

IN THE WORD – February 25, 2018

THE FORTY of Flood, Desert and Kingdoms

- **HOW THE PRACTICE OF LENT BEGAN AND BECAME TRADITION**
 - Tessarakosti in Greek and Quadragesima in Latin – mean “The Forty”
 - The 40-day pre-Easter practice of fasting and penance did NOT originate in the Bible
 - Apostolic Church
 - Council of Nicea
 - Medieval papacy
 - Lent develops as an amalgamation of several early fasting customs & typologies
 - So why does a Presbyterian church like BAC observe Lent?

- **THE SIGNIFICANCE OF “FORTY” OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES**
 - Noah (Gen. 7)
 - Moses
 - When he was 40 years old, he went back to visit his birth family (Acts 7:23)
 - After 40 years in Midian, after killing the Egyptian, God appeared to him in a burning bush in the wilderness of Mt. Sinai (Acts 7:30)
 - Israelites wandered 40 years – (Deut. 8:2-5)
 - 1st time on Mt. Sinai for 40 days; receives the 10 Commandments on Stone Tablets (Ex. 24:18)
 - 2nd time on Mt. Sinai for 40 days God renews His covenant – (Ex. 34:28)
 - Spies took 40 days to check out the Promised Land (Numbers 13:25)
 - Israel served the Philistines for 40 years before Samson’s deliverance (Judges 13:1)
 - King Saul – reigned 40 years (Acts 13:21) (human order)
 - Goliath taunted Saul’s army for 40 days (1 Sam. 17:16)
 - King David – reigned 40 years (1 Kings 2:11, 2 Samuel 5:4; 7 years in Hebron & 33 in Jerusalem) (Divine order)
 - King Solomon reigned 40 years (1 Kings 11:42)
 - Elijah – traveled 40 days to Mt. Horeb (1 Kings 19:7-8)
 - Ezekiel – lay 40 days on his right side to bear the iniquity of Judah – 1 day for each year of sin (Ez. 4:6)
 - Jonah warned the Ninevites that judgment would come in 40 days (Jonah 3:4)

- **INERRANCY OF SCRIPTURE DEBATE – were these all *really* 40 day/ year periods of time?**
 - Traditionalist vs. Contextualists
 - How should we interpret the significance of 40? (Infallible, Inspired, Authoritative)

(OVER)

- **RECURRING THEMES IN THESE OCCURANCES OF FORTY**

- Sin/ Judgement/ Chastisement

- Sin -The Flood
- Exile -*400 years* Abrahamic Covenant (Gen. 15:13; cf. Ex. 12:40, Acts. 7:6, and Gal. 3:17)
- Wandering for 40 years (BTW, Gen. 15: 13 “Then the LORD said to Abram, “Know this for certain, that your offspring shall be aliens in a land that is not theirs, and shall be slaves there, and they shall be oppressed for **four hundred years.**”)
- Israel’s servitude/ captivity/ enslavement to the Philistines
- Saul (did things in his own power, not God’s. Ruling must have been hell!)
- Jonah

- Intercession/ Repentance

- Moses
- Ezekiel
- Jonah

- A time of testing/ purification

- Noah
- Moses /the Israelites
- Moses spent 40 days alone with God awaiting the Stone Tablets with Law
- David – lots of wilderness time before he became King and ruled as a man after God’s own heart for 40 years

- Fasting and Prayer to draw closer to God, to see God

- Moses (Ex. 33: 17-23)
- Elijah (1 Kings 19: 11-19)

- **Metanarrative themes:** Being lost, being found, being hungry, being fed, waiting, captivity, slavery, sin, repentance, atonement for sin, seeking God, God working through an intercessor, coming into God’s presence with new understanding and mission