



Preparing Our Hearts For The King

2011 HOLY WEEK DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

HOW TO USE THIS DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

Preparing Our Hearts For The King is designed to assist you in following Jesus from His arrival into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday) to His death, burial, and victorious resurrection (Easter Sunday).

Each day, you will be given a passage of Scripture from the Gospel of Matthew highlighting one event from the life of Jesus taking place on the corresponding day during what we know as Holy Week. After prayerfully reading the selected passage for the day, you will be asked to reflect on its significance with an aim toward application in your life. Guiding questions are offered to make your journey with Jesus more impactful.

May this devotional guide be used by Him to grow your faith in Jesus, and may you find your heart being better prepared to celebrate the Risen King.

Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

~ Hebrews 12:2

SUNDAY | *Welcoming The King*

Jesus enters Jerusalem among shouts of acclamation by crowds hailing Him as the long awaited Messiah.

PRAY. *Ask God to reveal Himself to you through His Word.*

READ. *Matthew 21:1-11*

REFLECT. *Consider the meaning of the above passage by answering the following questions:*

- In the previous chapter (20:18-19), Jesus had predicted His death in Jerusalem. What type of attitude would you expect a condemned man to have as He enters the city in which He is going to be executed? Why do you think Jesus' entry into Jerusalem was different?
- As Jesus entered into Jerusalem to begin what we now call Holy Week, what evidence is there in this passage that these events were all a part of God's plan?
- None of the people in the crowd knew what was going to transpire in the week ahead. Why do you think they were so excited to be around Jesus—treating Him like royalty and literally, singing His praises?

APPLY. *Consider how the above truths might apply to your life by answering the following question:*

- Does the way you live your life cause people to ask who Jesus is (v. 10)? If not, what can you do to make people curious about the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords?

PRAY. *Pray about what God has shown you through His Word, asking Him to enable you to live out these truths by faith in Jesus.*

MONDAY | *Abiding In The King*

While returning to Jerusalem after a spending the night in Bethany, Jesus stops off at a fig tree for a bite to eat. Finding the tree to be with leaves but no fruit, Jesus seizes a teachable moment with His disciples.

PRAY. *Ask God to reveal Himself to you through His Word.*

READ. *Matthew 21:18-22*

REFLECT. *Consider the meaning of the above passage by answering the following questions:*

- In verses 18-19, what lesson is Jesus emphasizing with the disciples by cursing a tree having the outward appearance of being fruitful (as it was covered in leaves) but is not actually bearing any fruit? (Consider also Matthew 3:8; John 15:1-8)

- In verses 20-22, what is Jesus indicating to be essential in having God accomplish anything in and through a person for His glory?

- In whom is Jesus teaching His disciples to have ultimate confidence? Why?

APPLY. *Consider how the above truths might apply to your life by answering the following question:*

- In what specific areas of your life are you trusting in yourself and what you can accomplish **rather** than trusting in God and what He can accomplish through you by His strength? Take some time to surrender these areas to Him, asking Him to live more fully through you by faith in Jesus.

PRAY. *Pray about what God has shown you through His Word, asking Him to enable you to live out these truths by faith in Jesus.*

TUESDAY | *Looking Toward The King*

After confronting the religious leaders in the temple of Jerusalem, Jesus returns for a second time to the town of Bethany to lodge for the night. On the way, Jesus stops at the Mount of Olives to offer instruction his followers.

PRAY. *Ask God to reveal Himself to you through His Word.*

READ. *Matthew 25:14-30*

REFLECT. *Consider the meaning of the above passage by answering the following questions:*

- Each servant had a certain amount of money, ability, and time with which to work (vv. 14-19). What did each servant have that was the same? What did each servant have that was different? Did these factors explain the outcomes for these servants? Why or why not?

- What two rewards did the master give to the servants He called “good and faithful?” Did their different profit amounts impact how they were rewarded? Why or why not?

APPLY. *Consider how the above truths might apply to your life by answering the following question:*

- Do you expect God to reward you according to your ability or His happiness? How might your expectation impact how you serve Him?

- Considering two servants felt entrusted (vv. 20, 22) and one servant felt fear (v.25), which heart attitude best describes how you feel about serving God? How might these responses affect your response to Him in service?

PRAY. *Pray about what God has shown you through His Word, asking Him to enable you to live out these truths by faith in Jesus.*

THURSDAY | *Obedience By The King*

Jesus has shared in the Passover meal with his disciples. He has demonstrated humility in washing their feet. He has exposed the betraying intentions of Judas. Now, Jesus goes to the garden of Gethsemane to labor in prayer.

PRAY. *Ask God to reveal Himself to you through His Word.*

READ. *Matthew 26:36-46*

REFLECT. *Consider the meaning of the above passage by answering the following questions:*

- Given His close relationships with His disciples, allowing them the opportunity to be with Him as He agonized in prayer, how do you suppose Jesus felt after finding them asleep?

- Based on Jesus' prayers (vv.39, 42, 44) what is Jesus' attitude toward what He is being assigned by His Father to do?

- What stands out to you the most about the scene captured in vv. 45-46?

APPLY. *Consider how the above truths might apply to your life by answering the following question:*

- Noting Jesus' attitude of obedience to His Father, in what specific ways are you personally challenged to respond in simple obedience through faith in Christ?

PRAY. *Pray about what God has shown you through His Word, asking Him to enable you to live out these truths by faith in Jesus.*

SATURDAY | *Mourning Over The King*

Jesus is dead, and his followers have scattered. His body now rests inside a tomb made secure.

PRAY. *Ask God to reveal Himself to you through His Word.*

READ. *Matthew 27:62-66*

REFLECT. *Consider the meaning of the above passage by answering the following questions:*

- Do you think the chief priests and Pharisees were worried the disciples would steal Jesus' body or were they actually afraid Jesus might be raised from death? Why?

- How did God plan to use the securing of Christ's tomb for His glory and our faith?

APPLY. *Consider how the above truths might apply to your life by answering the following question:*

- What fear is keeping me from believing God's promise?

- Where have I been trying to seal up God's truth rather than act on it?

PRAY. *Pray about what God has shown you through His Word, asking Him to enable you to live out these truths by faith in Jesus.*

