

40 Words for 40 Days: Pauses for Lent | Meditation Guideline:

1. **Stop/Pause/Be Still:** Create space in your mind, time, and body to desire God's presence and listen to His voice.
2. **Meditate on the theme and scriptures for each day during the Lenten season.** Read the scriptures, reflect on them repeatedly, and meditate on what God is revealing to you through His Word.
3. Each day comes with an action suggestion. Follow it and put it into practice. May you encounter and experience God each day.
4. **Spiritual growth is not a solitary journey.** As we pursue the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ, we can share our intimate fellowship with Him with others. In this way, we can encourage one another. You are invited to share your experiences and reflections with fellow brothers and sisters in Christ throughout the Lenten season.

4.13.2025. Palm Sunday

Palm Sunday | Reading : Mark 11:1-11

"As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples, 2 saying to them, 'Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here.

3 If anyone asks you, "Why are you doing this" say, "The Lord needs it and will send it back here shortly." '

4 They went and found a colt outside in the street, tied at a doorway. As they untied it, 5 some people standing there asked, 'What are you doing, untying that colt?' 6 They answered as Jesus had told them to, and the people let them go. 7 When they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks over it, he sat on it. 8 Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread branches they had cut in the fields. 9 Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted, 'Hosanna!' 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!' 10 'Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!' 'Hosanna in the highest heaven!'

11 Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the temple courts. He looked around at everything, but since it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the Twelve. "



Key Verse : Mark 11:9

(Reference : 40 Words for 40 Days: Pauses for Lent, by Trevor Hudson)

40 Days of Fasting & Prayer Guide (7th Week 4/13 ~ 4/20)

There will be moments in our lives as Jesus-followers when we need to take a stand. It might involve standing for faithfulness in our personal relationships, being honest in our business dealings, or acting with integrity in matters of morality. In the wider public arena, it could mean facing issues about inequality between the haves and the have-nots, race and gender inequality, or issues of violence and lack of justice. In these areas and countless others, we can discern what response will most express the greatest command and then act.

This is what Jesus does that first Palm Sunday. He makes his decision to enter Jerusalem. He offers witness to God's kingdom there in the Holy City. He enters the city in such a way that no one will be able to ignore him. He takes on the messianic role, the role foretold by the prophet Zechariah in the Old Testament. He arrives humbly and vulnerably, riding on a colt. This is how Jesus takes his stand, whatever the consequences. He knows that as he does this, he is not alone.

When Jesus rides into Jerusalem amid the cheering crowds, he is saying in effect, "I stand for God's kingdom. Even if I am destroyed, I will be faithful to God and to myself." Jesus can no longer condone the massive structures of evil that surround him. He knows he has to face the evil in the temple and the evil in the world, no matter what happens to him personally. If he does not, he will fail in his calling to be God's Messiah for both Israel and the world. He takes the essential first step in his final action to save all humankind.

Followers of Jesus seek to live their lives as he would. Often Lent is a good time for us to identify those things, both in ourselves and around us, that Jesus would like us to confront. Jesus decides that first Palm Sunday to take a stand for his deepest convictions. Will we do the same? We will need a combination of courage and faith. But we know that we are not on our own; God is with us.

Reflection

When Jesus enters into Jerusalem, it is his highest point in his earthly ministry. Please get into the mind of Jesus to ponder what it means to be entering into the Holy City. What challenges that Jesus would face that leads up to his crucifixion?

Prayer

Heavenly Father! Our Savior Jesus Christ will face great battles after entering the Holy City. Help me to enter into the heart and mind of the Lord and walk with Him on this journey .

Day 35 : 4.14.2025.

Theme : JUDGE | Reading : Matthew 7:1

“Do not judge, or you too will be judge.”

We have the tendency to constantly judge others. Too often we judge others for faults that we struggle with ourselves. Rather than face these things in our own lives, we see them in those around us.

Jesus addresses our judgmental habits head-on in Matthew’s Gospel by saying, “Why do you see the speck in your neighbor’s eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye?” (7:3). Jesus explains that we must first take the log out of our own eye, then we will be able to see the speck in the other person’s eye more clearly.

Lent can be a time to confront the logs in our own eyes, to name them, and to call on the Lord for help removing them. Something beautiful happens when we do this: We become less judgmental, more gentle, and more understanding of the struggles that others face. In a word, we become compassionate.

Daily Practice & Prayer

Write down the name of the log in your eye that you often judge in the lives of those around you. Be as honest as you can. Ask God for the grace and mercy to remove this plank and to deepen your compassion for others who wrestle with it as well.

(Reference : 40 Words for 40 Days: Pauses for Lent, by Trevor Hudson)

Day 36 : 4.15.2025.

Theme : STRANGER | Reading : Matthew 25:35

*“For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat,
I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink,
I was a stranger and you invited me in.”*

Many people in this world feel like they are strangers. We may experience this feeling if we are in situations where we have no genuine connections with other people. This sense of disconnect can happen in our places of work, our church communities, and even our homes.

Significantly, Jesus and the New Testament writers emphasize welcoming the stranger. The writer of Hebrews maintains that when we show hospitality to strangers, we may entertain angels unaware. (See Hebrew 13:2) Not only are we encouraged to make strangers around us feel at home, but we also reminded that Christ comes close to us when we do.

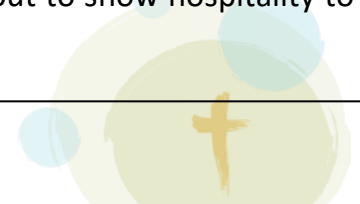
Welcoming strangers is a basic component of discipleship. Acknowledging this make us more aware both of the strangers around us and also motivates us to reach out and welcome them.

Daily Practice

As you go through the day, look for a stranger in your midst—a new colleague at work, a visitor at church, the person who has moved in down the road. Take the initiative to say hello, reach out with an extended hand, and take an interest in this person.

Prayer

Lord, it is hard to come out of my comfort zone to welcome the others, not to mention a stranger. Please help me to see my weakness and give me the courage to breakthrough it. Please fill me with your love, so that I can step out to show hospitality to the people around me.



Day 37 : 4.16.2025.

Theme : BETRAY | Reading : Matthew 26:21

*“And while they were eating, he said,
‘Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me.’ ”*

Few experiences can be more painful than betrayal. Many of us have faced betrayal in our own lives — a romantic partner has an affair, a close friend breaks confidentiality, a business partner deceives us. Such acts of betrayal cut painfully into our souls, often evoking anger and hatred.

In that unholy week leading up to his crucifixion, Jesus also experiences betrayal. Peter denies him. Judas kisses him. His other friends desert him. Because of these betrayals, Jesus’ enemies capture him. From that moment on, Jesus enters his passion and faithfully fulfills his calling as the suffering servant-king.

Could our betrayal also become moments to live more passionately into our calling us followers of the Crucified One? What would it mean for us this Lent to move beyond our anger and hatred toward those who have betrayed us?

Daily Practice

Bring the pain of your betrayals to God today. How is God calling you to live with them? Make a solemn commitment that you will always seek to be faithful to the promises you have made.

Prayer

Heavenly Father! You have commanded us to forgive those who have offended us. I also know that there is no way to break through by relying on my own strength. I pray that You will help me in due time so that I can break free from the bondage of being hurt and betrayed!

(Reference : *40 Words for 40 Days: Pauses for Lent*, by Trevor Hudson)

Day 38: 4.17.2025. Maundy Thursday

Theme : PRUNE | Reading : John 15:2

“He [The Father] cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. ”

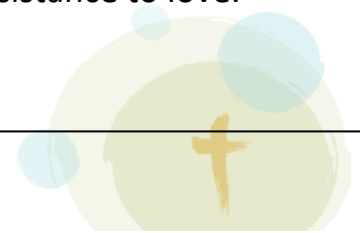
Pruning helps trees bear healthy fruit. It does not make them look more beautiful, but it does make them more fruitful. Unnecessary branches must be pruned, cut off, so that the tree can produce all the fruit it can.

In his striking image of the vine and the branches, Jesus speaks of how our lives need to be pruned by God. Those parts of our lives that lead us to resist Jesus’ way of love have to be stripped away. This pruning is done directly by the vinedresser, the Father, cutting the branches.

This pruning usually occurs when we experience hardship and humiliation. Through difficult times, we are challenged to recognize God’s pruning hand. Only then will we be accepting of God’s cleansing work in our lives instead of resisting it.

Daily Practice & Prayer

Ask God to reveal to you how selfishness and self-centeredness gets expressed in your relationships. Pray for God to gently prune you of your resistance to love.



Day 39 : 4.18.2025. Good Friday

Theme : GETHSEMANE | Reading : Matthew 26:36

“Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, ‘Sit here while I go over there and pray.’ ”

We all have Gethsemane moments. Perhaps we find ourselves in a crisis of some sort or we wrestle with what God wants us to do or we face the diagnosis of a severe illness. Whatever these personal Gethsemanes may look like, they have a way of challenging our trust in God.

For Jesus, his time in the Garden of Gethsemane is a time of lonely prayer before his crucifixion. It is in Gethsemane that he surrenders his life to God. It is where he falls with his face to the ground and prays, “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want” (Matt. 26:39).

May we allow our own Gethsemanes to become opportunities for us to renew our trust and confidence in God’s purpose for our lives.

Daily Practice

Before you go to sleep tonight, slowly make the sign of the cross over your body as an outward sign of your heart’s intention to make Jesus’ prayer of surrender your own in the midst of your Gethsemane moment.

Prayer

Pray slowly on Matthew 26:39 several times : “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want.” Ask God to give your strength to let go ourselves and submit ourselves to His heavenly ordained will.

(Reference : 40 Words for 40 Days: Pauses for Lent, by Trevor Hudson)

Day 40 : 4.19.2025.

Theme : DIE | Reading : John 12:24

“Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.”

In the verse above, Jesus is primarily speaking of his own death. At first his death will appear as a tragedy, but in the end it will be a triumph. His death will be the ultimate victory of the resurrection power of God over the forces of evil, sin, and death.

Through Jesus’ death is unique, he invites his followers to die as well. Like a seed that is planted in the ground and dies, Jesus invites us to die to ourselves in order to bear good fruit. We are asked to lay down our lives in love to be raised to new life.

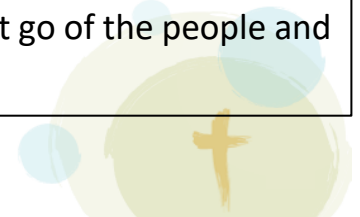
The breathtaking message of Good Friday and Easter Sunday is that life comes out of death. The big question facing us as we journey into the events of the cross and the resurrection is this: What do we need to die to this Easter in order to enter more fully into the new life Christ wants to give us?

Daily Practice

Write down your answer to the question above on a small piece of paper, tear it up, and then bury it in the ground.

Prayer

Luke 9:24 says, “For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it.” Pray this verse and ask God to help you let go of the people and things He wants you to let go of.



4.20.2025. Easter Sunday

Reading : Mark 16:1-8 | Key Verse : Mark 16:6

“When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus’ body. 2 Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb 3 and they asked each other, ‘Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?’ 4 But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away. 5 As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed. 6 ‘Don’t be alarmed,’ he said. ‘You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. 7 But go, tell his disciples and Peter, “He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.” ’ 8 Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid.”

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! This Easter greeting reminds us that God’s action in raising Jesus is the bottom line of our faith. On the third day, after his crucifixion, Mary Magdalene, Mary, mother of James, and Salmone find Jesus’ tomb empty. The love that Jesus proclaims, the love he lives, the love he is, is not defeated by the powers of evil and death. This is breathtakingly good news. No faith could be more tragic, no belief more futile than Christianity without its risen Lord. It would be sad and foolish to base our lives on a dead hero.

The strongest evidence for the Resurrection is the transformed lives of Jesus’ disciples. How else do we explain the sudden transformation that took place in their lives? Within days those frightened and grieving disciples are transformed into bold and courageous witnesses willing to die for their faith.

Something most extraordinary must have taken place for this to have happened. The One whom they follow is raised from the grave, and they encounter him in a way that convinces them he is now living beyond crucifixion.

The Resurrection means much for our lives today. Jesus is present with us as our loving Friend. He is available to each one of us in our struggle with the forces of evil. We too can experience “little Easters” in the midst of those things that make us “die” each day — the betrayal of a friend, the cruelty of a colleague, or even the failure of a dream. Easter reminds us that the risen Christ is always able to bring light and life where there seems to be only darkness and death. What wonderful good news this is! We are indeed Easter people living in a Good Friday world.

We can celebrate this good news : The risen Christ is in our midst. He continues to make available another kind of life to anyone and everyone. He has promised that all those who seek will find. May the words of Paul be our own prayer today : “I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death.” (Phil. 3:10)

Reflection

Another year of Lenten season is about to pass. When you reflect on this year of Lenten period, what speaks to you the most? Any thoughts or ideas that keep coming back to you? Please spend some time on this recurrent theme or idea and ask God what He wants you to receive as a life lesson.