

First Sunday in Lent, March 9, 2025

## Scripture Reading: Luke 4:1-13

***Most people want to be delivered from temptation  
but would like it to keep in touch. —Robert Orben***

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In my ministry as a pastor, I've had the opportunity to travel to Israel and visit many biblical sites. One of these is Jericho, behind which rises Mount Quruntul, the traditional site where Jesus began his earthly ministry. Christians know it as The Mount of the Temptation.

As I looked at this mountain, a tower of rock and rubble, I couldn't imagine anyone surviving four days up there, let alone 40! But I started to think again about Jesus' experience alone in this arid environment.

*He was not afraid of the wilderness.* Perhaps he even embraced it. We know that he emerged from these 40 days much stronger than when he started. In a sense, Lent is our spiritual wilderness, a time to strip away the distractions of daily life and focus on our relationship with God. The wilderness is not a place of *abandonment* but a place to encounter God! In the silence and solitude, if we listen carefully, we will hear his voice more clearly and understand his will for our lives.

*He resisted temptation.* His retreat involved some heavy lifting. He had to use his words and the weapon of Scripture to keep the devil at bay. He faced three significant temptations: turning stone to bread, worshiping Satan for worldly power and testing God's protection. Each temptation challenged his identity and mission, yet Jesus responded with the truth of Scripture, affirming his trust in God's provision, worship and protection. When we're tempted, the Bible is our most powerful weapon.

As we begin our journey through Lent, let us embrace this season as a time of spiritual renewal and growth. For Jesus, these 40 days were a type of strength training, as though he had his eye on the Olympics — which for him would be his final week in Jerusalem some three years hence. It began here, in the mountain of temptation.

So, let's take heart from the example of Jesus. We, too, can be strong. We, too, can be equipped for everything that lies ahead of us. With prayer and trusting in God's protection and provision, there's nothing that can stand in our way!

—Timothy Merrill

*Prayer: Heavenly Father, help me to embrace this time of reflection and renewal. Fill me with your Holy Spirit, and equip me with your Word to resist temptation and grow closer to you. In Jesus' name. Amen.*

## Daily Bible Readings

- Sunday:** Leviticus 20-23
- Monday:** Leviticus 24-27
- Tuesday:** Mark 1-3
- Wednesday:** Mark 4-6
- Thursday:** Mark 7-10
- Friday:** Mark 11-13
- Saturday:** Psalms 25-28



## March 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

### HOW MANY WORDS CAN YOU MAKE FROM THIS WORD?

## DEREGULATION

**DIRECTIONS:** The words have to be at least THREE letters long. And you can't use any letter twice in the same word, unless the letter appears twice in "DEREGULATION." So, for example, you can't make the word "latte" because there is only one T in "DEREGULATION," but you can make the word "deer" because there are two E's. List all the words in your answer. Use the space below, the back of this page or another sheet for scratch paper. See possible answers below. Ready? Set? Go!

*[scratch space]*

Answers to  
Are you  
getting  
ANT-sy?:  
giant,  
recant  
vagrant  
relevant  
stimulant

**Answers:** There are more than 1,800 possible words of three or more letters to be found in DEREGULATION. Here are some of them: delegation, goaltender, regulation, delegator, denigrate, elongated, engrailed, entourage, ideologue, interlude, longitude, outlander, realigned, regulated, unaltered, unrelated, altering, dateline, deleting, deletion, derogate, dialogue, enlarged, entailed, idolater, integral, ligature, lingered, loitered, oriental, aged, arid, auto, dale, dare, darn, dart, date, deal, dear, deli, dial, diet, earl, earn, edge, edit, euro, gain, gait, gale, gate, gear, gene, gent, idea, idle, idol, laid, land, lane, lead, lean, elder, elite, elude, enter, erode, etude, genie, genre, giant, glade, gland, glare, glean, glide, glint, gloat, glued, gored, gourd, grade, grail, grain, grand, grant, grate, great, greed, green, greet, grind, groan, groin, grout, gruel, grunt, guard, guide, guild, guile, guilt, ideal, inert, ingot, inlet, laden and hundreds more!

### Are you getting ANT-sy?

All answers end with ANT. Using the clues provided, fill in the spaces. Solution below.

		A	N	T				
			A	N	T			
				A	N	T		
					A	N	T	
						A	N	T

**CLUES** (from top row to bottom row):

- ▶ An 8-foot man would be one
- ▶ To take back one's testimony
- ▶ A bum, often homeless
- ▶ Pertaining to, germane
- ▶ A drug to reduce sluggishness

