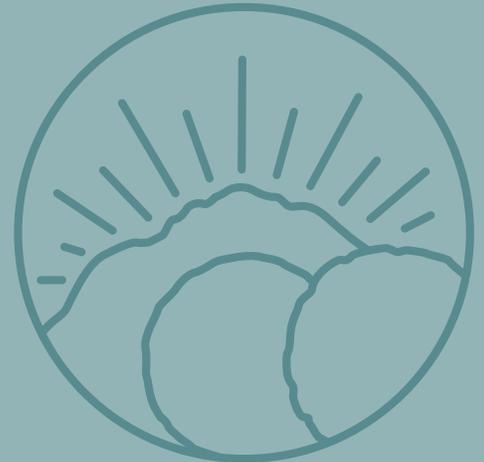
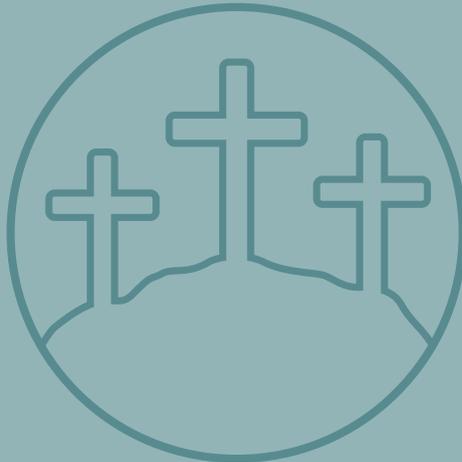


EASTER



A FAMILY GUIDE TO HOLY WEEK

READ

Scripture Reading for each day of Holy Week to share with your family

SAY

Devotional thought that will inspire and teach Biblical lessons for each day

DO

Family Activity you can do together to experience Holy Week in whole new way

PRAY

A guided prayer prompt for you and your family on the focus for each day.

WHAT IS HOLY WEEK?

Holy Week is what we call the week leading up to Easter, starting with Palm Sunday and ending with the celebration of Resurrection Sunday. It's also known as Passion Week, telling of the events leading up to Jesus' arrest, trial, death, and resurrection or the Great Week because of all the great things that took place during that week.

During that week in Jesus' life, He not only fulfilled Old Testament prophecies, but He endured death in order to be the perfect sacrifice who forever cleanses the sins of those who believe and restores them into the family of God.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE:

- 1. Set aside time.** It's easy to let time get away from us and other things get in our way. Commit to setting aside time each day for this Holy Week experience.
- 2. Use your Bibles.** Even though the full Scriptures are printed in this guide, have everyone grab their Bibles and look up the scriptures to read together. If you have very young children, have them sit beside a family member who has a Bible. It's an important visual that helps kids understand these stories, which come directly from the inspired Word of God.
- 3. Break it up into pieces.** It's not always effective to try to accomplish everything in one sitting, especially if you have young children. You know your family best and what works in your home. Don't hesitate to break each day into chunks. For example, you could read the Scripture at breakfast, do the activity after dinner, and say the prayer at bedtime. Stay flexible!
- 4. Get creative.** The activities, resources, and songs are there for you to use or to spark ideas you'd like to try with your family. Feel free to add your own ideas to make this special family time memorable for everyone in your family.
- 5. Pre-Holy Week Prep.** Resurrection eggs are a great way to help your kids retell the Easter story. You can purchase a set online or create your own using the instructions in the Resource section at the end. Use these throughout Holy Week.

SUNDAY

THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

READ

As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away."

This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet: "Say to Daughter Zion, 'See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.'"

The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. They brought the donkey and the colt and placed their cloaks on them for Jesus to sit on. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Hosanna in the highest heaven!" Matthew 21:1-9 ESV

SAY

As Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the donkey, the crowds recognized Him as a king who would conquer the Romans, ruling over the Jews at that time. They laid their cloaks and branches they cut down along Jesus' path and shouted, "Hosanna!" which means "Save us!" Jesus knew what his true purpose was—to die on the Cross and be raised to life again. It was part of God's rescue plan to give all people who believe a way to have their sins forgiven and to put them back into God's family forever. All of the excitement the crowds had, welcoming Jesus to Jerusalem is a small picture of the excitement we can have knowing Jesus died for the sins of all people so they can be part of God's eternal Heavenly kingdom.

DO

Have a "Hosanna Parade." Create your own palm branches using one of the many ideas for them online. Play one of the songs listed in the Resource section and sing, shout Hosanna, wave your palm branches as you walk around, and praise the Lord!

PRAY

Dear Jesus, We are filled with joy that You came to be our forever king. You deserve all of the joy, excitement, praise, and worship we can offer to You. Amen.

MONDAY

JESUS CLEARS THE TEMPLE

READ

On reaching Jerusalem, Jesus entered the temple courts and began driving out those who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves, and would not allow anyone to carry merchandise through the temple courts. And as he taught them, he said, "Is it not written: 'My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations'? But you have made it 'a den of robbers.'" Mark 11:15-16 ESV

SAY

God's temple was meant to be a place of worship where His people would come to offer sacrifices to Him and worship Him. Jesus saw many people using the temple courts as a place to sell and trade things to earn a profit, often cheating people out of money because of their high costs. Jesus set things right in the temple, cleansing it from the evil people had used it for.

DO

Ahead of time, put trash items inside your child's toy box or bin without them knowing. As an object lesson, take your kids to "clean out" their toys, removing all of the trash that doesn't belong there. Ask your kids why trash shouldn't be put in with their toys. Explain that God says our bodies are temples with which we can worship Him. If we throw "trash" (sin) all over inside ourselves, are we keeping our temples clean in a way that brings glory to God?

PRAY

Dear God, thank You for creating us to worship You and give You glory. Help us to see when our temples (our thoughts and hearts) are messed up by our sins and to ask You for forgiveness to clean out our sins. We want everything we do, say, and think to worship You. Amen.

TUESDAY

JESUS QUESTIONED BY RELIGIOUS LEADERS

READ

One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?"

"The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."

"Well said, teacher," the man replied. "You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him. To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices."

*When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." And from then on no one dared ask him any more questions.
Mark 12:28-34 NIV*

SAY

The religious leaders were looking for ways to catch Jesus saying something that didn't line up with God's rules. Instead, He gave answers that taught people how to best worship God. Loving God and loving others well shows others a true picture of God's love for them. How can we show God our love for Him and show others God's love?

DO

Cut out two large paper hearts from construction paper. On one heart, write "Love God"; on the other, write "Love Others." Take some time as a family to write down on each corresponding heart different ways you can love God and others well. Hang the hearts up in a place where you can all see them. Pick things off your hearts to do this week.

PRAY

Dear Lord, we want to be obedient followers of You who love You with everything we have and to love others so they can see how much You love them. Help us to listen to Your voice as You show us opportunities to do both this week. Amen.

WEDNESDAY

THE PLOT TO KILL JESUS

READ

Therefore many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary, and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him. But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. Then the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the Sanhedrin. "What are we accomplishing?" they asked. "Here is this man performing many signs. If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and then the Romans will come and take away both our temple and our nation."

Then one of them, named Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, spoke up, "You know nothing at all! You do not realize that it is better for you that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish." He did not say this on his own, but as high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the Jewish nation, and not only for that nation but also for the scattered children of God, to bring them together and make them one. So, from that day on they plotted to take his life. John 11:45-53 NIV

SAY

A week that started out with a celebration had taken a sad turn. More and more people wanted Jesus arrested and killed. The Jewish leaders instructed everyone that if they found Jesus, they should report it. Instead of believing in Jesus as the Son of God, they saw Him as someone who would take away what they believed was their best way of life. How was it possible for some to believe in Jesus as the Messiah and others to see Him as a threat to be destroyed?

DO

Using a paper plate, decorate one side with bright colors and the words "We believe." to represent all of the people who believed Jesus was who he said he was. Decorate the other side with dark colors and the words, "We do not believe." Talk about the difference between the two kinds of people and why some thought Jesus was a threat who needed to be arrested.

PRAY

Dear God, thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus, as the one who would rescue all who believe in Him from sin and death. Sometimes, people don't choose to follow Jesus because they don't understand that obeying God is the best way to live their lives. They think they know what's best. Please help us to show others God's best, and the only answer is Jesus. Amen.

THURSDAY

JESUS WASHED HIS DISCIPLES' FEET

READ

During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God, rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, do you wash my feet?" Jesus answered him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand." Peter said to him, "You shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no share with me." Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" Jesus said to him, "The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean, but not every one of you." For he knew who was to betray him; that was why he said, "Not all of you are clean."

When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, "Do you understand what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant[c] is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them. John 13:3-17 ESV

SAY

Washing someone's feet in Bible times was disgusting. People wore sandals and walked on roads and paths that were really, really dirty and stinky. It was the job of a servant to wash guests' feet because it was seen as one of the worst jobs anyone could do. The owner of the house would never, ever agree to wash anyone's feet. But Jesus demonstrated to His disciples that He cared for them so much He was willing to do something like washing their feet no matter how dirty they were.

DO

Wash each other's feet. There might be giggles or exclamations of "Eww!" but ask the Lord to bless the time as you show your kids what it means to be a servant like Jesus.

PRAY

Dear God, thank You for loving us so much. You are willing to do anything to cleanse us. Thank You for going to the Cross so we could be clean of our sins that separate us from You. Amen.

FRIDAY

JESUS IS CRUCIFIED

READ

And they crucified him. Dividing up his clothes, they cast lots to see what each would get. It was nine in the morning when they crucified him. The written notice of the charge against him read: the king of the Jews. They crucified two rebels with him, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, "So! You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, come down from the cross and save yourself!" In the same way the chief priests and the teachers of the law mocked him among themselves. "He saved others," they said, "but he can't save himself! Let this Messiah, this king of Israel, come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe." Those crucified with him also heaped insults on him.

At noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And at three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" (which means "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"). When some of those standing near heard this, they said, "Listen, he's calling Elijah." Someone ran, filled a sponge with wine vinegar, put it on a staff, and offered it to Jesus to drink. "Now leave him alone. Let's see if Elijah comes to take him down," he said. With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last. Mark 15:24-37 NIV

SAY

Sometimes, it's hard to understand why Jesus had to die. He was the only one who could take on all the sins of the world because He was sinless and innocent of any wrongdoing. He was punished, humiliated, beaten, and made fun of. But no matter what, Jesus was obedient to His Father because it was the only way for forgiveness to be made complete.

DO

Using painter's tape, tape a cross shape onto the center of a white piece of paper. Have your kids color the entire page with a black marker or crayon. When they're done, carefully peel off the tape, revealing a white cross. The black represents sin, and the white of the Cross is Jesus washing people's sins away so they can be part of God's family forever.

PRAY

Dear Jesus, thank You for suffering pain and death on the Cross so that anyone who believes in You can be forgiven and become part of God's family forever. Amen.

SATURDAY

SABBATH SILENCE

READ

After these things Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave him permission. So, he came and took away his body. Nicodemus also, who earlier had come to Jesus by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds in weight. So, they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews. Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. So, because of the Jewish day of Preparation, since the tomb was close at hand, they laid Jesus there. John 19:38-42 ESV

SAY

The Sabbath day was a very important day in the Jewish culture. You didn't cook or work on that day, so the day before was spent in preparation. Those who loved Jesus were able to wrap His body in cloth and put Him in a tomb but didn't have time to do everything the people usually did to get a body ready for burial. After the most awful day when Jesus died, can you imagine how hard it was for His followers to be quiet and rest? But that's what they did, probably with lots of tears and sadness. What would it have been like for those who loved Him to try to rest even though they were probably hoping beyond hope to find out His death was just a bad dream?

DO

The day between Jesus' death and His resurrection was probably an even quieter day than usual. We don't like waiting, especially when we don't know what's going to happen next. Set a timer for you to sit as a family in silence as a reminder that the followers of Jesus went from walking with Him, learning from Him, and being with Him to silence from Him.

PRAY

Dear God, thank You that even when it seems You're silent, You're not. When Jesus died, it didn't seem like anything good was ever going to happen again. But You were working behind the scenes, preparing for a huge celebration. Help us to be patient and always trust You during quiet waiting times. Amen.

SUNDAY

JESUS IS ALIVE!

READ

But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared. And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel. And as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise." And they remembered his words, and returning from the tomb they told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. Luke 24:1-9 ESV

SAY

What an amazing end to a story, and that was really an amazing beginning! Jesus died on the Cross and was raised to life again, which was a very happy ending for His followers, who were so very sad. But, in a way, it was just the beginning. The beginning of a new way of living in relationship with God. People would no longer need to make sacrifices continually for their sins to be forgiven. They just had to believe Jesus was the Son of God who had died and risen again to beat sin and death forever. It's the happiest story ever and the most exciting day in history...until the day that Jesus returns to make all things new for those who believe!

DO

Bake Empty Tomb Rolls together (See recipe in Resource section). While you make them, tell your kids that the marshmallow represents Jesus. As you wrap the marshmallow in the dough, explain that the dough is the tomb in which Jesus' body was sealed. Bake the rolls. When the rolls are slightly cooled but still warm, open them up to find an empty space inside where the marshmallow was. Jesus was risen; he was no longer in the tomb!

PRAY

Dear God, thank you for Easter! Thank You for sending Your Son to live a sinless life on the earth and to take all the sins of the world upon himself when He died on the Cross. Thank You for showing us Your mighty power through an empty tomb and a risen Savior! Hallelujah! Amen.

RESOURCES

SONGS (can be found on YouTube and/or Spotify)

- Mighty to Save - Hillsong/Hillsong Kids
- My God - Go Fish
- The Life John 14:16 - Seeds Family Worship
- He's Alive, He's Alive - Yancy
- Shout Hosanna - Kristian Stanfill
- I Believe - Go Fish
- Savior 1 John 4:14 - Seeds Family Worship
- All Have Sinned Romans 3:23 - Seeds Family Worship
- The Resurrection John 11:25-27 - Seeds Family Worship
- John 3:16 - The Rizers

- [What is Easter?](#) by Phil Vischer
- [The Garden, the Curtain, and the Cross](#) by Carl Laferton
- [Goodbye to Goodbyes](#) by Lauren Chandler
- [Benjamin's Box](#) by Melody Carlson

BOOKS

RESURRECTION EGGS

Supplies:

12 plastic eggs

1 egg carton or a basket to store eggs

Small objects to represent parts of the Easter story or drawings of the objects

The following items represent part of the Easter story. Place each item in an egg.

- Donkey and/or palm branches: Jesus's triumphal entry into Jerusalem
- Silver Coin: Judas betrayed Jesus
- Washcloth: Jesus washed His disciples' feet
- Bread and cup: The Last Supper
- Praying hands: Jesus prayed in the garden of Gethsemane
- Leather strip: Jesus was beaten
- Cross or nails: Jesus was crucified
- Dice: Soldiers play a game for Jesus's clothes
- Spear: Soldiers pierced Jesus with a spear
- Linen cloth: Jesus's body was wrapped for burial
- Stone: A stone sealed Jesus's tomb shut
- Empty egg: Jesus rose from the dead and left an empty tomb behind

1. Use these eggs throughout the week to go through the Easter story with your kids.
2. Encourage them to retell or act out parts of the story.
3. Hide the eggs for your children to find and talk about the items inside.

EMPTY TOMB ROLLS RECIPE



Ingredients

- 1 (10 ounce) package jumbo refrigerated crescent rolls
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon ground cinnamon
- 8 large marshmallows
- 1/4 cup butter, melted

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Prepare muffin pan (preferably jumbo muffin pan) with non-stick cooking spray.
2. Separate rolls into eight triangles and set aside. Combine sugar and cinnamon in a small bowl.
3. Dip each marshmallow into butter, then roll in cinnamon-sugar and place on a triangle dough. Pinch dough around marshmallow, sealing all edges. Make sure to seal well or all the marshmallows will escape.
4. Dip tops of dough into the remaining butter and then into the cinnamon-sugar. Place rolls with the sugar side up into prepared muffin cups.
5. Bake at 375 degrees for 13-15 minutes. Eat warm.