

A JOURNEY THROUGH LENT

*Traveling a Lenten journey
with people in the third third of life*

Week 3



MONDAY, MARCH 1

Give praise to the LORD, proclaim his name;
make known among the nations what he has done.
Sing to him, sing praise to him;
tell of all his wonderful acts.
Glory in his holy name;
let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice.
Look to the LORD and his strength;
seek his face always.

Psalm 105:1-4

As we continue our Lenten journey, this week our reflection questions are:

- *Where do you see God's presence in the world around you?*
- *What does it mean to you that God keeps God's promises?*
- *How might you offer praise to God in a special way this week?*

I love the ocean—to swim in it, or to kayak along the beach, or to putter around in a boat. When I stand on the shore or float on the water, I am absolutely boggled by the vastness and power of God's creation. Surely, God is there with me as I am overwhelmed by the immensity of his handiwork!

Prayer: Blessed are you, LORD our God, King of the universe, who made the great sea. Amen.

Meredith Eckel
Central Baptist Church, Westerly

TUESDAY, MARCH 2

Remember the wonders he has done,
his miracles, and the judgments he pronounced,
you his servants, the descendants of Abraham,
his chosen ones, the children of Jacob.
He is the LORD our God;
his judgments are in all the earth.

Psalm 105:5-7

What are “God moments” you remember?

I had gotten stranded during the great blizzard years ago and nearly froze to death in a car with no heat. I finally got out of the car and was assisted by a man who helped me find respite in a store that was still open for weary travelers. The owner gave me a blanket and let me stay the night. God was there for me. Those are the “God moments” we remember the most as we reflect on God’s presence throughout our years.

Prayer: Dear Lord, sustain us as we search for a way home. Lead us to a safe return. Amen.

Bob Auld
(retired) Summit Baptist Church, Greene

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3

He remembers his covenant forever,
the promise he made, for a thousand generations,
the covenant he made with Abraham,
the oath he swore to Isaac.

He confirmed it to Jacob as a decree,
to Israel as an everlasting covenant:
“To you I will give the land of Canaan
as the portion you will inherit.”

Psalm 105:8-11

What helps you remember the promise of God's presence?

Nature has always been the place that I have been most aware of God's presence. In deep woods, the sound of the wind rustling the leaves of the trees far above offsets the stillness and silence below and invites me to silence. Similarly, something about the vastness of the ocean and the relentless ebb and flow of waves evoke a stillness in me. My responses of wonder and longing help remind me to open to God's presence.

Prayer: Gracious God, we thank you for the beauty of nature. May it ever draw us into your presence. Amen.

Linda Bausserman
First Baptist Church in America, Providence

THURSDAY, MARCH 4

The heavens declare the glory of God;
the skies proclaim the work of his hands.
Day after day they pour forth speech;
night after night they reveal knowledge.
They have no speech, they use no words;
no sound is heard from them.
Yet their voice goes out into all the earth,
their words to the ends of the world.

Psalm 19:1-4a

What inspires you to declare the glory of God?

While visiting our daughter in Alaska, we took a half-day cruise out of Seward. We saw bears and sheep on the snowy mountainsides, numerous birds, and whales. The majesty of creation was awesome! We stood at the rail of the boat and together sang “How Great Thou Art.”

Today, glistening snow-covered trees, a colorful flower blossom, a gurgling brook, or a birdsong speak of the Creator’s glory! Praise God!

Prayer: For your majesty and might, for your beauty and peace, for your kaleidoscope of creation, I thank you, God. Amen.

Nancy Bancroft
Wakefield Baptist Church, Wakefield

FRIDAY, MARCH 5

The law of the LORD is perfect,
refreshing the soul.
The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy,
making wise the simple.
The precepts of the LORD are right,
giving joy to the heart.
The commands of the LORD are radiant,
giving light to the eyes.
The fear of the LORD is pure,
enduring forever.
The decrees of the LORD are firm,
and all of them are righteous.

Psalm 19:7-9

What refreshes your soul or gives joy to your heart?

God's presence in nature has been a source of wonder and peace for me from the first walks I took with my parents as a young child. Much of my appreciation comes from observing their joy in the seasons and the knowledge they shared about plants, birds, animals, and other natural phenomenon. For me, a walk in the woods is a chance to commune with God and often results in a change of mood and thinking.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for the repeated refrains of nature. We look forward to the coming of spring and change. Amen.

Dee Kolb
Oak Lawn Community Baptist Church, Cranston

SATURDAY, MARCH 6

But who can discern their own errors?

 Forgive my hidden faults.

Keep your servant also from willful sins;

 may they not rule over me.

Then I will be blameless,

 innocent of great transgression.

May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart

 be pleasing in your sight,

 LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.

Psalm 19:12-14

What words or meditations are you offering to God?

I am praising God for the ability to be a caring friend, for friendships sustained and new friendships welcomed. Kindness is one of God's miracles moving in our lives, so I praise God for the kindness in myself and in others, praying the light of God's love informs all our prayers. This week I will focus on kindness by comforting others and offering encouragement so we can all better enjoy the world we've been given.

Prayer: Dear God in heaven, for the hope of humanity may kindness and love be the blessings we both give and receive. Amen.

Suzanne Volmer
First Baptist Church, Pawtucket

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT, MARCH 7

When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple courts he found people selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money. So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple courts, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. To those who sold doves he said, “Get these out of here! Stop turning my Father’s house into a market!” His disciples remembered that it is written: “Zeal for your house will consume me.”

John 2:13-17

*Come to your Temple here with liberation
And overturn these tables of exchange
Restore in me my lost imagination
Begin in me for good, the pure change.* – Malcolm Guite

Lent often brings thoughts of *giving up* something. But what if we instead thought about *taking on* something?

We might read the story of Jesus’ cleansing the temple as an example of *giving up* corrupt and unfaithful behavior. But might we imagine it as an invitation to *take on* a new understanding of what God desires *from* and *for* us?

What might we imagine that God is inviting us to *take on* this Lent? Maybe a better sense of balance in our lives, a change we’ve been putting off, or a first step in a new direction. Whatever we imagine, may we trust that God will help us transform it into a new reality.

Prayer: Dear God, restore our lost imaginations and begin pure change in us. Amen.

Kathryn Palen
First Baptist Church in America, Providence
