

# 40 Days to Better Understanding



*The folks at Seeds of Hope believe that authentic work towards healing hunger comes from an inner strength, and that inner strength comes from spiritual disciplines. We also believe that a concerted effort, even by a small number of people, to observe a time of prayer together and perhaps fasting (come on; we dare you!) can make a huge difference in how we all face the problems of hunger and poverty. This forty-day calendar is designed to help you prepare spiritually for the work ahead of us. We challenge you to use the scriptures and suggestions on these two pages to make these forty days a holy season.*

*—from the staff and Council of Stewards*

1

Isaiah 1:15-17

Set aside a time each day, between now and World Food Day, to pray for those who are hungry and homeless. Ask the Lord to open your eyes to the needy around you and look for ways to serve them. Find a prayer partner to keep you accountable.

2

*Think about this quote from Dorothy Day: "We cannot love God unless we love each other. We know God in the breaking of bread, and we know each other in the breaking of bread, and we are not alone anymore."*

Matthew 5:42

7

Estimate how many pounds of meat your family ate during the last week and give 25 cents per pound.

Luke 9:10-17

8



Luke 6:20-26

Hold a candle light vigil for all people affected by hunger.

9

Ponder this fact: the average age of a homeless person in the U.S. is seven years.

Ezekiel 16:49

14

Get your Sunday school class or youth group to raise enough money to buy a goat or a llama for someone on the other side of the world. Contact Heifer Project International at PO Box 808; Little Rock, AR 72203; 501/376-6836; www.heifer.org.

Luke 1:46-55

15

How much do you weigh? Give a "penny per pound" to hunger relief.

Exodus 16:1-12

16

Go through your closet today and give any unused clothing away. Learn to live with less. Reactivate old clothing instead of buying new. Discuss with a friend what guides your clothes-purchasing habits.

Deuteronomy 24:17-22

22



Find a local food pantry and volunteer to distribute groceries.

Proverbs 14:21

23

Fast for one meal today and give to a hunger relief organization the equivalent of what you would have eaten.

James 5:1-6

21

Isaiah 3:13-15

Visit the hunger site on the web: [www.thehungersite.com](http://www.thehungersite.com).

28

1 Cor. 4:9-13

When you feel your stomach begin to growl, sit down and think about what hunger feels like. Don't immediately try to satisfy your urge. Some don't have such a privilege.

29

James 2:8

Choose one poor country to focus on today. Compare your lifestyle to the people there. Eat a meal of common foods of that country.

30

Find out more about US economic sanctions toward Iraq and how that is affecting Iraqi children.

Jeremiah 22:13-16

35



Practice believing six impossible things before breakfast.

Luke 14:12-14

36

Go to your favorite restaurant. Match what you spend on dinner and send that amount to a relief development ministry.

Job 5:1-16

37

Do this with your Sunday school class: take a \$25 budget, go to the grocery store, and figure out how to feed a family of four for the week. (No fair using what's already in your pantry.)

Psalms 82:1-4

3



Deut. 14:28-15:11

Find out more about debt relief for the world's 41 debt-poor countries. Contact Jubilee 2000/USA; 222 East Capitol Street, NE; Washington, DC 20003-1036; Phone: 202/783-3566; Web: www.2000usa.org/2000.

4

Start walking more instead of driving.

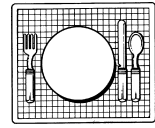
Ezekiel 18:5-9

5

Don't eat any snacks today. At least you know that you have another meal coming.

Lamentations 1:11

6



Visit a shelter for homeless people. Ask some of the guests what they ate today.

John 13:1-20

10

Read today's scripture and think about this: If you had just met Jesus like Zacchaeus did, what changes would you make in your life?

Luke 19:9-10

11

Estimate the cost of each meal you eat today (even home cooked meals). Give that amount of money to a local shelter.

Proverbs 14:31

12

Go shopping with someone who uses food stamps, and watch how people treat him/her.

Luke 16:19-31

13

Today, give up sugar, salt, pepper and any other kind of spice or additive.

Galatians 6: 7-10

17

Buy a package of granola bars and keep them in your car to give out to people who ask you for money or to anyone that you feel led to minister to.

I Cor. 10:23-24

18



Take a piece of fruit with you every time you get in the car. Find someone to give it to.

Matthew 6:25-33

19

Take a group of youth to a homeless shelter one morning and help serve breakfast to the guests.

Proverbs 19: 17

20

Find out if your local school district offers a free and subsidized breakfast and lunch program for students of low-income families.

Romans 12:9-21

17

Buy a package of granola bars and keep them in your car to give out to people who ask you for money or to anyone that you feel led to minister to.

I Cor. 10:23-24

24

Write a letter to your Congressional representatives, telling them that hunger issues are important to you. Look up Bread for the World at www.bread.org to find out how.

1 Timothy 6:17-19

25

Have one meal today where you eat only brown rice and drink only water. That's what many hungry people get to eat, and at least your water is clean.

Mark 10: 23-27

26



Meditate on this today: If Jesus went shopping with you, would your buying habits be different?

Isaiah 58:6-12

27

Amos 8:4-7

Eat your evening meal by candlelight tonight and discuss ways in which you can better conserve energy. Give 25 cents to a hunger organization for every electrical appliance in your kitchen.

31

Find a copy of *Spirits Rebellious* by Kahlil Gibran and read the section called "Khalil the Heretic."

2 Kings 4:42-45

32

Don't use dairy products today. Many developing nations do not get dairy products.

1 Timothy 6:17-19

33



Zechariah 7:8-14

Plant a garden in your back yard and give the produce to your local food pantry.

34



Search for Bible verses that refer to hunger. Give 5 cents for each one you find.

Luke 10:29-37

38



Pray for all of the people who work for the end of hunger in our world.

Matthew 19:16-22

39

Count the times you open your refrigerator door. Donate 10 cents for each time.

Matthew 25:34-40

40

Choose a time to go aside today and assess what you've learned about hunger and about yourself. Spend some time listening for God's leading. How can you stay in tune with this issue? What can you do over the next few months that will make a difference in your world?

Joel 3:13-16