

# HOLY WEEK DEVOTIONS



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH SALINAS  
2024

## Holy Week Schedule

Thursday, March 28  
Seder Dinner - 6:00pm

Friday, March 29  
Good Friday Service of Shadows - 7:00pm

## Resurrection Sunday Events

March 31

Sunrise Service - 6:30am

Pancake Breakfast - 8:30-9:45am

Easter Egg Hunt - 10:00am

Worship Service - 10:30am

## Resurrection Day, March 31

### ***Read John 20:31***

John's gospel has a variety of characteristics that are quite clever. One is that as each miracle happens in his gospel it is more significant than the prior miracle. When the people standing outside Lazarus' tomb saw Lazarus walk out of the tomb in response to Jesus' words, "*Lazarus, come out,*" they thought there could never be a greater miracle than this.

Yet, there would be a miracle that would not only be greater, but a miracle that changed the course of history. Everything since then pales in comparison to the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The resurrection of Jesus Christ confirms all that Jesus claimed and did.

For John, there is no greater event than Jesus' resurrection and because of that he writes, "*But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name*" (John 20:31). There is no greater miracle than Jesus rising from the dead, therefore may the powerful truth of the resurrection sink deeply into our lives so that we may have "*life in His name.*" ***HE IS RISEN! HE IS RISEN, INDEED!***

## Palm Sunday, March 24

### ***Read Matthew 21:8-9***

Palm Sunday is the day we celebrate the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, one week before his resurrection. It marks the start of what is often called "Passion Week" - the final seven days of Jesus' earthly ministry.

Matthew 20:29-34 tells the story of two blind men sitting by the roadside, and when they heard that Jesus was going by, they shouted. "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!" The crowd rebuked them and told them to be quiet, but they shouted all the louder, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!" Jesus stopped and called them. "What do you want me to do for you?" he asked. "Lord," they answered, "We want our sight." Jesus had compassion on them and touched their eyes. Immediately they received their sight and followed him. This is the first time Jesus Christ had been given the Messianic title and allowed it to be said in public.

Jesus wanted to make sure that when he came into Jerusalem being declared to the City of God - Jerusalem, with the claims of his kingship. Yet, He came gently, riding on a donkey. 'See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey' (Matthew 21:4-5)

Every other religion or philosophy in the world wants to save you through strength, but Jesus comes to die in our place, meaning we're saved not by our moral strength, but by his grace. And that is the message of Palm Sunday.

## Monday, March 25

### ***Read Luke 9:31-36***

And behold, two men were talking with Him, Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of His departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. Now Peter and those who were with Him were heavy with sleep, but when they became fully awake, they saw His glory and the two men who stood with Him. And as the men were parting from Him, Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is good that we are here. Let us make three tents, one for You and one for Moses and one for Elijah”—not knowing what he said. As He was saying these things, a cloud came and overshadowed them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is My Son, My Chosen One; listen to Him!” And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and told no one in those days anything of what they had seen.

The first Monday of Holy Week finds us on a mountaintop with Jesus. In Luke's gospel (9:30-36), Peter, James, and John witness the Transfiguration – a dazzling display of Jesus' divine glory. Moses and Elijah appear, talking of Jesus' "departure" – a word heavy with the coming events in Jerusalem.

Here, bathed in light, Jesus is affirmed by both heaven and history. Yet, beneath the brilliance, a tremor of trepidation might have resonated within Him. The coming days loomed large. He knew the path ahead – rejection, suffering, and a brutal death.

This divine reassurance, this glimpse of His ultimate glory, could be seen as a moment of solace for Jesus. He wasn't alone. The Father's voice boomed from the cloud: "This is My Son, My Chosen One; listen to Him!" (v. 35) God's love and purpose strengthened Jesus to continue toward what was about to come.

But perhaps, the Transfiguration also intensified the weight of the coming sacrifice. The dazzling light only emphasized the darkness He was about to enter. The divine confirmation of His identity solidified the path – the path to the cross.

As we begin Holy Week, let us ponder the complex emotions Jesus might have felt. He embraced His calling, yet the human cost wouldn't have been easy to bear. While we reflect on His sacrifice this week, may we hold in our hearts the glory and the suffering of the Christ.

## Holy Saturday, March 30

### ***Read Luke 23:54-56; Matthew 27:62-66; Isaiah 53:8-12***

Friday has passed. That day an innocent man was nailed to a cross. Now is the time of shadows. For the disciples this was a time of grief and confusion. They grieved the loss of their rabbi and friend. This man who enriched their minds, poured into their lives, and expanded their hearts; he is gone. The loss weighs heavy on them. Then there is the confusion. What were the last few years all about? What happens now? Will he indeed rise again?

There are times in our lives when we face these moments of shadows. Perhaps we are dealing with grief, anxiety, loneliness, confusion, and more. During this time, we can be caught up in what weighs us down, losing sight of what is to come. Would it not be great to see the outcome of our situation ahead of time? What if we could see how everything works out while we are in the middle of our shadowy time? We are not able to, of course. However, we do have the advantage of seeing what happens next in the lives of the disciples. We see the hope that is to come.

Want to know what is amazing? We worship the same God! We follow the same Jesus! We do not know what tomorrow brings, but He does. In that we find comfort. In that we find hope. Going through a time of shadows is a struggle, but Sunday is coming! Let us remember to keep our eyes on Him

## Good Friday, March 29

Why is Good Friday good?

In Isaiah 53:6 we read these words from the prophet, “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—everyone—to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

In Psalm 22:1 David foreshadows the words of Christ on the cross as he writes, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

In I Corinthians 15:3 we read these words from Paul, “For I delivered to you of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures,

We call Good Friday good because on that day God the Father removed our sins from our backs and laid them on the back of His beloved Son as He died on the cross. If your sins are still on your back Christ calls you to make this an even better Good Friday. “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28

## Tuesday, March 26

### ***Read Luke 5:16***

*Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed (Luke 5:16).* For everyone else, it was a Tuesday like any other Tuesday. Yes, it was *Passover* week so there would be some differences, but they had celebrated *Passover* in the past and there was a rhythm during that week they understood.

But, for Jesus this *Passover* was going to be different and He was the ***ONLY ONE*** who knew why it would be different. Therefore, it makes sense that Jesus often withdrew to lonely places to pray because He needed to commune with the Father so He wouldn’t lose sight of what must be done in a matter of days. He withdrew to lonely places because it is lonely when you are the ***Only One*** who knows what’s going to happen.

Each of us feels that way at times, don’t we? There are all kinds of activity going on around us, yet we have this gnawing feeling that no one understands what we are experiencing. Why not do what Jesus did at those times and simply *withdraw to a lonely place to pray*?

## Holy Wednesday, March 27

Salinas is known as the “Salad Bowl of the World” because of the many fruits and vegetables grown here. Farmers tend the fields in different stages of growth; some are freshly tilled, some are ready for planting, some are growing crops, some are ready to be picked, and others are in stages only a farmer would know. I am not a farmer or know much about agriculture, but I can see the phases of the produce growing as I pass by the fields. All the produce in these fields would have to start from seeds in the ground. The farmers would have to open the seed package to sow them.

In 1 Peter 1:23, the Word of God is referred to as a seed, “...for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God.” Like plant seeds have to be sown in soil, the Word of God must also be sown. Like the soil has to be prepared for the seeds, we must be prepared for the Word of God. The Word of God must be sown in the soil of our heart, our thoughts, our emotions, our life. The unsown seeds still in the package, will not grow and produce. The unopened and unread Bible is like unsown seeds.

Like a farmer tends to the seeds once sown, we must tend to the sown Word of God, to grow and be fruitful for God. “It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the soil, though it is smaller than all the seeds that are upon the soil, yet when it is sown, it grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants and forms large branches; so that the birds of the air can nest under its shade.” (Matthew 13:31-32)

From a seed to a crop, from tomb to resurrection. May we daily sow and tend the Word of God in our hearts, thoughts, and life to show the world the resurrected Jesus.

## Maundy Thursday, March 28

### *Read John 13:1-5*

During this Passover dinner some 1990-odd years ago, an important event happened. We all know it as the Last Supper. But let’s look again...

Before that fateful dinner, Jesus washed the disciples’ feet. An act of servitude, this event exemplifies his ministry on earth; humbling himself and loving even “the least of these”. But did you notice this: He even washed the feet of Judas Iscariot. Jesus likely knew at that time that Judas would betray Him. Here’s a question: How many of the disciples turned their back on him that night? If you said “One, Judas!” you’re incorrect. All of them did. All twelve deserted Him. All twelve failed our Lord.

Same night, another disappointment: Peter. Peter also failed—deserting and even denying Jesus. Judas continued the betrayal, all the way up to bringing the guards to Gethsemane to arrest Jesus. But Peter repented and returned to Jesus. In the book of Job—after the disasters that befell him—Job’s friends spend chapters trying to defend God’s honor. “It must be you, Job! God doesn’t punish unjustly!” Good for them, right? Job’s prayers, on the other hand, are presumptuous and disrespectful. Yet when God confronts Job on the error of his thinking, Job turns around...repents and changes his attitude. Job is correctable. And another key difference: Job spoke directly to God. Not about God... to God.

What does God say about all of the responses in the book of Job? To one of Job’s friends, he says “I am angry with you and your two friends, because you have not spoken the truth about me, as my servant Job has.” (Job 42). God wasn’t angry at Job! God even has Job pray for his friends so that God would accept their sacrifice.

It’s a not-so-subtle thing: we all fail the Lord at some point; the difference is in how we handle it afterward. Here’s the lesson: Keep short accounts with the Lord. Your sins and failures don’t surprise Him one bit. He knew you were going to fail before you ever even met Him. Jesus will serve even those He knows will fail Him. So when you fail, just tell Him. Speak to Him directly—even when you’re angry at Him. Be honest. He can handle it. Then move on and trust that He has forgiven you because He loves you so much!