

# Fasting Guide

**Spiritual and Physical Benefits  
Practical Fasting Guidelines**

**21 Days of  
Global Consecration**



# Introduction - Initial Considerations



## Why fast?

Jesus assumed His disciples—then and now—would fast. He said, **"When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do"** (Matthew 6:16), and again: **"The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast"** (Matthew 9:15). Fasting is not optional in the Christian life; it is an expected and vital part of our devotion to Him. It is basic Christianity—a spiritual discipline that should be part of every believer's lifestyle, not just an occasional event.

We also live in a critical hour. Through the prophet Joel, God calls His people: **"Even now," declares the Lord, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning"** (Joel 2:12). This is not just an individual call but a corporate one: **"Blow the trumpet in Zion, declare a holy fast, call a sacred assembly"** (Joel 2:15). By His Spirit, God is speaking the same to the Church today—it is time to fast, to humble ourselves, and to seek Him together.

Why? Because our God is an all-consuming fire (Hebrews 12:29). Fasting does not create God's fire; it positions us closer to Him, allowing us to encounter more of His presence and the things of the Spirit. It also burns away distractions and dullness of the flesh, increasing our spiritual sensitivity and hunger for Him. Fasting intensifies every spiritual discipline—whether prayer, worship, or study of the Word.



But let us be clear: **fasting does not buy us anything in the Kingdom.** Salvation, righteousness, and acceptance before God were fully purchased by Jesus Christ on the Cross. “It is finished” (John 19:30). Fasting adds nothing to the price already paid. Instead, fasting positions us to experience more of what Jesus has already accomplished. It opens our hearts more fully to His presence and to everything that is ours through the finished work of the Cross.

Above all, **the primary reason we fast is love for Jesus and hunger to know Him more.** We fast because we want to be hungrier for Him than for anything else. We set aside food so that our souls cry louder: “Jesus, You are my bread of life, You are my portion, You are enough.” This is not about earning His love—it is about responding to His love with wholehearted devotion.

## Biblical Reasons to Fast

The Bible shows many reasons God’s people have fasted. Here are some of the main ones:

- **To humble ourselves before God** (Ezra 8:21; Psalm 35:13).
- **Out of longing for more of Jesus** (Matthew 9:15).
- **To return to Him in repentance** (Joel 2:12).
- **To seek His guidance and direction** (Acts 13:2–3).
- **To strengthen prayer and intercession** (Nehemiah 1:4; Daniel 9:3).
- **To overcome spiritual battles** (Matthew 17:21).
- **To prepare for ministry and breakthrough** (Luke 4:1–14).
- **To draw closer to His presence** (James 4:8).

Even when fasting feels dry or when we feel nothing is happening, God is at work in the unseen: something is taking place in the Spirit.

The Lord sees every sacrifice: all that we do and all that we avoid doing out of love for Him. Fasting is an investment into the future. Whatever we invest now, we will reap later. If nothing else, we will reap more of His presence—and that is the greatest reward of all.

## Types of Fasts in the Bible

### Daniel’s Fast (Daniel 1:12; 10:2–3)

Daniel avoided rich foods, meat, and wine and ate only vegetables, legumes, and water. The Hebrew word used is **zera’**—meaning things grown from seed (vegetables, legumes, grains, fruits). He ate vegetables and drank water only. This would have included foods like:

- Lentils, beans, chickpeas, peas
- Whole grains (barley, wheat, millet, oats, possibly rice) — note: modern forms are GMO, highly processed and quickly convert to sugar, so they are not recommended today
- Fruits (dates, figs, grapes, pomegranates, apples, etc.)
- Vegetables (onions, leeks, cucumbers, herbs, etc.)

This is a **partial fast**—it removes certain foods while still allowing nourishment.

**Note:** Sadly, some treat the Daniel fast as permission to overeat simply because the foods are “healthy,” turning a fast into a feast. Large portions of nuts, avocados, oils, or starchy vegetables can add significant calories and defeat the purpose of fasting. To keep it a true fast, focus on modest portions, simple meals, and eating with restraint and prayerful intention.

## Esther's Fast (Esther 4:16)

Esther called for a complete fast—no food and no water for three days—before she took a life-or-death step. This is an absolute or dry fast and shows extreme seriousness and dependence on God. Anyone attempting to do a dry fast should first prepare with several days of clean eating, then start first as a water fast. After a minimum of 2 days, remove the water.

**Cautions:** An absolute fast can carry risks. Even healthy adults can become dehydrated in three days. It is not suitable for children, the elderly, pregnant or nursing women, or those with health conditions.

## 10 Main Scientific Health Reasons to Water Fast

1. A safe, effective way to burn fat while preserving metabolic health. After ~3 days the body uses fat for most calories, hunger often decreases, and muscle is better preserved. In contrast, calorie-restricted diets can lower metabolic rate; a prolonged calorie-restricted diet can even damage metabolism. Also, up to 40% of the weight loss is from losing muscle. When calories rise again, weight is often regained.
2. Improves blood sugar control and insulin sensitivity—fewer glucose spikes; better insulin response.
3. Lowers cardiovascular risk factors—reductions in blood pressure, LDL cholesterol, triglycerides, and inflammation.
4. Activates cellular cleanup (autophagy) and repair pathways—recycling of damaged proteins and organelles.
5. Reduces chronic inflammation—declines in markers like CRP, IL-6, and TNF- $\alpha$  in many studies.
6. Supports brain health and mental clarity—ketones and BDNF support learning, memory, and resilience.
7. Improves metabolic flexibility and mitochondrial health—better switching between glucose and fat fuels.
8. Promotes longevity and healthy aging—activates stress-resistance pathways (animal + early human data).
9. Supports gut health—digestive rest, microbiome balance, improved gut barrier function.
10. May help lower risk of non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD)—improved liver fat and enzymes.

**Note:** The information in this book is based on scientific research and is provided solely for educational purposes. It should not be interpreted as medical advice. Individuals with health conditions or those taking medications should seek guidance from a qualified clinician before undertaking fasting.

## How Water-Only Fasting Affects the Body – Short Timeline

- 0–24 hours: Liver glycogen fuels the body; normal hunger pangs and possible irritability as the body prepares to shift fuels.
- 24–72 hours: Glycogen depletes; fat breakdown and ketone production rise. Many feel clearer thinking and steadier energy; mild headaches or aches are common for some.
- Around 5 days: Stronger ketosis, deeper autophagy, reduced inflammation for many; often improved mental focus and fewer hunger pangs.

- Around 7 days: Continued fat-adaptation; some report temporary drops in certain white blood cells with regeneration during refeeding, suggesting immune “reset” effects.
- Longer than 7 days: Sustained ketosis, more autophagy, and shifts in hormones (insulin, thyroid, cortisol) and electrolytes. Extended fasts amplify the benefits, especially for those with underlying health issues.

## Keto (Ketogenic Fasting / Diet)

While not a biblical fast, many people today use a ketogenic diet (very low in carbs, high in healthy fats, moderate protein) to prepare for or extend water fasting. By lowering carbohydrates to around 20–50 g per day, the body shifts into ketosis—burning fat for fuel and producing ketones. **This is very similar to what happens in a water fast**, but without fully abstaining from food. Keto is often considered one of the healthiest approaches to fat loss, as it avoids the metabolic slowdown caused by restrictive diets and it preserves lean muscle.

- Entering ketosis before a fast makes the transition much smoother—reducing hunger, headaches, and fatigue in the first days.
- Some use keto in cycles, fasting 16–20 hours per day while eating one or two small meals (intermittent fasting). This helps the body become “fat-adapted” and ready for longer water fasts.
- Keto may also provide some of the health benefits of fasting—improved insulin sensitivity, lower inflammation, longevity markers, and mental clarity.

**Healthy keto:** A healthy keto plan emphasizes whole foods: vegetables, avocados, nuts, seeds, fish, eggs, olive, coconut oil, and any form of protein.



## Water Fast – The True Fasting in the Bible

In the Bible, the clearest model of true fasting is going without food while still drinking water. While there are variations such as partial fasts (Daniel) or absolute fasts (Esther), the standard fast described in Scripture is a water fast. This disciplines the flesh, supports healing in the body, humbles the heart, and turns our dependence fully toward God.

### Three key examples:

- Moses (Exodus 34:28): forty days on Mount Sinai while receiving the Law.
- Elijah (1 Kings 19:8): forty days to Mount Horeb in a season of supernatural fasting.
- Jesus (Matthew 4:2): forty days in the wilderness before His public ministry.

These remind us that the water fast is not just a physical discipline, but a sacred act of consecration that has marked some of the greatest moments in biblical history.

# Guidelines for Water Fasting

Most adults can fast up to 40 days without any health risks.

## Before You Begin — A 3-Day Preparation

If you normally eat processed foods, sugar, bread, pasta, rice, or lots of juice, spend 3 days preparing:

- Eat only low-carb, whole, real foods: vegetables, healthy fats (olive or coconut oil), and clean protein if you normally eat it.
- Avoid sugar, sodas, fruit juices, bread, and pastries.
- Reduce caffeine gradually.
- Optional: take magnesium, potassium, and sea salt for 3 days.
- This eases symptoms during fasting.

## Why Lower Carbs Before a Water Fast (Simple Steps)

Entering a low-carb or mildly ketogenic state before a water-only fast reduces the abrupt metabolic shift when glycogen runs out. If you are already fat-adapted (producing ketones), you're more likely to have fewer early side effects—headaches, intense hunger, fatigue—and to stabilize blood sugar sooner.

### Simple steps (2–7 days):

- Keep daily carbs under ~30 g for most people.
- Prioritize non-starchy vegetables, moderate protein, and healthy fats.
- Reduce caffeine.
- Drink plenty of purified water.
- Optional: use ketone test strips to confirm ketosis by the third day.

## When You Start the Fast (Choose Timing)

If you work weekdays, start on a Thursday so you have the weekend to rest. The first 72 hours are usually the most uncomfortable (headache, tiredness, muscle aches, irritability). After about 24 hours, your body switches to fat/ketone metabolism—hunger usually eases. If you lower carbs for 3 days beforehand, you can usually diminish or eliminate these symptoms.

## Hydration & Electrolytes

- **Water:** 2–4 quarts ( $\approx$ 2–4 L) daily, more if thirsty. Use a glass or stainless-steel container.
- **Salt/electrolytes:** If fasting more than 24–48 hours, many benefit from added electrolytes. A simple option is 1 tsp sea salt in ~10 oz warm water in the morning, or add the same across a gallon to sip all day. This can help prevent lightheadedness, low blood pressure, and headaches.



## Helpful Supportive Practices

- End your shower with 1–3 minutes of cool water.
- Daily dry brushing of the skin.
- 20–30 minutes of sunlight.
- Walk barefoot on grass.
- Consider chiropractic care or a weekly massage.
- Most importantly: prayer, Scripture, journaling, and silence before God.



## Why a “Fruit Juice Fast” Is a Poor Choice (Often the Worst Option)

While popular, juice fasts are often the least beneficial—and sometimes harmful—approach to fasting:

- **High sugar and glycemic load:** Fruit juices deliver concentrated sugars quickly, causing blood-sugar spikes and insulin responses—the opposite of the metabolic stabilization fasting seeks.
- **Lack of fiber:** Juicing removes fiber, which normally slows sugar absorption and supports gut health.
- **Insufficient protein and healthy fats:** Juices lack protein and fats needed to protect muscle mass and keep you balanced; prolonged juice “fasts” can accelerate muscle loss. Water fasting is superior: the body naturally turns to fat for energy while protecting lean muscle.
- **Hunger, energy swings, and cravings:** Concentrated sugar from juices can worsen hunger, cause irritability, and undermine spiritual clarity.
- **Dental and calorie issues:** Frequent acidic juices can damage tooth enamel and still provide significant calories, which defeats the purpose of fasting.

For both spiritual and health reasons, water fasting or carefully planned partial fasts (like Daniel’s) are healthier and more effective than fruit juice-only fasting.

## Breaking the Fast – Important Safety Principle

Refeeding must be gradual. Rapidly eating large amounts after a long fast can cause refeeding syndrome. After more than five days, reintroduce calories cautiously, starting with broth and soft vegetables. Keep carbs low or near zero to avoid shocking the system with a glucose spike. Avoid breaking the water fast with fruit juice, as the sudden sugar spike can be harmful.

## Refeeding Plan (for 5–40 Day Fasts)

Follow one day of protocol for every five days you fasted.

### Examples:

- A 35+ day fast would follow the full 7-day protocol below.
- A 5-day fast would follow only Day 1, then return to normal healthy eating.
- **Day 1:** Start with 2–4 oz warm bone or beef broth in sips; increase slowly; ~48 oz max for the day.

- **Day 2–3:** 32–48 oz of bone or beef broth; add small portions of lightly steamed greens (spinach, kale, etc.). Everyone is different—pay attention to your body. If digestive issues arise, return to the previous day's protocol, then try again.
- **Day 4–5:** Continue broth + 1–2 cups vegetables; no heavy dressings.
- **Day 6:** If possible, add small portions of fermented foods for gut health (sauerkraut, kimchi, kefir etc). (Usually, most store-bought yogurts contain little to no probiotics.)
- **Day 7:** Soft foods: eggs, cooked vegetables, small portions of fish or soft meats.

## Foods to Avoid After Water Fasts Longer Than 2 Days

The longer the fast, the more important it is to eat low-carb, very clean, and healthy afterward. Through autophagy, your body has consumed many old and damaged cells. It will start restoring and rebuilding the moment you refeed, using what you first consume for days or weeks (depending on fast length). You will “be” what you eat—treat your body as the temple of the Holy Spirit.

- No sugar, juices, processed foods, pastries, or flour products.
- Avoid large servings of starch (rice, potatoes, bread) at first.
- Use olive or coconut oil; avoid industrial seed and vegetable oils.

## When to Use Caution or Possibly Stop

Most adults can do up to a 40-day water fast without any negative consequences. However:

- If you feel confused, have chest pain, or have markedly decreased urine output.
- Extended water fasting is not recommended for those who are pregnant, nursing, have type-1 diabetes, or have serious chronic illness without individualized guidance.
- Children and young teens should not water fast for long periods.

Trust the Lord to give you grace to obey Him. Be wise and attentive to any symptoms.

## Final Encouragement

Your Heavenly Father is **so proud of you** when you fast! Though it is not easy, He sees and honors every sacrifice you make for Him. Fast with humility and prayer. Use the time you would normally spend preparing and eating food for repentance, more time in Scripture, seeking God's face, and intercession.

## Sources

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# There's still time!

## Share the Journey

Invite your family, cell group, and church to join you in the 21 Days of Consecration:

- ➡ Share on your social networks what we've posted
- ▶ Download our materials at [globalconsecration.org/mobilize](http://globalconsecration.org/mobilize) and share in your own church/social media.
- ✉ Use #GlobalConsecration on [Instagram](#)/[Facebook](#) and tag us

## Prepare for what's coming

You will receive more materials over the next few weeks. Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to prepare your heart for what comes next.

## Intercession

Pray that in these last days, more would join and God would give us all the grace to obey the Word.

## Testify

For **testimonies**, access [globalconsecration.org/testimony](http://globalconsecration.org/testimony) to share what God is already doing in your heart.

