

The Primary Focus of the Daniel Fast

As we continue the Daniel Fast (Dan 10:1-3), it is easy to focus on the food we're giving up or the activities we have surrendered. It's easy to focus on our abstinence and not on the basic purpose for which we are fasting. Let's remember that God is not impressed just because we stop eating altogether or we stop eating certain foods, even if we do it for our health. God is not impressed with the outward actions of our fast. The secret of any fast is not what we keep from entering the stomach, but what comes out of the heart. God is primarily concerned with our inner person, not necessarily our outer body.

In Mark 9:29, Jesus described the spiritual energy (prayer and fasting) needed to remove spiritual barriers: "This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting." Prayer and fasting works, Jesus tells us it does! So, we must give ourselves completely to prayer and to fasting, as we believe in God for growth, change, and intervention in our lives. We not only pray, we also fast; we not only fast, we also pray. The commitment of our outer body to fasting reflects our inner commitment to prayer. "Prayer and fasting" in this verse emphasizes continuous action. Which means we should fast more than once, or make fasting a regular practice, as a part of our "spiritual energy." Remember what Jesus said, "when thou fastest,"(Matthew 6:17) this indicates we can decide to fast at any time. There may be times when we need direction on what to do, we can fast and pray. We may encounter difficult challenges, of various kinds, that require additional insight from The Lord; we can not only pray, but fast too. During our Daniel Fast, our decision of what we eat or what we withhold (fast) will have more influence on our prayer life than most other spiritual exercises. If we're lacking respect for the fast, we're likely to lack respect for praying, reading and meditating on Scripture. Our outer determination of what we are willing to give up (fast) is a great measuring stick of our spiritual desire and hunger for The Lord.

In Luke 9:23, Jesus says, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." This involves turning to The Lord and putting Him first in our lives, and then turning away from anything that keeps us from following Him. There are three words in this verse that should influence our fasting. First, the word "deny" means that we should get rid of anything that hinders our relationship with The Lord. We must get off the throne of our hearts, and allow the Holy Spirit to sit there and control what we eat, drink, and especially how we pray. In Romans 8:26 the Word says, "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." The second word is "daily." Following Jesus during our 21 day fast must be total dedication to The Lord during the entire fasting period, which ends February 5th at 6 o'clock pm. Remember, we started the fast last

Sunday, January 15th at 6 o'clock pm. The third word is "follow." Just as Jesus fasted (Luke 4:1-14) in preparation for His spiritual work, so must we follow His example with our Daniel Fast.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, we continue to learn how to live in this natural world. We have a soul, and we live in a physical body. We are in the world, but we're not of the world. We ask You to sanctify us in every way, and may our whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless during our time of prayer and fasting. Lord, we are called into this fast to seek and dedicate ourselves, not only for a 21day period, but for an eternity. We ask that our time of prayer and fasting has a powerful impact upon us, so much so that we're changed inwardly to be even more committed to You, Your Word and Your ways. We simply ask that You bless us, O Lord, bless us indeed. Enlarge our spiritual territory, keep Your hand upon us, and keep us from evil, that it may not grieve us! Bless us and keep us, Heavenly Father, make your face shine upon us and give us hearts that will seek first Your Kingdom.

Lord, we are becoming spirit-conscious. We listen to the voice of Your Spirit and will obey Your instructions. We trust in You, Lord, with all our heart and lean not to our own understanding. In all of our ways we acknowledge You, and believe You will direct our paths. We walk in the light of Thy Word, Heavenly Father, depending on The Holy Spirit to be our Counselor, our Comforter, our Guide and Teacher. Your Word shall not depart out of mouths. We have been redeemed and we will continue to say so! We will meditate on Your Word day and night. Therefore, we will make our way prosperous, and we will have good success, not only during our fast, but also in life. We are doers of The Word and we put Your Word first.

In Jesus name!! AMEN!!!

PRAYER BASED ON THE FOLLOWING SCRIPTURE REFERENCES:	
1 Thessalonians 5: 23, 24	I John 4:12
John 16:13	I John 2:20
Proverbs 20:27	Romans 8:1, 14-16
Romans 12:1	Proverbs 3: 5-6
Psalms 119:105	Psalms 107:2
Ephesians 5:18	Joshua 1:8
Isaiah 48:7	James 1:22
Ephesians 1:18	Matthew 6:33

Scripture Readings for the Fast
(Second Week)

Sunday - Proverbs Chapters 8 and 23
Monday - Proverbs Chapters 9 and 24
Tuesday - Proverbs Chapters 10 and 25
Wednesday - Proverbs Chapters 11 and 26
Thursday - Proverbs Chapters 12 and 27
Friday - Proverbs Chapters 13 and 28
Saturday - Proverbs Chapters 14 and 29

If you have the Bible App on your phone, listen and read along. Also, use different translations (KJV, NIV, NASB, etc....)

Praying for each of you as we move into our second week. We are not eating bread, desserts, crackers, or any bread product. Again, thank you and GOD BLESS!!

Pastor Robinson