



Meditations for Lent 2026

(from SW cycle 5)

In this new fifth cycle of our Lenten 40 Days readings, we will read the Letter of James and Paul's Letter to the Romans. The readings for Ash Wednesday and Sundays follow the Lectionary readings for those days.

The readings are intended to be somewhat longer to give ample room for meditation, but households may decide to read only a portion of the daily reading in the morning prayer room.

OPENING HALF-WEEK:

Ash Wed 02/18 | Jl. 2:12-18

A time of seeking the Lord is a time of turning to him, of repentance, and of humbling ourselves before God.

Thu. 02/19 | Jas. 1

In a series of short exhortations, James presents the realities of life in Christ, grounded in God's word which we are meant to put into action.

Fri. 02/20 | Jas. 2

James develops two topics: how love of the brethren is meant to mark our lives, and how faith and works are meant to go together.

Sat. 02/21 | Jas. 3

Two further topics are raised: the need to control our speech (our tongues), and the invitation to receive and live by the wisdom that comes from God.

WEEK ONE:

Sun. 02/22 | Matt 4:1-11

Jesus sought God his Father for forty days in the wilderness in preparation for his ministry, and his faith and obedience were strengthened by testing.

Mon. 02/23 | Jas. 4

James calls us to friendship with God and the reception of his grace, and at the same time to not speak evil against our brothers but humble ourselves before them.

Tue. 02/24 | Jas. 5

Closing exhortations: James outlines the practice of Christian life as we wait for the return of the Lord and the coming of his kingdom.

Wed. 02/25 | Rom 1:1-16

Paul opens by outlining 'the gospel of God' that he serves, and identifies the 'righteousness of God' through faith as his key initial theme.

Thu. 02/26 | Rom 1:17-32

This is Paul's indictment of the human race apart from God: failing to acknowledge God, the world has fallen by stages into darkness.

Fri. 02/27 | Rom 2:1-11

Paul turns to show how those who condemn others for their sin are themselves culpable before God and will be judged impartially, both Jew and Greek.

Sat. 02/28 | Rom 2:12-29

All will be judged, whether by the revealed law of God or by the law written on the heart. There is no boasting for the Jews if they are not circumcised in heart.

WEEK TWO:

Sun. 03/01 | Matt 17:1-9

The transfiguration gave Christ's disciples a vision of his glory and of who they were following, so that they might be prepared for what was to come.

Mon. 03/02 | Rom 3:1-20

Paul recognizes advantages given to the people of Israel, but in the end because all are under the power of sin, Jew and Gentile alike stand under condemnation and need the righteousness of God that comes through faith.

Tue. 03/03 | Rom 3:21-31

God has revealed his righteousness in Jesus Christ: both Jew and Gentile are justified by faith and both can boast only in the grace of God.

Wed. 03/04 | Rom 4:1-12

Paul puts forward Abraham as the paradigm of one who was justified before God by hearing God's word in faith.

Thurs. 03/05 | Rom 4:13-25

Abraham believed in God and hoped in God ('in hope he believed against hope') that God would fulfill his promises, and so was reckoned as righteous before God.

Fri. 03/06 | Rom 5:1-11

Paul develops his account of the gospel by showing how our justification in Christ gives us a hope based on God's love poured into us through the Holy Spirit.

Sat. 03/07 | Rom 5:12-21

Paul contrasts the old and the new Adam (Adam and Christ), showing how Christ restores and fulfills all that was lost through Adam's sin.

WEEK THREE:

Sun. 03/08 | John 4:5-42

The Lord brings the gift of God, life in Jesus and worship in Spirit and in truth, to those who receive him

Mon. 03/09 | Rom 6:1-11

We have been made new in Christ, united to Christ's own death and resurrection, so that we might 'walk in newness of life'.

Tue. 03/10 | Rom 6:12-23

Christ has redeemed us, not so that we may continue a life of sin, but so that we might live righteously before him. Even now we receive and live by the 'eternal life' that is in Christ.

Wed. 03/11 | Rom 7:1-12

Paul explains that the law of Moses is holy but cannot deliver us from the power of sin, and so we are no longer 'under the law' but under the power of grace.

Thurs. 03/12 | Rom 7:13-25

The cause of our spiritual death was not the law but the power of sin living within us. The law, however, cannot deliver us from sin but only expose it; it is through Christ Jesus that we are free from the power of indwelling sin.

Fri. 03/13 | Rom 8:1-13

Paul describes the contrast between the 'flesh' and 'the Spirit'. Because we are in Christ we are no longer under the power of the flesh and are called to walk in the new life of the Spirit.

Sat. 03/14 | Rom 8:14-27

The great revelation: we are sons of God, children of God and fellow heirs with Christ, who can call upon the Father by the power of the Spirit within us, awaiting the fullness of the redeemed world in eternal life.

WEEK FOUR:

Sun. 03/15 | John 9:1-41

Christ anoints the blind so that they can truly see; they receive light from being joined to the Anointed One, who is the light of the world.

Mon. 03/16 | Rom 8:28-39

Paul concludes this magnificent chapter by pointing to God's providential care of the faithful, from his eternal foreknowledge to the goal of bringing us to final glory. And nothing in the created order can separate us from the love of God in Christ.

Tue. 03/17 | Rom 9:1-18

Paul wrestles in this three-chapter exposition to understand how God remains faithful to his promises to Israel while making sense of the fact that many in Israel have rejected Christ. Through a meditation on the Scripture (the OT), Paul shows how the Lord God is using the rejection of Israel to work out his ultimate purpose of bringing both Jew and Gentile to Christ.

Wed. 03/18 | Rom 9:19-33

Paul shows, from the OT Scriptures, how in God's providence Israel has stumbled, enabling the Gentiles to enter Christ's saving work.

Thurs. 03/19 | Rom 10:1-13

Christ is the end and goal of the law. Through a commentary on Deut 30:11-14, Paul shows how God is working his plan to bring both Jew and Gentile into the full righteousness of God through faith in Christ.

Fri. 03/20 | Rom 10:14-21

Paul, finding in the OT the mandate to preach the gospel, declares that the gospel has been proclaimed to Israel but that it did not meet with faith in many of those who heard, while the gospel at the same time has gone out to all the nations.

Sat. 03/21 | Rom 11:1-12

Paul recognizes in Jewish believers like himself the fulfillment of God's promise to Israel, while at the same time recognizing that Israel's hardness of heart has led providentially to the acceptance of the gospel among the nations.

WEEK FIVE:

Sun. 03/22 | John 11:1-45

Christ himself is the resurrection and the life; those who unite themselves to him through faith receive resurrection life from him.

Mon. 03/23 | Rom 11:13-24

Paul cautions Gentile believers in Christ (the grafted-in branches) not to boast over the fallen root of Israel, but to stand firm in their faith in Christ, recognizing that they have been grafted into Israel (and Israel's promise) through faith.

Tue. 03/24 | Rom 11:25-36

Paul sees in this a providential working of God to bring both Jew and Gentile to faith, underlining the election of Israel that is irrevocable and the time to come when 'all Israel shall be saved'.

Wed. 03/25 | Rom 12:1-8

New life in Christ is meant to lead to a transformation of the mind and the offering of our whole lives to God in spiritual worship. Paul underlines the various gifts distributed in the body of Christ.

Thurs. 03/26 | Rom 12:9-21

Paul offers here the many qualities and practices that should mark the Christian community: an exhortation to holy living.

Fri. 03/27 | Rom 13:1-14

Paul speaks in this chapter of our proper relationship to governing authorities, to our love of neighbor in fulfillment of the law, and to rejecting the world that we may be ready for the Lord's return.

Sat. 03/28 | Rom 14:1-12

Paul counsels how to live together with brethren who have differing convictions regarding Christian practices: we ought to bear with one another rather than condemn one another.

WEEK SIX – HOLY WEEK:

Sun. 03/29 | Matt 21:1-11

Matthew's account of Palm Sunday: Jesus enters Jerusalem publicly and triumphantly, riding on a donkey (Zech 9:9) as the promised son of David.

Mon. 03/30 | Rom 14:13-23

Paul continues his counsel to bear with one another on questions of food and drink. We are to hold to our own convictions (as Paul does) while at the same ensuring that our brother does not stumble because of our practice.

Tue. 03/31 | Rom 15:1-13

Paul concludes his counsel on bearing with one another by underlining the importance of hospitality, especially the welcoming of the nations into the Christian community.

Wed. 04/01 | Rom 15:14-33

Paul revisits his ministry to the Gentiles, expressing his deep desire to visit the believers in Rome, and asking for their prayers and help for his ongoing ministry.

Thurs. 04/02 | Rom 16:1-27

Paul concludes the letter with lengthy greetings to the church in Rome from his apostolic team, and calls the Roman Christians to stand for peace and to resist the work of Satan.

Good Fri. 04/03 | Passion in Matthew (A)

Reading/meditation on Matthew 26-27 (Thurs. evening through Saturday)

Holy Sat. 04/04 | Passion in Matthew (B)

Continued