

Holy Week

READING PLAN

M.

Introduction



Holy Week is one of the most sacred traditions in the life of the global Church. Its roots reach back to second- and third-century believers who gathered with deep reverence to remember the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In the earliest days, followers of Jesus would come together on Resurrection Sunday to honor and worship the risen King. Over time, this remembrance grew into a sacred pilgrimage, where believers intentionally walked through the final days of Jesus' earthly life, often retracing His steps in Jerusalem as an act of devotion and worship.



As Scripture became more accessible and the message of the gospel spread across the world, the practices surrounding Holy Week expanded as well. What began as remembrance became reflection, and reflection became formation, shaping the faith of generations of believers.



Yet, like many sacred things throughout history, parts of this beautiful week were at times distorted by religious customs, man-made rules, and traditions that missed the heart of Jesus. We recognize that some of you may carry wounds or hesitation connected to how Holy Week was observed in past church experiences. We want to pause and acknowledge that. We see you. And we want you to know that nothing is beyond God's power to redeem.



Our prayer is that this Easter season would be marked by a fresh and personal encounter with Jesus. As we walk chronologically through the final days of His life, from Palm Sunday to Resurrection Sunday, we invite you to slow down, reflect, and meditate on what took place. Every moment of Jesus' life was intentional. Every step toward the cross was purposeful. And every moment since the foundation of the world was leading toward our reunion with our Savior and King.

As you read each day, invite the Holy Spirit into these pages. Create space to remember what each day represents. Ask the Lord to reveal what He desires to show you this Easter season, both personally and corporately.



Thank you for choosing to walk through Holy Week with us. May this journey deepen your faith, renew your hope, and draw you closer to Jesus.



Palm Sunday



Palm Sunday marks the day Jesus made His humble yet triumphant entry into Jerusalem, the sacred city where so many defining moments of the Old Testament unfolded. This is the Promised Land God called Abraham to. It is the place where Abraham's faith was tested when the Lord asked him to sacrifice his son Isaac on Mount Moriah, and where he witnessed the faithfulness of God as a ram was provided in Isaac's place. This is the city King David established as the capital to bring unity among the twelve tribes of Israel. It is where the ark of the Lord was kept and where the temple of God was built. It is the place Psalm 132:13–14 declares the Lord chose to dwell, saying, "This is My resting place forever; here I will dwell, for I have desired it."



Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem was not accidental. It was not a coincidence. Every step was intentional and fully aligned with God's master plan.



As Jesus entered the holy city riding on a lowly colt, just as prophesied in Zechariah 9:9, the streets filled with men, women, and children crying out, "Hosanna." They shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest." The word Hosanna simply translated means, "Save, I pray." Their praise was not just celebration but a desperate cry for deliverance.



In their hands they waved palm branches, a custom used to honor victorious leaders. The palm branch symbolized peace and victory. This moment had been prophesied by King David in Psalm 118:25–26 nearly a thousand years before Palm Sunday ever took place.

Every moment was planned and seen by God. This was His plan to bring victory to the defeated, freedom to the captive, and deliverance to the oppressed. As the Savior of the world rode through the crowd, hearing the chants of His people crying out to be saved, one cannot help but wonder if He also heard the cries of generations yet to come. The voices of hearts are still searching for truth.



As you read the passages for Palm Sunday, allow this moment to become real between you and the Lord. Jesus did not come only to save those standing in Jerusalem that day. He came to save you as well. Your conquering King is ready to step in, to defend, protect, and cover you today. What an honor it is to be so deeply loved and completely safe.

Read:
Matthew 21:1–11
Mark 11:1–11
Luke 19:28–44
John 12:12–19



Monday



There is a caricature of Jesus that drifts through the modern imagination in soft pastel tones. Gentle. Meek. Mildly inconvenienced by sin, as though evil barely upsets Him. It is a portrait that hangs comfortably on the wall of modern emotionalism.

Then Monday of Holy Week tears it down.



Jesus enters the temple, and instead of offering greetings, He begins flipping over tables. Coins scatter across stone floors. Doves beat frantically against the air. Oxen bellow and then thunder through the courts while sheep spill from their pens in a frenzy of wool and dust. A whip of cords cuts through the noise. The disciples remember the Scripture: "Zeal for Your house will consume Me." (John 2:17)

This is not uncontrolled anger. It is royal authority.



Picture a prince stepping back into his father's kingdom after a long absence. The outer streets erupt at his arrival. Branches wave. Voices rise. The air shakes with shouts of Hosanna. From a distance, it appears that righteous loyalty has awakened and the kingdom is alive with devotion.

He passes through the gates, beyond the spectacle, and into his father's courts. There the sound changes. Coins clatter. Merchants haggle over the livestock that are crowding the corridors meant for prayer. The King's courts have been converted into a marketplace. A holy temple monetized. Worship reduced to transaction. His father's name leveraged for profit.



The Returning Heir did not come for applause in the roads. He came for the honor of his father's house. And so He acts.

Malachi had foretold it: "The Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to His temple." (Malachi 3:1) Haggai promised that the glory of the latter house would be greater than the former (Haggai 2:7-9). On Monday, that promise walks through the doors.



Jesus does not drift in quietly. He inspects. He judges. He purifies. Yet Matthew tells us something striking. After He clears the temple, the blind and the lame come to Him there, and He heals them (Matthew 21:14). The hands that overturned tables now restore broken bodies. Judgment makes room for restoration. His zeal is not petty rage. It is covenant love defending what belongs to the Father so that healing can dwell there again.

Then there is the fig tree.

It is full of leaves but empty of fruit. From a distance it appears alive.

Upon inspection, it offers nothing (Mark 11:12-14). The tree becomes a living parable of the temple itself. Activity without fruit. Movement without prayer. Leaves without life.

Jesus is not impressed by leaves.



Monday



Paul writes that we are the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19). The house is no longer stone and curtain; it is flesh and bone. If the Lord were to suddenly come to His temple today, what would He find? The appearance of devotion, or the substance of it? Leaves, or fruit?

Monday reminds us that Jesus is not merely Savior. He is the Son of the King, Lord of the house. His zeal still burns, not to destroy but to purify, not to shame but to restore what is rightfully His.



The Returning Heir has come home.

Haggai declared, “The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former... and in this place I will give peace.” (Haggai 2:9) The order matters. Glory restored, then peace given.

The Returning Heir cleanses the house so He can fill it. He overturns what corrupts so He can establish what heals. His zeal makes room for His presence, and where His presence dwells rightly, peace follows.



Holy Week does not begin softly. It begins with cleansing.

The Returning Heir has come, and with His restored glory comes the gift of His peace.

Read:

Matthew 21:12-22

Mark 11:12-19

Luke 19:45-48

John 2:13-22



Tuesday



Jesus was teaching in the Temple courts when the challenge came. This was not a casual setting. The Temple was the center of authority, and teaching there carried weight.

The chief priests and elders asked where His authority came from. Who gave Him the right to speak and act the way He did? The question went to the heart of the issue. Authority.



This exchange followed the withering of the fig tree. In the Old Testament, fig trees were used to describe a spiritual condition. A tree that looked alive but produced no fruit pointed to judgment. The meaning behind the fig tree would have been clear to the people of Jesus' time.



Jesus quoted Psalm 118:22-23 and applied it to Himself, saying the stone the builders rejected had become the cornerstone. He pressed the point further by asking if they had read what Scripture said, later recorded in Matthew 21:42. Builders were responsible for recognizing what mattered most. Their rejection revealed a failure to see what God was doing.

In Isaiah 8:14-15, Isaiah had warned that the Lord Himself would become a stone of stumbling. That warning was unfolding. The same stone that secured the faithful became an obstacle to those who relied on their own authority.



Jesus also echoed Psalm 110:1, speaking of the Messiah seated at God's right hand. Authority did not come from religious leadership. It came from God.

The confrontation exposed a hard truth. Religious systems can be active and still be fruitless. Authority can be claimed and still be hollow.

The question remains. Is Jesus treated as optional, or as the foundation everything rests on?



Read:
Matthew 21:23-25:46
Mark 11:20-13:37
Luke 20:1-21:38



Wednesday



As Passover approached, religious leaders quietly conspired to kill Jesus, fulfilling the words of Psalm 2: “The rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against His Anointed” (Psalm 2:1–2). What looked like human planning was actually God’s redemptive plan moving forward. Even in secret meetings and whispered schemes, Scripture was unfolding exactly as promised.



On that same day, two very different responses to Jesus were on display. At the house of Simon the leper in Bethany, a woman came to Jesus with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume. She broke the jar and poured the perfume on His head. It was a beautiful act of worship that honored Him as King and quietly prepared Him for burial. Jesus said, “She has done a beautiful thing to Me... she has anointed My body beforehand for burial” (Mark 14:6–8). She was criticized for the cost, but she held nothing back.



Judas, one of the twelve disciples chosen by Jesus and trusted with managing the group’s money, made a very different choice. He calculated Jesus’ worth in silver and agreed to betray Him for thirty pieces, fulfilling Zechariah’s prophecy (Zechariah 11:12) and echoing the grief of Psalm 41: “Even my close friend in whom I trusted... has lifted his heel against me” (Psalm 41:9).



This day holds a striking contrast. One follower poured out what was most valuable to honor Jesus, while another placed a price on Him. Both actions moved prophecy forward, revealing how differently hearts can respond even in close proximity to the Messiah. The events of this day remind us that being near Jesus does not automatically mean surrendering to Him. True devotion is revealed not by access, position, or familiarity, but by what a person is willing to lay down before Him.

As you read the Scriptures below, picture yourself in that room in Bethany. What is the most valuable thing you could offer Jesus? Ask yourself: Is there anything I consider “too valuable” to fully surrender to Him? (Comfort, control, approval, reputation, money, etc.) Surrender it all and make Jesus the Lord of your life.



Read:
Matthew 26:1–16
Mark 14:1–11
Luke 22:1–6
John 13:1–17



Thursday



The book of Exodus tells the story of Moses leading the children of Israel out of captivity and into freedom, back to the Promised Land. Most of us are familiar with the exodus from Egypt. Ten plagues, an evil Pharaoh, widespread devastation, and finally the Israelites were released to leave. Many who were raised in church can picture this story clearly. In a single Sunday school lesson, the highlights are often covered quickly. Yet there is far more to this story than we tend to notice at first glance.



The freedom of God's people did not come without devastation. What is often overlooked is that scholars believe the negotiations and manipulative resistance Pharaoh displayed toward Moses likely unfolded over the course of about a year. Think about that. For an entire year, the Israelites witnessed the power of God again and again, all while His children were kept safe and covered. Water turned to blood. Frogs, lice, and flies filled the land. Livestock died. Boils broke out. Hail destroyed crops. Locusts consumed what remained. Darkness covered Egypt. Then, just before the final plague, Moses received word that the time had come.



God instructed Moses to lead the people in what would become the first Passover meal. Each family was to sacrifice a perfect, unblemished lamb. The blood of that lamb was to be spread across the doorposts of their homes. That night, the Lord would pass through Egypt. The firstborn of both humans and animals would die, but every home marked by the blood would be passed over.



This story can be difficult to understand. At times it may even be hard to accept. Yet when we look deeper, we see so many powerful attributes of God at work. His mercy, His love, His justice, and His faithfulness, to name a few. God was rescuing His people from slavery and delivering them into freedom. They were not perfect. They were not deserving. Yet God remained faithful because of the covenant He made with Abraham long before any of them were born. The Passover meal was meant to remind God's people of the miracles He performed to bring about their deliverance.



On Thursday evening of Holy Week, Jesus sat with His disciples to partake in this memorial meal together. It was a meal they had observed every year of their lives. As they remembered what God had done for their ancestors generations earlier, they had no idea what was about to unfold before them. Then everything shifted.

Jesus took the bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to His disciples saying, "Take and eat; this is My body." Then He took the cup, blessed it, and passed it to them saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is poured out for you."



Thursday



The disciples did not fully understand what was happening in that moment, but Jesus knew they soon would. Though they were no longer slaves in Egypt and no longer physically bound, He knew they were still enslaved to another master: sin. Jesus understood that no amount of effort, obedience, or good works could make them right with God. Within the next twenty-four hours, the same justice, faithfulness, love, and mercy witnessed in Egypt all those years earlier would be revealed again as Christ was crucified as the perfect and blameless sacrifice. Like the bread torn, His body would be beaten and marred. Like the wine poured out, His blood would be shed to atone for the sins of the world. This time, even those who were once not considered God's people could be adopted into His family. A covenant that cannot be broken and will last forever.

Over time, communion can become routine or feel ritualistic. This is an invitation to slow down and remember the weight of the body and the blood. Remember the faithfulness of God, that will not break his covenant. The justice provided for your situation. Thank Him for the undeserved mercy and love you have received, all because of the fierce love He has for you.

As we reflect on this day, pause to recognize the weight of every moment of that Thursday. From the Lord's Supper, our first picture of communion, to Jesus humbly washing the feet of those He loved, to His betrayal and arrest, each moment was leading toward redemption. Jesus became the perfect, unblemished Lamb, shedding His blood so that we could walk in true freedom.

Read:
Matthew 26:17-56
Mark 14:12-52
Luke 22:7-53
John 13:1-18:11

Good Friday



It's always been called "Good Friday." Most of us would agree Fridays are good, all the way around. The beginning of a couple of days off to grill. Or do lawn work. Or sleep in. The day we catch up and catch our breath. Most of us have never met a Friday we don't love.

But some 2000 years ago was a Friday so marked, the calendar still reflects it today.



In this time, the evening marked a new day. And on that last Friday of His earthly life, Jesus's day began with His trusted friend betraying Him, saying he never knew Him. The book of Psalms forecasted this betrayal twice: Psalm 38:11- My loved ones and friends stay away, fearing my disease. Even my own family stands at a distance, and Psalm 88:18- You have taken away my companions and loved ones. Darkness is my closest friend.



Through the day, the precious Son of God would be even more abandoned, His followers and friends nowhere to be found, as He suffered a criminal's punishment. He would be beaten like a thief, interrogated like a traitor, and scourged like the deepest underbelly of society while, like a lamb to the slaughter, He did not open His mouth to defend Himself. (Isaiah 53:7).



Made to carry His cross, made from a tree He created, our precious Jesus met His final hours on a hill called Golgothah, or "the place of the skull." At this place of the Father's choosing, the spotless Lamb of God that John foretold, would be stripped naked, forced to thirst, be ridiculed and mocked, and would wear a crown made of thorns. He would hear the crowd calling for His execution after they admired His miracles. He would hear His mother weeping with no way to console her. The hands that touched the blind eyes would feel the piercing of nails. The feet that walked miles out of the way to forgive the adulterous woman would be punctured and restricted. (Psalm 22:16)



But the moment that defined time and still defines time would come in a moment of prophetic fulfillment from Psalm 22:1- My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from my cries of anguish?

God the Father, the Architect of space and time, the Author of the very plan being executed to save the humanity He loved- would turn His back on His one and only Son- and in so doing, would make many sons and daughters who would never feel His rejection.



Friends, as we move through our favorite day of the week, may we be humbled to our knees to remember that on a day He created, the Son of God in all His innocence, chose to lay down His life as the final sacrifice between God and man.

Good Friday



Only Jesus could love us this much- to know from the beginning of time that all the sacrifices before Him were leading Him up a hill to His death. Obedient to the end. Loyal to the Father's love for us. The Lamb of God, slain before the foundation of the world- gave His life on a Friday that began as any other Friday for most of us, but ended with a redemption story that only God could write.



A good Friday- the best Friday, indeed.

Read:
Matthew 26:57-27:61
Mark 14:66-15:47
Luke 22:54-23:56
John 18:12-19:42



Saturday



Palm Sunday marks the day Jesus made His humble yet triumphant entry into Jerusalem, the sacred city where so many defining moments of the Old Testament unfolded. This is the Promised Land God called Abraham to. It is the place where Abraham's faith was tested when the Lord asked him to sacrifice his son Isaac on Mount Moriah, and where he witnessed the faithfulness of God as a ram was provided in Isaac's place. This is the city King David established as the capital to bring unity among the twelve tribes of Israel. It is where the ark of the Lord was kept and where the temple of God was built. It is the place Psalm 132:13–14 declares the Lord chose to dwell, saying, "This is My resting place forever; here I will dwell, for I have desired it."



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Read:
Matthew 27:62–66
Mark 16:1



Resurrection Sunday



Every Easter morning, the earth feels different. The sky seems a little closer. The birds sing a bolder song. The wind smells refreshing. The sunrise itself is a little more bold, more vivid.

Maybe it's just the creative liberty of a renewed mind's imagination, how we know He makes all things new and that Resurrection Sunday is a day that just "feels" more alive and invigorated.



But the Word tells us in Romans 1:20 that since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.

The earth KNOWS.



What must it have felt like that morning, when the Son of God had risen from the grave? The women who loved and followed Jesus went to His tomb to complete the burial rituals and anoint His precious body with ointments and herbs. But upon their arrival, they were greeted by angels who asked them a poignant question that is still relevant to us today- "Why are you looking for the living among the dead? Remember how He told you when He was with you?"



It seems so obvious, as we read these ancient texts. Of COURSE Jesus was alive like He said He would be. Of COURSE He rose on the third day and of COURSE He kept His word, like He always had. How could they miss it? How could they doubt?

Yet, we do it every day. We look for freedom in old ways of thinking. We look for safety through human relationships. We look for security in our jobs and finances. We look for satisfaction among the things we buy. All the while, the resurrected Jesus, is alive in our lives like He said He would be, and we treat Him like the grave is still sealed. The truth is, no matter what is taking place in our lives today or any day, the prophecy found in Job 19:25-26 is still our hope- I know that my redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand on the earth.



In the end of your grief, Jesus stands.
In the end of your sickness, Jesus stands.
In the end of your waiting, Jesus stands.
In your family, Jesus stands.
In that diagnosis, Jesus stands.
In the end of your heartache, the resurrected, full alive Jesus STANDS!



THIS is why the earth feels alive on Easter Sunday.

Resurrection Sunday



It knows that the minute the buried body of Jesus began to breathe, sin and heartbreak had no leverage over this world anymore! Jesus is ALIVE, friends. And because He is alive, SO ARE WE!

Happy Resurrection Day! He is risen! Go and tell EVERYONE!



Read:
Matthew 28:1-15
Mark 16:1-20
Luke 24:1-53
John 20:1-31





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