



Meditations for the 40 Days: 2019

This year we will read and meditate on two books, Exodus and Hebrews. The passage for each day will be somewhat longer than usual (about a chapter), with a brief commentary offered. The meditations will be centered on the Forty Days, following the normal progression of themes: weeks 1-2, faith and repentance; weeks 3-4, relationship with the Lord; weeks 5-6, redemption. There is also a second passage for each day (usually a New Testament passage) that serves as an application of the main text—this can be used for personal meditation and / or an evening reading in the household.

OPENING HALF-WEEK:

The focus for weeks 1-2 is on the deliverance of the children of Israel from Egypt and their encounter with the Lord on Sinai. Their deliverance is a type of ours, and it provides a rich vein of meditation on our need for a more profound freedom from the bondage of sin and a deeper relationship with the Lord. The readings contain lessons about faith and repentance, about dealing with temptation, and about God's hand on our lives

Wed. 3/6 | Is. 58:1-12

Fasting for a season of seeking the Lord is to be accompanied by change of life and by works of mercy (opening meditation for the season).

Thu. 3/7 | Ex. 1

The bondage of the people of Israel is a type of human bondage to sin (1 Pet. 1:14-18).

Fri. 3/8 | Ex. 2:1-22

God's man prepared: Moses is the man of God chosen for leadership of the people (Heb. 3:2-6; 11:23-26).

Sat. 3/9 | Ex. 2:23 – 3:20

God promises help to his people: God reveals himself to Moses as the one who will intervene to save his people (Is. 43:10-13).

WEEK ONE:

Sun 3/10 | Ex. 5:1 – 6:1

The oppression of Pharaoh: Pharaoh is a type of Satan, ruler of this world; God's action to redeem his people provokes spiritual resistance (Eph. 6:12; Matt. 2:12-15—Herod is also a type of Satan).

Mon. 3/11 | Ex. 6:2-13

God the redeemer: once again God speaks to Moses of his purpose to redeem the children of Israel, so that they might truly be his people (1 Pet. 2:9-10; Rev. 21:1-4).

Tue. 3/12 | Ex. 6:28 – 7:24

The plagues of God's judgment: the 10 plagues are acts of warfare and judgment; God judges Pharaoh and Egypt, condemning them and punishing them for oppressing his people.

Wed. 3/13 | Ex. 10:21 – 11:10

The plagues of God's judgment: God distinguishes between those who belong to him and those who do not; the former are brought to life and light, the latter to darkness and death (Rev. 16:10-11).

Thu. 3/14 | Ex. 12:1-20

The Passover: the Passover lamb was an unblemished offering to God that protected the people and made deliverance possible; Jesus is the true Passover Lamb (Rev. 5:9-12).

Fri. 3/15 | Ex. 12:21-36

The Passover: the blood of the Passover lamb saved the children of Israel from the judgment falling on Egypt, and the blood of Jesus saves us from the judgment coming on the world (1 Pet. 1:18-19).

Sat. 3/16 | Ex. 12:37-51

The Passover: the completion of the Passover is to be celebrated by all those who belong to the people of God, in remembrance of their deliverance (1 Cor. 5:7-8).

WEEK TWO:

Sun. 3/17 | Ex. 13:17 – 14:9

The departure from Egypt: the Lord himself leads his people out in order to make them his own. Christ's departure is the departure of the new human race, from the world of sin to life with God (Lk. 9:31; Ps. 114:1, 2).

Mon. 3/18 | Ex. 14:10-31

The departure from Egypt: by passing through the Sea with the Lord, the children of Israel saw the power of Pharaoh destroyed. Christians see the power of sin destroyed when they are joined to the Lord in baptism (Rom. 6:4-6; Heb. 11:27).

Tue. 3/19 | Ex. 16:1-18, 35

Wandering in the desert: the Lord provided his people with heavenly bread to sustain them as they passed through the desert. The true heavenly bread is Christ (Jn. 6:32-33; Gal. 2:19-20).

Wed. 3/20 | Ex. 17:1-16

Wandering in the desert: the Lord provided his people with water to drink as they passed through the desert, and gave them victory from all attack. Christ provides spiritual water to give life and drive away all enemies (1 Cor. 10:1-4; Jn. 4:14).

Thu. 3/21 | Ex. 18:13-27

Wandering in the desert: the Lord gives governors to his people so that they can keep his law and be a people. He continues to do so in Christ and through his Spirit (Eph. 4:1-3, 11-14; Num. 11:25).

Fri. 3/22 | Ex. 19:1-25; 20:18-20

The covenant on Sinai: the Lord manifested himself to the people, to make a covenant with them and to teach them his fear. He gave us the New Covenant in Christ, making us his people (1 Pet. 1:14-17; 2:9-10).

Sat. 3/23 | Ex. 20:1-17

The covenant on Sinai: the Lord gave his people the 10 commandments, so that they might live with him. Those commandments are written on our hearts in the New Covenant (Jer. 31:33; Matt. 22:37-40).

WEEK THREE:

The meditations for weeks 3-4 will be on the remainder of Exodus and Leviticus: the revelation of God to the people and the establishment of the tabernacle and worship. These are types of God's presence in our lives and in the life of his people. The passages can help us to set our hearts more fully on the Lord and on living in his presence. They conclude with readings from Numbers that point to the need for a fuller redemption.

Sun. 3/24 | Ex. 22:20 – 23:9

The covenant on Sinai: the 10 commandments are displayed more fully through other commandments and instructions that teach us how to love God and our neighbor (Matt. 7:21).

Mon. 3/25 | Ex. 24:1-18

The covenant on Sinai: the covenant is completed by a sacrifice with a meal in which the elders, representing the people, experience the communion with God that the covenant is intended to bring about (Jn. 17:3).

Tue. 3/26 | Ex. 32:1-20

The revelation of God's glory: the people, in Moses' absence, break the covenant and earn God's punishment (Ps. 106:19-23; 1 Cor. 10:6-7, 11).

Wed. 3/27 | Ex. 33:7-11; 33:18 – 34:9; 34:29-35

The revelation of God's glory: the Lord's response to the intercession of Moses and the repentance of the people is the revelation of his grace and his glory (2 Cor. 3:12-13, 15, 18).

Thu. 3/28 | Ex. 34:10-28

The revelation of God's glory: the Lord renews his covenant with his people, teaching them to be a holy people, and to worship God in a way that prefigures the truth to come (Jn. 1:17).

Fri. 3/29 | Ex. 35:4-19; 35:30 – 36:1; 37:1-9

The worship: God revealed his throne in heaven (Ex. 25:19) so that he might establish an earthly place of access to him and of atonement in the midst of the people (Heb. 8:5; Ps. 84:1-2).

Sat. 3/30 | Ex. 40:16-38

The worship: the Lord fills the tabernacle with his presence and dwells in it, as he fills his new covenant temple (Eph. 2:19-22).

WEEK FOUR:

Sun. 3/31 | Lev. 8:1-29; 9:22-24

The worship: a description of the consecration of the priests and of the tabernacle for the worship of God. Christ is the priest of the New Covenant.

Mon. 4/1 | Lev. 16:2-28

The worship: the Day of Atonement was the holiest day, the day of the covering of sins. The crucifixion, resurrection and Ascension fulfil the Day of Atonement (Heb. 9:11-14, 24).

Tue. 4/2 | Lev. 19:1-4, 11-18

The holy life: God's people are to offer pure worship to his glory, and they themselves are to be holy as well. Their life in this world and love of one another manifest the holiness of God (1 Pet. 1:22 – 2:5).

Wed. 4/3 | Num. 11:4-30

The trial: the rebellion of the rabble, typifying the flesh, leads to the outpouring of the Spirit to bring the reign of God among the people and points to the prophetic role of all God's people in the age of grace (Jl. 2:28-29; Ac. 1:8).

Thu. 4/4 | Num. 12:16 – 13:33

The trial: at the moment when the people prepared, the army of the Lord, were sent to take the land, they shrank back (Deut. 1:26, 29-32; Heb. 6:11-12).

Fri. 4/5 | Num. 14:1-25

The trial: those that rebel in unbelief against God fail to inherit the blessing, but God will not forsake his people. Those with faith in him will see the Lord fill the earth with his glory (Heb. 3:7-19; Ps. 103:8-14).

Sat. 4/6 | Num. 20: 1-13; 21:4-9

The trial: the dispensation of Sinai did not succeed in achieving its end of creating a holy people, faithful to the Lord, and needed to be completed by the work of Christ. But even those who have faith in Christ have to take heed lest they fall and do not enter God's rest (1 Cor. 10:6-13; Jn. 3:13-15).

WEEK FIVE:

The meditations for the final two weeks are drawn from the Letter to the Hebrews, which applies Old Testament types and prophecies to the work of Christ, and enables us to focus directly on his death and resurrection. (From Holy Thursday through Holy Saturday, we will also meditate on the Passion according to Luke.)

Sun. 4/7 | Heb. 1:1 – 2:4

True salvation is given to us by the Son of God, who is superior to the angels (who mediated the law) (Ps. 2:7-9).

Mon. 4/8 | Heb. 2:5-18

The true glorification of man comes through the Son who became one of us, so that he might be the great High Priest (Ps. 8:4-6).

Tue. 4/9 | Heb. 3:1-19

It is Christ who is over God's house as a son, and who therefore gives us the salvation the Israelites failed to obtain in the wilderness, provided we keep our faith in him (Jer. 17:5-13).

Wed. 4/10 | Heb. 6:9-20

Jesus' high priesthood, of the order of Melchizedek, is established both by a promise and an oath, so that we might have a sure hope in him (Gen. 22:9-19).

Thu. 4/11 | Heb. 7:1-10

Melchizedek is a type of the priest whose priesthood replaces the Levitical priesthood (Gen. 14:17-20).

Fri. 4/12 | Heb. 7:11-28

Our priest is the Son made perfect forever, who has an eternal priesthood (Ps. 110).

Sat. 4/13 | Heb. 8:1-13

The priesthood of Christ is enacted on the better promises of the New Covenant, and so attains God's purposes more fully (Ez. 36:24-26; Jer. 31:31-34).

WEEK SIX – HOLY WEEK:

Holy Thursday through Holy Saturday: Read the passion narrative from Luke (Lk. 22-23).

Sun. 4/14 | Heb. 10:1-18

The sacrifice of Christ attains the forgiveness of sin and our sanctification (Jer. 31:31-34).

Mon. 4/15 | Heb. 10:19-39

Having obtained such great gifts, we need to persevere in hope, awaiting the judgment of God (Heb. 2:3-4).

Tue. 4/16 | Heb. 12:1-7

We should run the race with perseverance, with our eyes on Jesus, who ran it before us and underwent suffering on our behalf (Is. 35).

Wed. 4/17 | Heb. 12:18-29

We have already attained to a share in the life of the age to come through Christ; this is the substance, the Law was the shadow (Deut. 5:22-33).

Thu. 4/18 | Heb. 4:14 – 5:10

The Priesthood of Christ: Jesus is the great High Priest who suffered as an obedient son, so that he might be the source of eternal salvation for us.

Fri. 4/19 | Heb. 9:1-28

The sacrifice of Christ: Christ entered the heavenly sanctuary as our priest and presented his blood which takes away our sins.

Sat. 4/20 | Heb. 4:1-13

The rest of Christ: the death of Christ obtains for us the true Sabbath rest, rest from sin and Satan, and the life of the age to come, in which God brings the work of creation to perfection.