

FASTING GUIDE

Types of Fasting in the Bible



Regular Fast

Traditionally, a regular fast means refraining from eating all food. Most people still drink water or juice during a regular fast.



Partial Fast

This type of fast generally refers to omitting a specific meal from your diet or refraining from certain types of foods.

*In **Daniel 1:12**, they restricted their diet to vegetables and water: "Please test your servants for ten days: Give us nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink."*



Liquid Fast

This is a type of partial fast that eliminates solid food, but allows for water, juice and in some cases, broth.



Full or Complete Fast

These fasts are absolute - no food and no drink.

*Esther called for this type of fast in **Esther 4:15-16**: "Then Esther sent this reply to Mordecai: 'Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my maids will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish.'"*



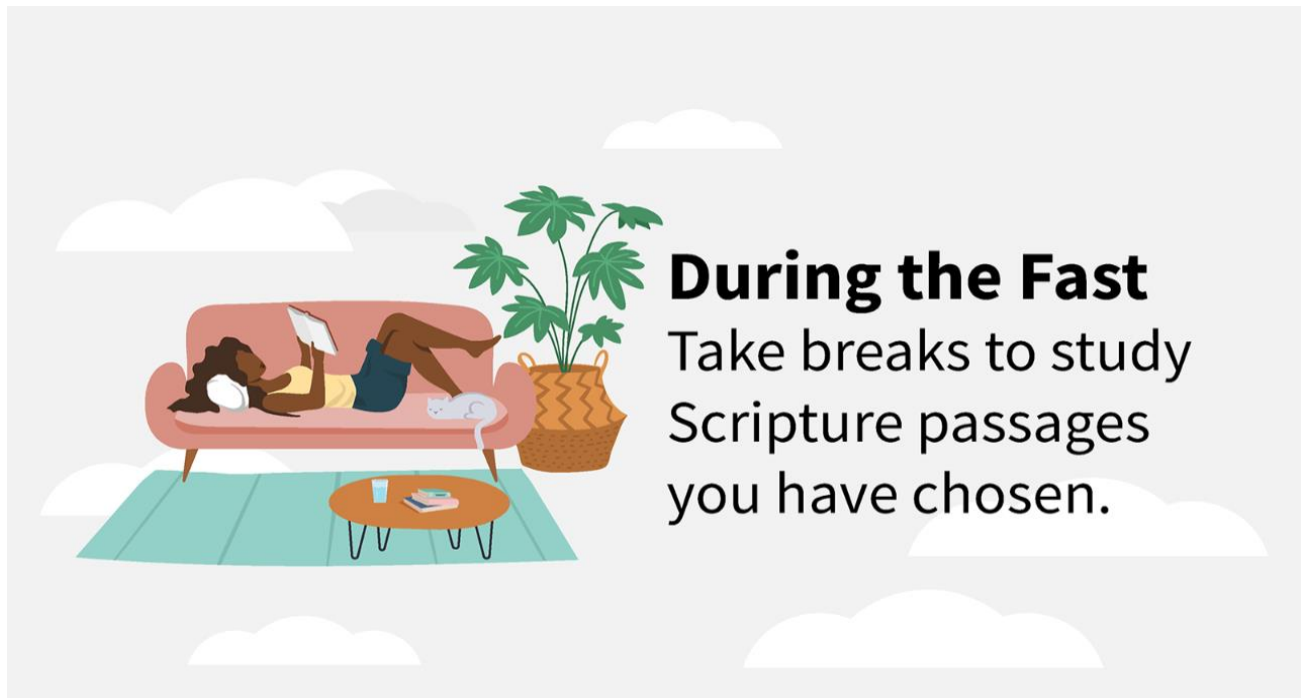


The normal fast involves abstaining from all forms of food, but not from water, and commonly lasts 24 hours, from sunrise to sunrise. If you are fasting for the first time, you might be missing a meal or two. Over time, you can build up to a full day or more.

Begin by refraining from solid food, but drink liquids. Water is the best, since soft drinks are not good for the digestive system, and coffee and tea stimulate the nervous system. Before beginning a fast, it is common to experience headaches as the body withdraws from caffeine.

When planning, you should prepare mentally and physically by cutting down on food intake before the actual fast, taking on a vegetarian diet to control cravings for food. Reduce your intake of beverages like coffee, tea and soft drinks as well.

Drink plenty of water. (This is always a good idea - whether you're fasting or not!)



During the Fast
Take breaks to study
Scripture passages
you have chosen.

During your fast, set aside specific and significant time to worship and seek God in prayer. Plan ahead so your time can be unhurried, and you can enjoy your time with the Lord. Many people begin this time by repenting of any sins the Holy Spirit brings to mind and asking God for forgiveness. This is essential to ensure that sin is not hindering your communication with God.

Then plan time to make your request known to God and to seek His will. Take breaks to study scripture passages you have chosen. Don't rush your time with God. Take time to listen. Keep a notebook and pen nearby to record the ideas, insights, directions, and instructions He impresses on your mind. When you turn down the "noise around you" by fasting, you can more easily hear God.

Continue to drink plenty of water. Apple or watermelon juice is a great morale booster. Sleep early - the first few days are usually the most challenging.



Ending the Fast

If you plan to fast only a day or two at a time, it is best to end the fast with a small glass of fruit juice as your first meal.

Breaking the fast may require as much discipline as beginning it. During the fast, your stomach contracts and your body's digestive and elimination systems rest. The longer you fast, the more time the digestive organs need to reactivate before functioning at full speed.

If you plan to fast only a day or two at a time, it is best to end the fast with a small glass of fruit juice as your first meal. Gradually introduce small amounts of easily digestible foods such as yogurt, soup, fresh fruit, and cooked vegetables.

If your fast lasts longer than a few days, you should continue with juices for a day or more before gradually introducing more substantial foods like yogurt, soup, and fruit. Be sure you introduce new foods in small quantities and that you chew it well. You should stop eating at the slightest sensation of fullness.

If fasting only a few days at a time, ending the fast should be easier.

What If You Fail at Fasting?



Bill Bright put it this way: It takes time to build your spiritual fasting muscles. If you fail to make it through your first fast, do not be discouraged. You may have tried to fast too long the first time, or you may need to strengthen your understanding and resolve. Keep trying until you do succeed. God will honor you for your faithfulness.

Conclusion

Fasting is a way God's people have humbled themselves before Him for more than three thousand years! Jesus, David, and many other followers of our God have gone without food for a little while to worship and pray to the one who supplies all our needs.

Praise God: the one who hears and answers our prayers!