



GOOD NEWS CHURCH

# PASSION WEEK DEVOTIONAL 2022



# DAY 1 | MONDAY



Open your time with a word of prayer. As we begin Passion Week, let's walk with Jesus as he lived out his final days before his crucifixion.

Read Luke 19:28-44 – Jesus and his Triumphal Entry.

Jesus probably started entering the city of Jerusalem on Monday of his final week of ministry, rather than on Sunday as traditionally thought. Whether Sunday or Monday, Jesus entered on a colt (a young donkey) to signify his humility, and the crowds praise him. In Luke's Gospel, the crowds are reported to be saying, "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" (19:38). In the other Gospels, the crowds are reported to say, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" (Matt 21:9-10; Mark 11:9-10; John 12:13). They probably said all of those things, plus more, to celebrate their hero, their king. Hosanna means "save us," and the crowds were hopeful that Jesus would save them from the political domination that they had been under for so many years.

As a response to the crowds, the Pharisees tell Jesus to rebuke his followers. Notice that they only refer to him as "Teacher." They probably still see Jesus as a mere teacher, a Rabbi, and not as God manifested in the flesh. Jesus responds by saying, "if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out" (19:40), confirming that no one can stop the worship of God. We know that many of the same people who were praising and worshipping Jesus on that Monday were nowhere to be seen later that Friday, as Jesus was on trial and being crucified. It is easy for us to only see what is right before our eyes, and to follow the crowds. However, as followers of Jesus, we are called not to follow the masses but to stay focused on Jesus himself, despite what we may see right in front of us.

As you meditate on this passage and pray, reflect on your commitment to Jesus. Ask him for a stronger vision to see beyond what is right in front of you to walking with him when things do not seem glorious.

# DAY 2 | TUESDAY



As you begin, pray and ask God for an emotional depth to your relationship with him. As you read, let's imagine how Jesus was feeling when he entered into the Temple.

**Read Mark 11:15-18 – Jesus and the Temple Cleansing.**

Likely on the next day, after his Triumphal Entry, Jesus enters into the city core of Jerusalem and enters into the Temple, the capital of Judaism at the time. This was a few days before the annual celebration of the Passover, which was one of the biggest festivals in Judaism. Passover was a celebration which commemorated how God “passed over” the Israelite people while they were slaves in Egypt, and how God freed them to become a free nation (see Exodus 12). People came from all over the region to celebrate Passover in Jerusalem, and many of them would have had to take with them sacrificial animals. When Jesus enters the Temple courts, he sees that instead of focusing on the worship of God through the Passover and remembering the meaning of Passover, they were using this opportunity to conduct business and make profit from travelers who did not bring the proper sacrificial animals. This desecration of the Passover and the Temple angers Jesus, so he overturns the tables with all of the items and money on them. The Jewish leaders then decide to kill Jesus for humiliating them and hindering their profitable system.

Imagine that you were an eyewitness to this, that you were one of the people celebrating Passover and saw Jesus overturning tables and condemning the exploitation of the Passover. How would you have felt seeing this?

As you close in prayer, reflect on how Jesus desires a pure heart, and ask him to show you ways in which you can keep your motives for God pure and aligned with his will.

# DAY 3 | WEDNESDAY



Today is sometimes called “Holy Wednesday” or “Spy Wednesday,” the day in which Judas agreed to betray Jesus to the Jewish leaders. Begin your devotions by praying for protection against the enemy, who is ready and eager to bring defeat and discouragement to God’s people.

**Read Luke 21:37–22:6 – Jesus and His Betrayal.**

On Wednesday, Jesus was busy teaching in the temple as he had done the previous few days since he arrived in Jerusalem. During this week, Jesus’s final week, his popularity was gaining more and more, as his teachings were radical and powerful. He was teaching them many things, and his teachings angered the Jewish leaders, who became even more settled that Jesus would have to die. They were threatened by his increasing popularity and his message which would hinder their own comfort, respect, and status in the community.

In verse 3 of our passage today, the text says that “Satan entered Judas” (22:3). Luke seems to portray Satan, the devil, as one of the primary opponents of Jesus. In Luke 4:13, after trying to tempt Jesus in the wilderness, and failing, he leaves Jesus until an “opportune time.” This time seems to have come, as he is able to “enter” Judas. This simply means that Satan was able to exert influence and control over Judas, but only because Judas had opened himself up to that. Judas was probably not a sincere disciple of Jesus but was more of a lover of money and maybe a lover of the status and attention that Jesus brought. He used Jesus for his own potential gain, and now that Jesus’s time was looking like it was up, he tried to make one last profit from him. Several years earlier, Satan tried to tempt Jesus with all of the wealth and glories of this world—and he failed. Now, Satan had tempted Judas with the same advantages—and this time, he succeeded.

The enemy often tempts us with our weaknesses. For Judas, it was wealth and money. For you, it may be something different. As you close this time of devotions today, pray and reflect on what your own particular weaknesses are, and pray to God that he would protect you from temptation, so that you can remain faithful and victorious today.

# DAY 4 | THURSDAY



We approach the final night that Jesus spent with his disciples, during the preparation of the Passover meal. There was a lot going on that night, but as you read this passage, imagine yourself as one of the disciples sitting with everyone in the upper room, then walking over to the Garden of Gethsemane, and then watching Jesus get betrayed.

Read Matt 26:17-56 – Jesus, the Upper Room, and His Arrest.

We are going to focus on Jesus's arrest in this passage. As you were imagining being one of the disciples with Jesus that night, you may have had some thoughts or emotions, while with Jesus in the garden and then watching him get arrested.

Write a paragraph or two, recalling what you would have been thinking and feeling that night, as if you were there actually there.

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As you close this time with a prayer, imagine again what you would say to Jesus that night, if you had some time to talk to him while being arrested (maybe you are able to hit pause and only you and Jesus were able to talk).

# DAY 5 | GOOD FRIDAY



Open with prayer, asking God to help you see the death of Jesus in a fresh, new light. Today's passage is much longer, two whole chapters. Take time to soak in what God's Word says to you today as you read the following passage. I encourage you to read slowly and meditatively.

**Read John 18–19 – Jesus, His Arrest, His Trials, and His Execution.**

The transition from Thursday night to Friday morning is subtle, as Jesus is arrested by a mob of soldiers, and then sent to several different trials. Did you notice the soldiers' response when Jesus asks who they're looking for? They say that they were looking for Jesus, and Jesus says, "I am he," and then they all fall back and then to the ground. Think about that for a moment: Jesus was powerful enough to speak and cause his opponents to fall to the ground. This shows that Jesus was still in control of the situation and that he willingly gave himself up.

There was a lot happening that night, and a lot to process, all the way through the morning. Jesus was not only tortured physically, although he was brutally tortured, but he was also tortured emotionally, mentally, socially, and spiritually. He was tortured emotionally, as they continued to insult him and accuse him of false allegations. He was tortured mentally by grilling him with questions and sending him back and forth from jury to jury. He was tortured socially, as most of his disciples, his closest friends for three/four years, abandoned him in his greatest moment of need. And he was tortured spiritually because at his death, he was separated from holy fellowship with the Father. Pause for a moment and think about how we would feel if we were tortured in all of those ways, all the while being beaten to near death.



# DAY 5 | GOOD FRIDAY

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Some have wondered why it is called Good Friday, since so much evil was done to an innocent man. We call it “Good” because Jesus did a good work, only something he was able and qualified to do. We call it “Good,” not because a good man did something nice for everyone, but because a good God paid the ultimate price, and then defeated death so that we can all have eternal and abundant life through him.

So as we near the end of Passion Week, and look forward to the victorious resurrection of this Jesus this Sunday, let us worship God in gratitude through prayer for defeating death and evil, and giving us hope and life in this world full of pain and suffering. He suffered so that we don’t have to suffer forever.

Close with a prayer from your heart; take your time!





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