

# Lenten and Easter Bible Study



Feb 11

Feb 18

Feb 25

Mar 4

Mar 11

Mar 18

Mar 25



# Let's start with a prayer

Holy Father,

Help us to submit ourselves more fully to Your divine will for our lives in our 40-day Lenten journey to repentance and spiritual cleansing in preparation for the celebration of Your Son's glorious Resurrection on Easter Sunday. We pray that this Lenten journey, Father, brings about a change in our lives that leaves us, at the end of the journey, more committed to our faith and less drawn to the attractions of this earthly existence. As we begin our study of Jesus' last journey to Jerusalem, help us, Lord, to follow in His footsteps by denying selfish worldly interests and by humbly showing our gratitude to You through acts of charity, self-sacrifice, and service to the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. We pray in the name of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.



# 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent

## Prayers



### Collect:

By your help, we beseech you, Lord our God, may we walk eagerly in that same charity with which, out of love for the world, your Son handed himself over to death.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

### Prayer over the people:

Bless, O Lord, your people, who long for the gift of your mercy, and grant that what, at your prompting, they desire they may receive by your generous gift.

Through Christ our Lord.

✠



# Scripture Reading:



## Fifth Sunday in Lent

*Jerimiah 31: 31-34*

*Psalms 51: 1-2; 10-11, 12-13*

*Hebrews 5: 7-9*

*John 12: 20-33*

## **Themes:**

- **Covenant**
- **Penance**
- **Death / Resurrection**







## Prophet Jerimiah (*Jerimias*)

- Lived 650 BC to 570BC
- Remained in Jerusalem after the fall in 597BC



“The days are surely coming, says the Lord,  
when I will make a **new covenant**  
with the house of Israel and the house of  
Judah.

It will not be like the covenant that I made  
with their fathers when I took them by the  
hand  
to bring them out of the land of Egypt —  
a covenant that they broke,  
though I was their **husband**,  
says the Lord.

But this is the covenant  
that I will make with the house of Israel after  
those days, says the Lord:  
I will put my law within them,  
and I will write it on their hearts;  
and I will be their God, and they shall be my  
people.

No longer shall they teach one another, or say  
to each other,

“Know the Lord,”  
for they shall all know me,  
from the least of them to the greatest, says  
the Lord;  
for **I will forgive their iniquity,**  
and remember their sin no more.”

## Jerimiah 31: 31-34





## Covenant Language

"I took them by the hand" - Imagery of the "Father" leading his children.

"Husband" - Imagery of an "espousal relationship" with Israel.

"New covenant" - Luke 22:20 "And so with the cup, when supper was ended, This cup, he said, is the **new testament**, in my blood which is to be shed for you."

❑ Hebrew: "*Berit*"

❑ Latin: "*Testamentum*"

❑ Greek: "*Dia theke*" - refers to a "gift" out of love that creates relationship of family.

-It is the will of God that establishes an ordinance – Cardinal J. Ratzinger.

What is the Gift? It is Christ himself.



# Jerimiah Prophesized...

The words of this prophecy are central to Jeremiah's ministry and profoundly impact the New Testament and Christian teaching. The promised "New Covenant" is more than a political or national restoration of Israel and Judah's divided kingdom. It will bring about a universal, spiritual restoration of all God's covenant people in a new and eternal covenant ([Jer 31:1, 3-4, 7-8, 34](#); [32:40](#); [Heb 13:20](#)) in which all nations will come to know God and His gift of salvation through the Redeemer-Messiah. God the Son ([Lk 2:30-32](#); [Mt 28:19-20](#)).."

- ❑ The prophecy presents the promise of the New Covenant in two parts:
  - Part I describes the Old Sinai Covenant that Israel's sins have broken (verse 32).
  - Part II speaks forcefully of the New Covenant, which will forgive sins and is everlasting (verses 33-34).



The promised New Covenant also has three key characteristics:

- It is "new," and unlike the "old," dependent on external acts of obedience. It will bring about an interior, heart-transforming change. It is not written on stone but the hearts of believers (verse 33).
- It is "new" because no previous covenant will be able to compare with it. The New Covenant is definitive and will not be superseded; it is eternal (verse 34).
- It is "new" in that sins are forgiven not through animal sacrifice but by the atoning sacrifice of God the Son Himself.

Jesus' New Covenant declares the fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecy ([Heb 8:13](#); [10:8-10](#)). His Passion will call together the dispersed children of God as prophesied by Isaiah ([Is 66:18-21](#)). It will also gather in the Gentiles as prophesied by Simeon at Jesus' Temple dedication ([2:32](#)). But unlike the Old Sinai covenant ratified in the blood of sacrificed animals ([Ex 24:3-8](#)), Jesus instituted this New Covenant in His Blood.





At the Last Supper, He told those assembled, *"this cup is the new covenant in my blood"* ([Lk 22:20](#); repeated by Paul in [1 Cor 15:25](#)). He accomplished fulfilling the old Sinai Covenant and the inauguration of the new as He shed His blood on the altar of the Cross. In one of His last statements from the Cross, Jesus pronounced the Old Covenant "fulfilled/finished" ([Jn 19:30](#)). The Holy Spirit baptized the New Covenant community of the faithful at Pentecost, fifty days after Jesus' Ascension. The New Covenant community spread the gospel to:

- Jews
- Gentiles

([Jer 31:34](#)), forming a holy New Covenant people made up of Jews and Gentiles and making them one, not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit of God.







Prophet Nathan confronts King David.



## Psalms 51

One of the Seven  
“Penitential” Psalms.



# Psalm 51: 1-2; 10-11; 12-13



**"Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me · from my sin.**

**Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me.**

**Restore to me the joy of your salvation and sustain in me a willing spirit. Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you."**



# Psalm 51 David's Confession



## The Chiasm in Psalm 51:2



This verse contains four consecutive rhyming terms in Hebrew, each ending with the first-person singular (me/my):

<i>Cabiseni</i>	<i>meaoni</i>	<i>v'mechatati</i>	<i>tah'reni</i>
Wash me	from my guilt	and from my sin	cleanse me

Literary structure is a Chiasm:

- ❑ used on ancient writing to emphasize a point.
- ❑ requires forethought – “examine of conscience”



## Lament of a Repentant Sinner

This psalm, attributed to David, is the most famous of the seven Penitential Psalms (Ps 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, and 143).

- The psalmist expresses his heartfelt contrition for his sins and his deeply felt desire to reconcile himself with the Lord. He begins his prayer by acknowledging that he is a sinner, and he asks God to take away his sins that have damaged his relationship with his Lord (verse 3-4).
- The focus of verses 12-13 is on God's grace. More than simply wiping the slate clean of his confessed transgressions, the psalmist desires an intimate relationship with God. He seeks a profound change of heart, similar to the relationship between God and His people described in Jeremiah 31:33-34 in the First Reading (written five centuries after David).

He asks God to restore him with His own Spirit so he will have the joy of coming before God's Divine Presence in the Liturgy of Temple worship and to have a place in the future promise of salvation. Restoration to fellowship with God also gives him the authority he needs to teach other sinners about God's grace and mercy and to encourage them to repent and return to fellowship with the Lord God (verses 14-15)







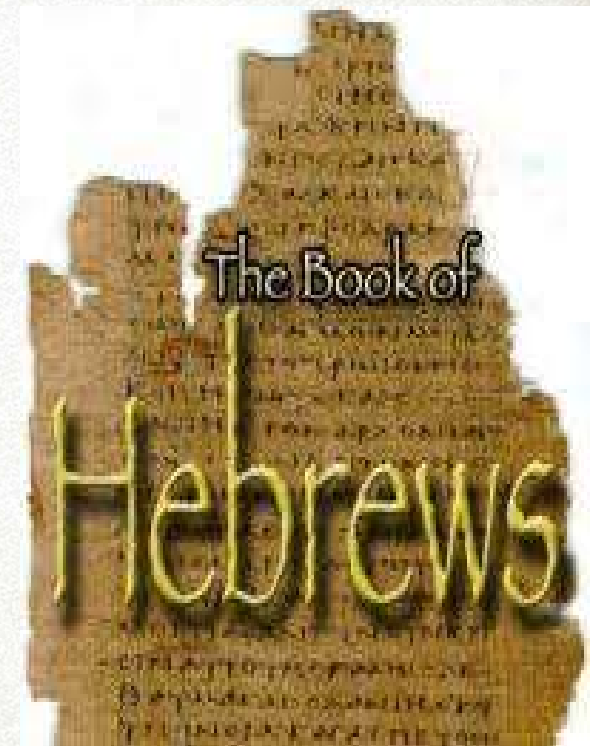
# Letter to the Hebrews



Date: AD 70

Author: Paul? - Or ?

Language: Greek





# Hebrews 5: 7-9



**"In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission.**

**Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him."**



## Jesus the Obedient Son.

The unknown author provides a concise summary of Jesus' life on earth. St. Cyril of Alexandria wrote that Jesus "offered his life as a model of saintly existence to be used by earthly beings; he took on the weaknesses of humanity, and what was his purpose in doing this? That we might truly believe that he became man, although he remained what he was, namely God" (*Letter to Euopitus, Anathema*, 10).

Jesus came in the flesh to redeem fallen humanity. Concerning Jesus' prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, St. Paul writes: *he offered prayers and supplications with loud cries and tears to the one who was able to save him from death*. Paul continues in verse 7 by saying that the Father heard His prayer, and God's answer was "submit in obedience." The Son's response was *"not my will Father but Yours"* ([Mt 26:42](#)). Jesus was "heard" (verse 7) because He did not disobey. In His response, the Son was "made perfect" (verse 8).



- It is not through this submission that Jesus "learned obedience" (verse 8) as though He didn't previously know about obedience, but rather that He "experienced" obedience.
  - It is easy to be "obedient" to one's superior or to one's parent when what is required is pleasant.
  - However, it is something else entirely when obedience means submission to something that one does not want to experience.
  - St. John Chrysostom advised the faithful: "If he, though the Son, gains obedience from his sufferings, how much more shall we? Do you see how many things Paul says about obedience in order to persuade them to obedience? [...] 'Though what he suffered' he continually 'learned' to obey God, and he was 'made perfect' through sufferings. This, then, is perfection, and this means we must arrive at perfection.
- For not only was he himself saved; but also became an abundant supply of salvation to others" (*The Epistle to the Hebrews*, 8.3).



- By His obedient response, in submission to the Father, Jesus, the new Adam, overcame the sin of the first Adam, whose disobedience brought sin and death into the world ([1 Cor 15:45-49](#); [CCC# 411](#); [504](#)).
  - Being "made perfect," Jesus Christ became *the source of our salvation for all who obey Him* (verse 8).
  - Jesus became "the source of our salvation" in His perfect obedience to the Father by submitting Himself to death on the Cross as the unblemished sacrifice for the sake of a sinful of humanity.
- Concerning this passage, St. Ephraim wrote, "He became the source of our eternal salvation by replacing Adam, who had been the source of our death through his disobedience. But as Adam's death did not reign in those who did not sin, so life reigns in those who do not need to be absolved. Even though he is a liberal giver of life, life is given to those who obey, not to those who fall away from him" (Ephraim, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews*).







# Jesus' Prophecies of His Death & Resurrection



“...when I am lifted up  
from the earth, I will draw  
all people to myself.”



# John 12: 20-33



**'Among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. The person who loves their life loses it, and the person who hates their life in this world will keep it for eternal life.**

**"Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honour.**

**.... Continued**



## **Gospel Continued..**

**"Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say — 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name."**

**Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again."**

**The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, "An Angel has spoken to him." Jesus answered, "This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself."**

**Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.**



## Jesus Returns to the Temple

After His triumphal entry into Jerusalem [10<sup>th</sup> of Nisan] the day we celebrate as Palm Sunday:

- Same day the sacrificial victims were chosen in the first Egyptian Passover (Ex 12:3-5),
  - Jesus went to the Temple.
  - He came to cleanse the Temple again in preparation for a new Liturgy of worship (Mt 21:12-17 and the next day in Mk 11:12-19).
  - Jesus returned every day that week to teach the people and challenge the chief priests, Pharisees, and Scribes.
- Our Gospel Reading event took place on Wednesday of His last teaching day in Jerusalem when some Greek-culture Gentiles requested "to see" Jesus, which meant that they wanted a private audience. However, in John's symbolic and spiritual style, "to see" may also mean "to believe" in Jesus.
- This indicates that Jesus' Gospel of salvation had spread beyond the Jews.



## Jesus Returns to the Temple....Continued

- These Gentiles, who were praying – stood in the Temple's Court of the Gentiles, approached the Apostle Philip (verse 21).
  - Most scholars suggest that these Gentiles assumed that the Apostle with the Greek name could take their request to Jesus and act as their interpreter.
  - Philip went to his hometown friend Andrew to assist him with their request.
  - Recall that Philip, Andrew, and Andrew's brother Simon-Peter all came from Bethsaida (Jn 1:44), a town in Northern Galilee with a large Greek culture population (see Mt 4:15, which quotes Is 9:1). Andrew's name is also Greek with no Hebrew or Aramaic equivalent.
- These Greeks were probably "God-fearers" (see Acts 10:22), Gentiles who believed in Yahweh and tried to follow His Law but who had not submitted to the rite of circumcision; therefore, they were not part of the covenant family.
- It is the only possible explanation when you consider Jesus' response. If these people had been Gentile converts to Judaism, they would not have been in Jesus' eyes any different than the other members of the covenant people, the ethnic Jews and Israelites to whom Jesus was obliged to bring the message of salvation before any others. **The Gentiles' coming is a new event and signals a definite turning point in His ministry.**



## The parable of the Seed That Dies

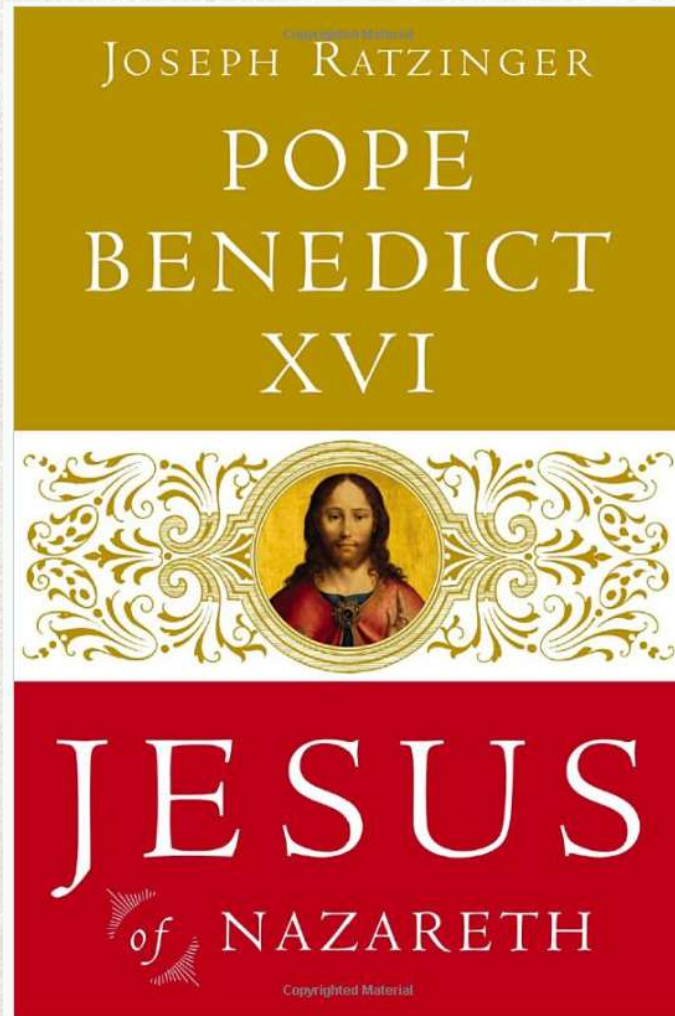
- In answer to the Gentiles' request to speak to Him, Jesus tells a parable symbolizing His coming death and glorification. The seed in the parable represents Jesus' Body, and He compares a seed to His Body in speaking of His sacrifice being a condition of His glorification and of death as the means of gaining life.
- Just as a seed must be covered with earth before it sprouts new life, so too must Jesus endure physical death to bring us new life that lasts eternally.
  - St. Augustine addressed this Paradox between Christ's humiliation in **Death** and His glorification in **Resurrection**. He wrote, "it was appropriate that the loftiness of his glorification should be preceded by the lowliness of his passion" (*The Gospel of John*, 51.8).
  - St. Paul expressed this same paradox when he wrote to the Christians at Philippi: *Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross. Because of this, God greatly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name* (Phil 2:7-9).



This same principle is true for those of us who follow Christ, as Jesus says in verses 25-26:

- Anyone who loves his life (more than Me) destroys it.
  - Anyone who hates his life in this world preserves it to live eternally in the next life.
  - Anyone who serves Me must follow Me.
  - Anyone who follows Me will be rewarded.
- The principle in verse 25: *Whoever serves me must follow me*, held true for His disciples during the last week of His earthly life in 30 AD and for each of us who commit to "follow" Christ today.
- We must die to a life of self-centeredness and the temptations of this world. We must live for Christ to receive the fullness of life from God and in becoming channels of life in Christ to others. Through the Sacrament of Baptism, we die to sin and this world. After our spiritual rebirth in the water and the Spirit, we must go forward in our faith journey to daily take up our crosses and die to sin to live for Christ. .





## Baptism:

CCC# 1214: "This sacrament is called Baptism, after the central rite by which it is carried out: to baptize (Greek *baptizein*) means to 'plunge' or 'immerse'; into the water symbolizes the catechumen's burial into Christ's death, from which he rises up by Resurrection with him, as 'a new creature.'" Also see 2 Cor 5:17; Gal 6:15; Rom 6:3-4; Col 2:12).

The Baptism of Jesus points to his death:

**Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI links Jesus' baptism to his death:**

**"this also explains why, in his own discourses, Jesus uses the word *baptism* to refer to his death." (p. 18)**





### Catechism References:

#### **Catechism References:**

Jeremiah 31:31-34 (CCC 64, 715, 762, 1965); 31:33 (CCC 368, 580, 2713)

Psalms 51:12 (CCC 298, 431)

Hebrews 5:7-9 (CCC 609, 2606); 5:7-8 (CCC 612, 1009); 5:7 (CCC 2741); 5:8 (CCC 2825); 5:9 (CCC 617)

John 12:24 (CCC 2731); 12:27 (CCC 363, 607); 12:28 (CCC 434); 12:31 (CCC 550, 2853); 12:32 (CCC 542, 662, 786, 1428, 2795)



## **The Angelus Prayer**

**V. The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.**

**R. And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.**

**Hail Mary, full of grace,  
The Lord is with Thee;  
Blessed art thou among women,  
And blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.  
Holy Mary, Mother of God,  
Pray for us sinners,  
Now and at the hour of our death. Amen**

**V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord.**

**R. Be it done unto me according to thy word.**

**Hail Mary. . .**

**V. And the Word was made flesh.**

**R. And dwelt among us.**

**Hail Mary. . .**

**V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.**

**R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.**

**Let us pray: Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts, that we to whom the Incarnation of Christ Thy Son was made known by the message of an angel, may by His Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of His Resurrection. Through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen**