



THE
daniel
fast

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daniel
fast

*feed your soul, strengthen your spirit,
and renew your body*

susan gregory



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The Daniel Fast: Feed Your Soul, Strengthen Your Spirit, and Renew Your Body

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Dedication

I DEDICATE THIS BOOK to the worldwide Daniel Fast community who came together on the Daniel Fast blog and Web site. You have led me to deep and powerful truths about our Kingdom of God life as I researched answers to your questions and pondered your comments. You have encouraged me with your kind letters and messages of support. You have joined me with your virtual presence and financial support as we ministered to the men, women, and children in southern Africa. And you have taken my hand as we work together to let others know about the precious and powerful gifts available to the children of God through prayer and fasting.

I am honored to be a member of this community with you. Thank you, dear friends. While I can't list your individual names here, please know that I am truly grateful to you for making this book possible . . . I dedicate it to you. May the peace of Christ continue to overtake every part of your lives.

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Before You Begin

THE DANIEL FAST includes a very healthy eating plan. However, please allow the Great Physician to work hand in hand with your earthly physician. Any time you enter into a significant change to your diet and exercise routines, it's a good idea to check with your health professional for his or her input.

Fasting should never harm the body. If you have special dietary needs—if you are pregnant or nursing, if you have a chronic illness such as cancer or diabetes, if you are a young person who is still growing or an athlete who expends more than typical amounts of energy on a regular basis—contact your health professional and modify the Daniel Fast eating plan in a way that is appropriate to meet your health needs.

Introduction

BE BLESSED, DEAR CHILD of the Most High God! You are about to enter into an exciting, life-changing spiritual adventure. Fasting is a powerful spiritual discipline designed by our Creator to draw us closer to Him, and the Daniel Fast is an experience for your whole person: body, soul, and spirit.

As I write these words, I am more convinced than ever that God has anointed the Daniel Fast to strengthen and empower His children for this period in the church's history. At a time when world systems are shaking, obesity and disease are at an all-time high, and the power of darkness seems stronger each day, I have seen miracles happen when people turn their hearts to God and consecrate themselves for a period of prayer and fasting.

The Bible instructs us to measure the quality of things by their fruit. Clearly, the Daniel Fast bears much good fruit as it changes lives toward goodness, faith, and health. I receive thousands of e-mails and messages a year from people whose lives have been forever altered during their Daniel Fast. And that's why I am so excited about the renewal of this biblical discipline that I believe is powered by the Holy Spirit and sanctioned by God.

Throughout Scripture, we find numerous men and women entering into times of fasting: Job, Jonah, Esther, Isaiah, David, Jeremiah, Daniel, Joel, John the Baptist, Jesus, Matthew, Mark,

Luke, John, and Paul. Fasting is interwoven throughout the Bible as a normal and acceptable practice in our faith. It's not a rule born out of church doctrine or tradition. Rather, as many men and women are discovering today, fasting is a tool created by the Father to help bring His children into closer communication and relationship with Him.

Keep in mind, fasting is about food. It's about restricting all or some foods for a spiritual purpose. While the origins of fasting are not definite, we do know that God ordered specific times when His people were not to eat certain foods. When God initiated the Passover—or the Feast of Unleavened Bread—as recounted in Exodus 12, He was very specific about the foods that should and should not be eaten. When Moses met with God on Mount Sinai (see Exodus 34), he ate no food and drank no water for forty days.

So just what is the Daniel Fast? In the first chapter of the book of Daniel, we learn of the young prophet's tensions over the differences between the Babylonian customs and his Jewish ways, and it had to do with food. Daniel refused to defile the body that he had set apart for the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The food offered to him—meat and wine that had been dedicated to the Babylonian false gods—wouldn't do. So Daniel and his companions entered a partial fast (restricting food for a spiritual purpose) so they could remain true to their God.

Throughout the rest of the Bible, we find stories of men and women of God who fasted as part of their spiritual discipline. And today, preachers and Bible teachers still profess the need for fasting. But rare is the occasion when someone offers step-by-step instructions for how to do it.

I believe that's the ministry God has given me. After communicating with thousands of men, women, and teens about the Daniel Fast, I've discovered that what people want most is instructions. They don't just want to know *about* fasting, they also want to know *how to fast*. The purpose of this book is to guide you toward a successful Daniel Fast. I want you to learn how to fast so you can real-

ize the great benefits this biblical discipline offers. In these pages you'll learn:

1. How fasting can help you draw closer to God
2. What questions to ask before embarking on an extended fast
3. How to establish a purpose for your fast
4. How to prepare for a Daniel Fast that will enrich your body, soul, and spirit
5. About the dietary restrictions in the Daniel Fast
6. How to prepare nutritious meals that comply with the Daniel Fast (including more than enough recipes for breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks on a twenty-one-day Daniel Fast)
7. What it means to walk in the Spirit as He is in the Spirit and how to make this choice for your own day-to-day life
8. How to begin to revamp your life and claim your citizenship in the Kingdom of God
9. How to complete a Daniel Fast and continue the new habits you've formed to make a positive difference in your life
10. How to incorporate prayer and fasting in your life as an effective tool for your spiritual growth

As you read these words, I hope you sense a stirring of great anticipation and excitement inside. You are about to embark on a spiritual encounter that will open doors of understanding, growth, and faith like you have never known. In the following chapters, I'm going to show you how to have a successful and effective fasting experience that will strengthen your personal relationship with Christ.

When you finish this book, you will be completely equipped for

your Daniel Fast. And if you have a question that is not addressed or adequately answered here, I will show you how to find what you need. My mission is to do all I can to help you and other members of the body of Christ experience a successful Daniel Fast.

So get ready to learn about the Daniel Fast and see how it can serve you as you continue on your quest to seek the Kingdom of God, develop your faith, and grow in the love and knowledge of our amazing Father.

Be blessed in all you do.

Susan Gregory
The Daniel Fast Blogger
Susan@Daniel-Fast.com

*Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely;
and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved
blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

—I THESSALONIANS 5:23

P A R T O N E



Sometimes you are so hungry, the only
way to be fed is to fast.

CHAPTER 1

Who Is the Daniel Fast Blogger?

FIRST OF ALL, I'm not a preacher or a Bible teacher or a huge ministry leader. I am an ordinary woman whose life has been dramatically changed by stepping into a deeply personal day-to-day relationship with Jesus Christ. I've learned from my own experience and the experiences of others that we have a choice about how to live our lives. Jesus instructs us to seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness (His way of doing things). God told His people that He has set before us life and death, blessings and curses, and He instructs us to choose life so that both we and our descendants may live. The choice is ours. And it's a choice with benefits that go beyond spending eternity with God. Thankfully, we can choose to have a dynamic, powerful, and purposeful life right here on earth and accomplish great things for God.

Every morning I make the choice to live a faith-driven life. I try to make every word I say and every action I take line up with the Word of God. Do I sound radical? Well, maybe I am, compared to a lot of people. I am radically alive with Christ, and the more

I focus my thoughts, activities, resources, and future on Him, the more exciting and at peace my life becomes.

I accepted Christ as a young woman and spent the next several decades participating in the typical activities of family, work, church, and social life. There were some great ups with family, motherhood, friendships, and achievements. And there were also some really tough downs, including an unwanted divorce and a long-term chronic illness. But I made it through those times with my mind and body still intact.

However, it wasn't until 2007 that I really started learning what living a life of faith is about. I was going through some really tough life experiences. It was the very beginning of the recession. My real estate investing business collapsed under the mortgage industry debacle and my finances were in shambles. I had no idea what I was going to do to even survive! Perhaps you've gone through that dark wilderness where hope seems so far away and relief seems out of sight. The pressure was on, and I felt utterly alone.

But I wasn't alone. I soon discovered the Bible's truth that Jesus will never leave us and will never forsake us. I learned that when we draw near to God He will draw near to us. I made a quality decision to believe everything in the Bible. I decided in advance that if doubt or fear reared their ugly heads, those would serve as signals that I needed to pursue more of the love and knowledge of Christ. Oh, He is so faithful! I set my mind on trusting God and His Word. I would get up every morning and spend hours studying faith and prayer. I wrote in my journal. I read books by well-respected and proven Bible teachers and preachers, spent hours talking with my Father, and proclaimed the truths and promises He made to His children.

It didn't happen overnight. It was like a big ship turning around—degree by degree, my doubt turned into faith and my fear turned into hope. I truly knew what it felt like to have the joy of the Lord as my strength. And through this process, my Father led me out of the wilderness and into His glorious light. The bro-

ken areas of my life began to heal, and as I purposed to build every part of my life on the Word of God, I entered into a life of stability, peace, and rest like I had never known before.

Part of this process was the Lord returning me to Christian writing. One day I was sitting on the couch in my living room. I wasn't meditating or praying or doing anything very "spiritual." I was just sitting. That's when I heard God's still, small voice in my spirit, *Start writing about the Daniel Fast.*

That seemed like an interesting idea. I had practiced fasting for many years and was actually preparing to start a twenty-one-day Daniel Fast at the beginning of the New Year, which was just a couple of weeks away. I also had experience as a writer, although I had not written professionally for more than ten years. I searched the Internet and learned there wasn't a lot of information available about the Daniel Fast. Maybe there were others who needed to know more about this fast, and maybe I could help meet that need.

I knew from my own experience that many people begin the New Year with prayer and fasting. Since the start date was fast approaching, I had to get the information out quickly. I decided to write a blog titled "The Daniel Fast."¹ Soon I had pages and pages of good information posted about the Daniel Fast, and it didn't take long until people started entering comments and asking questions on the blog. I replied to each one, and the comments and questions increased as the New Year approached.

After a few days, I quickly saw that the number one need of the people visiting the blog was recipes. So I scoured through my own recipe collection and began to adjust some to fit the Daniel Fast guidelines and make them available on my blog. This is when I could see God's plan unfold. Visitors to the blog were ecstatic to have the information they needed for a successful Daniel Fast,

“ I began this fast fourteen days ago and all is well. I feel good spiritually, emotionally, and physically, plus I have lost ten pounds!
—Corby ”

and I was launched into a whole new line of work. I could see that my loving Father had led me back into Christian writing for a sure purpose. Plus—and this is the big part—what I thought was merely a writing assignment, God meant for a lay ministry where I would meet the growing needs of His people.

Today, the blog has received more than 1.5 million hits, and I've been able to minister to thousands of men, women, and young people. I call myself the Daniel Fast blogger, but in reality, the title doesn't matter. I have experienced the grace of God in my life. My greatest ministry desire is to help men, women, and young people to learn to trust God and His Word more than anything.

Through this process, God has opened my heart to brothers and sisters in the body of Christ as they search for answers and practical instructions about this fasting practice. My great blessing is to serve God by serving His people. Many of the letters I receive from people bring me to tears as they share their victories during their Daniel Fasts. People who have never been successful at dieting have found victory as they focus on Christ and develop the fruit of the Spirit of self-control. I praise God with men and women who experience restored relationships with their spouses, parents, or children. Many write about answered prayer and miracles. And I especially love the testimonies about how people have learned for the first time to have an intimate and loving relationship with Christ.

Our God is so good, and He so wants His children to trust in Him and follow His ways so we can have the good life He planned for us. My number one goal is to help people experience a successful Daniel Fast so they can grow in the love and knowledge of our amazing Father and experience the love of Christ in new and remarkable ways.

The Bible teaches in James 4:8, "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you." Fasting puts us in a position to set aside a particular time when we can focus our attention on God and draw near to Him. In that nearness is the blessing and the power. In that

nearness we experience God's presence and hear from Him. In that nearness we grow, work our faith muscles, and examine our hearts. The Daniel Fast offers you a Spirit-led opportunity to feed your soul, strengthen your spirit, and renew your body.

I am immeasurably thankful to the Lord for giving me this ministry, and with that blessing I truly want to be a blessing to others. I am honored that men and women are served with the information I share about the Daniel Fast. And I am thankful to you for entrusting me with the time and resources that you have invested in this book.

Please feel free to e-mail me at Susan@Daniel-Fast.com if you have questions that are not answered in these pages.

Daniel Fast Recipes

Dried Fruit and Almond Granola

Granola is a perfect breakfast choice on the Daniel Fast. But most granola found in supermarkets includes sweeteners or other ingredients not included on the Daniel Fast. So making a big batch of this easy (and very affordable) recipe is a smart move. Plus it's so nutritious and filling.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups rolled oats
 - ½ cup shredded coconut
 - ½ cup sliced almonds
 - 3 tablespoons vegetable oil (such as canola oil)
 - ½ cup chopped dried fruit (apples, figs, apricots, etc.)
 - ½ cup raisins
1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
 2. Combine oats, coconut, and almonds in a large baking dish. Drizzle with oil and toss until well blended. Bake in preheated oven for 15–20 minutes, tossing every 5 minutes, until lightly toasted.
 3. Allow mixture to cool slightly before mixing in dried fruit and raisins.
 4. Store in airtight container and serve with soy milk, fresh fruit, and/or fruit juice.

Makes 4 cups (about 8 servings)

Apple Pie Oatmeal

This recipe is a tasty way to prepare and serve a great meal for yourself and your family. Rolled oats are an excellent food choice for breakfast because they provide valuable protein, stave off hunger for a long period of time, and provide beneficial fiber to do good work in your body!

INGREDIENTS

- 4 cups water
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2 cups rolled oats
- ½ teaspoon Apple Pie Spice (see recipe below)
- ¼ cup chopped apple

1. Bring water to a boil in medium saucepan over medium-high heat. Add salt and when dissolved, stir in oats and Apple Pie Spice. Reduce heat and continue to cook for 4 minutes.
2. Add chopped apple and cook for 1–2 more minutes until oats are cooked.
3. Serve in individual bowls with unsweetened soy milk, if desired.

Makes 4 servings

Apple Pie Spice

- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ⅛ teaspoon ground allspice
- ⅛ teaspoon ground cardamom

Combine all ingredients. If making a larger batch, store in an airtight container. Use with Apple Pie Oatmeal or other recipes that call for Apple Pie Spice.

Banana Wheat Bran Cereal

When I was growing up, my father was often the one who prepared school-morning breakfasts. The most common fare was hot oatmeal and Zoom, a whole wheat cereal made by Krusteaz, a division of Continental Mills. Little did I know that good ole Dad was serving such healthy meals. Wheat bran is packed with fiber and healthy nutrients. Plus the cereal is perfect for Daniel Fast breakfasts. This recipe adds bananas, but you can be creative and add other fruits to suit your taste.

Daniel Fast Menus

SAMPLE MENUS

| Day | Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner | Snack |
|-----|--|---|---|--|
| 1 | Muesli with soy milk Sliced fruit | Steamed vegetables with brown rice Apple | Susan's Vegetarian Chili Green salad Orange slices | Hummus with vegetable plate |
| 2 | Drew's Breakfast Burritos | Susan's Vegetarian Chili Carrot and celery sticks | Bean Burgers with Black Bean and Mango Salsa Green salad Apple slices | Fruit plate Almonds |
| 3 | Apple Pie Oatmeal with soy milk Apple slices | Plentiful Vegetable Soup Salad greens with vinaigrette | Tex-Mex Chili Pot Red, Black, and Yellow Delight Salad Fruit plate | White Bean Dip with carrots and celery |

Twenty-One-Day Daniel Fast Devotional

STUDIES INDICATE that there are 2.1 billion Christians on the earth today. That's a lot of people! Christianity is the largest of all the religions in the world and includes more than 20,800 denominations. That's a lot of churches! But I wonder how many of the individuals who call themselves Christians would also consider themselves to be *disciples* of Jesus Christ.

Why the distinction? Many people attend church; let's call them "church attendees." But a disciple is something different. A disciple of Christ is a student who learns and follows the Master's teachings and lives according to His way. When you follow Christ, it doesn't mean that you will consider or obey selected parts of His teaching and ignore others. No, a disciple takes His teaching as truth in its entirety and then shapes his or her life according to those truths.

I can say without wavering or qualification that I am a Christian; it's my label. But the mantle that covers me is that I am a

disciple of Jesus Christ. It is Jesus and His teachings that shape my life, determine my future, and serve as the foundation on which I stand in all things.

As a disciple, I learn and study God's Word so I can discover more about how I am to live, serve, and behave. It's a lifelong process with immeasurable treasures of joy, knowledge, peace, and supernatural power.

My hope is that you, too, can call yourself a disciple of Jesus Christ. My prayer is that the following devotions stir up your faith and strengthen your walk with your Father as you experience the Daniel Fast. And for this reason I do not cease to pray for you . . .

And to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.

—COLOSSIANS 1:9-18

DAY 1

Firstfruits Offering

The best of all firstfruits of any kind, and every sacrifice of any kind from all your sacrifices, shall be the priest's; also you shall give to the priest the first of your ground meal, to cause a blessing to rest on your house. —EZEKIEL 44:30

Today is the first day of your fast. You are stepping into a different experience of feeding your soul, strengthening your spirit, and renewing your body. By entering into this special period of time, you are consecrating yourself (setting yourself apart) to focus more intently on the Lord and His ways.

We don't hear much about firstfruit offerings anymore. But they were a customary part of life for Old Testament believers, and there are many ways to make firstfruit offerings today. In Ezekiel 44:30, we see that the firstfruit is for the priest. So on this first day of consecrated prayer and fasting, you can say to Jesus, your High Priest, "Lord, today I give You the first of me. I put You first in my life."

We are also asked to give a firstfruits offering of our resources, just as God instructed the Israelites to do with their produce. The promised reward was "a blessing to rest on your house." You will recall that both Cain and Abel gave offerings to the Lord. Abel gave the firstborn of his flock and it pleased the Lord. But Cain's heart was not right before the Lord. Scholars conclude that his offering was not the best he had to offer, but rather leftovers. God rejected this offering.

The Lord doesn't want our spare time or our leftover efforts. He wants to be first in our lives. He wants the best of us. Throughout Scripture we are commanded to put God first. Exodus 20:5 says, "You shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God." And in Matthew 6:33, "But

seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”

When we put God first in our lives, when He is the first and last authority in all that we do, then we are pleasing to the Lord and we have access to all He has for us. Psalm 103:1-2 says it beautifully: “Bless the LORD, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name! Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.”

Does God want this position of priority because He craves our attention or needs our admiration? Maybe in part. I believe the underlying reason that God wants us to put Him first in our lives is because of the amazing, powerful, and immeasurable love He has for each one of us. He wants to pour out His mercy, grace, goodness, wisdom, and blessing over us in abundance. He wants us to be all He created us to be so we can experience a marvelous life and accomplish the good works He has already assigned to us.

The greatness He has planned for each of us is so enormous that the only way it can be fully realized is for us to stay close to Him. Likewise, His love and care are so deep and so broad and He desires to have an intimate and loving relationship with each of us that we must be close to Him to share in that bond. Finally, we know that our adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. His goal is to steal, kill, and destroy us, and we need the protection and counsel of our Father and His forces, available to defend us and realize the victory.

Do you hear the Holy Spirit’s still, small voice beckoning you to come closer? Is God calling you to make adjustments in your life so that He is first in every area? Your period of prayer and fasting is a perfect time to hear the Lord and discover how much He desires you and every aspect of your life. Open your heart to Him and seek His wisdom and council. He will instruct you and guide you as you draw closer to Him and His ways. His arms are open wide, so respond to His warm and gracious invitation and come.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. *Our whole family is going to go on the Daniel Fast. Do think this is a healthy eating plan for children? My oldest is six years old.*

A. According to Jewish law, children are not responsible for their actions until they reach “the age of majority,” generally thirteen years for boys and twelve for girls. At this time, children start to bear their own responsibility for Jewish ritual law, tradition, and ethics and are privileged to participate in all areas of Jewish community life. Prior to this, the child’s parents hold the responsibility for the child’s adherence to Jewish law and tradition. Health and growth issues also must be considered for pre-teen children. The main thing you want to teach your children about fasting is the fact that it’s part of our spiritual discipline. I think you will be most effective with your children if you ask them which foods they would like to restrict so they can experience the impact of the fast.

Acknowledgments

I WANT TO THANK the members of my “life support team” who have invested in and stood alongside me over the years. I am grateful to you and for you! While this list is not exhaustive, I do want to recognize Erin Bishop, Lynn Chittenden, Mick Fleming, Nole Ann Horsey, Sid Kaplan, Michael Main, Tonia Pugel, Lili Salas, Pastors David and Linda Saltzman and Ellensburg Foursquare Church, Pastor Abbie Thela (my little brother-in-love), Fr. Paul Waldie, OMI (a living testimony of Christian love), and my dear children, grandchildren, and family.

This book would likely be sitting on the hard drive of my computer if it wasn't for Ann Spangler, whose wisdom, experience, and giftedness have been priceless. I also want to thank the professional and dedicated team at Tyndale House Publishers—especially my editor, Lisa Jackson.

The foundation of everything good in my life is my amazing Father to whom I am grateful beyond words. Thank You for the conversations and time we spend together, along with the guidance, love, grace, and joy You give so generously. You have shown me comfort, security, and power in the Way, the Truth, and the Life. My sincere hope is to serve You as I serve Your people who use this book to grow in the love, knowledge, and grace of Your Son through the spiritual discipline of prayer and fasting.

Notes

1. The Daniel Fast Blog, <http://www.DanielFast.wordpress.com>, and Web site, <http://www.Daniel-Fast.com>.
2. Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry's Complete Commentary on the Whole Bible*, Daniel 1:12, "Prove us for ten days; during that time let us have nothing but pulse to eat, nothing but herbs and fruits, or parched peas or lentils, and nothing but water to drink, and see how we can live upon that, and proceed accordingly."
3. There are two primary theological views of the makeup of humankind. The view that a person is comprised of two parts (body and soul) is called *dichotomy*. The view that a person is comprised of three parts (body, soul, and spirit) is called *trichotomy*. There is also the philosophy of *monism* that says there is no distinction between body and soul. Although I am not a theologian, I believe that Scripture teaches the trichotomy of humankind.
4. Caroline Leaf, *Who Switched Off My Brain?* (Dallas: Switch On Your Brain USA LP, 2009), or see "Thought Life," <https://www.drleaf.net/osc/thoughtlife.php?osCsid=3faebe66f468b5971458c23060bb4b01> (accessed September 28, 2009).
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12. See <http://www.centralbean.com/cooking.html>.

About the Author

Susan Gregory, “The Daniel Fast Blogger,” launched the Daniel Fast blog and Web site in December 2007. Since then, her site has received millions of hits. Susan is passionate to see individuals experience a successful Daniel Fast as they seek God and endeavor to grow in the love and knowledge of Christ. Author of *Out of the Rat Race*, Susan has written for nationally known ministries and her work has taken her to more than thirty-five countries. A mother and grandmother, she lives on a small farm in Washington State. Visit her online at <http://www.Daniel-Fast.com>.