



**DAILY BREAD
LECTIONARY DEVOTIONS
LENT 1 — YEAR B**

INVOCATION

L: In the name of the Father
and of the Son +
and of the Holy Spirit.

G: Amen

PSALM OF THE DAY: PSALM 6

**A: Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us.**

L: O LORD, do not rebuke me in your anger

G: or discipline me in your wrath.

L: Be merciful to me, LORD, for I am faint;

**G: O LORD, heal me, for my soul is in
anguish.**

L: Turn, O LORD, and deliver me;

G: save me because of your unflinching love.

L: I am worn out from groaning.

G: My eyes grow weak with sorrow.

L: Away from me, all you who do evil,

G: for the LORD has heard my weeping.

L: The LORD has heard my cry for mercy;

G: the LORD accepts my prayer.

**A: Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

L: Lord our strength, the battle of good and evil rages within and around us, and our ancient foe tempts us with his deceits and empty promises. Keep us steadfast in your Word, and when we fall, raise us up again and restore us through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

READING & MEDITATION *see next page*

PRAYER

LORD'S PRAYER

**A: Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.**

VERSE OF THE DAY

**A: It is written: "Worship the Lord your God,
and serve him only." (Matthew 4:10b)**

BENEDICTION

L: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ
and the love of God
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with you all.

A: Amen

READING AND MEDITATION:

First Sunday in Lent: The call to sinners in Lent is a serious call to struggle. While we throw out and leave behind the trivial outward Roman type practices of Lent, let's not throw out repentance in the process. Let's not replace the trivial externals with something even worse: assurances that we are so forgiven that we need not bother anymore with repentance.

As you study this week, seek to find the *connecting theme* in all the lessons by using Luther's Four Big Barber Questions to ponder and discuss each individual reading:

1. *What is God saying to me in this lesson?*
2. *For what does this lesson lead me to give thanks?*
3. *What sins does this lesson lead me to confess?*
4. *For what does this lesson lead me to pray?*

THE GOSPEL: MARK 1:12-15

Make no mistake about it: the life of Christ for us was along a hard and painful road. He begins his earthly ministry and his journey to the cross by a time of loneliness and struggle in the desert. So intense is the struggle that the angels attend him! That's a mystery deep and profound. What possible help could they be? Nevertheless there it is: as in Gethsemane, they do not come to lessen his struggle but to help him in some way endure it or continue in it. Given the seriousness with which he begins his journey to the cross, you can be sure that his call to repentance was not trite or cute or trivial. The good news is that he was victorious in the struggle, and that he won it *for us*. Now he calls us into his kingdom. Pass through the gate of repentance to the good news Lent announces, and then go back into the desert to struggle against the foes of the devil, the world and your own flesh with him as your strength and support and with the holy angels as your companions. The alternative? A struggle outside of the kingdom with the fallen angel/destroyer as your guide and his doom as your future.

My takeaways:

FIRST LESSON: GENESIS 22:1-18

Or perhaps you don't think that you have all that much to repent of or struggle against. Well, then think about the First Commandment. What do you love so much that it would be impossible to willingly and gladly give up if the Lord required it? Would you give up your son? Abraham got up early and went straight ahead to obey. Would you? When God has required you to give something up, some time, some friend, some money, some popularity, out of love and loyalty to his Word, did you do it? Did you do it gladly and willingly? If God would ask you now to give up house and home, wealth and position, all that you are and have, would you get up early and go straight to it? If he took these things away, would you complain about it? If you do not love God enough to give up your son for him, why should he give up his Son for you? But that's what he promises in the closing verses of the reading. The offspring, descended from Isaac, in whom we will really be blessed, deserves our all. We deserve nothing. How little he gets. How much he gives just to forgive the littleness of our heart's devotion. Everything is opposite and upside down of the way we would expect and the way we deserve. Do you still think you have nothing to repent of and that the struggle is easy?

My takeaways:

SECOND LESSON: ROMANS 8:31-39

As beautiful as these verses are, it takes a miracle for us to believe them! That's what Lent is all about, a detailing of the otherwise unbelievable love of God in the sacrifice of his own Son for the likes of us sinners. Having given his Son, and having performed the miracle of giving us faith to believe it, how could we ever again doubt his love? Come death, come angels or demons! Let the past haunt me and the present scare me and the future terrify me! It is all nothing; the love of God in Christ leaves me at peace and secure. Lent proves that love as nothing else could. The repentance that is *always* profound sorrow over sin has its counterpart in an equal measure of confidence in the love of God for sinners. Indeed sorrow filled repentance is a joy when I know what God's response to it will be! And a repentance that is without genuine terror or real sorrow receives the proclamation of Lent and of salvation won coldly or with indifference.

My takeaways:

What major theme(s) connect(s) all the lessons?