

Monday 22nd February

LO: Lent

What Is Lent?

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, which is the day after Shrove Tuesday (Pancake Day). It is the start of a very important time in the Christian Calendar.

What does Lent lead up to?

Lent leads up to Easter, the time that Christians remember Jesus' death and resurrection.

Lent is 40 days long (not including Sundays).

Why is Lent 40 days long?

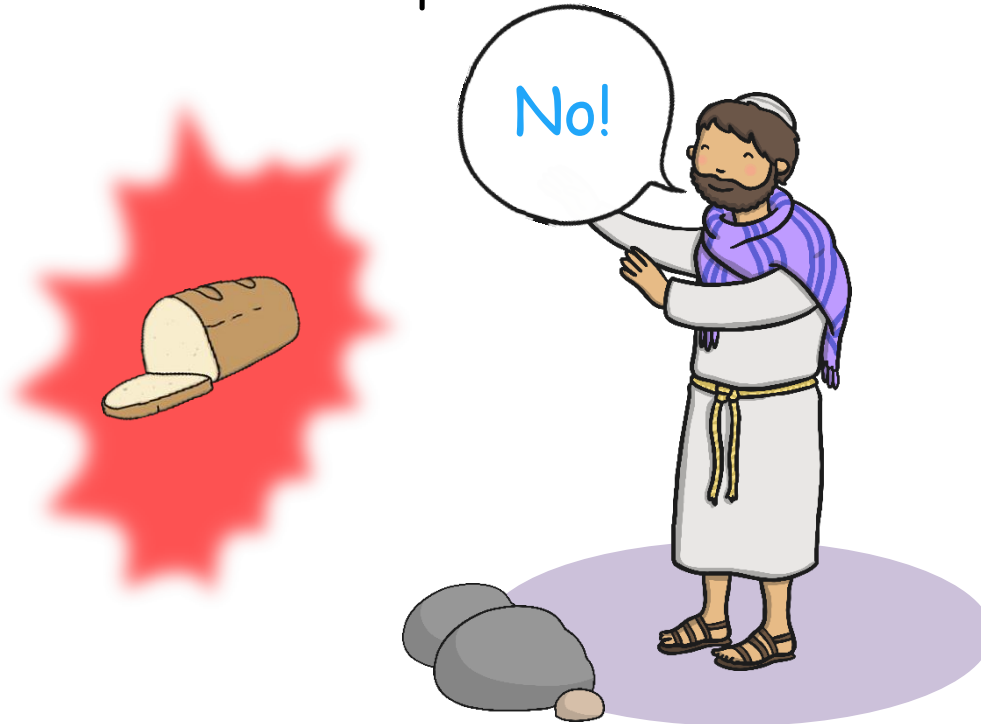
Jesus Goes into the Wilderness

Before Jesus began his teaching, he spent 40 days and 40 nights in the desert, to be with God. During this time, he had no food. Whilst Jesus was in the desert, the Devil appeared, trying to tempt Jesus.



Jesus Goes into the Wilderness

The Devil knew that Jesus was hungry, so he told him that if he was indeed the Son of God, to turn the rocks nearby into bread. The Devil knew Jesus could do this, but Jesus knew it was a trap and told him 'No!'.



Jesus Goes into the Wilderness

Next, the Devil took Jesus to the Holy City and to the top of a temple. He told Jesus to throw himself off the temple. "If you are the Son of God," he told Jesus, "then the angels will save you." But Jesus knew it was a trick and he told the Devil that he was not to test God.



Jesus Goes into the Wilderness



Finally, the Devil took Jesus to a very high mountain and told him "All the kingdoms of the world will be yours if you worship me."

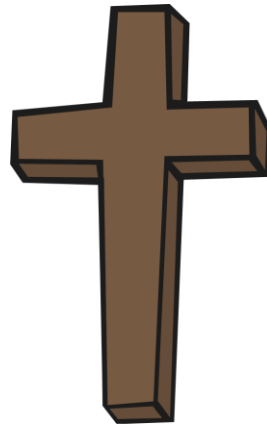
But Jesus told him to leave and that he only worshipped and served God. God was very pleased with Jesus and how he resisted the Devil's temptations.



Jesus Resisted Temptation

Jesus spent 40 days and 40 nights in the desert. He had no food. Whilst he was in the desert, the Devil tried to tempt him with food. The Devil made Jesus many promises, but each time Jesus told him 'No!'.

Lent lasts 40 days, to remind Christians of Jesus' sacrifices when he was in the desert and also of his refusal to be tempted by the Devil.



Watch the Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P-6a25Yo2wE>



Shrove Tuesday

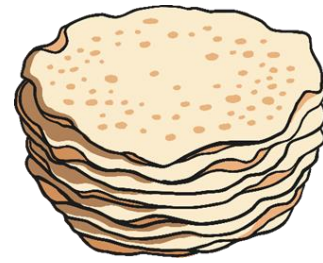


Shrove Tuesday is actually the day before Lent begins, the day before Ash Wednesday.

It is a day of preparation for Lent. Today it is often known as Pancake Day.

Shrove comes from the old word 'shrive', which means to confess the things you have done wrong. Many people used to go to church to do this on the day before Lent began.

Why are pancakes eaten on Shrove Tuesday?



It was once the custom to have a special kind of fast during Lent. This meant that people would not eat any fat, meat or eggs and only eat plain foods. The Tuesday before became a day of celebration when pancakes were made and eaten to make sure that all the fat and eggs that were in the house were eaten up before Lent began.

Pancakes are still eaten in many homes on Shrove Tuesday and it is usually a time of happiness and fun. However, very few people stop eating fat, meat and eggs during Lent these days. Some Christians will fast by not eating certain foods or by fasting for once a day each week.

Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday is the day after Shrove Tuesday and signals the start of Lent. It is called 'Ash Wednesday' because Lent is a time when people are sorry for the wrong things in their lives and ashes are used in the Bible as signs of sadness.

Some churches have a special part in a service called 'ashing'. As a way of showing sorrow for wrong things done, and as a reminder that all die, the Priest makes a sign of the cross in ashes on the forehead of each person. The ashes are usually made from burning palm crosses that were kept from Palm Sunday the previous year.



Lent is a time when Christians think about the things they have done and the way that God wants them to live.

Saying sorry to God by confessing their sins - owning up to the wrong things they have done - is a more important part of people's worship and prayer during Lent.

What Do Christians Do During Lent?

Today, many Christians mark Lent by trying to 'give up' something they like. It might be chocolate or something like video games. They do this to remember Jesus' sacrifice when he was in the desert and to test their own self-discipline: to see if they can say no to temptation, just as Jesus did.



Lots of churches hold special Lent services.

When Does Lent Finish?

Lent ends at Easter, when Christians remember Jesus' death on the cross and his resurrection.



What Would You Give up for Lent?

Lent is a time for Christians to remember Jesus' sacrifice and how he resisted temptation.

If you were giving up something for Lent, what would it be?
Why would it be difficult for you to give it up?



Task

Complete the Thinking about Lent Sheet.

Extension

Research about Mardi Gras celebrations.

Find out about fasting in other religions and whether there are common themes.