

GUIDE THROUGH

HOLY WEEK

Holy Week (Palm Sunday to Resurrection Sunday) is a profound time in the Christian Church calendar. Because of this, we would like to invite you on a journey through this final week of Jesus' earthly life. We've compiled some gleanings from gospel biographers who speak into the historical events that occurred during Jesus' final days. Consider reading one passage each day. Then, use the reflection prompt as a guide to lead you to the cross, and ultimately, to the empty tomb.



PALM SUNDAY

MATT 21:1-11, MARK 11:1-11
LUKE 19:28-44, JOHN 12:12-19

Jesus enters Jerusalem for the last days of his journey toward the cross. He enters an expectant and welcoming city, bustling due to the Passover feast that was soon to take place. Many people are eager to see the man who had raised Lazarus from the dead. Only a few days following the Triumphal entry, the people's shouts of, "Hosanna!" would turn to, "Crucify him!"

REFLECT

How do you desire to set your heart, mind, and practices on Jesus in these days leading to the cross and to Resurrection Sunday? How do these Scriptures prepare you to worship?

MONDAY

MATT 21:12-22
MARK 11:12-19, LUKE 19:45-48

Upon his arrival to Jerusalem, Jesus becomes indignant at the hypocrisy he finds at the temple: leaders who reject his works and ways, vendors who collect illegal profit (Lev 5:7) from those coming to worship. He curses a deceptive fig tree; the leaves providing an appearance of fruitfulness, when in reality the tree is fruitless.

REFLECT

What hypocrisy or self-deception are you practicing in these days leading to the cross and to Resurrection Sunday? How do these Scriptures lead you to confession and repentance?

TUESDAY

MATT 21:23-26:5, MARK 11:27-14:2
LUKE 20:1-22:2, JOHN 12:37-50

Jesus demonstrates his authority as "the Word who became flesh" (John 1:14) through this series of parables, woes, and pronouncements of the second coming and final judgment. Listening intently, the Pharisees hope to find something in the words of Jesus that will provide reason for the Romans to arrest him. Yet, in their misplaced theological zeal, they're unable to trap him by any question or critique.

REFLECT

What warning or lesson might you hold to in these days leading to the cross and to Resurrection Sunday? How do these Scriptures exhort and challenge you?

WEDNESDAY

MATT 26:6-16, MARK 14:3-11
LUKE 22:3-6

An unnamed woman pours her most fragrant and expensive perfume Jesus' feet. This is a costly and generous act of adoration that, unknowingly, prepares the body of Jesus for his impending execution and burial. Meanwhile, the disciples who are closest to Jesus deem this act utterly wasteful; this pronouncement is most vividly displayed in Judas' betrayal of Jesus.

REFLECT

How might the beautiful thing done for Jesus stir affection inside of you in these days leading to the cross and to Resurrection Sunday? How do these Scriptures cultivate gratitude and generosity within you?

THURSDAY

MATT 26:17-75, MARK 14:12-72
LUKE 22:7-71, JOHN 13:1-18:27

Jesus and the disciples partake in a special Passover meal that inaugurates the new covenant. All that Christ has come for is quickly unfolding, beginning with an honest prayer of submissive sorrow to the Father. This prayer is followed by Jesus' betrayal, arrest, false trials, and accusations. This dreadful night ends (just as the Lord had said) with the sound of a rooster crowing.

REFLECT

What do you notice about the words and works of Christ on this final night leading to the cross and to Resurrection Sunday? How do these Scriptures help you to see Jesus?

GOOD FRIDAY

MATT 27:1-61, MARK 15:1-47
LUKE 23:1-56, JOHN 18:28-19:42

There is much to lament on this day. Jesus is delivered over to be crucified, and Barabbas (the name ironically means 'son of the father') is released. The crowds who shouted "Hosanna!" just days prior are now shouting, "Crucify him!" Jesus, standing silently before his accusers, is beaten, mocked, and despised. He bears the full weight of abandonment from the Father and his friends. The light of the world bears the burden of the sinful darkness of the world and declares, "It is finished!"

REFLECT

What is God inviting you to lament on this day? How do these Scriptures help you to see the necessity for the cross of Christ?

SATURDAY

MATT 27:62-66

Jesus has died. Roman guards increase the security of the tomb with a stone, nearly immovable by men, in front of the place where Jesus' body lay. This Saturday, this Sabbath, is silent.

REFLECT

What does the silence of Saturday say as you consider this day in between the cross and the resurrection? How do these Scriptures cause you to pause and consider how God is at work even in profound silence?

RESURRECTION SUNDAY

MATT 28:1-20, MARK 16:1-8
LUKE 24:1-53, JOHN 20:1-21:25

Both fear and joy fill this morning. Guards and women at the tomb witness the heavens shaking earth as angels testify to what has occurred: Jesus was crucified. Jesus was buried. Jesus has risen - just as he said. Jesus is alive! The news runs rampant, and over the next forty days Jesus appears to many and commissions his disciples to take this news to the ends of the earth.

REFLECT

Jesus is alive! He has defeated sin, death, and hell. All authority - all authority - has been given to him. Hallelujah! How do these Scriptures compel you to rejoice, and to share this good news with others?

