

# **Lent and its significance**

March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021 @ Concord Church

**Bible Readings:** Luke 18:1-8; 2-Chrinicles 7:11-18; Romans 8:5-9

**Lent** is traditionally a period of fasting and penitence

Lent is a significant season in the year for Christians – a time of solemnity and self-reflection where they confess their failings and resolve to live a more godly life based on the teachings of Jesus Christ. It lasts for just over six weeks leading up to Easter.

Lent, as we now know it, has its origins about 900 years after Jesus. There was international agreement that there should be a season of prayer and seeking forgiveness lasting 40 days plus Sundays – leading up to Easter Sunday. The significance of the time period was that immediately before he began his ministry, Jesus spent 40 days in the desert reflecting on the future of his life.

The last week of Lent is Holy Week, which commemorates the final days before Jesus' execution on a cross. It begins with Palm Sunday which marks the day Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey. It was a day of triumph when crowds of followers and supporters waved palm branches and laid them on the ground in front of him. In many churches, Christians are given small palm crosses to remember the day. These are the crosses that are burnt the following year to provide ashes for Ash Wednesday.

The need for the Spiritual revival in the present time is beyond question. Lent season provides us that opportunity. We need to audit our Christian Life and create a discipline whereby we can read Bible prayerfully, listen to reverently, receive believingly and obey implicitly. The Bible is the instrument of regeneration, the means of sanctification and the channel of edification to the believers in every part of the earth.

It is bread to feed, light to search, water to cleanse; the secret of growth, the source of strength, the shield of preservation and the sword of victory.

Read it *regularly, connectedly, consecutively*. Give your heart and mind the whole field of Scripture, Christ in type and prophecy is found in the Old Testament; Christ on earth, in life, in death and in glory is found in the New Testament. The Bible is from God. It is divinely inspired, has been miraculously guarded, is of supreme authority, all-sufficient and eternal, the standard of doctrine, a channel of blessing and the rule of life for every believer.

## **Characteristics of God's Word**

1. The Word of life (Philippians 2:16)—To be held forth
2. The Word of reconciliation (2-Corinthians 5:19)—To be proclaimed
3. The Word of salvation (Acts 28:26)—To be heard
4. The Word of truth (Ephesians 1:13)—To be received
5. The Word of faith (Romans 10:8)—To be believed

6. The Word of wisdom (1-Corinthians 12:8)—To be ministered
7. The Word of faithfulness (Titus 1:8-9)—To be held fast

### **Symbols of the Word of God**

1. A Mirror to show us ourselves (James 1:23)
2. A Hammer to break the will (Jeremiah 23:29)
3. A Fire to melt the heart (Jeremiah 23:29)
4. A Sword to pierce the conscience (Hebrews 4:12)
5. A Seed to quicken the soul (1-Peter 1:23)
6. A Light to show the path (Psalm 119:105)

### **Names used for the Scriptures/Word of God**

1. Word (James 1:21-23; 1-Peter 2:2 )
2. Word of God (Luke 11:28; Hebrews 4:12)
3. Word of Christ (Colossians 3:16)
4. Word of truth (James 1:18)
5. Holy Scriptures (Romans 1:2; 2-Timothy 3:15)
6. Scripture of truth (Daniel 10:21)

In the passage that we just read (Luke 18:1-8) Jesus is concerned that His followers learn to be consistent and diligent in their prayer-lives, so that they can fully accomplish God's plans & purposes for their lives. Jesus is making a point about faith and persistence in prayer life. We learn number of important things from this parable of Jesus Christ:

1. Prayer is our means of communicating our concerns to God—we must keep praying about all things until Jesus returns (VV7-8; Rom 12:12; Eph 6:18; Col 4:2; 1-The 5:17).
2. In this life, we will face injustice (V5)—our main adversary is Satan (1-Pet5:8). Prayer can protect us from the evil one (Matt 6:13).
3. In our prayers, we should cry out against Sin & injustice and ask God to demonstrate His perfect justice (v7). Our requests must be accompanied by a willingness to listen to God's direction and to do what He tells us.
4. Steadfast prayers show our faith and trust in God. God is willing to answer our prayers but he does want us to learn to depend on Him more and to take an active role in His plans.
5. In the coming days before Christ's return, there will be increased Satanic and demonic opposition to the prayers of God's faithful people (1-Tim 4:1). Many will give up a persistent prayer life (Matt 13:22 & Mk 4:19). This will be because of Satan's schemes and the pleasures of this world.

Let us during this season of Lent, be mindful of these dangers and be diligently committed to strengthen our Spiritual Life. Let us invite JESUS CHRIST in our situations to come, help and support us in our spiritual growth.