

PASSION WEEK Reading Plan

One of the best ways to prepare your heart for Easter is to walk with Jesus through the Scriptures from Palm Sunday through Good Friday to Resurrection Morning. Reading any one of the four Gospels will provide a valuable perspective on Passion Week, but no one Gospel includes every detail of the story. To get a complete picture, it is helpful to read selected portions.

Palm Sunday

Jesus makes his Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem, fulfilling prophecy: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey" (Zechariah 9:9 ESV).

Read: Luke 19:28-44

Monday

Jesus cleanses the temple, infuriating the religious leaders. "Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves" (Mark 11:17).

Read: Mark 11:12-19

Tuesday

The religious leaders challenge Jesus' authority and try to trap Him in several difficult theological debates. Jesus condemns them for their hypocrisy.

Read: Luke 20:1-26,39 and Matthew 23:1-39

Wednesday

The religious leaders plot to kill Jesus. When Jesus allows a woman to anoint Him with very expensive oil, Judas Iscariot offers to betray Him. "Then one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot (who was about to

betray Him), said, 'Why wasn't this fragrant oil sold for 300 denarii and given to the poor?' ...Jesus answered, 'Leave her alone; she has kept it for the day of My burial'" (John 12:4-5, 7 HCSB).

Read: Matthew 26:1-16

Maundy Thursday

Jesus celebrates Passover with His disciples in what is now called the Last Supper. Then He goes to pray in the Garden of Gethsemane, where Judas hands Him over to the authorities. "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done" (Luke 22:42).

Read: Matthew 26:17-75 and 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

Good Friday

The Jewish mob pressures Pilate, the Roman governor, to sentence Jesus to death. He is crucified and buried. "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh" (1 Peter 3:18).

Read: Matthew 27:1-61, Luke 22:54-23:56, and Isaiah 52:13-53:12

Saturday

The disciples mourn the death of Jesus while the Roman guard secures His tomb. The women "prepared spices and ointments" to anoint Jesus' body "and rested the sabbath day according to the commandment" (Luke 23:56).

Read: Matthew 27:62-66 and Romans 6:3-11

Easter Sunday

The women go to Jesus' tomb but find it empty. An angel announces that "He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay" (Matthew 28:6), and they hurry back to tell the others. Later, Jesus appears to His disciples.

Read: Luke 24:1-49 and 1 Corinthians 15:1-11