



EASTER FAMILY DEVOTIONAL

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Day 1: Palm Sunday

THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

Jesus is Worthy of Praise

READ:

Mark 11:1-10

1 Now when they drew near to Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples 2 and said to them, "Go into the village in front of you, and immediately as you enter it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Untie it and bring it. 3 If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' say, 'The Lord has need of it and will send it back here immediately.'" 4 And they went away and found a colt tied at a door outside in the street, and they untied it. 5 And some of those standing there said to them, "What are you doing, untying the colt?" 6 And they told them what Jesus had said, and they let them go. 7 And they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it, and he sat on it. 8 And many spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut from the fields. 9 And those who went before and those who followed were shouting, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! 10 Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest!"

DEVOTION:

On Palm Sunday, we celebrate a special time in Jesus' life when people honored Him as a king. The people were so excited to see Jesus that they welcomed him by waving palm branches and shouting, "Hosanna!" Celebrating Jesus and Palm Sunday is important for us, too, because we can remember the journey that Jesus took to offer us salvation.

In a story from the Bible, Jesus tells His friends to find a young donkey, just like it was written in the Bible a long time ago (Zechariah 9:9). In those days when a king rode on a donkey through the city, it meant that everything was peaceful. Jesus chose to ride on this donkey to show that He brings peace and that He is a true king. When Jesus went into the city, people threw their coats on the ground and waved palm branches, shouting, "Hosanna! God bless the one who comes in the name of the Lord!" Everyone thought Jesus was a great leader, but they didn't understand everything. Jesus wasn't there to be a king who won battles. He was there to help and save people, even if it meant suffering a lot.

Today, on Palm Sunday, we give Jesus the love and respect He deserves. As followers of Jesus, we want to thank Him and praise Him every day because He is the best! We know that He is always there for us, showing us love and giving us strength.

QUESTIONS:

1. What do you think it was like to be in the crowd of people welcoming Jesus into Jerusalem?
2. In what way can you show praise to Jesus today and every day?
3. Why is Jesus the one who deserves the praise?

Day 2: Monday

CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE

Worship God Properly

READ:

Luke 19:45-46

45 And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold, 46 saying to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be a house of prayer,' but you have made it a den of robbers."

Matthew 21:12-13

12 And Jesus entered the temple and drove out all who sold and bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons.

13 He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you make it a den of robbers."

DEVOTION:

In Jesus' day, the temple was really important to good Jewish people. They would go there to pray, worship and learn about God, much like when we go to church now. But they would also bring sacrifices to God, like doves or bulls, to make up for their sins. This was a big deal because it was part of the Old Testament law. But here's the thing: some Jews got lazy. Instead of bringing their own sacrifices, they'd buy them at the temple. This caused lots of problems. They weren't following the rules from the Old Testament; they were cheating each other when they bought stuff, and worst of all, they were doing it all in the area where non-Jewish people were supposed to worship. So basically, they turned the place where everyone was supposed to pray into a big marketplace. That's why Jesus got upset and said, "My house should be a place of prayer, but you're turning it into a den of thieves!" (v.46) He wanted everyone, from every nation, to be able to come and worship freely. So, He cleansed the temple as one of his last big things.

We can learn from this story and think about how we worship God in our churches. Are we joining in with the music, prayers, and Bible lessons, or are we being a distraction to others?

QUESTIONS:

1. What distracts you when you are worshiping God?
2. Do you do anything to distract others as they worship God?
3. What changes do you need to make so that you can be focused on worshiping God?

Day 3: Tuesday

THE WIDOW'S OFFERING

A Cheerful Giver

READ:

Luke 21:1-4

Jesus looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the offering box, 2 and he saw a poor widow put in two small copper coins. 3 And he said, "Truly, I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them. 4 For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on."

Mark 12:41-44

41 And he sat down opposite the treasury and watched the people putting money into the offering box. Many rich people put in large sums. 42 And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which make a penny. 43 And he called his disciples to him and said to them, "Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box. 44 For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on."

DEVOTION:

It's the Tuesday of Passion Week, and Jesus had just cleansed the temple the day before, showing how important it is to worship properly. Now, he's teaching about giving by pointing out a widow who gives an offering to God.

Jesus takes his disciples to a spot where they can see people putting money in the temple offering plates. Lots of rich folks are giving big amounts, which might impress the disciples. They might feel like they could never give as much as those rich people and maybe even think they're not as important to God. But Jesus is focused on something else entirely and has a lesson for his followers. He's looking at the heart of the person giving.

Jesus notices a widow who puts in just two small coins, all she had. He tells his disciples that she actually gave more than all the rich people because she gave everything she had to live on. Her love and sacrifice catch Jesus' attention and teach his followers something important. God doesn't care much about money, fame or status. What matters is the love and willingness to give in our hearts. God knows our hearts and wants us to trust Him enough to give everything. That's why Jesus said in Luke 6:38, "Give, and you will receive. Your gift will return to you in full—pressed down, shaken together to make room for more, running over, and poured into your lap. The amount you give will determine the amount you get back". God loves it when we give cheerfully, and he wants to bless us when we do.

QUESTIONS:

1. Why did the widow's offering show her love and trust for God?
2. God sees your heart, and He knows why you do the things that you do. How
3. does that make you feel?
4. After reading these Bible verses, will you make any changes in the way you give back to God?

Day 4: Wednesday

PREPARED FOR BURIAL

Jesus Deserves Love and Honor

READ:

Matthew 26:6-13

6 Now when Jesus was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, 7 a woman came up to him with an alabaster flask of very expensive ointment, and she poured it on his head as he reclined at table. 8 And when the disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying, “Why this waste? 9 For this could have been sold for a large sum and given to the poor.” 10 But Jesus, aware of this, said to them, “Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a beautiful thing to me. 11 For you always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me. 12 In pouring this ointment on my body, she has done it to prepare me for burial. 13 Truly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will also be told in memory of her.”

DEVOTION:

Jesus has been teaching important lessons to his friends this whole week. He showed them how to worship and how to give with a cheerful heart.

On Wednesday, during Passion Week, Jesus is hanging out with his friends in Bethany. They're at Simon the leper's house, a guy Jesus probably healed from leprosy. Then, a lady named Mary, who is Martha and Lazarus's sister, comes up to Jesus. She has this fancy ointment made of alabaster, and she starts putting it on Jesus. It's not just about the expensive stuff, though. Mary's really showing her love and respect for Jesus. She kneels down and puts the ointment on his head and feet. Some of Jesus' friends aren't sure about this. They think Mary's wasting something valuable and could've sold it to help the poor. But Jesus explains that what Mary's doing is important. He's not saying we shouldn't care about the poor, but right now, Mary's showing her love for Jesus.

Jesus tells his disciples that Mary's getting him ready for something big – his burial. Mary didn't even know what she was doing, but she still wanted to honor Jesus. That's pretty cool to think about!

We all have different ways to worship God. It could be using a special talent, using your time for Him or giving what we have. Whatever it is, God sees it and loves it when we honor him with our worship.

QUESTIONS:

1. How can you use your time to show love and honor to God?
2. How can you use your talents to show love and honor to God?
3. How can you give your treasures to show love and honor to God?

Day 5: Thursday

A NEW COMMAND

Love Like Jesus

READ:

John 13:1-5; 21-22; 34-35

1 Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. 2 During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him, 3 Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God, 4 rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. 5 Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

21 After saying these things, Jesus was troubled in his spirit, and testified, "Truly, truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me." **22** The disciples looked at one another, uncertain of whom he spoke.

34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. **35** By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

DEVOTION:

Today's story is packed with important moments. Jesus is having dinner with his disciples for the Passover meal, which later becomes known as the Last Supper. Right at the start, Jesus surprises everyone by taking off his fancy robe, wrapping a towel around his waist and washing his friends' feet like a servant. It's a big deal because Jesus, whom they follow and respect, is humbling himself to show love to his followers. Amazing!

Then, Jesus talks about what's going to happen later that night. He wants his friends to understand and be ready. But just like when we hear something but don't really get it, the disciples didn't fully understand. Maybe they weren't listening or thought they knew it all already, but they missed what Jesus was trying to tell them.

After their talk, Jesus gives his friends a new rule to live by. It's kind of like an old rule but with more details. He says, "Love each other just like I love you. If you show love like this, everyone will know you're my followers"(v.35). Jesus wants his friends to be known for their love. This is one of the last things Jesus says before he goes to the cross.

It's a tough time for his friends because Jesus is about to show his love for everyone by dying for their mistakes. His new rule is to love others just like he does. Jesus sets a great example for us all to follow.

QUESTIONS:

1. How would you define being humble?
2. How did Jesus humble himself before His disciples? How can we humble ourselves before others?
3. What are some ways that we can love one another just as Jesus has loved us?
4. Share something specific that you can do to love someone God has put in your life.

Day 6: Friday

IT REALLY IS A GOOD FRIDAY

God Gave All

READ:

Luke 23:32-38

32 Two others, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. 33 And when they came to the place that is called The Skull, there they crucified him, and the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. 34 And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." And they cast lots to divide his garments. 35 And the people stood by, watching, but the rulers scoffed at him, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, his Chosen One!" 36 The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine 37 and saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!" 38 There was also an inscription over him, "This is the King of the Jews."

DEVOTION:

"Father, forgive them, " Jesus cries out from the cross.

Imagine this: Jesus is nailed to the cross, hanging between two criminals. He didn't do anything wrong, but he's been unfairly punished and sentenced to die this way. And it gets worse – people are making fun of him, hitting him and even spitting on him. The soldiers are playing games to win Jesus' clothes, and the religious leaders are yelling mean things at him. It's all really awful, but Jesus still says, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (v. 34).

He's basically asking God not to be mad at them for their mistakes. That's amazing! While Jesus is suffering on the cross for their sins, he's still forgiving them. That's real forgiveness.

Our sins – anything we think, do or say that displeases God – are the reason Jesus had to go through all this pain on the cross. Sin needs a sacrifice, and Jesus chose to be that sacrifice for us. He took the punishment we deserved and offered forgiveness, even when he was hurting so much.

That's why we call this day "Good Friday." It wasn't good for Jesus – it was really hard for him – but it's good for us because it's a reminder of how much God loves us. Jesus' sacrifice means we can believe in him and have a home with him in Heaven forever.

QUESTIONS:

1. What is sin, and why is it such a big problem?
2. What is the penalty for sin?
3. Why did Jesus willingly sacrifice Himself for our sins?

Day 7: Saturday

THE SILENCE OF SATURDAY

The Battle is Won

READ:

Luke 23:50-56

50 Now there was a man named Joseph, from the Jewish town of Arimathea. He was a member of the council, a good and righteous man, 51 who had not consented to their decision and action; and he was looking for the kingdom of God. 52 This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. 53 Then he took it down and wrapped it in a linen shroud and laid him in a tomb cut in stone, where no one had ever yet been laid. 54 It was the day of Preparation, and the Sabbath was beginning.[g] 55 The women who had come with him from Galilee followed and saw the tomb and how his body was laid. 56 Then they returned and prepared spices and ointments.

John 20:19a

On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews,

DEVOTION:

"It was Friday, and things seemed really bad. Jesus was dead.

A follower of Jesus named Joseph owned a tomb that was made in a big rock. He probably planned to use the tomb for himself one day. Joseph asked Pilate for Jesus' body so he could bury him properly. Jesus was wrapped in nice linen and put in Joseph's tomb. Then it was Saturday.

Saturday felt super quiet and sad. Jesus' friends didn't know what to do. They felt like they lost all hope. Did the bad guys win? Was everything they believed in a lie? The disciples hid in a locked room, feeling scared and worried.

We know that Jesus rose from the dead the next day, winning the battle. But Jesus' friends and followers did not know what would happen next, and they felt defeated. Do you ever feel like you're stuck between Friday and Sunday? Do you feel lost and defeated?

S.M. Lockridge once said in his short sermon, "It's Friday, the disciples are questioning what happened to their King, and the Pharisees are celebrating that their scheming has been achieved but they don't know it's only Friday, Sunday's comin'!"

QUESTIONS:

1. Do you ever feel like you are alone and afraid?
2. How does the fact that Jesus has risen victoriously from the tomb help you when you feel discouraged or defeated?
3. What are some ways that you can focus on Jesus rather than on the difficult things in your life?

Day 8: Easter Sunday

HE IS RISEN

Jesus is Alive

READ:

Mark 16:1-8

When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. **2** And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. **3** And they were saying to one another, “Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?” **4** And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back—it was very large. **5** And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed. **6** And he said to them, “Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him. **7** But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.” **8** And they went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

DEVOTION:

"It's Sunday – the day Jesus rose from the dead!

Mary and some other ladies went to the tomb where Jesus was buried. They wanted to finish preparing his body with special spices, even though Jesus had said he would come back to life. Maybe they forgot what Jesus said or didn't believe it, but off they went to the tomb. When they got there, they saw the big stone that covered the entrance was moved. They were confused and shocked. Where was Jesus' body? Did someone take him? Then, an angel appeared and asked them, "Why are you looking for the living among the dead? He is not here, but he has risen! Remember how he spoke to you when he was still in Galilee, saying 'It is necessary that the Son of Man be betrayed into the hands of sinful men, be crucified, and rise on the third day'?" (Luke 24:5-7).

Jesus really did rise from the dead. He beat sin, hell, and death. Nothing could keep him down. When he said, "It is finished" on the cross, he paid for all our sins. And when he rose from the dead, it was like the payment went through. Our sins are completely forgiven now. That's why we celebrate Easter every year. We can be happy and celebrate because our Savior, Jesus, is alive. He's up in heaven right now, getting things ready for us.

We're winners because of Jesus. We're forgiven because of what He did on the cross. And that's something worth celebrating!

QUESTIONS:

1. How will you celebrate the resurrection of Jesus?
2. What do you think about Jesus paying for your sins?
3. Who can you tell about Jesus this week?

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