

C O R N E R S T O N E P E N T E C O S T A L C H U R C H

Corporate Prayer and Fasting

HOLY WEEK

April 6 - 12, 2020

And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said.

Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

Matthew 28:5-6

PRAYER FOCUS

"HE DID IT FOR US"

Monday: He Loved Us - "We are Loved"

John 3:16 | 1 John 4:10 | Ephesians 5:1-2

Tuesday: He Forgave Us - "We are Forgiven"

1 Peter 2:24 | 1 John 1:9 | Psalm 103:12

Wednesday: He Redeemed Us - "We are Redeemed"

Ephesians 1:7 | 1 Peter 1:18-19 | Galatians 3:13

Thursday: He Healed Us - "We are Healed"

Isaiah 53:5 | 1 Peter 2:24-25

Friday: He Saved Us - "We are Saved"

Romans 10:9-10 | Ephesians 2:4-10 | 2 Timothy 1:9

Saturday: He Reconciled Us - "We are Reconciled"

2 Corinthians 5:18-19

Sunday: He Gave Us the Victory - "We are Victorious"

1 Corinthians 15:55-57

HOLY WEEK

Holy Week is a string of eight days that allow us an opportunity to reflect upon the shift in humanity Jesus' sacrifice on the cross launched. It starts with Palm Sunday when Jesus enters the city of Jerusalem. The week leads us through the Last Supper, His crucifixion, and ends on Easter Sunday with His resurrection. This is the basis of Christianity, His sacrifice launched the New Covenant God promised and many had prophesied throughout the Old Testament. Each day of Holy Week allows us to peek into the heart of our Savior at an intently close proximity. His love for us is reflected in every significant step toward the cross, every breath up to the last, and His resurrection.

How Holy Week Leads to Easter (Resurrection) Sunday

Though Jesus didn't walk the earth incarnate until He was born in Bethlehem to Mary and Joseph, He exists and works throughout the entirety of the Bible. Scripture assures us that He was present at Creation with the Father, that He is the Word, and many prophesies were specifically fulfilled during this final, holy week of Jesus' life on earth. Each Gospel has a narrative of the last week of Jesus' life (Matthew 21-28; Mark 11-16; Luke 19-24; John 12-21).

What is Holy Week?

Holy Week begins on Palm Sunday and ends with Easter Sunday. During this one week, many biblical prophesies were fulfilled. Jesus came to earth to save humanity by dying on the cross on Good Friday and resurrecting on Easter Sunday. By enduring and defeating death sacrificially for us, He swung open the gates of heaven making a way for our sin to be forgiven and usher us into the presence of God (Romans 5:8).

"It is during Holy Week that we see most profoundly how deep the Father's love is for us."

Due to the sinful nature of humanity as a result of Adam and Eve's fall in the garden of Eden, it's impossible for us to be "good enough" to be in the presence of God and forgiven for our sins. Jesus died to make the way for salvation. The Old Testament Law offered many sacrifices to God, but Jesus was the perfect atoning sacrifice once and for all. He endured the cross out of His great love for us. Holy Week is a sacred opportunity to study the foundation of Christianity. Our God is not one of coincidence. Every step toward the cross was intentional, every lesson laced with His personal love for all of us.

Important Days

Brief Overview of Significance

Palm Sunday

Celebrates Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem.

Holy Week

The week leading up to Easter

Maundy Thursday

Commemorates the footwashing and Last Supper of Jesus and the Apostles

Good Friday

Commemorates the crucifixion of Jesus and His death at Calvary

Resurrection Sunday

Celebrates the resurrection of Jesus from the dead and His victory over sin and death

What Happened on Palm Sunday?

Jesus rode into Jerusalem on what we now call Palm Sunday; palm branches, which symbolize triumph or victory, were strewn in Jesus' path, as He rode into the city. He rode into town on a humble donkey, fulfilling the prophecy in Zechariah 9:9: "Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, low and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey." The people welcomed Him, echoing the words of Psalm 118:25-26: "Lord, save us! Lord, grant us success!" more popularly recognized as "Hosanna! Hosanna!"

The word hosanna originated from the word save. The meaning of the word eventually shifted to express gratitude for Salvation, and is used in the New Testament initially in Matthew 21:9: "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!'"

This is a pivotal moment in the history of humanity, as the long awaited new covenant God promised to His people would produce a new salvation through Jesus' death on the cross.

What Happened the Monday before Easter?

On the way back into the city from Bethany, where Jesus and the twelve spent the night, Jesus became hungry. Seeing a fig tree with no fruit on it, though it was full of leaves and thus should have been full of fruit, Jesus spoke a curse on the tree. Jesus went to the temple on Monday and confronted those making a profit off of the people coming to worship there.

"Jesus entered the temple courts and drove out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves. 'It is written,' he said to them, 'My house will be called a house of prayer,' but you are making it a den of robbers." -Matthew 21:12-13

Those who heard and witnessed Jesus' miraculous healings that day sang praises to Him, which caused authorities to begin looking for a way to kill him. The Gospel of Luke says that "they could not find any way to do it, because all the people hung on his words." - Luke 19:48

What Happened the Tuesday before Easter?

The next day, Peter noticed the fully withered fig tree Jesus had cursed, to which Jesus admonished a lesson to have faith and recognize the power of forgiveness:

"Have faith in God," Jesus answered. "Truly I tell you, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in their heart but believes that what they say will happen, it will be done for them. Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins." -Mark 11:22-26

Holy Tuesday was a day of avoiding traps and teaching. The priests set four traps for Jesus, the first questioning His authority, to which He answered with a question and then taught three parables: The Parable of the Two Sons, The Parable of the Tenants, and The Parable of the Wedding Banquet. The second trap challenged Jesus' allegiance, the third trap attempted to ridicule Jesus' belief in resurrection, and the fourth Jesus answered by claiming God's greatest command to be "Love."

Stopping at the Mount of Olives to rest on way back to Bethany to spend the night, Jesus spoke to His disciples about the upcoming trials for His followers.

What Happened the Wednesday before Easter?

Though the Gospel of Luke states, "every day he was teaching in the temple," Holy Wednesday is referred to as a day of rest for Jesus. While in Bethany, a woman anointed Jesus' feet with perfume. It is also widely known throughout as "Spy Wednesday." While Jesus rests in Bethany at the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, the plot of the high priest and the authorities to kill Jesus is in full swing.

Finding an open opportunity in the greed of Judas, Satan entered him. Judas went to the chief priests and authorities, "and from that moment he sought an opportunity to betray him." He would soon betray Jesus for the price of a slave, and the twelve would scatter. None of the twelve will be left at the foot of the cross as Jesus dies but John.

What Happened on Maundy Thursday?

On Holy, or Maundy, Thursday, in an upper room, Jesus and His disciples shared the Last Supper. On this day, Jesus washed the feet of His disciples, and broke bread with them for the last time. Still celebrated today as a part of many congregational traditions, the bread broken and the wine shared represented the body and blood of Christ, to be broken and shed for the disciples, and all of us. During the meal, Jesus predicted His betrayal by one of them, and Peter's denial.

After the meal, the disciples accompanied Jesus to the Garden at Gethsemane, where Jesus prayed in agony. "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." An angel came to strengthen Jesus in the garden. There, He taught His disciples, and us, what to do when we come to the end of our own strength and need God to help us press on.

What is Maundy Thursday?

Maundy, from the Latin root madam, means "commandment" or "mandate." On that Thursday Jesus gave His disciples a new commandment, which is why we use the term Maundy today. The word in this context is used by Jesus after He washes the feet of His friends.

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you are also to love one another." John 13:34

"Maundy Thursday celebrates more than a new mandate of sacrificial love; it points to a sacrifice of eternal significance." No one knew love like the sacrificial and selfless love of Jesus before the cross. Thus, a new commandment to love sacrificially and selflessly.

What Happened on Good Friday?

Good Friday was the last day of Jesus' life on earth before His resurrection. He was betrayed by Judas, as predicted, and denied by Peter, as predicted. His disciples scattered. He was arrested and was placed on trial falsely.

He was condemned, beaten, mocked, and required to carry His own cross to the place where He was crucified and died. "The soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head." Though he was offered something to dull the physical pain, Jesus refused. He chose to face the pain of death head on. They stripped Him of His clothes and cast lots for them, fulfilling another prophecy.

Two prisoners were crucified alongside Jesus. One mocked Him, but the other said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.' Jesus answered him, 'Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise'" (Luke 23:39-43). Amidst the most cruel, unfair, unjust, and painful death a human body could endure, Jesus chose to respond in grace to the criminal beside Him and care for His mother and best friend. "When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to her, 'Woman, here is your son,' and to the disciple, 'Here is your mother'" (John 19:25-27). At noon, Jesus cried out "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit," and died.

"It was at about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, for the sun stopped shining. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two." -Luke 23:44-46

Jesus was taken down from the cross, wrapped in linens, and placed in a tomb.

Why is it called Good Friday?

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." -Romans 8:28

This doesn't mean we are protected from all things that are bad. Jesus' death was awful. The most painful thing, physically, mentally, and spiritually, that any human could have to endure. Why would Jesus choose to obey His Father's will? And why was His will for His only Son to suffer? God's ways are truly above our ways, but the good that came out of Jesus' death saved our souls for eternity.

"He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all- how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?" -Romans 8:32

What Happened on Black (Holy) Saturday?

Jesus' body rested in the tomb on Holy Saturday; it was a rich man's tomb, fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah 53:9. Preparations were made for Jesus' body and placement in the tomb until 6pm, when preparations for the Sabbath began.

"The women who had come with Jesus from Galilee followed Joseph and saw the tomb and how his body was laid in it. Then they went home and prepared spices and perfumes. But they rested on the Sabbath in obedience to the commandment." -Luke 23:55-56

There are varying theories as to where Jesus' soul was in between His death on the cross and His resurrection. The Bible doesn't really say too much about where He was at. From His statement to the criminal on the cross, "you will be with me today in paradise," we can only assume that He was in the presence of His Father in heaven on Holy Saturday.

What Happened on Resurrection Day?

"He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay."
-Matthew 28:6

On Easter Sunday, Jesus rose from the dead, fulfilling the prophecy. Early in the morning, the women who had prepared the spices before the Sabbath returned to Jesus' tomb to find it empty. Mary Magdalene arrived first.

"Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb." -John 20:1
Two men, angels, appear to the women to tell them Jesus has risen (Matthew 28:2-7; Mark 16:4-7; Luke 24:2-7).

The women, both afraid and joyful, remained first silent, and then quickly finding the eleven disciples. Mary ran ahead to tell Peter and John, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him" (John 20:2). Jesus met the other women on their way!

"And behold, Jesus met them and said, 'Greetings!' And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshipped him." -Matthew 28:9-10

After all eleven have been informed, they rush to the empty tomb. Jesus appeared to Cleopas and another on the road to Emmaus, and to Peter. That evening, He entered a room with locked doors to greet the other ten disciples, "Peace to you!" (Luke 24:36-43; John 20:19-23)

Why Christians Should Observe Holy Week

Holy Week shouldn't be observed out of religious obligation but out of hearts seeking the opportunity to journey with Jesus in the closeness the events of this week bring to all who believe in the sacrificial salvation He died to give us. For those curious about Jesus, observing Holy Week is a good opportunity to ask questions and seek answers about who He is, what His sacrifice means, and how His gift affects humanity. When Christians observe Holy Week, we set ourselves apart for Him and dedicate our time to Him. Our observation gives Him the glory and honor that He deserves, for the gift of life we get to live.

A Prayer for Holy Week

Father,

Holy Week reminds us how intentional You are about loving us. You came to save the lost, You sent Your only Son to be sacrificed so we could be in Your presence. Jesus, thank You for making a way for us. May we come to know fully and never forget the lengths You went to save us. Bring the story of each day to life for us as we walk through this week. Move our hearts closer to You, and direct our lives to bring honor to You. Jesus, help us to follow Your new command of love. Help us to understand and receive Your love, and teach us how to love the people in our lives well.

Bless this week, Father, and may many new souls come to receive Your grace.

In Jesus' Holy Name,

Amen.

7 Last Words of Christ

1. Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. (Luke 23: 34)

1. What terms do you usually use to address God? Why? How might your faith be affected if you started addressing God in your prayers as “Father”? How would it help you better understand the relationship between you and God?
2. In what sense can your sin be seen as a debt owed to God? How do you pay off a debt like that? On what just basis can God forgive this debt of sin?
3. What does knowledge of sin have to do with Jesus’ forgiveness? At what level did Jesus’ killers understand what they were doing?
4. Who was most responsible for killing Jesus? What responsibility do we bear for Jesus’ death on the cross.

2. This day you will be with me in Paradise. (Luke 23: 43)

1. Why do you think one of the criminals on the cross insulted and mocked Jesus? What human trait prompted him to do this?
2. Why does the other criminal rebuke him for his insults? On what grounds does he try to stop him? (Luke 23:40-41)
3. What did the thief have to believe about Jesus to cause him to ask him, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom” (Luke 23:42). What are the elements of his faith?
4. Did the thief confess his sins? Was he repentant?
5. How do you think the thief’s request make Jesus feel?
6. What are the elements of Jesus’ promise to the thief in Luke 23:43?
7. What are we disciples supposed to learn from this strange exchange on the crosses above our heads? What does Jesus intend us to get out of this?

3. Woman, Behold Your Son (John 19:26-27)

1. What do you think Mary is feeling while she is waiting at the cross for Jesus to die? What kinds of thoughts are going through her mind?
2. Why, of all the disciples, do you think John is at the cross?
3. Why didn't Jesus make his brothers responsible for Mary? Why John?
4. What does this Third word teach us about Jesus?
5. What are the implications of Jesus' Third Word for our own personal family relationships?

4. My God My God, Why Have You Forsaken Me? (Mark 15:34)

1. How long was Jesus on the cross? In what way did the period seem to change about half-way through? (Mark 15:25, 33-34)
2. Why do you think the sun stopped shining? What did it signify? (Mark 15:33)
3. What does the loudness of Jesus' voice tell us about his mental and emotional states? (Mark 15:34)
4. What is the significance of Mark 15:34 including a quotation from Psalm 22?
5. In what sense was Jesus forsaken? Why must he be forsaken at this time?
6. What was the "cup" that Jesus accepted in the Garden of Gethsemane? (Luke 22:41-44)
7. In what way does this Fourth Word reveal love?

5. I Thirst (John 19:28)

1. What are the reasons that Jesus would have been thirsty? Physiologically what would have been going on in a person suffering as Jesus did?
2. What scriptures are fulfilled by John 19:28-30 or may refer to this aspect of the crucifixion? Why was fulfilling scripture important to Jesus?
3. What is the significance of the sponge being offered to Jesus on a branch of hyssop?
4. Why do you think the New Testament makes such a strong point about Jesus' physical suffering? What difference would it make if Jesus were a divine person who didn't actually suffer on the cross? What difference would it make if Jesus were only a human being martyred on the cross?

6. It is Finished (John 19:30)

1. What did Jesus come to accomplish? What was his “prime directive”?
2. What was the “cup”, the “baptism”, that he faced in order to accomplish his mission?
3. Why did Jesus shout out this Sixth Word, rather than say it quietly?
4. What do we learn from Sixth Word about purpose? About focus? About obedience?
5. How is the willingness to suffer vital to finishing one’s mission?

7. Father, Into Your Hands I Command My Spirit (Luke 23:46)

1. What is the meaning of the veil of the temple being torn in two? (Luke 23:45b)
2. What does Jesus mean when he says, “Father, into your hands I command my spirit”. Why does this saying comfort us so much?
3. What would you have felt like had you witnessed Jesus’ crucifixion – if you didn’t know the next chapter in the story?
4. Why is faith so important during the dark chapters of our lives? What does it take to shake off the numbness and depression and take hold of that faith once more.