

for Feb 12, '67
Cover sheet

Scripture: Matthew 4:1-11

Sermon topic: "Forty Important Days"

Text: Matthew 4:10--"Begone, Satan!
For it is written, 'You shall worship
the Lord your God, and him only shall
you serve.'"

Proposition: The forty days of Lent
increase understanding of Christianity.

Sources: An Encyclopedia of Religion,
Vergelius Ferm, p.629-630.

The Story of the Christian Year,
G.M. Gibson, p.90-93.

The Public Speakers Treasure Chest,
H.V. Prochnov, #1123.

Macartney's Illustrations, p.385.

Pulpit Digest, ? month, 1949, p.40.

Revised Standard Version of the Bible

Date written: March 5, 1949.

Places & dates used:

Huntington, Ark., March 6, 1949.

Evanston, Wyo., p.m., March 26, 1950.

Chapel 6, Camp Rucker, Ala., Feb. 22, 53.

Wheatland, Wyo., Feb. 27, 1955--a.m.

Sheridan, Wyo, Feb. 16, 1958..Senior.

Hi MYF Lenten Breakfast program.

Montrose, COA, Mar. 7, 1965 - 8³⁰ - 4/1/67

Montrose & Blaine, COA, 2-12-67

for OAKLAND (PART) F2. - 3-10-74

Cover sheet

Signature: Matthew 4:1-11

Version topic: "Forty Important Days"

Text: Matthew 4:1-11 -- "Be none, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.'"

Proposition: The forty days of Lent increase understanding of Christianity

Source: An Encyclopedia of Religion
Veritas Team, p. 189-190

The Story of the Christian Year
C.M. Wilson, p. 92-93

The Bible Treasury Chest
H.V. Prochnov, 11/23

Masaryk's Illustrations, p. 285
Lipton Digest, 2 month, 1919, p. 10

Revised Standard Version of the Bible
Date written: March 5, 1919

Places & dates used:
Huntington, Ark., March 6, 1919

Evangelical, 9:00 a.m., March 26, 1920
Chapel of Camp Hucker, 11 a.m., Feb. 22, 23

Westland, Wyo., Feb. 27, 1919 - a.m.
Sheridan, Wyo., Feb. 10, 1918 - a.m.

At the Lenten breakfast program
Lent, as with Lent 1919

St. Lawrence - St. Lawrence, Wyo. 2-1919

Introduction:

Reserve men's numbers
on roster

1. Numbers have been important in many religious systems for thousands of years. In the sixth century B.C., Pythagoras held that numbers were important for all areas of life. He is known today among the general public primarily for his discovery that the **square** of the hypotenuse of a right triangle is equal to the sum of the squares of the legs of the triangle. However, he worked out also a system by which he held that numbers were the actual things about us, and in which he assigned everything a significant number. The first ten numbers were particularly sacred and related to God and His particular blessings to mankind.

2. We see traces of this train of thought today in the activities of astrologers and others who claim a power to foretell the future through a number system which relates to the stars and the whole universe.

3. In the **main**, ~~however~~, today we put little trust in numbers as being magical. However, we still sometimes think in slightly superstitious terms regarding some numbers. We occasional-

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2. We see traces of this train of thought today in the activities of astrologers and others who claim a power to foretell the future through a number system which relates to the stars and the whole universe.

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ly regard the number 13 as symbolic of bad luck. Because of the influence of certain dice games, we sometimes think of the numbers 7 and 11 as being lucky.

4. In spite of past ancient or unenlightened overemphasis on numbers as sacred or significant, we ~~still~~ use them as symbolic of sacred and important things. Though there is no magic in the numbers themselves, they can suggest to us vital thoughts.

5. Among the chief of these for Christians are the ^{No. 40} 40 days of the Lenten season. Lent is the 40 day period preceding Easter, not including Sundays. ^{FACT ALSO} The fact that 40 is the number of days here is of significance to Christians.

I. The 40 days of Lent symbolize the time which Moses spent on Mount Sinai. During that time he received the important and civilizing Ten Commandments. ~~Thus~~, we think of the will of God for our lives as it is expressed in these commandments, when we think of those 40 days of Moses on the mountain. We think of the gratitude we owe for life in a society which is

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6. The 40 days of Lent symbolize the time which Jesus spent on Mount Sinai. During that time he received the important and crowning Ten Commandments. Thus, we think of the will of God for our lives as thus expressed in these commandments, when we think of those 40 days of Moses on the mountain. We think of the gratitude we owe for life in a society which is

based on these laws.

1. A young recruit in the army was the victim of so many practical jokes that he doubted all men and their motives. One night while he was on guard, the figure of one of the officers loomed up in the darkness.

"Who goes dere?" he challenged.

"Major Moses", replied the officer.

The not-too-bright young soldier smelled a joke, so he said, "Glad to meet yuh, Moses. Advance and give de ten commandments."

2. So familiar and so deeply ingrained into our culture are these ten commandments about which the young recruit was joking, that we often use them as the object of jokes. The Ten Commandments are, nevertheless, ~~still~~ the laws upon which people break themselves unless they obey them. They are ~~still~~ rules which operate to protect us.

II. Another connection with the experience of Moses whereby the number 40 acquires significance for Christians is in the record of the Israelites, led by Moses, spent 40 years wandering in the desert.

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1. A young recruit in the army was the victim of so many practical jokes that he doubted all men and their motives. One night while he was on guard, the figure of one of the officers loomed up in the darkness. "Who goes there?" he challenged. "Major Ross", replied the officer. "The not-too-bright young soldier smiled a joke, so he said, "Glad to meet you, Ross. Advance and give the ten commandments."

2. A familiar and so deeply ingrained into our culture are these ten commandments about which the young recruit was joking, that we often use them as the object of jokes. The ten commandments are, nevertheless, the laws upon which people break themselves since they obey them. They are the laws which operate to protect us.

11. Another connection with the experience of those who are the number of recruits significant in the history of the record of the United States Army is that of the years wandering in the desert.

1. It took that long to prepare themselves in faith, strength and understanding for occupancy of the chosen and promised land, and to receive the blessings which God had promised them.

2. Thus, from the Biblical record we have brought to us strongly the necessity of thorough preparation for worthwhile things of life.

3. One of America's outstanding preachers was asked once how he was able to deliver outstanding spiritual and intellectual sermons Sunday after Sunday. He replied that for the first 3 days of each week he saw no one; he was studying and preparing the sermon. Then on Thursday and Friday he attended to pastoral duties. On Saturday, again, he saw no one, for that day he was preparing the man. Careful preparation and God's help and guidance enabled him to be an outstanding preacher.

4. Preparation is important. A leading layman in a strong church once said that he thought ministers should be allowed to stay in an appointment longer than just a few years; even

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for life. He said, by way of illustration and backing up his belief, that a merchant had to stay in a community a lifetime, as a rule, to establish a successful business.

4. ~~So~~, we may be reminded by ^{the} ~~this~~ 40 day period preceding Easter, the period of Lent which began last Wednesday morning, that it is important to make thorough preparation for ~~worth-~~ while Christian living. That preparation is in getting to know God better through more perfectly following of Christ.

III. Lent's 40 days are symbolic of Christ's 40 days of temptation in the wilderness, about which we read in our Scripture.

1. ~~As xxxxxx~~ Jesus had to undergo this period of struggle with Satan before becoming active in his ministry. We, too, must darefully analyze our weaknesses, fight our temptations, and put our trust in God before we are able to fight life's spiritual battles. "Begone Satan! for it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.'" We can say that, too, after we have wrestled

for life. He said, by way of illustration and backing up his belief, that the merchant had to stay in a corner of a lifetime, or a wife, to establish a successful business.

He says we may be reminded by this 10 day period preceding Easter, the period of Lent which began last Wednesday morning, that it is important to make thorough preparation for Easter while Christmas is over. That preparation is a certain degree of fasting, though more varied following of this.

11. Lent's 10 days are symbolic of
Christ's 10 days of temptation in the wilderness, about which we read in our scriptures.

1. As xxxxx Jesus had to undergo this period of struggle with Satan before becoming active in his ministry. We, too, must carefully analyze our weaknesses, fight our temptations, and put our trust in God before we are able to fight later spiritual battles. "Evangelium" for it is written: "I shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve." We can say that, too, after we have wrestled

with and defeated that which tempts us.

2. A man once watched an Indian preparing a snare with which to catch a wild animal. He was surprised to learn that the Indian never sprang the trap or pulled the noose the first time the animal appeared. Instead of that, he would let it come repeatedly and feed where the trap was, and then, when it had become bold and thoroughly familiar with the surroundings, he would set the trap so that the next time it came the animal would be caught in the snare.

That is the way temptation works. It does not drive its shaft into the heart of its victim at first, but deceives it and lures it on; and then the fatal blow is delivered.

3. The 40 days of Lent, reminding us of Christ's temptations, should be days in which we carefully seek to determine just what our own temptations are; then with His help seek to overcome them.

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1. As such, it recalls to us the essential doctrine of Christianity that through Jesus and by Jesus death is overcome. 40 hours of death, and then he arose. So shall we arise; perhaps not in 40 hours, but certainly at some time, into life eternal if we put our trust in Him. Such is the symbolism.

2. In the spread of Christianity over the world, in its appeal to men generally, its winning word has been salvation. That salvation is from death; and is borne evidence to here by righteous living after the pattern of the Saviour Jesus. Lest we overlook or underemphasize this central truth of Christianity, it is vital to spend each day of Lent reminding ourselves of the importance of our personal salvation.

3. During World War II, the official telegram announcing the death of a heroic young flying officer was received at a certain home. The mother of the boy, unable to sleep at night by reason of her grief, found that a certain number kept repeating itself in her mind like a signal. This kept on the entire night through.

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The number was 629, 629, 629.

As she was working at this time in the local library, she could do no other than associate this number with a shelf of books in the library. The next day she went to the shelf of books marked with this number and saw that they were books on the subject of aviation. Taking one of them down and opening it at random, the first words she read on the page before her were these: "I am still alive". She read no more. Overcome with emotion, she replaced the book on the shelf and went home, being unable to work any more that day after so strange an experience.

4. ~~So it is that we do~~ have assurance if we have faith in Christ that those who believe in him are still alive, no matter how long their bodies have been buried. ~~Such is our assurance too, that we~~ shall continue living after death.

Conclusion: Lent has been conceived of as being a time of preparation for the coming of Easter. Its 40 days remind us of

1. Moses' 40 days on Sinai;
2. The people of Israel 40 years

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 remind us of
 1. Jesus' 40 days on earth;
 2. The people of Israel 40 years

in the desert;

3. The 40 days temptation of Jesus;
4. and Christ's 40 or so hours in the tomb before he overcame death.

These events symbolize for us

1. The importance of God's laws, given in the Ten Commandments;
2. the necessity of thorough preparation for receiving God's gifts;
3. The manner in which temptation may be overcome: "Begone, Satan! for it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve'."
4. and the victory of the Christian over death.

Truly, the 40 days of Lent are ^{CAN BE} important to the Christian, for they should be a time of self-searching, study, prayer, and preparation for Easter in accordance with the meanings which the 40 days symbolize.

Lent's 40 days should and can increase Christian understanding of their beliefs. It should enable Christians successfully to say, "Begone Satan! for it is written, "' You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.'"

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