



LENT

Bible Reading Initiative 2025



The word “Lent” originates from the “lengthening” of daylight hours, and traditionally has offered a time of reflection and prayer, often accompanied by fasting or other spiritual disciplines. Widely known as covering “40 days”, Lent times actually vary depending on church tradition and location. So why 40 days? Well, we remember that the rain fell for 40 days in the time of Noah’s flood; Moses stayed on Mount Sinai 40 days; Jonah gave the people of Ninevah 40 days to repent; and above all, Jesus spent 40 days in the desert before beginning his ministry. Others make reference to the 40 weeks of pregnancy as a period expecting new birth. Whatever and however we got here, Lent offers a set time to be intentional in growing as disciples, and so provides us with a wonderful opportunity to commit, as a whole church, to reading the Bible together as we prepare for Easter.

Traditionally, Sundays are not counted in Lent as they remain days of celebration, but for consistency, our readings will include all the Sundays. A variety of people from within the church will offer a brief reflection on each of the selected readings, and you can then access these weekly through OddBods, on our website (bodminlightandlife.co.uk), or by collecting a paper copy on each preceding Sunday.

Join us as we explore God’s word together! Welcome to the Lent Bible Reading Initiative!

DAY ONE: Ash Wed 5th March 2025

Reading: Genesis 1:26-31

Day Six, and God has really established some momentum by now! The world having been created, so things reach their peak with the creation of human beings. And these simple but profound words tell us much about both how God sees us, and how we should see ourselves.

First, we are created *in God’s image* (v27). Maybe not in looks, but in character! We too have the capacity to love, to create, to transform. We are not “distant relatives” but rather an expression of the very Godhead itself, and intimately linked to our Heavenly Father.

Secondly, *God blessed them* (v28). “Blessing” is one of those words that can roll off our tongue all too readily, but what does it really mean? Here it means *provision*; it means *purpose*; and it means *participation* in the very things of God.

And finally, we see that *it was very good* (v31). Previous days have brought results which God judged to be “good” – this one is different. The fact is that God delights in human beings. He delights to be in relationship with us. Our Creator God delights in you!

Why not use these three simple thoughts to ponder again the significance of who God has made you, and how he regards you. How can you both receive afresh, and spread that “blessing” today?

Jon Langford

DAY TWO: Thurs 6th March 2025

Reading: 1 Samuel 16:7

I was, funnily enough, always a little fella when I was growing up. Alongside my vertical challenges, I was also quite shy, believe it or not! Yet I loved acting, and in fact, at the age of 9, together with a couple of friends, I formed my very own theatre company. People were always amazed when this rather shy little chap stood on the stage and was transformed into a confident performer. Yet growing up, these times on stage were very important to me. I felt alive! I felt that the real me came through (albeit acting as someone else!). The real me emerged from within.

We are all familiar with the phrase, “Don’t judge a book by its cover,” but as God’s people this should apply to the way we regard each other, and indeed, all those around us. How quickly we make judgements of others (less than a second on first impression, apparently)! And then we are confronted with passages like this one from 1 Samuel as the prophet selects David the Shepherd Boy to be David the King of all Israel. God is clear. He looks at the inner person. He knows our heart (Psalm 139:1), and He knows our potential in his hands. Even the prophet was in danger of missing this.

Two things emerge for me today. First, let’s be slow to judge others on their outward appearance, and instead seek God’s (inner) perspective on those around us, remembering, as we saw yesterday, that *all* are made in His image. And secondly, let’s give ourselves some slack. Let’s recognise that God has made us all to be different. Let’s not limit ourselves by our outward appearances, but let’s allow God to remind us of our real (inner) selves: the selves He has loving formed and sculpted. Perhaps then we, and others, might find ourselves truly alive – whatever stage we find ourselves performing on.

Jon Langford

DAY THREE: Fri 7th March 2025

Reading: 2 Chronicles 7:14

This little gem of a verse appears as Solomon completes the Temple for the Lord. Its actual context is God saying that when he seems distant, his people should seek him honestly, humbly and fervently.

So what do we learn? Well, if we want to experience his blessing, God says that his people must stop sinning, turn from their self-centeredness, pray, and give their desires over to his will. Great words! Great sentiment! But what does this really look like today?

Well, today this is a challenge to each one of us, especially in a “Google” world which expects an instant response. God asks for a consistent and heart-felt cry from his people that his will might be done. And his promised response is two-fold: He will both “forgive their sin” and “heal their land”. Think about that for a moment. Imagine what it would be like to experience that combination of personal and national renewal, where God reigns. Imagine!

The secret, revealed to Solomon, is ours to share. In humility we need to put ourselves right with God (yep, even those bits we don’t admit to *anyone!*), and to consistently and faithfully seek him, and him alone. But now for the reality bit. What do you need to put right with the Lord today? And in what way can you seek him as you go about your routine today? For then his Kingdom will be just that little bit closer.

Jon Langford

DAY FOUR: Sat 8th March 2025

Reading: Psalm 62

In the 1st verse, the NIV says, 'my soul finds rest in God' and the ESV says, 'my soul waits in silence'. How beautiful to start reading in this psalm that we can relax and let God into our thoughts and beings.

The 1st and 5th verses are similar. The 5th verse is like a reminder for us, before going off to thinking about other things, that we can 'rest' and 'wait in silence'. Easy to say but at times very difficult to get that 'away space' and to not be distracted! Maybe it is time to think about getting into a quiet space today?

The 2nd and 6th verses are also the same. They remind us that God is our Rock – solid and securely fixed, and salvation comes from Him alone. A fortress is an amazing picture. We are surrounded by Him and protected. Other words leap out – 'trust', 'hope', 'refuge'. 'power'. 'unfailing love'. Such beauty and depth are found in this one psalm. Take a moment to think on these words.

All these verses describe what is going on at this particular time in David's life. His use of plain *language* encourages us to use plain *words* to tell God what is going on in our lives that is troubling us. And notice that these words are encased with the adoration of God - the descriptions of what is going on in David's life are encased between the descriptions of God. Today, may we ponder in the silence, and rest to hear the Holy Spirit speak to our whole being in Him. Take time out today to really relax and soak up the beauty and majestic descriptions of who our God is once again, and tell Him what is troubling you.

Fay Lewry

DAY FIVE: Sun 9th March 2025

Reading: Psalm 91:1-2

These two verses can really help us to reflect, this Sunday. We are the 'whoever' (v1) that believe and trust in Him. What a delight to dwell in the shelter of God! It is a place to find safety and know that we are being protected.

Life, though, brings many sorrows and pain. These verses remind us that no matter what is happening in our changing world, God stays the same and is still in every situation. He is our refuge and fortress. In the Old Testament, God made provisions for people to go to a city of refuge, a place where they could be saved from people wanting to get revenge for a crime that someone may or may not have committed. May you find refuge today in any trials that you may be going through. Let Him come near to you, so that you can dwell in His protection.

The Hebrew word for God in the first verse is *Shaddai*, which means God Almighty or All Sufficient One. God isn't just enough for us but is *all-sufficient* for us. We can put our trust and hope in Him for He is the One and Only True God. Let us pray today that our God will help many 'whoever' ones in lands where there is persecution, unrest and atrocities just because they believe in God Almighty, El Shaddai. And let's pray that we, too, would know his all-sufficient love for us afresh.

Fay Lewry