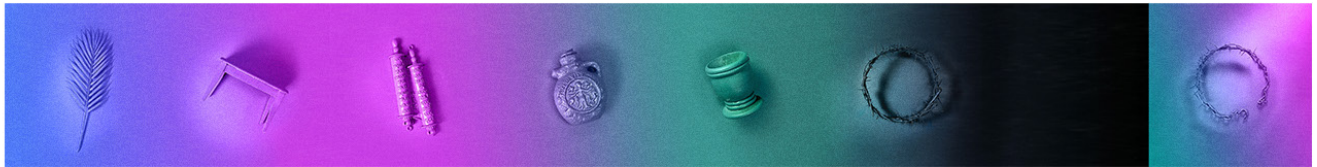


# holyweek familydevotional



**2023**



**MCLEAN BIBLE CHURCH**

# DEAR FAMILIES,

The death and resurrection of Jesus can feel like a heavy topic for parents to talk about with their children. The Christmas stories from a few months back of a baby in a manger are more joyous and make for easier conversation. When we get to Holy Week the story begins with a joyous parade and ends with the miracle of resurrection but in between these bookends we read stories of deception, death, torture, confusion, and extreme sadness. However, these same stories can be used to reveal the character of Christ. The humble, servant King who gave up his own life that we may one day have eternal life with him. Our prayer is that these stories will help each of us realize the depth of Christ's sacrifice, preparing our hearts and minds to experience the wonder of Easter.

We've intentionally designed this devotional booklet to encourage families to set aside time each day during Holy Week to deepen your faith and experience the awe of the Easter story. These simple, meaningful devotions will help you to remember the events leading up to Jesus' death and celebrate the eternal hope we have in Jesus' resurrection.

## WHAT IS HOLY WEEK?

Some would call Holy Week the most important week in all of history. Holy Week is the week before Easter, a period which includes the religious holidays of Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday. This is an opportunity to walk through the events of Jesus' final week leading to his crucifixion and death, but that's not the end of the story. Following along in our Holy Week devotion will allow families to experience the miracle of Jesus' resurrection.

## HOW TO USE THE DEVOTIONS

The week leading up to Easter is a wonderfully natural opportunity to disciple the little hearts in your home. We hope you will use this guide and commit to a daily rhythm for the week (at the dinner table, at bedtime, set an iPhone reminder for a specific time of day, etc.) There is not a right or wrong way to use these devotions. You could read one each day during Holy Week. You could also combine some of the stories and read a few of them on the same day. Maybe you're only able to read one or two of them together as a family and that's okay! We want to help you take steps toward incorporating time around God's word as a family.

As the parent, read the Bible passage and devotion ahead of time to prepare. Think about how you can help connect the Word of God to the heart of your child/children. Consider balancing the gravity of the week with the maturity level of your child based on your discernment and the Spirit's leading. If you have older students or teens in your home, invite them to help lead a portion of the worship time. Most importantly - Relax. Enjoy it. Have fun. You are playing a role in your child's life, but God is the main actor. Love them, laugh with them, pray with them, and point them to a God who is all about His glory and their great joy. And know that as you are being intentional to disciple the hearts of your children, we are praying for you and here to help however we can.

We've provided ESV Scripture references for each story, but feel free to read the stories from a children's story Bible or other translation if that works best for your family. We invite you to use the three simple steps as a framework for your time together.

**READ:** Open God's word together and read the suggested passage from the Bible or from a children's story Bible. Some days the passages are longer than others. Help keep younger children engaged by having them help tell the story. You can invite pre-readers to make up motions to do each time they hear a specific word or name in the story. For older children or teens, give them a section of the story to read aloud or have them read the lines of a character as you narrate the story.

**ASK:** Use the questions to reflect on the story. We've provided you with simple questions that work well with all ages. There are no right or wrong answers, but simply serve as a tool to get children and students thinking about God and the stories we've read.

**PRAY:** Close your time with prayer using the provided suggestions or your own words and ideas.

# ***SIMPLE EXTRA IDEAS FOR FAMILY WORSHIP***

- Light a candle to make this time special
- Sing a familiar worship song together (or Google one and sing it together)
- Memorize a verse of scripture together (a few suggestions- Philippians 2:8, Romans 8:34 or Matthew 28:5-6)
- Allow children to read the Bible verses if they'd like
- Pray together and invite children to pray as well but don't force them to
- Create hand motions to go along with the worship song or Bible verse (the sillier the better)
- Use Lego blocks to build something featured in the story
- Google how to create a resurrection garden and make one
- Ask questions about what you've read & don't be afraid to ask questions as a parent (You don't have to know all the answers, it's ok to say, "I'm not sure but let me do some research and I'll get back to you.")
- Make or purchase hot cross buns to eat on Good Friday
- Make a colorful sign or banner with the words "Alleluia! Jesus Is Alive!" written on it. Hide it somewhere for your children to discover on Easter Sunday. Have your child make the banner and then hide it for you to find!
- Celebrate Jesus' resurrection by singing or listening to a favorite Easter song together
- Google a recipe for Resurrection Rolls and make them together



# palm sunday

## THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

### MATTHEW 21:1-11

*Now when they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go into the village in front of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord needs them,' and he will send them at once." This took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet, saying,*

*"Say to the daughter of Zion,  
'Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.'"*

*The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them. They brought the donkey and the colt and put on them their cloaks, and he sat on them. Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up, saying, "Who is this?" And the crowds said, "This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee."*

### DEVOTION

The Jewish people were celebrating Passover. Jesus was going to Jerusalem to celebrate. Jesus and his disciples stopped in a town and Jesus told two of his disciples to go ahead of him. He told the two disciples to go into a village and there they would see a young donkey that no one had ever ridden. He told them to untie the donkey and bring it to him. He said that if anyone asks them what they are doing to say, "The Lord needs this donkey but will return it soon." The disciples brought the donkey to Jesus.

A long time ago, before Jesus was even born, God said that the Savior would come to Israel on a donkey and now Jesus was doing just as God had said. The news that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem spread through the entire city. People heard about the amazing things he had done so they cut palm branches and ran to see Jesus. The Pharisees and religious rulers realized there was nothing they could do because everyone was going to see Jesus. Jesus rode into Jerusalem and the crowd spread their coats on the road ahead of him and waved palm branches in the air. His followers began to

shout and sing, praising God for all the wonderful miracles they had seen. The Pharisees were mad and told Jesus to stop the people from saying things like that. But Jesus said if they keep quite the rocks along the road would burst into tears. So, the people kept singing, "Blessings on the king who comes in the name of the Lord, praise God in highest heaven." The entire city was in an uproar and as Jesus entered, they asked, "Who is this?" And the crowd replied, "It's Jesus!" Jesus rode the donkey through the streets of Jerusalem to the temple, just as God said he would many years before.


### ASK

What would it be like to be in the crowd that welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem? What would you have said or done if you had been there?

### PRAY

Dear Jesus, like the people on Palm Sunday, we praise you. Thank you for coming to be our King and establishing your kingdom. Help us to serve you. Amen.





# holy monday

## JESUS CLEARS THE TEMPLE

### MATTHEW 21:12-17

*And when he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came up to him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?" Jesus answered them, "I also will ask you one question, and if you tell me the answer, then I also will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, from where did it come? From heaven or from man?" And they discussed it among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?' But if we say, 'From man,' we are afraid of the crowd, for they all hold that John was a prophet." So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.*

### DEVOTION

When Jesus had entered the city, he went to the temple. The temple was the place people went to pray and worship God. The temple officials had set up tables and booths inside the temple to sell animals. The people bought these animals to use as sacrifices to worship God. The temple officials were being dishonest and asking for too much money. They were trying to use the people's worship to get rich. When Jesus entered the temple, he saw all the people using the temple to buy and sell instead of to worship. Jesus was sad and angry because he knew the temple was supposed to be a place to worship God. Jesus flipped over the tables and coins went sailing through the air while Jesus told the men they were sinning by turning a place of worship into a way to make money. Jesus then began to teach and told everyone that the Bible says God's house is a house of prayer and worship for all people. The temple officials became angry that Jesus had ruined their business. They were jealous that all the people liked Jesus and they started to look for ways to kill him. Jesus continued to teach people and the people continued to use the temple to worship and praise God.

### ASK

What does this story show you about Jesus? How do you think the people in the temple felt when Jesus turned over all the tables?

### PRAY

You are a powerful God that no army can defeat. You are strong and mighty, and we worship you. Thank you for defeating death once and for all.



# holy tuesday

## JESUS TEACHES IN THE TEMPLE

### MATTHEW 21:23-27

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

*And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them. But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying out in the temple, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" they were indignant, and they said to him, "Do*

*you hear what these are saying?" And Jesus said to them, "Yes; have you never read,*

*"'Out of the mouth of infants and nursing babies  
you have prepared praise?'"*

*And leaving them, he went out of the city to Bethany and lodged there.*

### DEVOTION

Jesus was teaching in the temple and a crowd had gathered to hear him. The chief priest and elders interrupted Jesus while he was teaching and said, "Who gave you the authority to do these things?" Which was a way of saying that Jesus didn't have the authority because they (the religious leaders) had not given the authority to him. The Jewish leaders were jealous of Jesus. They were threatened by Jesus' ministry. They knew that Jesus' power was greater than theirs and that Jesus had done many miracles they were unable to do. This is the last time we will see Jesus teach as a free man. This is also the beginning of Jesus being terribly mistreated.

### ASK

When you think about Jesus being mistreated, how does it make you feel? The religious leaders should have been the most devoted followers of Jesus, but they were the ones accusing Him. Why do you think the religious leaders were causing these problems?

### PRAY

Lord, we sing out, "Hosanna" to you only & we remind ourselves that you are always in control, even when situations around us seem out of control.

# ANOINTED

## MATTHEW 26:6-13

*Now when Jesus was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, 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. And when the disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying, "Why this waste? For this could have been sold for a large sum and given to the poor." But Jesus, aware of this, said to them, "Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a beautiful thing to me. For you always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me. In pouring this ointment on my body, she has done it to prepare me for burial. 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 was in a place called Bethany having dinner at a man's house named Simon. A woman heard that Jesus was having dinner at Simon's house, so she went to the house and brought a jar filled with very expensive perfume. The woman poured the perfume on Jesus' head while he was sitting at the table. The disciples saw what the woman had done and were very annoyed. They said the woman was being wasteful and that the expensive perfume could have been sold and the money given to help poor people. Jesus knew the disciples were thinking these thoughts and having these conversations. Jesus told the disciples that what the woman had done was a beautiful thing because she was preparing his body for burial. Jesus then told his followers that the story of what this woman had done would be told all over the world.

## ASK

Do you think Jesus was annoyed that the woman poured perfume on him? Why do you think Jesus said this woman was preparing his body for burial?

## PRAY

Help us to be people that love you with all our hearts like the woman in this story. You have forgiven us of so much and we love you.



# JESUS & THE DISCIPLES

## MARK 14:12-26

### *The Passover with the Disciples*

*And on the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they sacrificed the Passover lamb, his disciples said to him, "Where will you have us go and prepare for you to eat the Passover?" And he sent two of his disciples and said to them, "Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him, and wherever he enters, say to the master of the house, 'The Teacher says, Where is my guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?' And he will show you a large upper room furnished and ready; there prepare for us." And the disciples set out and went to the city and found it just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover.*



maundy  
thursday

*And when it was evening, he came with the twelve. And as they were reclining at table and eating, Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me." They began to be sorrowful and to say to him one after another, "Is it I?" He said to them, "It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread into the dish with me. For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born."*

*And as they were eating, he took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to them, and said, "Take; this is my body." And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, and they all drank of it. And he said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. Truly, I say to you, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God." And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.*

## DEVOTION

Jesus was going to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. His disciples asked him where he wanted to eat the Passover meal. Jesus told the disciples that when they go into the city, they would see a man carrying a pitcher of water and they should follow him into a house. After they follow the man into the house, they should ask the owner if there is a guest room in the house where the Teacher can eat the Passover meal with his disciples. Jesus told them that the owner of the house would take the disciples upstairs to a large room that would already be set up and that is where the disciples should prepare the meal. When the disciples got to the city, everything was exactly like Jesus said it would be. Later that night Jesus arrived with the twelve disciples. They sat down to eat, and Jesus took some bread, blessed it, and gave it to them. He told them to take the bread and said, "this is my body which is given for you." Then Jesus took a cup

of wine, gave thanks for it, and said to the disciples, "this is my blood, it is poured out as a sacrifice to forgive the sins of many." Jesus told the disciples that one of the men eating with them would betray him. He said that things were supposed to happen this way, but that great sadness would await the one who betrays Jesus. The disciples were very upset and started asking who it would be.

## ASK

Why do you think Jesus used food and drink to remind us how much he loves us? When we celebrate the Lord's Supper at our church, how is it like the special meal Jesus had with his disciples?

## PRAY

Dear Jesus, thank you for giving us a way to remember your sacrifice on the cross for us and to remind us how much you love us.





# JESUS' SACRIFICE

## JOHN 19:14-30

*Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, "Behold your King!" They cried out, "Away with him, away with him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar." So he delivered him over to them to be crucified.*

*So they took Jesus, and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them. Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Many of the Jews read this inscription, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and it was written in Aramaic, in Latin, and in Greek. So the chief*

*priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but rather, 'This man said, I am King of the Jews.'" Pilate answered, "What I have written I have written."*

*When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his garments and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier; also his tunic. But the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom, so they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be." This was to fulfill the Scripture which says,*

*"They divided my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots."*

*So the soldiers did these things, but standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.*

*After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), "I thirst." A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished," and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.*

## DEVOTION

The Jewish leaders and teachers did not like what Jesus was doing or how he claimed to be the Son of God. They planned to arrest him to get rid of him once and for all. Judas agreed to betray Jesus and give him over to the religious leaders for money. Jesus was arrested and taken to the rulers of the land so they could decide what to do with him. His clothes were torn and taken from him.

A crown made of thorns was put on his head. He was beaten so badly that he could barely stand on his own. Then he was forced to carry his cross so far up a mountain that he needed help because he could not do it on his own. Once Jesus made it to the place where he would be crucified, called the

Place of the Skull, the soldiers around him nailed him to the cross and waited for him to die. While Jesus was hanging on the cross many people shouted at him to save himself from dying but Jesus knew he had to die to forgive his people for their sins. At noon darkness fell across the whole land, three hours later Jesus took his last breath and died.

## ASK

Are any parts of this story difficult for you to hear? How does this story make you feel?

## PRAY

Dear Jesus, you are our Lord. You came to earth for us. You lived for us. You suffered for us. You died for us. You love us. Thank you, Jesus.

# forgotten saturday

## THE FORGOTTEN DAY

### MATTHEW 27: 62-66

*The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate and said, "Sir, we remember how that impostor said, while he was still alive, 'After three days I will rise.' Therefore order the tomb to be made secure until the third day, lest his disciples go and steal him away and tell the people, 'He has risen from the dead,' and the last fraud will be worse than the first." Pilate said to them, "You have a guard of soldiers. Go, make it as secure as you can." So they went and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone and setting a guard.*

### DEVOTION

This part of the story is only in the book of Matthew, the first of the four gospels. Think about all that has happened. Darkness has covered the land during the daytime. The curtain of the temple has been torn from top to bottom. The whole earth has shaken so powerfully that the rocks have split open. Jesus' body is laying inside a stone cave. Jesus Christ, the Expected Messiah, is dead! The people who followed Jesus and believed he was the Savior are now confused and more discouraged than ever. Just a few days ago they were waving palm branches and shouting praise and now the life of the one they praised is over. But even in his death, we see the great power of Jesus. The Pharisees and chief priests have seen all of this happen. They know that Jesus is dead but driven by fear, they come to remind Pilate that Jesus said he would come back to life after three days. Pilate gave orders for the tomb to be sealed and guarded by soldiers. Even though Pilate and the soldiers are making plans, we know that God's plans can't ever be stopped.

### ASK

Do you think the Pharisees and chief priests realized they'd made a horrible mistake? Why do you think Pilate gave orders to seal the tomb and have guards protect it?

### PRAY

God. You are all powerful and the death of your son, Jesus, on the cross made a way for us to be with you forever. Today we celebrate that truth.



# DEATH TO LIFE

## MATTHEW 28:1-20

*Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. See, I have told you." So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples.*

*And behold, Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me."*

*While they were going, behold, some of the guard went into the city and told the chief priests all that had taken place. And when they had assembled with the elders and taken counsel, they gave a sufficient sum of money to the soldiers and said, "Tell people, 'His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep.' And if this comes to the governor's ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble." So they took the money and did as they were directed. And this story has been spread among the Jews to this day.*

*Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

## DEVOTION

Very early on Sunday morning, the women who cared for Jesus went to visit his body and found that the tomb was empty. Jesus was no longer there. An angel told them, "Do not be afraid, Jesus is not here, he has risen from the dead." The women remembered that Jesus had told them He would rise again on the third day. The women ran to tell the disciples what they had seen and heard and for the next forty days Jesus appeared to many others to show them that he was alive and well. He taught them that his death and resurrection was the only way they could be forgiven and be with God forever. God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only son so that whoever believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.

## ASK

What would you have done when you realized that Jesus was alive again? Who would you run and tell that Jesus is alive?

## PRAY

Jesus, you are Lord. Jesus, you are our hope. Jesus, you won the victory over death. Jesus, we jump for joy because you are alive! Amen

**easter**

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