



A LOOK AT FIVE IMPORTANT DAYS  
IN THE GOSPEL STORY

# Christ's Concluding Days

By Steven Houser

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# Introduction

The greatest story ever told ends with celebration, friendship, betrayal, death and resurrection. These concluding days present a beautiful narrative that ultimately leads to the salvation of all people who believe them to be true and bank their life on the accomplishment of our Hero's sacrifice. Every year Christians from all around the world celebrate the execution and subsequent glorious resurrection of our King.

The four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, are all eyewitness accounts of the life and ministry of Jesus. They were written so that there would be a record of the most amazing life ever lived. Each of these books record the last days of Jesus' life for the expressed purpose of helping the reader connect with Jesus, be transformed by His story and believe that He is the savior of the world.

This book takes a look at 5 special days recorded in each of the Gospels. Read this along with the corresponding passages of scripture to get a feel for the emotion of those final moments with Jesus, the uncertainty after His death and the passionate mission of His followers after His resurrection.



# Palm Sunday

## **Celebrated as King**

Jerusalem was always a busy city, but never more busy than when the feast of the Passover was approaching. Tradition tells us that devoted Israelites made long journeys to be in the holy city for the celebration. Preparations for the most important feast on the Jewish calendar were extensive and expensive. The markets were filled with supplies for the Passover rituals and meal. People packed the marketplace as they made their preparations; consequently, commerce was buzzing!

Meanwhile, Jesus, the famous teacher and miracle worker had been staying in a small village near Jerusalem called Bethany. He and His disciples were staying with friends as they finished their pilgrimage to the holy city. News had spread that Jesus was approaching and villages around Jerusalem were in a fever of anticipation to see what Jesus would do. Large crowds from Jerusalem were gathering in order to catch a glimpse of the famous teacher.

The morning that Jesus was going to enter the gates of Jerusalem, He sent his disciples before Him to borrow a young donkey for Him to ride. This was to fulfill ancient prophecy concerning the King of the Jews found in Zechariah 9:9:

“Say to the daughter of Zion,  
Behold, your king is coming to you,  
Humble, and mounted on a donkey,  
And on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.”

As Jesus and His disciples approached the gates of the city, the enthusiastic crowd threw down their cloaks as well as branches from palm trees and called out “Hosanna to the son of David, Hosanna to the King. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.” Which later in the week is echoed from the mouths of children in the temple as Jesus was teaching.

By this reception Jesus was welcomed to Jerusalem as a long awaited King. His arrival is called the Triumphal Entry because of the commonality it had with processions of victorious kings. Though, humble and on a donkey, the joyous outburst of the crowds rivaled that of the most popular monarch.

## **Jerusalem is Stirred Up**

When Jesus’ procession enters the gates of Jerusalem it created quite a stir. People were pouring into the streets, wanting just a glimpse of the prophet/teacher/miracle worker who was being hailed as King. The whole city was in an uproar about this event and the word continued to be spread that Jesus had come to Jerusalem.

In fact the crowds are so stirred up that some of the Pharisees tell Jesus to rebuke His followers who are acclaiming Him as King. Jesus refuses to rebuke the crowd and continues His procession into the city. This was not the first time that a crowd had Kingly expectations for Jesus. In John 6, there is another stirred up crowd who sees His coming as an inauguration of sorts, but it was not the right time for Jesus and “ Perceiving then that they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king, Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by Himself.”

When Jesus is made much of it creates quite a stir.



## **Visiting the Temple**

After entering Jerusalem, the first place Jesus visits is the Temple. It was a custom of Jesus to make his way to His Father's house in the towns that He visited. Jesus' sincere love for that place of worship stands as the foundation for His zeal that lashes out at those who would turn the house of God in to a "den for robbers" on the following day.

The Temple visit on the evening of Palm Sunday is about reflection as He paces the temple grounds while having a look around, and mourning as He weeps for Jerusalem. After releasing His sorrow for the people of Jerusalem, Jesus and His disciples retire to Bethany to prepare for a return to the Temple in the morning.

## **Why do we observe this day?**

Christians observe Palm Sunday to remember the King of Kings who humbled Himself to serve His people. We celebrate in the same way that the people of Israel celebrated His entrance into Jerusalem, with singing and anticipation. We also look forward to the events that Palm Sunday initiated; our King's ministry, death and resurrection.

Lastly we also anticipate the victorious return of our King. He has promised that He will come again. His final Triumphal Entry will be a moment of celebration beyond any we have ever dreamed. His return will usher in total restoration, as He mends the broken, gathers forgiven sinners, and renews their display of His image.



# Maundy Thursday

## Washing the Disciple's Feet

Maundy Thursday celebrates the servant heart of Jesus on the evening that He was betrayed, which begins with washing His disciple's feet. This was a strange moment for the disciples, but a beautiful display of service as the Rabbi tied a towel around His waist, knelt before his students, poured water over their feet and gently dried them.

After He finished washing his disciple's feet, Jesus explains why He served them in this way.

John 13:12-16 "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 is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him."

## Passover Meal

After the lesson in love and service, Jesus and his disciples recline at a table for His final Passover meal.

At this meal Jesus reflects on the coming days as He loves, serves and enjoys the men who have walked with Him over the past few years. This would be the last moment of peace in the midst of the growing tension surrounding Jesus.

Luke 22:14-15, "And when the hour came, He reclined at table, and the apostles with Him. 'I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.'"

As He reclined at the table with the disciples, Jesus teaches them the meaning of this and future Passover meals. When Jesus presents the wine and the bread, He describes the suffering the Son of Man was to endure. The rest of the time with his disciples would be short lived as the man who would betray Jesus sat at the very same table.

Luke 22:21-23, "But behold, the hand of him who betrays Me is with Me on the table. For the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed!' And they began to question one another, which of them it could be who was going to do this."

## Night of Prayer

Jesus concluded the meal by leading the disciples to the Mount of Olives to pray. Here Jesus poured out His heart and soul to the Father. He cried out in heartache over what was to happen next. Jesus would soon be betrayed and dragged to the dwelling of the High Priest. As Jesus was being accused and mocked, Peter stood by watching it all unfold. The night ends with Peter denying Jesus three times before an interested crowd, fulfilling what Jesus had said to Him at supper.

Luke 22:61, "And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the saying of the Lord, how He had said to him, 'Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times.'"

# Why Do We Observe This Day?

The purpose of setting aside Maundy Thursday is to begin reflecting on the suffering that the Savior endured. Just as Jesus anticipated His death at the Last Supper and during his evening of prayer, so Christians can use Maundy Thursday to look forward to the next few days that recall what Jesus experienced for our salvation. When we see the horror of the pain, we can better understand the glory of Christ’s victory.



# Good Friday

The sorrowful yet hopeful observance continues. As Christians celebrate Good Friday, we turn our attention to the story of the day the Lord was killed. Yet this time we find that there is an excitement in the air. Good Friday's story ends with Jesus in the grave yet there are textual markers that seems to say "Wait...there is more."

## Hope in the Text

The first textual marker that should give hope is found in verses Luke 22:67-71. As Jesus is being called to account before the High Priest we read, "If you are the Christ, tell us.' But He said to them, 'If I tell you, you will not believe, and if I ask you, you will not answer. But from now on the Son of Man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God.' So they all said, 'Are you the Son of God, then?' And He said to them, 'You say that I am.' Then they said, 'What further testimony do we need? We have heard it ourselves from His own lips.'"

Though this becomes the very reason the Pharisees kill Jesus, it is also reason the reader can find hope. He would soon be seated at the right hand of the power of God. No matter what happens to Him next, the reader knows the authority that Jesus has and claims.

As we read what unfolds next we are confronted with the injustice of it all. After the first examination of Jesus, He was bounced around from one authority to the next. Pilate, Herod, and back to Pilate; neither of them found Him guilty. Luke 23: 14-16 states the following:

“you brought me this man as one who was misleading the people. And after examining Him before you, behold, I did not find this man guilty of any of your charges against Him. Neither did Herod, for he sent Him back to us. Look, nothing deserving death has been done by Him. I will therefore punish and release Him.” From then on the Pharisees seized control by inciting the crowd in order to force Pilate’s hand. Pilate unwillingly turned over Jesus to the desire of the crowd, washing his hands of judgment.

## **The Son of Man Lifted**

What happens next in the story is the peak of human history and the culmination of God’s sovereign plan. As Jesus is led from the city to the Hill of the Skull, called Golgotha. There He was nailed, hands and feet, on two wooden beams and lifted up for all to see. This mental image should remind us of what Jesus told Nicodemus in John 3, “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him may have eternal life.”

After Jesus was lifted up, we find the next text that offers hope. Jesus was crucified between two criminals. One of the criminals mocked Him and the second worshiped Him. We can find hope in the promise Jesus makes to the second criminal. Luke 23:43 reads, “And he said to him, ‘Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.’”

The promise reminds us that the death on the cross is not the end for Jesus or His followers. Paradise with Christ is our portion.

After this, Jesus dies. Though it is not recorded in Luke, Matthew records the earth crying out in validation of the Messiah, giving hope for all who would believe. Matthew 27:51-54 tells us, “And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split. The tombs also were opened. And many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised, and coming out of the tombs after His resurrection they went into the holy city and visited many. When the centurion and those who were with him, keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were filled with awe and said, ‘Truly this was the Son of God!’”



When everything had calmed down, Jesus' body was removed from the cross and placed in a tomb.

### **Why Do We Observe This Day?**

We observe Good Friday to remember the sacrifice of our Savior, Jesus, the Son of God, laid Himself down in our place, promising in John 10 that He has the authority to take it back up again. Jesus said, "No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father." (Jn. 10:18)

On Good Friday, the church celebrates this promise as we mourn the death of our Savior. On this day, we remember the brutality of the death that we deserved and find hope because our punishment was given to another.



# Saturday

The day after the death of Christ is one marked by fear, uncertainty and doubt.

## Fear

In the mind of the religious leaders they had won a three year long battle with a renegade teacher who was challenging everything they held dear. They had finally captured the man who was leading so many astray and put to death the problematic sect by putting to death their leader.

But in the hearts of the religious leaders was a fear that they were wrong. This man had done so many miracles, and had taught with such authority that several of them wondered if He truly was the Son of God.

Remembering that He taught He would rise from the dead three days after being buried and fearing that His teaching would come true, or that His disciples would steal His body and fabricate a lie, the Chief priest and Pharisees went a second time to Pilate and asked that he give soldiers to protect the tomb. A guard of soldiers were sent to the tomb to make sure that Jesus stayed in it.

## Uncertainty

When He was eating the Passover meal with his disciples, Jesus foretold the

fear and uncertainty that his followers would experience by quoting Zechariah 13:7; “Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.” Of course they denied the thought that they would ever leave His side as He suffer. Peter goes so far as to claim that even when everyone else scatters, he would follow Jesus to the end.

As expected by the reader, Jesus’ words come true. His disciples scatter at the moment that Jesus is arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane. One of the disciples, in such a hurry to leave and not be captured, ran away naked. Peter tried to keep his word, but he famously denied Jesus three times before running away himself.

Facing uncertainty, we do not hear about the disciples at all the day after Jesus death, but when we meet up with them in the following events, they are huddled in a home...Hiding.

## **Doubt**

This type of uncertainty and fear would naturally bring about intense levels of doubt. Thomas’ doubting of the risen Jesus was not seeded in the ministry of Christ or in the time they spend with Him while He was alive, instead, the foundation of Thomas’ doubt was the days they spent wondering if they would ever see Jesus again.

As we pick the story up in the event of Resurrection Sunday, read carefully the response of the disciples to the news of the empty tomb and their response to the servant girl who neglects to open the door for the risen Jesus. Seeds of doubt were brought about by uncertainty and fear.

## **Why do we observe this day?**

Christians unofficially observe this day as we anticipate the celebration of Resurrection Sunday. The day seems to be a lull in the Holy Week celebration, but it is very appropriate that Christians remember the time that the disciples spent waiting as the uncertainty mounted the day after Christ death, and it is also important to remember, that Jesus truly has risen and is our living savior.

# Resurrection Sunday

As Sunday began, uncertainty was still palpable. Jesus having died Friday in the afternoon, had been dead for over 36 hours. His disciples were tempted to give into despair and were in hiding. His enemies were beginning to think that their plot had been successful.

Yet, before the sun had risen and "while it was still dark," there was one person who was brave enough to venture out and visit his tomb...And what she found there would eventually "turn the world upside down." (Acts 17:6)

John 20:1 "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."

## He was Gone

The guards were gone, the stone was rolled away, and the tomb was empty! The burial clothes were in the tomb but there was no body! Mary ran to where the disciples were hiding and declared to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him."

Two disciples ran to the tomb and they too are greeted by its emptiness. One after the other, they both enter and explored it. He was not there, He was Risen from the dead! As unsettling as this was, a seed of hope was quickly growing in their hearts as they remember what Jesus had taught them.

Mark 8:31 "And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again."

## **He is Risen**

As if a fog had lifted, the two disciples saw clearly. Their master and teacher was the suffering servant found in Isaiah's prophecy, by whose wounds we all would be healed. Though they did not know what this meant for His followers, the disciples went home with a hope filled wonder.

The story continues as the resurrected Jesus appeared to Mary, then to all the disciples, and then to many more people before He went to be with the Father!

1 Corinthians 15:3-6 "For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time."

## **Believe on Him**

Resurrection Sunday is the day we set aside to triumphantly commemorate the Resurrection of our Savior and the salvation of all who will believe on Him.

Romans 4:24-25 "It will be counted to us who believe in Him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification."

Take time to consider the events of crucifixion and resurrection. Remind yourself of the blood that poured out of the wounds of Jesus. Remember the pain that He went through, and punishment He received in our place. Reminisce about the love and grace displayed on the cross, and the forgiveness that was purchased there.

*Believe on Him, because He is Risen Indeed.*



# HOLY WEEK

## TIMELINE

Sunday

MATT. MARK LUKE JOHN

- Jesus enters Jerusalem 21:1-11 11:1-10 19:29-44 12:12-19
- Jesus visits Temple 11:11

Monday

MATT. MARK LUKE JOHN

- Jesus Curses the Fig Tree 21:18-19 11:18
- Jesus Cleanses Temple 21:12-13 11:15-18 19:45-48
- Jesus Tell of his Death 12:27-36
- Jesus Hides from those who will not believe 12:36-43
- Authority of Jesus 12:44-50

Wednesday

MATT. MARK LUKE JOHN

- Plot to Kill Jesus 26:2-5 14:1-2 22:1-2
- Judas Gets Paid 26:14-16 14:10-11 22:3-6

Tuesday

MATT. MARK LUKE JOHN

- Jesus Questioned 21:23-27 11:27-33 20:1-8
- Parable: Vine-dresser 21:33-46 12:1-12 20:9-19
- Parable: Wedding Feast 21:1-14
- Widows offering 12:41-44 21:1-4
- Parable: Talents 25:14-30
- Parable: Sheep & Goats 25:31-46
- Prophecy: End Times 24:1-51

Thursday

MATT. MARK LUKE JOHN

- Jesus Celebrates Passover 26:20-30 14:17-26 22:14-38 13:1-14:31
- Jesus Washes Feet 13:2-17
- Lord's Supper 26:26-29 14:22-25 22:15-20
- Jesus prays at Gethsemane 26:30-46 14:26-42 22:39-46



MATT. MARK LUKE JOHN

Friday

26:47-56 14:43-52 22:47-53 18:2-12 • Betrayal at Gethsemane

26:69-75 14:66-72 22:54-62 18:25-27 • Peter denies Jesus 3 Times

27:1 15:1 22:66-72 • Sanhedrin Condemns Jesus

27:11-14 15:1-5 22:1-7 18:28-38 • Jesus before Pilate

23:8-12 • Jesus meets Herod

27:15-23 15:6-14 23:13-22 18:39-40 • Jesus before Pilate 2nd Time

27:27-31 15:16-19 19:1-3 • Jesus is mocked & flogged

27:45-50 15:33-37 23:50-55 19:16-17 • Jesus led to the Golgotha

27:45-50 15:33-37 23:50-55 19:25-30 • Jesus Dies

27:51-61 15:42-47 23:50-55 19:31-42 • Jesus is Buried

MATT. MARK LUKE JOHN

Sunday

28:1-8 16:1-9 24:1-8 20:1 • Women go to Tomb

28:6 16:6 24:6 20:9 • Jesus is Risen

Saturday

MATT. MARK LUKE JOHN

• Passover Sabbath

23:56

Appearances

MATT. MARK LUKE JOHN

• The Women at the Tomb

28:9-10 16:9-11 20:11-18

• Disciples on the Road

16:12-13 24:13-35

• 11 Disciples in Galilee

28:16-20 16:14-20 24:36-49 20:19-23

• Thomas

20:24-29

• Peter

21:15-19

• John

21:20-24



# Bring it Home

## Family Discipleship

Bring it Home is a resource ministry and community excited about helping and resourcing parents and families with the goal of discipleship and worship happening in the home.



**EDUCATE** Parents of their responsibility to lead their family in Christ honoring Worship,



**ENCOURAGE** Parents to fulfill that God given responsibility



**EQUIP** them by offering resources that will help in fulfilling that responsibility.

## New Podcast



## Resourcing Families

The Bring it Home website features free and helpful resources, free printables for your home, a blog that has a family heartbeat and a team that is excited to serve your family in any way possible.



## Family Workshops

Bring it Home currently host two family workshops each year geared toward learning and equipping families in the Pyeongtaek area.



## Community

Bring it Home also features a community of people who are excited about family discipleship and are always sharing free and helpful resources.

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