, they bowed down to him with their faces to the ground. As soon as Joseph saw his brothers, he recognized them, but he pretended to be a stranger and spoke harshly to them. “Where do you come from?” he asked.”

THINK

A joyous reunion is not exactly what Joseph had in mind when seeing his brothers again. After all, they had thrown him in a pit, sold him to Egyptian traders, and told his father he was dead. Now, here they were, bowing before him just as his dreams foretold. It would seem like the perfect setup to exact revenge. But time had revealed a plan beyond his brother’s horrendous actions. Joseph realized that God had positioned him to save his family and many others.

It’s easy to focus on the transgressions against us. However, such a narrow focus is cloudy and can cause us to miss what God wants to do through us. At times, the vision for His purpose and plans for our lives may seem blurry and feel as if God is leaving us in the dark. But be encouraged! God is in control. Just hold on and fix your eyes on Him. In due time, you’ll see with 20/20 vision as God makes His plan clear.

PRAY

Heavenly Father, Thank You for reminding me that You are in control. It’s very easy to focus on my current circumstances and lose sight of Your greater plans. Help me keep my eyes fixed on You and trust that You are doing something far greater than I can see. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

January 20

Feast or Famine?

READ

Genesis 45:16-47:27

Genesis 47:23-24, Joseph said to the people, "I will provide you with seed so you can plant it in the fields. Then when you harvest it, one-fifth of your crop will belong to Pharaoh. You may keep the remaining four-fifths as seed for your fields and as food for you, your households, and your little ones."

THINK

There's a reason for the saying, "When it rains, it pours." In life, doesn't it often like feast or famine? Some years produce great windfalls, and we delight in God's blessings. Other years (Hmph... 2020, for example) life is full of storms, unfortunate situations, and turmoil. And it's in those years that good leadership is vital to help get us through.

Joseph excelled when all of Egypt suffered from a horrific famine. People, desperate for food, came to him for help. And, as we see in today's reading, he showed great wisdom — that came from knowing God — and orchestrated a plan to keep them from dying of starvation.

Like Joseph, God wants you to lead with wisdom. He wants you to press into Him for guidance. His Word promises that He gives wisdom to all who seek it without judgment. So, next time you shrug and think, "When it rains, it pours," approach His throne of grace and seek the guidance that only He can provide. You'll never be left to thirst or hunger when living out God's amazing plan.

PRAY

Dear Lord, Thank You for Your provision and promise. Amid life's storms, I choose to seek the wisdom that only comes through knowing You. Amen.

January 21

What You Intended for Harm...

READ

Genesis 47:28-50:26

Genesis 50:15, 19-20, “But now their father was dead, Joseph’s brothers became fearful. Now Joseph will ... pay us back for all the wrong we did to him.’ ... But Joseph replied, “Don’t be afraid of me ... You intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good. He brought me to this position so I could save the lives of many people.”

THINK

When bad things happen, when we’ve been horribly betrayed or hurt by others, it’s easy to dwell on the negative. But Romans 8:28 assures us that God works through all things for our good and His glory. Not some things, not at certain times, but through ALL THINGS!

Joseph was especially aware of this! His own brothers, jealous of their father’s apparent favoritism, threw Joseph in a pit and sold him into slavery. Over time, and after spending years in prison for a crime he didn’t commit, he rose to power in Egypt. God reunited his family there. But after the death of their father, his brothers thought he’d surely enact revenge. But Joseph made an eloquent statement that would be remembered throughout the annals of time: “What you intended to harm me, God meant for good!!

Let that thought resonate in your heart. Because no matter your circumstances, no matter the severity of your betrayal, remember that God is working through it for a far greater purpose and find it within you to rejoice!

PRAY

God, I know that no matter how hurt or betrayed I feel, that You will work through it for my good and Your glory. Thank You! Amen.

January 22

Hope in the Hopeless

READ

Job 1:1-4:21

▮ Job 1:22, “In all of this, Job did not sin by blaming God.”

THINK

Have you ever taken a tough exam that you thought you’d fail? Imagine a test in which you lost your wealth, family, and health. That’s the life of Job!

In today’s reading, we see Job — a great man of God, blameless and full integrity — seemingly living the perfect life. Little did he know, he was about to enter the darkest moment of his life — and he was going to become a shining example of faith. In a matter of days, he lost all of his children, health, and wealth. All he had left was a wife who told him he should curse God and die. And what did he do? He praised God! In the midst of his grief, he chose to continue to trust in God and follow Him.

Maybe you’re coming out of a trial, are in the middle of a trial, or entering a trial. Instead of turning your back on God when the pressure escalates, choose to trust that He can work everything (even trials) for His good. God was always in control, even amid Job’s hardship, and He had a master plan — even though Job couldn’t see it at the time.

Remember, even when things seem hopeless, with Christ, there’s always hope!

PRAY

Dear God, Thank You that even amid my hardships, that You are always in control. Help me trust that You have a plan for my life even when all seems lost. You are my hope when things seem hopeless. Amen.

January 23

Cry Out to God

READ

Job 5:1-7:21

Job 6:1-3, “Then Job replied: “If only my anguish could be weighed and all my misery be placed on the scales! It would surely outweigh the sand of the seas — no wonder my words have been impetuous.”

THINK

At times, you might be tempted to think you have to have it all together BEFORE approaching God in prayer or worship. He is King of kings, and to pray with an attitude of respect and honor is definitely fitting. But He is also our Heavenly Father and desires for us, His children, to cry out to Him when we are in need.

Picture a young boy outside with his father. If he finds himself in trouble or gets frustrated, there is no hesitancy — he impulsively calls out! He doesn't weigh his words carefully and evaluate what he'll say before he speaks. He trusts his father. And, depending on the situation, his father responds immediately, or he watches him struggle for a moment, knowing there is a lesson to be learned.

Whatever you are going through, call out to God — even if your words come out in a nonsensical jumble. He loves you, hears you, and will walk with you through whatever you're facing.

PRAY

My Heavenly Father, I cry out to You today. I don't understand _____, but I choose to trust in You. You are my Rock and my Salvation — nothing is impossible for You! Amen.

January 24

Don't Get Swept Away

READ

Job 8:1-11:20

▮ Job 10:17, "Your forces come against me wave upon wave."

THINK

When you're drowning in hardships, a heavy workload, or mounting debt, it seems impossible to get a foothold and rise above the waters. Sometimes life gets so complicated it's overwhelming. We look up and wonder, "Why me?"

Job was not only facing great tragedy and loss, but his friends scornfully judged him, adding insult to injury. It's one of Satan's favorite ploys. He loves to attack us from all sides. He delights in inflicting shame, betrayal, guilt, and pain through life's circumstances and other people — even our so-called "friends." And, if we let him, he will destroy us.

But despite the crashing waves of despair, God has provided a way. In a name: Jesus. He's the only One who can rescue us from death and destruction. When the storm sweeps away everything we are clinging to, the Rock of Ages still remains. He sees us through, and we WILL overcome.

PRAY

Lord, Help me trust You through the storms of life. It's not about my comfort but my living testimony. You are God and have a greater purpose. Thank You for being my God and my Rock. Amen.

January 25

In His Hands

READ

Job 12:1-14:22

Job 12:10, *"In His hand is the life of every creature and the breath of all mankind."*

THINK

Have you ever felt like the world was spiraling out of control? Made a plan only to be derailed by unforeseen circumstances? Been blindsided by betrayal, tragedy, or unexpected challenges?

Often, we act as though a white-knuckled grip on our lives will bring us safety and security. We put our trust in money and man-made institutions and then wonder why we're constantly crippled with worry and fear of the future.

We weren't made to shoulder the weight of all life's problems on our own! We were created to be vessels for God's purpose — to enjoy Him, love Him, and share Him with others. We can trust God to take the reins because, in reality, He is already in control. He has our best interest at heart, and He is the only One powerful enough to hold the world's future in His hands. He cares for us and will accomplish His will, no matter the circumstances!

PRAY

Dear Lord, Thank You for being in control. I accept my life's difficulties, knowing You will use them to accomplish Your purpose. I give my life, troubles, and worries all to You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

January 26

Healing Words

READ

Job 15:1-18:21

Job 17:10, “As for all of you, come back with a better argument, though I still won’t find a wise man among you.”

THINK

If you’ve ever watched Charlie Brown, you may recall hearing the teacher say, “Wah, wah, wah, wah, wah.” It’s like the sound we hear when we’re seeking words of comfort, but instead, we receive platitudes or condemnation for perceived transgressions. Perhaps it’s what Job heard, too, as his “friends” suggested that unconfessed wrongdoings were the source of his hardships. These must have been who the writer of Proverbs spoke of in Proverbs 12:18 when he wrote, “The words of the reckless pierce like swords, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.”

Life is challenging. We look for answers to life’s issues everywhere. But we must seek the words of the wise if we hope to find true healing. Words that remind us that God, our Creator, sees us, hears us, loves us, and cares for us deeply. Remind someone of that truth today. Perhaps it will bring healing to them also.

PRAY

Heavenly Father, Thank You for Your unconditional love, grace, and mercy. Lead me to those who can remind me of Your unfailing faithfulness and help me to do the same for others. Let my words bring healing to someone else’s life. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

January 27

Think Outside the Box

READ

Job 19:1-21:34

Job 19:28-29, "How dare you go on persecuting me, saying, "It's his own fault"? You should fear judgment, for your attitude deserves punishment. Then you will know there is indeed a judgment."

Job 21:34, "How can your empty cliches comfort me? All your explanations are lies!"

THINK

Why do bad things happen to good people? The answer to this quintessential question: Life isn't fair! This is the argument Job was having with his friends. They believed God only brought down wrath on the wicked. Therefore, Job must have done something to deserve such dire circumstances. But Job, in his weakened state, stood firm and said, Your argument doesn't fit the facts!" And the fact is, good things also happen to bad people!

God shines grace on the righteous and unrighteous alike because grace isn't earned; it's a gift. So, Job's friends' theology didn't square with the truth. They, like so many of us today, put God in a box. Even when we think we have a clear understanding of God, we can't predict His actions.

It's time to think outside the box. Trying to rationalize God's actions is futile. Instead, get to know God's heart so that you can trust Him even when you don't understand His actions.

PRAY

God, You are a limitless God! Your ways are higher than mine, and I stand in awe of Your power. But even more importantly, I trust You. Give me the discernment to look beyond my circumstances toward greater understanding, acceptance, and intimacy with You. Amen.

January 28

The Right **THEY**

READ

Job 22:1-25:6

Job 23:11-12, "For I have stayed on God's paths; I have followed His ways and not turned aside. I have not departed from His commands, but have treasured His words more than daily food."

THINK

Do you have people in your life who uplift, encourage, and help strengthen your relationship with God? Or, is your life filled with people who constantly tear you down, discourage you, and keep you from growing closer to God?

Job was in the middle of fighting human judgment versus what he knew to be true about God. Job's "friends" were trying to lead him astray instead of leading him to God. These "friends" thought Job was deserving of his circumstances. But in this pivotal time in his life, he didn't let their accusations turn him against God. Instead, he ultimately went to the One who knew everything about him.

Who are your friends? Take a "friend-ven-tory" and see if you have the right kind of "THEY" in your life. Are they Tough, Honest, Encouraging, and Yielded to Christ? If not, ask God to provide the right people in your life!

PRAY

Dear God, Even amid my trials, help me to seek out the right kind of people in my life. I pray that THEY help lead me closer to You and point me to Your truth. Amen.

January 29

Where Does Understanding Dwell?

READ

Job 26:1-29:25

Job 28:20,23-24, “Where then does wisdom come from? Where does understanding dwell? God understands the way to it and He alone knows where it dwells, for He views the ends of the earth and sees everything under the heavens.”

THINK

When faced with hardship, we often ask every question imaginable. But, ultimately, we end at “Why?” We long for an audible voice, a message in the sky, a clear sign that will lead us to the answers we long for. But wisdom and understanding are often elusive as we run through options, possibilities, and our own limited reasoning.

God doesn’t always tell us why, but He is always trustworthy. In Job’s case, God allowed hardship to come. Job wasn’t privy to the big picture — nor did he know the blessings to come — but he chose to trust God. Despite everything he’d lost and endured, he trusted in who he knew God to be.

What are you struggling with understanding today? What big picture question are you uncertain about and searching for answers to? Whatever it is, rely on God’s wisdom and trust that He is at work in your life — even though the solution is beyond your grasp!

PRAY

Lord, Help me recognize true wisdom comes from You, alone. Please give me discernment and understanding today, that my life and my actions may be a LIGHT that brings You glory. Amen.

January 30

God Hears

READ

Job 30:1-40

▮ Job 30:20, *“I cry out to you, God, but you do not answer.”*

THINK

Depression can hit like a ton of bricks. Negative thoughts dominate your mind, and the downward spiral intensifies into utter darkness. In today’s reading, despair enveloped Job and came over him like a thick fog. All he saw was hopelessness.

When you’re in a pit of despair, you feel miserable. Your cry to God may seem like it’s muffled in the shadows and whisked away by the wind. You may feel all alone, curled up in the dark corners of your mind. But even if you can’t hear His voice or feel His presence, He is still there.

If you pray and speak the languishing words of your broken heart, He listens. When you come before Him and speak the raw truth of your brokenness, something supernatural happens. He speaks through the Holy Spirit within you, and hope returns.

Circumstances may not change instantly, and you may still face your giants, but the Holy Spirit will empower you not only to carry on but to prevail.

PRAY

Lord, Open my ears so I can hear Your voice. Keep me teachable so I may grow closer to You. Restore the abundant hope of Jesus in me and heal my broken spirit. Amen.

January 31

Age Before Wisdom?

READ

Job 32:1-34:37

Job 32:8, “But it is the spirit in a person, the breath of the Almighty, that gives them understanding.”

THINK

Some people think wisdom only comes with age. “The older I get, the wiser I am,” right? It seems to make sense, too; after all, the more you’ve lived, the more you’ve learned. But the Bible tells us true wisdom comes from God alone, not the passage of time.

The Spirit compelled Elihu to speak. Despite being the youngest and least educated person there, a word of wisdom was put on his heart to remind Job that God is greater. We can’t accuse Him of treating us “unfairly,” for He offers a redemption we don’t deserve and a grace we could never earn.

Elihu spoke when prompted by the Spirit. Will you do the same? God is not limited by the physical age of those He chooses to speak through. All He requires is an open heart and a willingness to obey His commands.

PRAY

Lord, I ask for Your wisdom and guidance. May Your Spirit place words on my heart that they might overflow to others. Amen.



echo
C H U R C H
A L A S K A