

An aerial photograph of a wide, winding river flowing through a deep, hilly valley. The river is light-colored, possibly due to sand or silt, and meanders through the landscape. The surrounding hills are covered in dense, dark green vegetation. The sky is overcast and hazy, creating a soft, diffused light across the scene.

Lent

40 DAYS OF PREPARATION

FEBRUARY 17 - APRIL 3, 2021
DEVOTIONAL JOURNAL

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INTRODUCTION

We are excited that you've decided to join us on our study of Scripture during the season of Lent. In this simple study, you will be writing God's word each day; the Scriptures were selected to help you prepare your heart for Easter. You can write the whole passage selected or portions of the passage. Writing Scripture is a great way to keep your mind focused, help internalize Scripture, and grow your faith word by word.

"For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of heart."

Hebrews 4:12

WHAT IS LENT?

Lent is the 40 days (not including Sundays) from Ash Wednesday to the Saturday before Easter. It is a time of reflection and preparation before the celebration of Easter. By observing 40 days of Lent with fasting and prayer, we, as Christ followers, imitate Jesus' withdrawal into the desert for 40 days before the start of His earthly ministry. The three main things Christians focus on during Lent are prayer, fasting (abstaining from something to reduce distractions on God), and giving, or charity.

FASTING GUIDE

Complete Fast

In this type of fast, you drink only liquids, typically water with light juices as an option.

Selective Fast

This type of fast involves removing certain elements from your diet. One example of a selective fast is the Daniel Fast, during which you remove meat, sweets, and bread from your diet and consume water and juice for fluids and fruits and vegetables for food.

Partial Fast

This fast is sometimes called the “Jewish Fast” and involves abstaining from eating any type of food in the morning and afternoon. This can either correlate to specific times of the day, such as 6:00 am to 3:00 pm, or from sunup to sundown.

Soul Fast

This fast is a great option if you do not have much experience fasting food, have health issues that prevent you from fasting food, or if you wish to refocus certain areas of your life that are out of balance. For example, you might choose to stop using social media or watching television for the duration of the fast and then carefully bring that element back into your life in healthy doses at the conclusion of the fast.

PREPARING FOR LENT

What are some challenges you have faced over the past few months?

What are some things God has done in that same time?

What has been on your mind most over the past few months?

PREPARING FOR LENT

What distracts you the most during your time in God's Word?

What do you hope to gain during Lent?

Do you plan to fast during Lent? Pray about it and be specific about your intention here.

“...For dust you are, and to dust you will return.”

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17th

Genesis 2:7 and Genesis 3:19

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

“So great is his mercy toward those who fear him.”

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18th

Psalm 103:13-14

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

*“At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness,
and he was in the wilderness forty days.”*

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 19th

Mark 1:12-15

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

*“...This is the commandment, the rules and regulations,
that God, your God, commanded me to teach you to live out
in the land you’re about to cross into to possess.”*

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20th

Deuteronomy 6:1-2

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 21st

“Listen obediently, Israel. Do what you’re told so that you’ll have a good life, a life of abundance and bounty, just as God promised, in a land abounding in milk and honey.”

Deuteronomy 6:3

As a part of today’s Sabbath rest you are released from whatever you are fasting from during Lent. Before you begin your day, pray this prayer out loud by yourself or with others!

SABBATH PRAYER

Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for asking me to observe the Sabbath day as one of your commandments for my life; by keeping one day out of seven separate or holy from my normal routines in order to seek and know you more. Today, Lord, I choose to trust you with all other work and projects at home, at work, and or at school into your care. I am sorry for the ways I have not listened and obeyed this command. I also recognize that there is no shame or condemnation in you. Today, teach me how to rest and how to build this into my normal life rhythms. I welcome your presence in this day and in the decisions I make as I follow you. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Prayer based on Exodus 20:8-10

DEPARTING SONG

“I Thank God” by Maverick City

*He picked me up, He turned me around
Placed my feet on solid ground
I thank the Master, I thank the Savior
Because He healed my heart, He changed my name
Forever free, I’m not the same
I thank the Master, I thank the Savior
Oh, I thank God*

*“Shout it loud and clear! Don’t hold back!
Let your voice be like a trumpet blast!”*

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 22nd

Isaiah 58:1-2

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

*“They say, ‘Why is it that when we fasted,
you did not see it? We starved ourselves, and you didn’t seem to notice.’”*

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 23rd

Isaiah 58:3-5

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

*“This is the kind of fast that I desire:
Remove the heavy chains of oppression!”*

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24th

Isaiah 58:6-7

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

*“Then my favor will bathe you in sunlight
until you are like the dawn bursting through a dark night.”*

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25th

Isaiah 58:8-10

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

*“The Lord will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs
in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame.”*

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 26th

Isaiah 58:11

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

*“Your people will rebuild long-deserted ruins,
building anew on foundations laid long before you.”*

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 27th

Isaiah 58:12

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 28th

*Attention, Israel! God, our God! God the one and only!
Love God, your God, with your whole heart: love him with all that's in
you, love him with all you've got!*

Deuteronomy 6:4-5

As a part of today's Sabbath rest you are released from whatever you are fasting from during Lent. Before you begin your day, pray this prayer out loud by yourself or with others!

SABBATH PRAYER

Lord, today, I ask that you would help me to keep my feet from breaking the Sabbath and from doing as I please on your holy day. Lord, I thank you that you've called me to a day of rest! Today, I will take delight in your Sabbath whether I am on my own, with friends, and or with family.

Lord, I will honor this day as holy, set apart from my normal routine, by not going my own way, doing as I please, or speaking idle or petty words. Lord, I receive the truth that if I obey you in this that I will find your joy and you will cause me to ride in triumph on the heights of the land and to feast on the inheritance that I have in Christ Jesus! For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

Prayer based on Isaiah 58:13-14

DEPARTING SONG

"Blest Day of God, Most Calm, Most Bright" (verses 1 and 4)
John Mason, Songs of Praise (1683)

*Blest day of God, most calm, most bright, the first, the best of days;
The laborer's rest, the saint's delight, the day of prayer and praise.
This day I must with God appear; for, Lord, the day is Thine;
Help me to spend it in Thy fear, and thus to make it mine.*

“Rather, in humility value others above yourselves.”

MONDAY, MARCH 1st

Philippians 2:1-4

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

*“...he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death –
even death on a cross!”*

TUESDAY, MARCH 2nd

Philippians 2:5-8

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

*“...that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth.”*

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3rd

Philippians 2:9-11

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

“Do everything without grumbling or arguing.”

THURSDAY, MARCH 4th

Philippians 2:12-14

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

*“Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky
as you hold firmly to the word of life.”*

FRIDAY, MARCH 5th

Philippians 2:15-18

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

“... Write these commandments that I’ve given you today on your hearts.”

SATURDAY, MARCH 6th

Deuteronomy 6:6-9

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

SUNDAY, MARCH 7th

“Work six days. The seventh day is a Sabbath, a day of total and complete rest, a sacred assembly. Don’t do any work. Wherever you live, it is a Sabbath to God.”

Leviticus 23:3

As a part of today’s Sabbath rest you are released from whatever you are fasting from during Lent. Before you begin your day, pray this prayer out loud by yourself or with others!

SABBATH PRAYER

Praying Psalm 23

*The Lord is my shepherd;
I have all that I need.*

Response: Lord, thank you that you have given me everything I need. Show me how you have provided for me in the past week so that I may praise you for it!

*He lets me rest in green meadows;
He leads me beside peaceful streams.
He renews my strength.
He guides me along right paths,
bringing honor to his name.*

Response: Lord, I give you permission to lead me to rest this Sabbath day. When I rest, it’s where I hear your voice, it’s where I am restored, and it’s where I am given true strength. I recognize that only you know the future and I ask that this time will prepare me for the week ahead or the trial I will (or currently) face.

*Even when I walk
through the darkest valley,
I will not be afraid,
for you are close beside me.
Your rod and your staff
protect and comfort me.*

Response: God, I will not resist your presence when you wish to shepherd or guide me with your rod and staff. I repent for the ways I have chosen my own way instead of yours. Help me Lord to be more like you!

*You prepare a feast for me
in the presence of my enemies.
You honor me by anointing my head with oil.
My cup overflows with blessings.
Surely your goodness and unfailing love will pursue me
all the days of my life,
and I will live in the house of the Lord forever.*

Response: Thank you for being with me even when I am overwhelmed by obstacles or people who may not love, bless, or support me. God, I receive your supernatural anointing and empowerment for this week and for my household. I also receive every blessing you want to give me; keep coming after me with your unfailing love!

DEPARTING SONG

“Promises” by Maverick City

*God of Abraham, You're the God of covenant and faithful promises
Time and time again, You have proven You'll do just what You said
Though the storms may come and the winds may blow
I'll remain steadfast
And let my heart learn when You speak a word
It will come to pass
Great is Your faithfulness to me
Great is Your faithfulness to me
From the rising sun to the setting same
I will praise Your name
Great is Your faithfulness to me*

“Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.”

MONDAY, MARCH 8th

1 Peter 5:5-7

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

“Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him.”

TUESDAY, MARCH 9th

1 Peter 5:8-11

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

*“I no longer count on my own righteousness through obeying the law;
rather, I become righteous through faith in Christ.”*

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 10th

Philippians 3:8-11

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

*"I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which
God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus."*

THURSDAY, MARCH 11th

Philippians 3:12-14

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

“God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.”

FRIDAY, MARCH 12th

Psalm 73:23-26

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

*“When you take it all in and settle down, pleased and content,
make sure you don’t forget how you got there—
God brought you out of slavery in Egypt.”*

SATURDAY, MARCH 13th

Deuteronomy 6:10-12

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

SUNDAY, MARCH 14th

Deeply respect God, your God. Serve and worship him exclusively. Back up your promises with his name only. Don't fool around with other gods, the gods of your neighbors, because God, your God, who is alive among you is a jealous God. Don't provoke him, igniting his hot anger that would burn you right off the face of the Earth. Don't push God, your God, to the wall as you did that day at Massah, the Testing-Place. Carefully keep the commands of God, your God, all the requirements and regulations he gave you. Do what is right; do what is good in God's sight so you'll live a good life and be able to march in and take this pleasant land that God so solemnly promised through your ancestors, throwing out your enemies left and right—exactly as God said.

Deuteronomy 6:13-19

As a part of today's Sabbath rest you are released from whatever you are fasting from during Lent. Before you begin your day, pray this prayer out loud by yourself or with others!

SABBATH PRAYER

O God our King, by the resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ on the first day of the week, you conquered sin, put death to flight, and gave us the hope of everlasting life: Redeem all our days by this victory; forgive our sins, banish our fears, make us bold to praise you and to do your will; and steel us to wait for the consummation of your kingdom on the last great Day; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

from the Book of Common Prayer

DEPARTING HYMN

"Lord of the Sabbath, Hear Us Pray" (verses 1, 2, and 6)

Philip Doddridge (1737); altered by Thomas Cotterill (1819)

Lord of the Sabbath, hear us pray, in this Your house, on this Your day; and own, as grateful sacrifice, the songs which from Your temple rise. Now met to pray and bless Your Name, whose mercies flow each day the same; whose kind compassions never cease, we seek instruction, pardon, peace. O long expected day, begin, dawn on these realms of woe and sin! Break, morn of God, upon our eyes; and let the world's true Sun arise!

*“He will take great delight in you; in his love he will no longer rebuke you,
but will rejoice over you with singing.”*

MONDAY, MARCH 15th

Zephaniah 3:15-17

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

“Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.”

TUESDAY, MARCH 16th

Romans 12:9-12

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

“We turned our backs on him and looked the other way.”

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17th

Isaiah 53:1-3

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

“He was beaten so we could be whole.”

THURSDAY, MARCH 18th

Isaiah 53:4-5

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

“All of us, like sheep, have strayed away.”

FRIDAY, MARCH 19th

Isaiah 53:6-7

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

*“...We stood there and watched as God delivered miracle-signs,
great wonders, and evil-visitations on Egypt,
on Pharaoh and his household.”*

SATURDAY, MARCH 20th

Deuteronomy 6:20-24

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

SUNDAY, MARCH 21st

It will be a set-right and put-together life for us if we make sure that we do this entire commandment in the Presence of God, our God, just as he commanded us to do.

Deuteronomy 6:25

As a part of today's Sabbath rest you are released from whatever you are fasting from during Lent. Before you begin your day, pray this prayer out loud by yourself or with others!

SABBATH PRAYER

In this time of prayer, I recognize that it is good to give thanks to you, Lord. Today, I sing praises to your name, O Most High; I will declare your steadfast love in the morning, and your faithfulness by night. For you, O Lord, have made me glad by your work; at the works of your hands I sing for joy.

Thank you for this day of rest!

Prayer based on Psalm 92:1-4

O God, in the course of this busy life, give us times of refreshment and peace; and grant that we may so use our leisure to rebuild our bodies and renew our minds, that our spirits may be opened to the goodness of your creation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

For the Good Use of Leisure, from the Book of Common Prayer

DEPARTING SONG

"Move Your Heart" by Maverick City

Jesus, Jesus, my offering

All my ambitions, my hopes, my dreams

And here's my life, Lord - a sacrifice

Oh, just to bless You

I just wanna move Your heart

It's all I wanna do

I just wanna stand in awe

And pour my love on You

No matter how much the cost

I freely give it all to You

All to You

*“Yet when his life is made an offering for sin,
he will have many descendants.”*

MONDAY, MARCH 22nd

Isaiah 53:8-10

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

“I will give him the honors of a victorious soldier.”

TUESDAY, MARCH 23rd

Isaiah 53:11-12

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

“... ‘For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.’”

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24th

Luke 19:5-10

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

"I am the resurrection and the life."

THURSDAY, MARCH 25th

John 11:21-27

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

“...Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink.”

FRIDAY, MARCH 26th

John 7:37-39

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

“...For the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath.”

SATURDAY, MARCH 27th

Luke 6:1-5

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

SUNDAY, MARCH 28th

The next day the large crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!"

John 12:12-13

As a part of today's Sabbath rest you are released from whatever you are fasting from during Lent. Before you begin your day, pray this prayer out loud by yourself or with others!

PALM SUNDAY PRAYER

We praise you, Almighty God, for the acts of love by which you have redeemed us through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. On this day you entered the holy city of Jerusalem in triumph, and was hailed as King by those who spread their garments and branches of palm along your way. May the branches be for us signs of your victory. Grant that we who bear them in your Name may ever hail you as our King, and follow you in the way that leads to eternal life; in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.
Adapted from the Book of Common Prayer

DEPARTING SONG

"Hosanna, Loud Hosanna" by Jennette Threlfall

*"Hosanna in the highest!"
That ancient song we sing,
For Christ is our Redeemer,
The Lord of heaven, our King.
O may we ever praise Him
With heart and life and voice,
And in His blissful presence
Eternally rejoice.*

*“...And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to arrest him
by stealth and kill him.”*

MONDAY, MARCH 29th

Mark 14:1-2

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

*“... a woman came with an alabaster flask of ointment of pure nard,
very costly, and she broke the flask and poured it over his head.”*

TUESDAY, MARCH 30th

Mark 14:3-8

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

*“Then Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve,
went to the chief priests in order to betray him to them.”*

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 31st

Mark 14:10-11

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

“...yet not what I will, but what You will.”

THURSDAY, APRIL 1st

Mark 14:35-36

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

“It is finished,’ and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.”

FRIDAY, APRIL 2nd

John 19:16-30

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

*“So because of the Jewish day of Preparation,
since the tomb was close at hand, they laid Jesus there.”*

SATURDAY, APRIL 3rd

John 19:38-42

What God is saying to me today

My word for today

SUNDAY, APRIL 4th

Then the angel spoke to the women. "Don't be afraid!" he said. "I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He isn't here! He is risen from the dead, just as he said would happen."

Matthew 28:5-6

As a part of today's Sabbath rest you are released from whatever you are fasting from during Lent. Before you begin your day, pray this prayer out loud by yourself or with others!

EASTER PRAYERS

Almighty God, who through your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ overcame death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life: Grant that we, who celebrate with joy the day of the Lord's resurrection, may, by your life-giving Spirit, be delivered from sin and raised from death; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

from the Book of Common Prayer

O God, who for our redemption gave your only begotten Son to die upon the Cross, and by his glorious resurrection delivered us from the devil and the power of death: Grant us grace to die daily to sin, that we may live with him in the joy of his resurrection; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

from the Book of Common Prayer

DEPARTING SONG

"He's Alive" by Don Francisco

*He's alive, He's alive, He's alive and I'm forgiven,
Heavens gates are open wide.*

