
LENTEN BIBLE READING PLAN 2023: JOURNEY TO THE CROSS

WHAT IS LENT? Lent is the traditional 40-day (minus Sundays) observance between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday in which Christians fast, pray, and prepare spiritually for a time of reverence and adoration of Christ's crucifixion and resurrection. In addition to our weekly Bible Studies, we have collected 40 Psalms and prayers for use as we begin Lent on Ash Wednesday through the Holy Week.

Lent gives us an opportunity to step back and pause to recognize our humanity and sinful nature. The Lenten season reminds us of our need for a Savior as a time to reflect and repent for our shortcomings. It is an opportunity to recognize the human condition we may spend the rest of the year running from and bring our need for a Savior to the forefront. Lent prepares us as we approach Good Friday and Easter with thanksgiving for the grace and mercy shown to us.

How to use these 40 Psalms and prayers? While you're welcome to pray through several of these Psalms and prayers for Lent all at once, picking and choosing the ones that look most meaningful to you, I'd recommend praying one daily Lenten prayer each day throughout the 40 days of Lent. You can choose to use them as grace before dinner/supper everyday, as a morning devotion, bedtime devotion with children or as a family and so on. The idea is to start a practice of daily prayer that will last after Lent has concluded. I hope this resource will help in our spiritual renewal during this Lenten season.

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Day 1: “Even if they come to see me, they speak empty words; their heart collects false rumours; they go outside and spread them. (Psalm 41: 6)

Prayer for the Anglican Church in Canada: Remember us, gracious God, when we are lonely and depressed, and support us in the dark night of grief and despair, for your love is faithful and you do not forget your broken ones. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord. Amen

Day 2: You tyrant, why do you boast of wickedness against the godly all day long? You plot ruin; your tongue is like a sharpened razor, O worker of deception (Psalm 52: 1-2)

Prayer for the oppressed: God of the oppressed, we pray for all those who suffer injustice at the hands of cruel and indifferent rulers, especially for the innocent victims of war. Give them strength and patience and hasten the day when the kingdoms of this world will own the perfect law of love, made known to us in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Day 3: “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me” (Psalm 51: 11).

Prayer for Purity: Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hidden. Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord.

Day 4: “The righteous will be glad when they see the vengeance; they will bathe their feet in the blood of the wicked” (Psalm 58:10).

Prayer for Justice: God of justice, sweep away all tyranny and violence that righteousness and equity may prevail among your people. We ask in the name of Jesus Christ.

Day 5: “To you, O my Strength, will I sing; for you, O God, are my stronghold and my merciful God” (Psalm 59: 20).

Prayer for deliverance: God of power, deliver us from evil and confirm our trust in you, that with our rising we may sing of your justice and exult in your mercy. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

Day 6: “Put your trust in him always, O people, pour out your hearts before him, for God is our refuge” (Psalm 62: 9)

Prayer for Turkey and Syria: Lord God, in a threatening world we look to you as our rock of hope. Hear us as we pour out our hearts to you, and give us your grace and protection, through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

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Day 7: How wonderful is God in his holy places! the God of Israel giving strength and power to his people! Blessed be God! (Psalm 68: 36)

Prayer for Guidance: Blessed are you, Lord God of truth and justice; you open our hearts and our mouths to pray and to praise. Guide now our feet in your holy way, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Day 8: Forget not the clamour of your adversaries, the unending tumult of those who rise up against you (Psalm 74: 22).

Prayer for God's Righteousness: O God, when violence threatens and destruction seems at hand, help us to remember that you maintain your cause and still rule your universe through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Day 9: "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer" (Psalm 19: 14).

Prayer of Purification: Gracious creator of heaven and earth, your Word has come among us as the true Sun of righteousness, and the good news of his birth has gone out to the ends of the world. Open our eyes to the light of your law, that we may be purified from sin and serve you without reproach for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Light and our Life.

Day 10: "I will offer you the sacrifice of thanksgiving and call upon the name of the Lord" (Psalm 116: 15).

Prayer for the Administrants: Eternal God, faithful in your tender compassion, you give us hope for our life here and hereafter through the victory of your only Son. When we share his cup of salvation, revive in us the joy of this everlasting gift. We ask his in his name.

Day 11: "It is better to rely on the Lord than to put any trust in flesh" (Psalm 118: 8).

Prayer for Cleansing: Holy and mighty God, your Son's triumph over sin and death has opened to us the gate of eternal life. Purify our hearts that we may follow where he has gone and share in the radiance of his glory. We ask this for the sake of our risen Lord.

Day 12: "Deliver me, O Lord, from lying lips and from the deceitful tongue" (Psalm 120: 2).

Prayer for Truth and Reconciliation: Eternal Source of truth and peace, guard your people from the folly of rash and slanderous speech, that the words of our mouth may not cause hurt and rejection, but rather healing and unity; through Christ our Lord.

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Day 13: I was glad when they said to me,” Let us go to the house of the Lord”(Psalm 122: 1).

Prayer for Peace: Lord Jesus, give us the peace of the new Jerusalem. Bring all nations into your kingdom to share your gifts, that they may render thanks to you without end and may come to your eternal city, where you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever.

Day 14: “To you I lift up my eyes, to you enthroned in the heavens” (Psalm 123:2)

Prayer for Christian Unity: King of love, rule in the hearts of all people on earth through your Son Jesus Christ, that we may become one family and one kingdom serving you by serving each other. We ask this in his name.

Day 15: “I do not occupy myself with great matters, or with things that are too hard for me” (Psalm 131: 2)

Prayer for meditation: God of earthquake, wind, and fire, may we know you also in the voice of silence. Teach us the way of quiet, that we may find our peace in your presence, in the pattern of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Day 16: “Happy are the people of whom this is so! happy are the people whose God is the Lord!” Psalm 144: 16).

Prayer of Praise: Generous and bountiful God, give compassion to the prosperous and comfort to the needy, that all people may come to love and praise you, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Day 17: “The Lord shall reign for ever, your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Hallelujah!” (Psalm 146: 9).

Prayer for Worship: God our creator and redeemer, inspire your people, in prosperity or adversity, to turn always to you, eternal source of life, health, and goodness; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Day 18: “He has raised up strength for his people and praise for all his loyal servants, the children of Israel, a people who are near him. Hallelujah!” (Psalm 148: 14)

Prayer for Mission and Ministry: Blessed are you, Lord our God, creator of heaven and earth; you open our eyes to see the wonders around us, and our hearts and mouths to praise you. Now give us strength for loving service, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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Day 19: “Hallelujah! Praise God in his holy temple; praise him in the firmament of his power” (Psalm 150: 1).

Prayer for Pastoral Care: Maker of the universe, Source of all life, give us grace to serve you with our whole heart, that we may faithfully perform your will and joyfully participate in your creation, to the praise and glory of your name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Day 20: “Fear and trembling have come over me, and horror overwhelms me” (Psalm 55: 6).

Prayer for Overcoming Fear: God of grace, when we are frightened and alone, help us to trust you and cast our burdens upon you, that we may be upheld by your saving strength. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ.

Day 21: “The righteous will rejoice in the Lord and put their trust in him, and all who are true of heart will glory” (Psalm 64: 10).

Prayer for Victory: Heavenly Father, you gave your Son victory over those who plotted evil against him and when he cried to you in his agony, you delivered him from the fear of his enemies. May those who suffer with him find refuge in you, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Day 22: “May the meadows cover themselves with flocks, and the valleys cloak themselves with grain; let them shout for joy and sing” (Psalm 65: 14).

Prayer for the Choir: Lord God, joy marks your presence; beauty, abundance, and peace are the tokens of your work in all creation. Work also in our lives, that by these signs we may see the splendour of your love and praise you through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Day 23: “Blessed be God, who has not rejected my prayer, nor withheld his love from me” (Psalm 66: 18).

Prayer for Thanksgiving: God of power and might, you bring your people out of darkness and slavery into light and freedom through the waters of salvation. Receive our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, and keep us always in your steadfast love, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Day 24: “You are my helper and my deliverer; O Lord, do not tarry” (Psalm 70: 6).

Prayer for all Volunteers: Deliver us, Lord, from every evil, and grant us peace in our day. In your mercy keep us free from sin and protect us from all anxiety, as we wait in joyful hope for the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

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Day 25: “My tongue will proclaim your righteousness all day long, for they are ashamed and disgraced who sought to do me harm” (Psalm 71: 24).

Prayer for Lectors: Holy God, be our strength and our salvation, that we may never be ashamed to praise you for your mighty acts. We ask this through Jesus Christ.

Day 26: “And blessed be his glorious name for ever! and may all the earth be filled with his glory. Amen” (Psalm 72: 19).

Prayer for Equity: “O God, bring our nation and all nations to a sense of justice and equity, that poverty, oppression, and violence may vanish and all may know peace and plenty. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ.

Day 27: “The Lord has sworn and he will not recant: ”You are a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.” (Psalm 110: 4)

Prayer for the Clergy: Jesus Christ, King of kings and Lord of lords, born as a man, exalted now on high, priest of the new covenant, judge who will come at the end of time, glory to you for ever and ever.

Day 28: “So he shepherded them with a faithful and true heart and guided them with the skilfulness of his hands” (Psalm 78: 72).

Prayer for the Servers Guild: God of pilgrims, strengthen our faith, we pray. Guide us through the uncertainties of our journey and hold before us the vision of your eternal kingdom, made known to us in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Day 29: “Restore us, O Lord God of hosts; show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved” (Psalm 79: 18).

Prayer for Stewardship: Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ, our good shepherd; you have led us to the kingdom of your Father’s love. Forgive our careless indifference to your loving care for all your creatures and remake us in the likeness of your new and risen life. We ask this in your name.

Day 30: “But Israel would I feed with the finest wheat and satisfy him with honey from the rock” (Psalm 81: 16).

Prayer for Forgiveness: Father, forgive our foolish ways, and feed us always with that living bread, which is given for the life of the world, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

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Day 31: “Arise, O God, and rule the earth, for you shall take all nations for your own” (Psalm 82: 8).

Prayer for the Homeless and Needy: Strength of the weak, Defender of the needy, Rescuer of the poor, deliver us from the power of wickedness, that we may rejoice in your justice now and forever, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Day 32: “O Lord of hosts, happy are they who put their trust in you!” (Psalm 84: 12)

Prayer for fellow Believers: God of pilgrims, teach us to recognize your dwelling-place in the love, generosity, and support of those with whom we share our journey, and help us to worship you in our response to those who need our care; for all the world is your temple and every human heart is a sign of your presence, made known to us in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Day 33: The singers and the dancers will say, “All my fresh springs are in you.” (Psalm 87: 6)

Prayer for God’s Presence: God of eternal light, open our eyes to the vision of your holy city coming down from heaven; make our hearts sensitive to your presence, and our wills eager to join in the comfort and healing you bring to all the world. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

Day 34: Blessed be the Lord for evermore! Amen, I say, Amen. (Psalm 89: 52)

Prayer for Spiritual Renewal: Remember us, gracious God, when we cannot see your way and purpose, and renew in us the joy of your kingdom of light and life. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

Day 35: May the graciousness of the Lord our God be upon us; prosper the work of our hands; prosper our handiwork. (Psalm 90: 17)

Prayer for the Altar Guild: Eternal Father of our mortal race, in Jesus Christ your grace has come upon us. For his sake, prosper the work of our hands until he returns to gladden our hearts forever.

Day 36: “He will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with his truth”. (Psalm 96: 13)

Prayer for God’s Righteousness: We worship you, God of glory, in the beauty of holiness, and we joyfully proclaim your just and righteous rule, established for all, through your Son Jesus Christ the Lord.

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Day 37: “He takes up the weak out of the dust and lifts up the poor from the ashes” (Psalm 113: 6).

Prayer of Adoration: We magnify your name, O Lord, in all times and places. You subdue the arrogant and raise the humble; you feed the hungry and reveal the poverty of wealth. We give thanks for your salvation, made known in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Day 38: “The wicked will see it and be angry; they will gnash their teeth and pine away; the desires of the wicked will perish” (Psalm 112: 10)

Prayer for Parish Staff: God of light, teach us to love each other as you love us, that we may bring peace and joy to the world, and rejoice in the kingdom of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Day 39: “Be exalted, O Lord, in your might; we will sing and praise your power” (Psalm 21: 14).

Prayer for the Nation’s Leaders: Giver of life and source of all blessings, may the leaders of the nations serve your people with justice and protect them from violence, hardship, and exploitation. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, and our King.

Day 40: May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble, the name of the God of Jacob defend you; Send you help from his holy place and strengthen you out of Zion; (Psalm 20: 1-2)

Prayer for Church Wardens and Vestry: God, our hope, and our defence, protect all those who call upon your name, that they may stand upright in the day of trouble, and share in the victory of your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ.