

From Christian commentaries, the **TIME SPAN** (40 is mostly used in regards to time) means a time of testing, probation, and trial. Judaism traditionally sees it a little differently.

The number 40 has great significance throughout the Torah and the Talmud. The number 40 represents transition or change; the concept of renewal; a new beginning. The number 40 has the power to lift a spiritual state.

In the Hebrew Bible, forty is often used for time periods, forty days or forty years, which separate "two distinct epochs".

1. Rain fell for "forty days and forty nights" during the Flood (Genesis 7:4).
2. A mikvah consists of 40 se'ah (approximately 200 U.S. gallons or 760 liters) of water
 - a. When a person becomes ritually impure, he must immerse in a ritual bath, a mikveh. Immersion in a mikveh is the consummate Jewish symbol of spiritual renewal.
 - b. It is no accident that in the story of Noah, the rain poured for 40 days, and submerged the world in water. Just as a person leaves a mikveh pure, so too when the waters of the flood subsided, the world was purified from the licentiousness which had corrupted it in the days of Noah.
3. The 10 lavers in the Temple each held "40 baths" (about 230 gal.) of water (1 Kin 7:38).
4. Noah waited for forty days after the tops of mountains were seen after the flood, before releasing a raven (Genesis 8:5-7)
5. Isaac was 40 years old when he took Rebekah as his wife (Gen 25:20).
6. Esau, Isaac's son, also got married when he was 40 (Gen 26:34).
7. Embalming took 40 days in early Bible times (Gen 50:3).
8. The book of Exodus has 40 chapters.
9. Spies were sent by Moses to explore the land of Canaan (promised to the children of Israel) for "forty days" (Numbers 13:2, 25).
 - a. One of those spies was Joshua, and he was forty years old when he went (Josh 14:7).
10. The Hebrew people lived in the lands outside of the promised land for "forty years". This period of years represents the time it takes for a new generation to arise (Numbers 32:13).

11. According to the Talmud (Avot 5:26), at age 40 a person transitions from one level of wisdom to the next. He reaches the level of binah - the deeper insight of understanding one matter from another. After Moses led the Jewish people for 40 years in the wilderness, he told them: "God has not given you a heart to know, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, until this day" (Deut. 29:3-4). From here we see that it took the Jewish people 40 years before reaching a full level of understanding.
12. Several Jewish leaders and kings are said to have ruled for "forty years", that is, a generation. Examples include Eli (1 Samuel 4:18), Saul (Acts 13:21), David (2 Samuel 5:4), and Solomon (1 Kings 11:42).
13. Moses spent three consecutive periods of "forty days and forty nights" on Mount Sinai:
 - a. He went up on the seventh day of Sivan, after God gave the Torah to the Jewish people, in order to learn the Torah from God, and came down on the seventeenth day of Tammuz, when he saw the Jews worshipping the Golden Calf and broke the tablets (Deuteronomy 9:11).
 - b. He went up on the eighteenth day of Tammuz to beg forgiveness for the people's sin and came down without God's atonement on the twenty-ninth day of Av (Deuteronomy 9:25).
 - c. He went up on the first day of Elul and came down on the tenth day of Tishrei, the first Yom Kippur, with God's atonement (Deuteronomy 10:10).
 - d. The Israelites arrived at Mt. Sinai as a nation of Egyptian slaves, but after 40 days they were transformed into God's nation.
14. There are 40 days between the first day of Elul, when we begin to blow the Shofar to prepare for Rosh Hashana, until Yom Kippur, the end of the annual teshuva (repentance) period. These 40 days are the most auspicious time for personal growth and renewal.
15. Goliath challenged the Israelites twice a day for forty days before David defeated him (1 Samuel 17:16).
16. The average length of a woman's pregnancy is 40 weeks.
17. The prophet Elijah had to walk 40 days and 40 nights before arriving at mount Horeb (1 Kings 19:8).
18. Ezekiel laid on his right side for 40 days to "bear the iniquity" of Judah's sins (Ezek 4:6).
19. 40 lashes is one of the punishments meted out by the Sanhedrin (Deuteronomy 25:3), though in actual practice only 39 lashes were administered.
 - a. The purpose is to bring the offender to a point of change, transition and atonement.

20. (Numbers 14:33–34) alludes to the same with ties to the prophecy in The Book of Daniel.
 - a. "For forty years—one year for each of the forty days you explored the land—you will suffer for your sins and know what it is like to have me against you."
21. The Israelites were in captivity to the Philistines for 40 years for doing evil (Judg 13:1).
22. One of the prerequisites for a man to study Kabbalah is that he is forty years old.
23. "The registering of these men was carried on cruelly, zealously, assiduously, from the rising of the sun to its going down, and was not brought to an end in forty days" (3 Maccabees 4:15).
24. 14. Before his temptation, Jesus fasted "forty days and forty nights" in the Judean desert (Matthew 4:2, Mark 1:13, Luke 4:2).
25. 15. Forty days was the period from the resurrection of Jesus to the ascension of Jesus (Acts 1:3).