



And He shall
REIGN
Forever and EVER

Introduction to Lent

O Lord and Master of my life!

Take from me the spirit of sloth, faint-heartedness, lust of power and idle talk.

But give me rather the spirit of chastity, humility, patience and love to my servant.

*Yea, O Lord and King! Grant me to see my own errors and not to judge my brother;
for thou art blessed unto ages of ages. Amen.*

—A COMMON FOURTH-CENTURY PRAYER OF LENT FROM ST. EPHREM THE SYRIAN

Lent is about the Gospel. It is a time to narrow the focus of the Church to the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, to repent and believe the Good News of the Kingdom.

The season of Lent lasts approximately 40 days, excluding Sundays, between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday. The 40 days have obvious biblical parallels in the flood narrative (Gen. 6-8), the giving of the Law to Moses on Sinai (Exod. 24:12-18), Elijah's journey to Mount Horeb (1 Kings 19:1-12) and Jesus' fasting and temptation in the wilderness (Matt. 4:1-11, Mark 1:9-12, Luke 4:1-13).

Originally a preparation period for those desiring to be baptized, Lent eventually became embedded into Christian tradition as a season for the Church to symbolically follow Christ into the wilderness. It is a period to empty ourselves of lesser things so that we might be filled with the greater things of the Gospel.

This guide has been specifically designed for our 2018 theme; **“and He shall reign forever and ever.”** (Revelation 11:19). Each study will provide questions based on the weekly sermon that can be used for group discussion and/or personal reflection. In addition, an Old Testament text has been added to broaden your understanding of God as King and His coming Kingdom.

The Kingdom of God is a theme that runs throughout all of Scripture and was the primary message Jesus preached. And yet, in spite of so much emphasis, many Christians are still confused about the Kingdom and struggle to relate its reality to their everyday life.

Over the next 7 weeks, it's our prayer that the Good News of the Kingdom will bring us a greater joy about the days we are living in and a more hopeful anticipation about what is still to come.

Each weekend, as you hear the sermon and read the passage provided consider journaling your reflections on these three questions.

1. What do these passages reveal about Jesus as King and His everlasting Kingdom?
2. What do these passages reveal about how I understand the world?
3. How does God want me to respond as a citizen of His Kingdom?

Consider joining with friends during lent to grow deeper in Christ!