

HOLY WEEK

TIMELINE CONTINUED



Tuesday in Holy Week

On Tuesday morning, Jesus and his disciples return to Jerusalem. They pass the withered fig tree on their way, which they notice.

At the Temple, the religious leaders still angry with Jesus for establishing himself as a spiritual authority, organize an ambush to arrest Him. However Jesus evades them saying *"Blind guides!...For you are like whitewashed tombs-beautiful on the outside but filled on the inside with dead people's bones and all sorts of impurity. Outwardly you look like righteous people, but inwardly your hearts are filled with hypocrisy and lawlessness...Snakes! Sons of vipers! How will you escape the judgment of hell?"*

Later that afternoon, Jesus leaves the city with his disciples and travels to the Mount of Olives, which sits due east of the Temple and overlooks Jerusalem. Here Jesus gives the Olivet Discourse, an elaborate prophecy about the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the age. He speaks, as usual, in parables, using symbolic language about the end of times events, including His Second Coming and the final judgment.

Scripture indicates that this Tuesday was also the day Judas Iscariot negotiated with the Sanhedrin, the rabbinical court of ancient Israel, to betray Jesus (Matthew 26:14-16).

Jesus and the disciples return to Bethany to stay the night.

[Tuesday's events are found in Matthew 21, 23, 24. Mark 11. Luke 19.]

Wednesday in Holy Week

The Bible does not say what the Lord does on the Wednesday of Holy Week. Scholars speculate that after two exhausting days in Jerusalem, Jesus rested. Many scholars believe

this is when Jesus and the disciples share dinner with Simon the Leper, and the woman who anoints His head with oil.

[Wednesday events are in Matthew 26:2-13.]

Maundy Thursday: Passover and the Last Supper

While still in Bethany, Jesus sends Peter and John ahead to the Upper Room in Jerusalem to make the preparations for the Passover Feast. That evening after sunset, Jesus washes the feet of his disciples. By performing this humble act, Jesus demonstrates how believers should love one another.

Jesus shared the feast of Passover with his disciples, saying: *"I have been very eager to eat this Passover meal with you before my suffering begins. For I tell you now that I won't eat this meal again until its meaning is fulfilled in the Kingdom of God."* (Luke 22:14-16)

As the Lamb of God, Jesus was about to fulfill the meaning of Passover by giving his body to be broken and his blood to be shed in sacrifice, freeing us from sin and death. During this meal Jesus establishes the Lord's Supper, or Eucharist, instructing his followers to remember his sacrifice by sharing in His body and blood (the elements of bread and wine. (Luke 22:17-23)

Later, Jesus and the disciples leave the Upper Room and go to the Garden of Gethsemane, (Jesus does not return to Bethany, surely aware of the danger ahead) At Gethsemane Jesus prays in agony to God the Father, *"his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground."*

Early that morning in Gethsemane, Jesus is betrayed with a kiss from a friend (Judas Iscariot) and arrested by the Sanhedrin. He is taken to the home of Caiaphas, the High Priest, where the whole council had gathered to falsely accuse Jesus. As the hearing is getting underway, Peter waits outside and denies Jesus three times before the rooster crowed.

[Thursday's events are recorded in Matthew 26:17-75, Mark 14:12-72, Luke 22:7-62, and John 13:1-38.]

Good Friday

Good Friday is the most difficult day of Holy Week. Christ's journey becomes horrible in these final hours before His death. Early in the morning, Jesus is falsely tried by the Sanhedrin, Pilate, Herod Antipas, and then Pilate again. Jesus is then tortured and beaten.

Before Christ is led away the soldiers push a crown of thorns on His head. Beaten and mocked Jesus is forced to carry His own cross until He can go no further and is aided by Simon of Cyrene. Taken to Golgotha Jesus is nailed to the cross between two criminals at about 9:00am

Jesus speaks seven final statements from the cross. His first words are, *"Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."* His last words are, *"Father, into your hands I commit my spirit."* Then, about 3 pm (the ninth hour), Jesus breathes his last breath and dies. The sky goes dark, and the Temple curtain is torn in two.

Jesus died at the time when the Passover lambs were being sacrificed, fulfilling the Hebrew Scriptures. He endured the weight of all of humanity's sin, the weight of cruelty, and the weight of separation from God.

By 6pm Friday evening, Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea take Jesus' body down from the cross and lay it in a tomb. According to Scripture, Judas Iscariot, overcome with remorse, hanged himself early Friday morning.

[All of Friday's events are recorded in Matthew 27:1-62, Mark 15:1-47, Luke 22:63-23:56, and John 18:28-19:37.]

Holy Saturday and the Tomb

Jesus' body reposes in the tomb, where it is guarded by Roman soldiers throughout the day on Saturday, which was the Sabbath. When the Sabbath ended at 6 p.m., Christ's body is ceremonially treated for burial with spices purchased by Nicodemus. While his physical body laid in the tomb, Jesus conquered death, both spiritually and physically, securing our eternal salvation.

I pray that this timeline has been a help in your Holy Week reflections. We cannot be sure what exactly took place during Holy Week as none of us were there. But we can be assured: "...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." (1 Corinthians 15:3-4).

Have a blessed Holy Week
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