

Fasting Guide

Key points:

1. To strengthen prayer ([Ezra 8:23](#))
2. To seek God's guidance ([Judges 20:26](#))
3. To express grief ([1 Samuel 31:13](#))
4. To seek deliverance or protection ([2 Chronicles 20:3 – 4](#))
5. To express repentance and a return to God (e.g., see [1 Samuel 7:6](#))
6. To humble oneself before God (e.g., see [1 Kings 21:27 – 29](#))
7. To express concern for the work of God (e.g., see [Nehemiah 1:3 – 4](#))
8. To minister to the needs of others (e.g., see [Isaiah 58:3 – 7](#))
9. To overcome temptation and dedicate yourself to God (e.g., see [Matthew 4:1 – 11](#))
10. To express love and worship for God (e.g., see [Luke 2:37](#))

The types of fast:

1. A 1-day fast (sunrise to sunset). Judges 20:26, to seek direction from the Lord.
2. A 3-day fast without food or drink. Esther 4:16, for wisdom, discernment, protection, and guidance. In Acts 9:9 Saul was converted but for 3 days he went without food and water.
 - So far I've found that these 3-day fasts are the last complete fasts mentioned.
 - The rest of the fasts either do not specify or say food only was fasted.
3. A 7-day fast. 1 Samuel 31:13. For wisdom, seeking comfort from grief, and guidance.
4. A 10-day fast of vegetables and water only. Daniel 1:12, Daniel was fasting for favor, strength, wisdom, and discernment.
5. A 14-day fast. Acts 27:33-34. Paul and the men on the ship fasted food for protection and wisdom.
6. A 21-day fast. Daniel 10:3, for times of distress and mourning. No meat, wine, or pleasant food, and no oils. Fruit, vegetables, nuts, and water instead. In modern times, this is a popular fast (and diet).

7. 40-day fast. I can only find three 40-day fasts in the Bible. Each person was divinely appointed and touched by God for this type of fast.

- Exodus 34:28 and Deuteronomy 9:9, 9:18.
- Moses neither ate nor drank water.
- In 1 Kings 19:8, Elijah ate and drank and then sustained his 40 days of fasting.
- In Matthew 4:2-4, Jesus fasted food for 40 days. It says afterward he was hungry (being thirsty isn't mentioned and Satan tries to tempt him with food, not water).
- Because there are so few 40-day fasts in the Bible, I would caution you to be very careful in undertaking this type of fast. A 40-day fast is not something you should jump into without much preparation.