



Holy Week

D E V O T I O N A L



Church family,

Easter is the most important celebration of the year for those who believe in Jesus. We focus on how Christ gave His life on the cross and then rose from the grave. He sacrificed so that we may have eternal life through Him!

Our hope is that you will join us in reading the Scriptures this week as we explore the life of Christ throughout Holy Week, leading us toward Resurrection Sunday. We desire for you to utilize these devotionals that describe each day of this week and that you would grow personally, dialogue with your family around the Bible, and create gospel conversations with others by inviting them to join you.

Would you consider doing this?

- Pray for a friend who doesn't know Jesus.
- Ask them to join you in reading through this Holy Week Guide.
- Encourage them to worship with you on Easter morning.

We are praying for you as you engage with the Scriptures this week!



HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

ENGAGE The Text

Each day, read the Scriptures first and then the devotionals. Our hope is that you would make time to reflect and personally grow in your understanding of this pivotal week in the life of Christ. Familiarity with certain things that we have heard can often keep us from seeing the text anew. You may have additional commentaries or resources that you might use. Dig in this week!

ENGAGE Your Family

Our prayer is for each family to engage with the truths of Scripture together. At the end of each devotional, we have provided questions and activities that can assist you in experiencing the devotionals as a family. Find a time each day that works best for you. Don't feel overwhelmed with finding major blocks of time but make it a priority to schedule a few moments each day. It's worth it!

ENGAGE Others

Our mission is to tell and invite others into this grand story as we engage the whole person with the whole gospel of Jesus Christ. This is a great opportunity to reach out, reassure, and invite others into this story of extraordinary hope. The challenge before you this week is to bring others into conversations around the Scriptures and devotionals as we lead into Easter Sunday.

SUNDAY, MARCH 24

Palm Sunday: Triumphal Entry

Matthew 21:1-10; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:29-40; John 12:12-19

Most of the crowd spread their coats in the road, and others were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them on the road. Then the crowds who went ahead of Him and those who followed kept shouting:

“Hosanna to the Son of David! He who comes in the name of the Lord is the blessed One! Hosanna in the highest heaven!”

When He had entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, “Who is this?”



—Matthew 21:8-10

Today is often called “Palm Sunday” because of the branches people waved and laid on the ground as Jesus entered the city. It marks the first day of “Holy Week,” the seven days leading up to Easter.

Imagine standing on the side of the road when Jesus came into the city. The man claiming to be the Son of God was riding in on a donkey, an unimportant animal used for carrying heavy things.

People were everywhere, waving palm branches like they would do for an important person. Yet this man didn’t look or act like any of the other important people you’ve seen pass through your city before. Would you wonder who He was or what was so special about Him?

Many people in the crowd that day were asking these types of questions, too. But they still recognized His importance and shouted, “Hosanna! Hosanna in the highest!”

The word “hosanna” means “God save us!” It’s often spoken as a word of praise. Seeing Jesus ride into their city inspired the crowds to lay down whatever they could find—coats, nearby palm branches, and other things—to cover the dirt and prepare a grand entrance that was fit for a King.

Talking Points

- Why do you think people were saying, "Hosanna! God, save us!"? What did they need to be saved from?
- What do you think you would've felt that day if you'd seen Jesus riding into the city on a donkey? Would you feel excited? Would you feel afraid?

Family Activity

The crowds cut branches from nearby trees to cover the ground and to wave as Jesus rode through the streets of Jerusalem. So, imagine that Jesus were passing by your house today. How would you welcome Him? Challenge your family to run outside and gather things from the garden or yard that you could wave as a welcome. It could be a branch, some leaves, a stick, or even a flower.

Now, imagine the noise and joy the people felt as Jesus passed through the crowd. As you wave your "branches," see who can shout "Hosanna!" the loudest.

MONDAY, MARCH 25

Cleansing of The Temple

Matthew 21:12-13; **Mark 11:15-19**; Luke 19:45-48

*And He began to teach and say to them,
“Is it not written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations?’
But you have made it a robber’s den.”*

—Mark 11:17

Jesus arrived in Jerusalem when the city was preparing for a very important festival, the Passover celebration. He first went to the temple, which was the place where people went to worship God.

When He got there, He didn’t find a holy place of worship—He found a mess! Animals and tables were everywhere. The temple leaders had allowed it to become a store where people could buy and sell animals in order to make money.

Jesus became angry when He saw this! The temple was supposed to be a holy place. Many families were preparing for the Passover festival. The religious leaders used the temple to sell the items they needed and make money, instead of keeping it holy for prayer and worship.

Jesus turned over all their tables, scattered the items they were selling, and made them stop. He reminded them that the temple was supposed to be a house for God—not a place for making money.



Talking Points

- These verses tell us that Jesus got angry because people were doing bad things that weren't honoring to God. Have you ever gotten angry when you've seen someone doing something wrong?
- How do you and your family worship and focus on God together? Is there a particular place you go to celebrate how good God is?

Family Activity

Let the kids make a big mess in one room of the house. They are allowed to pour out toys and turn over small furniture. Give them about five minutes to make this mess. After they make the mess, talk about how Jesus made a mess in the temple because He was angry and wanted to get rid of all the bad things in God's house

Then, together as family, clean up the mess. Talk about how Jesus cleansed the temple because He loved God and wanted others to respect God. Talk about ways we can respect and honor God, too.

TUESDAY, MARCH 26

A Woman Anoints Jesus

Matthew 26:6-13; **Mark 14:3-9**; John 12:1-8

But Jesus said, “Let her alone; why do you bother her? She has done a good deed to Me. For you always have the poor with you, and whenever you wish, you can do good to them; but you do not always have Me. She has done what she could; she has anointed My body beforehand for the burial.”

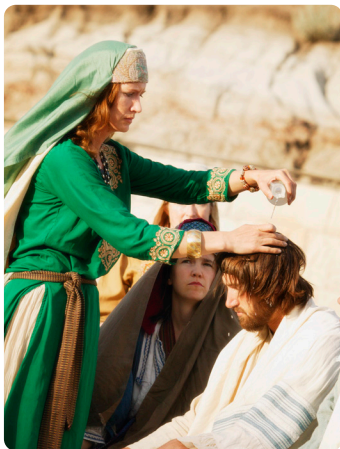
—**Mark 14:6-8**

As Jesus and His friends spent time together one night, a woman came into the room and opened a glass bottle of expensive perfume oil. She poured the oil on Jesus to anoint Him—to show how special He is and to honor His holiness.

Her actions surprised everyone—except for Jesus. Some people even got angry at her! The oil she’d poured out wasn’t cheap kitchen oil. It was very expensive! They couldn’t understand why anyone would waste something so costly, rather than giving it to the poor or using it for something else.

But Jesus knew exactly what she did and why. He knew she was giving up something very important as a way to show her love to Him.

He explained to the others that she’d done a very special thing for Him. She’d given the best that she had. It was a special moment of worship, and it’s an example for us to show our love for Jesus by giving Him the best we have—no matter the cost.



Talking Points

- Why did Jesus say that pouring the perfume on Him was special?
- What are some ways your family shows love to Jesus and to one another?

Family Activity

Until Easter, use a scented candle or some perfume in your house. Each time you smell it, it will help each of you remember the sweet gift the woman gave to Jesus.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27

The Plot to Kill Jesus

Matthew 26:1-5,14-16; Mark 14:1-2,10-11; Luke 22:1-6; John 11:45-57

Then one of the Twelve—the man called Judas Iscariot—went to the chief priests and said, “What are you willing to give me if I hand Him over to you?” So they weighed out 30 pieces of silver for him. And from that time he started looking for a good opportunity to betray Him.



—Matthew 26:14-16

Yesterday, we read a story about a woman who loved Jesus. Earlier this week, we read a story about crowds of people who were excited to see Jesus come to their city. But it's important to remember that not everyone loved Jesus, nor were they all excited to see Him.

Some people actually hated Him! Many people thought the things Jesus said were lies, and they thought He was very dangerous. They hated Him so much they wanted to kill Him—and they started making plans to do so, picking a good time and place to capture and arrest Him.

Judas, one of Jesus' 12 disciples, realized he could make some money by helping them find Jesus and capture Him. (Since he was close to Jesus and called Him a friend, this was a very bad betrayal.) He went to Jesus' enemies and asked them how much money they would give him if he helped them.

They told him they would give him 30 pieces of silver, which in the Old Testament was the amount of money paid to a slave-owner when one of their slaves was killed.

Judas accepted their money, and they all began planning how to arrest Jesus and kill Him.



Talking Points

- Was Jesus worth more than 30 pieces of silver? Why or why not?
- Judas was Jesus' friend, but he chose to betray Him. Discuss what betrayal means and talk about it as a family. Do you think it hurt Jesus to be betrayed by His friend? Have you ever been hurt by a friend?

Family Activity

Supplies needed: 30 silver coins (nickels, dimes, or quarters)

Put the coins in a small bag. Then, dump the coins onto a table and have the children count the coins. After counting the coins, talk about what they would be willing to do for the coins, good or bad. Keep the coins on the table or in a place that is easily seen to remind them how Jesus was betrayed and how He may have felt.

MAUNDY THURSDAY, MARCH 28

The Last Supper

Matthew 26:17-30; Mark 14:12-26; **Luke 22:7-23**

Then came the Day of Unleavened Bread on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and make preparations for us to each the Passover."

—Luke 22:7-8



Maundy Thursday is the day we stop and remember the last supper that Jesus ate with His disciples. We call it Maundy Thursday because “maundy” comes from the word “mandatum,” or “a command.” On this day, we stop and think about the commands that Jesus gave His disciples the night before He died. He asked them to remember.

Hundreds of years before that last supper, God’s special people (called the Israelites) lived in Egypt as slaves. The Egyptians were mean to them and treated them unfairly, so God started making a plan to rescue them. He asked a man named Moses to help them escape from Egypt.

One night, God told Moses to have every Israelite family kill a lamb and paint some of its blood over the doorway of their homes. During the night, an Angel of Death came through the streets in Egypt and killed the oldest son in every house that didn’t have blood on the door. But no one died in the houses that had blood on the door. The blood of the Passover lamb saved God’s people from death.

The Egyptians became afraid of the Israelites after this and begged them to leave Egypt. God had rescued His people! Every year after that, the people of Israel observed the Passover, remembering what God did for them.

The night that Jesus ate the last Passover meal with His disciples, He told them He was going to become the last Passover lamb. He would save them forever by dying on a cross for their sins. His body would be broken for them like bread, and His blood would be poured out for them like wine.

He commanded them to remember Him every time they ate bread or drank wine. Today, we still continue to remember Him this way. We call it The Lord’s Supper.

Talking Points

- How do the bread and the juice remind us of Jesus when we have the Lord's Supper?
- Why is it important for us to remember that Jesus died for us?

Family Activity

Using the recipe below, make unleavened bread. After dinner, turn off all technology, as well as all the lights. Light a few candles and gather around a table together. Eat the bread and have grape juice to drink. Talk about the bread representing the body of Christ and juice representing the blood shed for us. Pray as a family and do an activity (play a game, read, or draw) together without any technology.

Recipe for Unleavened Bread

1/2 cup of white flour
3/4 cup of whole wheat flour
3/8 tsp. of salt
3/8 tsp. of baking powder
3 tbsp. of vegetable oil
3/8 cup of warm water
2-3 tbsp. of honey

1. Mix all your ingredients together in a bowl. Do not over stir.
2. Pat the dough into a circle on a greased cookie sheet, about 3/8 inch thick and about 5 inches round.
3. Score the top of the loaf. (Cut it lightly into eight sections, not all the way through.)
4. Bake about 15 minutes at 400 degrees.

The Day Jesus Died

Matthew 27:27-55; Mark 15:16-41; **Luke 23:26-49**; John 19:16-37

When they came to the place called The Skull, there they crucified Him and the criminals, one on the right and the other on the left. But Jesus was saying, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing."

—Luke 23:33-34a

And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, "Father, into Your hands, I commit My spirit." Having said this, He breathed His last.

—Luke 23:46

The kind of death that Jesus died on the cross, called crucifixion, was very painful. One reason it was so excruciating was because the crucified person's hands and feet were nailed to a huge cross made out of large pieces of wood.

When Jesus was hanging on the cross, people in the crowds below teased and mocked Him. They made a crown of thorns for Him to wear, and they were making fun of Him by calling Him "The King of The Jews." They even gave Him vinegar instead of water when He was thirsty.

But even while Jesus was in pain and being made fun of, He asked God to forgive all the people who wanted to kill Him. He chose to stay up on the cross—even though He was powerful enough to come down from it—because He loved us. He knew He had to die so all of our sins could be crossed out forever.

Even though He'd done nothing wrong, He took the punishment for us instead. He died for us, so that we could live and be forgiven of our sins!



Talking Points

- Why do people call this "Good Friday" when so many bad things happened to Jesus on that day?
- How does it make you feel to think about Jesus dying for you?

Family Activity

Supplies needed: wooden or cardboard cross, light-colored markers, white paint, and paintbrushes

Have each family member write sins on the cross in light-colored markers. Talk about them and show your kids yours so they understand that even adults have things they struggle with.

Using the white paint, paint over the words and cross. Repeat until the words are completely covered. (You may have to wait for the paint to dry between coats)

Talk about how Jesus dying on the cross covered all our sins and how we are forgiven when we put our faith in Him. Display the crosses somewhere you can see them often, remembering what Jesus has done.

SATURDAY, MARCH 30

Resting and Waiting...

Matthew 27:57-61; Mark 15:42-47; **Luke 23:50-56**

And he took [the body of Jesus] down and wrapped it in a linen cloth, and laid Him in a tomb cut into the rock, where no one had ever lain.

—Luke 23:53

And on the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment.

—Luke 23:56b

Jesus died on the day before the Sabbath, a day for people to rest from the week and think about God, and worship together as a family. It began when the sun went down on Friday, and ended at sunset on Saturday.

Because God had commanded it, no one was allowed to do any work on the Sabbath. (See Exodus 20:10 and Deuteronomy 5:14.) They did all of their work the day before, on “Preparation Day,” to prepare for their day of rest.

After Jesus died, two men named Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus took His body to a tomb to be buried. Some women who loved Jesus very much followed behind them as well. Because of the Sabbath, they weren’t allowed to prepare Jesus’ body for burial, so they planned to come back to the tomb at a later time. Then, they returned to their homes to rest and wait.

While they rested and waited, they were probably extremely sad. Jesus had been killed in an awful way. They probably missed the friend they had grown to love the most! It must have been hard to think about anything else that day.

But Jesus had told them He would rise again on the third day after His death. They may have remembered this and wondered if it could be true. It would be hard to hope for something so good when so many bad things had happened, but that’s what Jesus had said. They would just have to rest and wait.



Talking Points

- As Christians, most of us celebrate our day of rest on Sunday, but not everyone does! When does your family celebrate a day of rest? What kinds of things do you do to relax?
- If you were one of Jesus' disciples, would you believe that He was going to be raised from the dead? Or would you be afraid He was gone forever?

Family Activity

Go on a walk as a family and look for large stones. Have each person pick one up and bring them back to the house.

When you return, have each person hold the stone and think of something that makes them sad. Write these things on the stones. Talk about these things and how on this day the people were sad because Jesus was dead and they thought He was gone forever.

Take the stones outside put them in the dirt. Let the children bury them in the ground just as Jesus was buried.

Jesus is Risen!

Matthew 28:1-15; Mark 16:1-8; **Luke 24:1-12**; John 20:1-18

But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men suddenly stood near them in dazzling clothing; and as the women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, "Why do you seek the living One among the dead? He is not here, but He has risen."

—Luke 24:1-6

Today is the day we've been waiting for. Jesus is alive! Christians call this day Easter, or "Resurrection Sunday." The word "resurrection" means to rise from the dead—and that's exactly what Jesus did!

When the women came to the tomb the morning after the Sabbath, they saw the stone had already been rolled away by someone else! After going inside the tomb and seeing that Jesus' body wasn't in there anymore, they thought someone had stolen it. They didn't know what had happened. The Bible tells us they were afraid.

But suddenly, two angels appeared and asked the women why they were looking for a living person in a grave! The women must have been surprised at this, but then they remembered what Jesus had said about rising from the dead.

The angels then told them the good news they had wanted to hear! "He is not here, but He has risen!" Jesus was stronger and more powerful than death. He proved it!

Because Jesus rose from the dead, those who believe in Him as Lord and Savior are also promised to live with Him forever after our bodies die on earth. Easter Sunday is a special day when we celebrate and tell the world loudly that Jesus is alive!



Talking Points

- Why is it important for our family that Jesus is alive?
- After the women who visited the tomb realized that Jesus was alive, they went and told other people the exciting news! Who do you need to tell that Jesus is alive?

Family Activity

Supplies needed: plastic eggs, birthday candle

Have a "Jesus Hunt." Hide Easter eggs around the house. Make all but one of them empty. Hide the candle egg well so they likely find it last. Tell the kids they are to look for the candle. Every time they find an empty egg, they should yell, "Not here!" Then, once they find the candle egg talk about how Jesus has risen and today we celebrate that He is the light of the World. He may not be with us physically today, but we can still celebrate His light that never burns out.

