



Meditations for the 40 Days: 2021

Our meditations this year will follow the pattern of short meditations that lead us through the season. The initial section focuses on repentance and turning to the Lord.

OPENING HALF-WEEK:

The initial half-week of the 40 Days is a period to consider what it means to go through a lengthy season of seeking the Lord and to prepare to do it well.

Wed. 2/17 | 2 Cor. 5:20 – 6:2

The appeal of the apostle to repent and take advantage of the acceptable time.

Thu. 2/18 | 1 Kn. 19:1-18

The 40 days of Elijah in the wilderness and at Mt. Horeb, as a pattern for us of a time of seeking the Lord.

Fri. 2/19 | Matt. 9:14-17

The period when we seek the Lord and fast is the time before the bridegroom comes again.

Sat. 2/20 | Ps. 35:1-6, 27-28

A time of seeking the Lord is a time of spiritual warfare, and for this we need God's help.

WEEK ONE:

The first week focuses on repentance, turning towards the Lord, and his will for our lives.

Sun 2/21 | Mk. 1:12-15

Like Moses and Elijah, Jesus spent 40 days in the wilderness as a time of testing before beginning his ministry of calling others to repentance.

Mon. 2/22 | Deut. 30:15-20

Repentance involves a choice, a choice to obey God and so to enter on the way of life and blessing.

Tue. 2/23 | Ps. 32:1-5

Repentance involves the confession of sins and the receiving of forgiveness from God.

Wed. 2/24 | Jon. 3:1-10

The preaching of Jonah to Nineveh, the call to repentance, and the response of those far from God.

Thu. 2/25 | Ps. 32:8-11

Repentance must lead to obedience, which includes the ongoing response to God's commands and guidance.

Fri. 2/26 | Lk. 11:29-32

Jonah in the belly of the whale is a sign and type of Jesus' death and resurrection; faith in the work of Christ makes true repentance possible.

Sat. 2/27 | Deut. 30:11-14

The Lord gives us an accessible and attainable word which allows us to turn to him and obey him.

WEEK TWO:

The second week is a period to focus on obedience and living according to God's will.

Sun. 2/28 | Mk. 9:2-10

The vision of Christ transfigured is both a vision of the glory to come and a source of faith for us on the way.

Mon. 3/1 | Is. 1:18-20

The one who rebels will see only condemnation, but the one who repents and believes will receive forgiveness and blessing.

Tue. 3/2 | Is. 57:15

The man with whom the Lord dwells is the repentant and obedient man.

Wed. 3/3 | Ps. 1:1-2

Obedience comes from a delight in the will of God.

Thu. 3/4 | Ez. 18:30-32

In order to be obedient to the Lord, we need a new heart and a new mind.

Fri. 3/5 | Gen. 22:1-18

The binding of Isaac is an example of obedience, and a type of Jesus' death and resurrection, the sacrifice that brings the blessing of the new covenant.

Sat. 3/6 | Ez. 36:24-28

The Lord gives us a new heart and a new Spirit, and establishes his covenant with us, a covenant of true righteousness.

WEEK THREE:

The third week centers on seeking the Lord and delighting to be in his presence.

Sun. 3/7 | Jn. 2:14-21

Christ cleanses the Temple, showing zeal for the purity of the house in which God is worshipped. This zeal is directed to establishing a people, his body, who worship the Lord in purity.

Mon. 3/8 | Ps. 105:1-6

We are called to seek the Lord, and to seek his presence continually.

Tue. 3/9 | Ps. 84:5-7

Zion is 'the place of God's presence', both now and at the end of the age (Heb. 12:22). To live for Zion is a source of strength and direction for our lives.

Wed. 3/10 | Ps. 16:1-4

God is goodness itself, and true wisdom is to choose him and delight in him and in those who belong to him.

Thu. 3/11 | Ps. 16:5-6

God himself and his kingdom are the inheritance of Christ and those who belong to Christ.

Fri. 3/12 | Ps. 16:7-10

Christ was not held by death, but was raised (Ac. 2:25-27). Those who belong to him can rejoice in the security that comes from living in and with God.

Sat. 3/13 | Ps. 16:11

In God's presence is the joy of victory and the joy of seeing God.

WEEK FOUR:

The fourth week likewise centers on the goodness of being with the Lord, but with a special focus on looking forward to the fullness of being with him in the age to come.

Sun. 3/14 | Jn. 3:14-21

Christ came into the world and died so that the human race might have life, life in the light.

Mon. 3/15 | Rev. 7:15

In the age to come, we will be in God's presence and worship him (note: 'day and night' does not clearly mean that direct worship is all that we will do, though many have understood the passage this way.)

Tue. 3/16 | Rev. 7:16-17

To live in God's presence is to have the fullness of life.

Wed. 3/17 | 1 Pet. 1:13

The coming of the Lord and what he will bring should be our hope even now.

Thu. 3/18 | Rev. 22:3-5

At the end, we will see God and the Lamb, and reign with him.

Fri. 3/19 | Rev. 5:6-10

Here we see revealed the praise of the Lamb who has died and shed his blood, that we might reign with God and worship him.

Sat. 3/20 | Rev. 21:22-23; 22:1-2

At the end, God will be all in all, his glory will fill his creation, and his presence will be life-giving.

WEEK FIVE:

The fifth week centers on the work Christ came to perform by his death and resurrection, and on the spirit in which he accomplished it.

Sun. 3/21 | Jn. 12:20-33

Christ came to give eternal life to those who follow him, but the way to that life is the way of losing one's life.

Mon. 3/22 | Heb. 5:7-10

Obedience is the path Christ took for our salvation, but in this world it means as well the way of suffering.

Tue. 3/23 | Phil. 3:8-14

The disciples of Christ follow in the way that he lived and share in his sufferings.

Wed. 3/24 | Jn. 8:39-47

The conflict Christ was in was a conflict between God and his word on the one side, and this world and the powers behind it on the other.

Thu. 3/25 | Jn. 10:10-18

Christ came to lay down his life for the sheep, caring for them in a way that pleased his Father.

Fri. 3/26 | 1 Pet. 2:19-25

Christ suffered unjustly at the hands of men, trusting to Father, the Lord of all, to vindicate him.

Sat. 3/27 | Jn. 11:45-53

Christ's death was not for his own sake, but for the sake of the nation to which he came to bring life, and for the sake of all the children of God.

WEEK SIX – HOLY WEEK:

The sixth week is Holy Week, and the meditations center on Christ, the righteous servant of God his Father, who offered his life for the sins of the world.

Sun. 3/28 | Zech. 9:9-10

The humble servant of God is the king who will rule the nations.

Mon. 3/29 | Is. 42:1-9

The servant of the Lord is called to be the covenant for the people and the salvation of the nations, and he faithfully gives himself to this task.

Tue. 3/30 | Is. 49:1-6

The servant of the Lord was chosen by God to restore his people to their land, and to bring salvation to the whole human race.

Wed. 3/31 | Is. 50:4-9

The servant of the Lord did not rebel against the suffering that was appointed for him, but trusted in God to vindicate him.

Thu. 4/1 | Is. 52:13–53:12

The Servant of the Lord is punished for the sins of others and makes himself a guilt offering to save them.

Holy Thursday eve (4/1) through Holy Saturday (4/3): the passion narrative from Mark (Mk. 14-15)