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The Holy Week of Jesus

PALM SUNDAY: JESUS' TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

On the Sunday before his death, Jesus began his trip to Jerusalem on a donkey, knowing that soon he would lay down his life for the sake of the world. As he made his triumphal entry, the crowds welcomed him by waving palm branches in the air and shouting "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"

So, how do you think it would have felt to have been in the crowd watching Jesus ride in on a donkey?

Mark 11:1-11 and Luke 19:28-44

WEDNESDAY: DAY OF REST

The Bible doesn't say what Jesus did on Wednesday. Some scholars speculate that after two exhausting days in Jerusalem, Jesus and his disciples spent this day resting in Bethany in anticipation of the Passover. Bethany was about two miles east of Jerusalem. Here Lazarus and his two sisters, Mary and Martha lived. We can only speculate about how Jesus spent this final Wednesday.

So, if you had been a disciple, how would you have spent Wednesday with Jesus?

SUNDAY: RESURRECTION

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the most important event of the Christian faith. The very foundation of all Christian doctrine hinges on the truth of this account. Early Sunday morning several women went to the tomb and discovered that the large stone covering the tomb's entrance had been rolled away. An angel announced, "Don't be afraid! I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He isn't here! He is risen from the dead, just as he said would happen." The Bible provides undeniable evidence that the resurrection of Jesus Christ happened by documenting eyewitness accounts. Mary Magdalene was the first person to see him. Several others, including some of the disciples, saw him that day too.

So, what would go through your mind if you saw Jesus walking around town after you had seen him die on the cross?

Luke 24:1-11 or Mark 16:1-14

THURSDAY: PASSOVER, GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE, AND BETRAYAL

Jesus went with his disciples into Jerusalem for the Passover feast. This particular feast has become known as the Last Supper. During this Last Supper, Jesus washed the disciples' feet and shared communion with them. He used the bread and wine to symbolize his broken body and shed blood that frees us from sin. Later Jesus and the disciples left the Upper Room and went to the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus prayed in agony to God the Father. Later that evening in Gethsemane, Jesus was betrayed with a kiss by Judas Iscariot and arrested by the Sanhedrin.

So, why do you think Jesus left the Passover meal and went to pray in the Garden? How would you have felt if Jesus had washed your feet?

Mark 14:12-72 or Luke 22:7-62

FRIDAY: THE CROSS

Jesus' journey turned treacherous and acutely painful in these final hours leading to his death. Before the third hour (3 a.m.), Jesus endured the shame of false accusations, condemnation, mockery, beatings, and abandonment. After multiple unlawful trials, he was sentenced to death by crucifixion. Before Christ was led away, soldiers spit on him, tormented and mocked him, and pierced him with a crown of thorns. Afterwards, Jesus carried his own cross to Calvary where, again, he was mocked and insulted as Roman soldiers nailed him to the wooden cross. His first words from the cross were, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." His last were, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." Then, about the ninth hour (3 p.m.), Jesus breathed his last and died. By 6 p.m. Friday evening, his body was taken down from the cross and laid in a tomb.

So, why do you think that Jesus was talking to his "Father"? How would you have felt if you had witnessed the events of the day?

Mark 15:1-47 or Luke 22:63 - 23:56

SATURDAY: LAID IN THE TOMB

Jesus' body lay in the tomb where it was guarded by Roman soldiers throughout the day on Saturday, which was the Sabbath. So, what do you think the followers of Jesus did on Saturday? Read the scriptures passages noted and compare the different versions.

Luke 23:56-56, Matthew 27:57-64, Mark 15:42-47 and Mark 16:1-5, and John 19:38-42

MONDAY: JESUS CLEARS THE TEMPLE

When Jesus arrived at the Temple in Jerusalem, he found the courts full of corrupt money changers. He began overturning their tables and clearing the Temple, saying, "The Scriptures declare, 'My Temple will be a house of prayer,' but you have turned it into a den of thieves."

So, why do you think Jesus overturned tables and cleared the money changers from the temple?

Mark 11:12-17 and Luke 19:45-48

TUESDAY: TEACHING AT THE TEMPLE

At the Temple, the religious leaders aggressively challenged Jesus' authority, attempting to ambush him and create an opportunity for his arrest. But Jesus evaded their traps and pronounced harsh judgment on them. In the afternoon, Jesus left the city and went with his disciples to the Mount of Olives. He taught in parables about end times events, including his Second Coming and the final judgment.

So, if you had heard Jesus talking about his Second Coming, what would have been your reaction?

Mark 11:20-23:57 or Luke 19:47-21:36

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