

Holy Week: Everything You Need to Know

What would Holy Week look like if you were a fly on the wall to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ? Perhaps it would go something like this.

Day 1: Hosanna in the Highest

The carpenter's son from Nazareth, who has been performing miracles is entering Jerusalem on a donkey, with throngs of people behind Him waving palm branches and saying, "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! The King of Israel!" (John 12:13).

He isn't riding a horse like a warrior, but a donkey, as if He were trying to bring peace to the world.

Day 2: Den of Thieves

After Jesus' magnificent entry into Jerusalem yesterday, you could sense that something explosive might happen.

Jesus overturned the tables of the moneychangers and the seats of those who sold doves.

He said to them:

"My house shall be called a house of prayer, but you have made it a 'den of thieves.'" (Matt. 21:13).

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Day 3: Curse of the Fig Tree

In the morning, Jesus returned to the city from Bethany where He stayed overnight.

But when He approached it, Jesus found nothing on the tree except for leaves.

He said to the tree, "Let no fruit ever grow on you again." Even His disciples, many of whom had been following Him for three years, asked, "How did the fig tree wither away instantly?"

But Jesus answered His disciples about the fig tree: "Truly I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but also, if you say to this mountain, 'Be removed, and be thrown into the sea,' it will be done. And whatever you ask in prayer, if you believe, you will receive" (Matt. 21:21-22).

Day 4: 'Woe to You Scribes and Pharisees'

Yesterday, Jesus put the chief priests, scribes and Pharisees in their place. He publicly rebuked them by saying "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! You shut the kingdom of heaven against men. For you neither enter yourselves, nor allow those who are entering to go in. Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! You devour widows' houses and for pretense make long prayers. Therefore you will receive greater condemnation" (Matt. 23:13-15).

Day 5: The Hour is Near

Today is Passover, and it's a time of celebration for all Jewish people.

During the meal, Jesus announced that one of His friends would betray Him. It had to be Judas Iscariot, who had met with the high priests the day before. It was rumored they gave him 30 pieces of silver to hand Jesus over to them.

During the meal, Jesus broke bread and said, "Take and eat. This is My body."

He then took the cup and gave all to drink and said, "This is

My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." (Matt. 26:26-28).

Jesus took His friends to the Garden of Gethsemane, and I heard Him tell His disciples that He would go and pray close by.

Jesus said "The hour is near, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going; he who betrays Me is at Hand." (Matt. 26:45). An angry mob, with Judas with them, entered the garden.

Shortly after, they bound Jesus and led Him away. I was told they were taking Him before the Sanhedrin to be tried.

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Day 6: The Crucifixion

Jesus was blindfolded and mocked.

Pilate told the chief priests that Jesus had done nothing worthy of death. The soldiers, still mocking Him, scourged Jesus severely, including with cat o' nine tails, which rips the skin off a person.

They continued to laugh at Him and, after putting a robe and a crown of thorns on His head, they sarcastically labeled Him as "King of the Jews."

They sent Jesus before Pilate. The Jewish custom during this season is to release one prisoner, and Pilate asked the crowd whom they wanted released to them. They asked for Barabbas, a robber, and so he was released. But what would they do with Jesus?

"Crucify Him," many in the crowd shouted.

The Romans even made Jesus carry His own cross. They led Him

up to Golgotha, which means "The Place of a Skull." Some were still mocking Jesus, while others were weeping for Him, including some of His followers and His mother.

They had already put two criminals up on crosses, one on the left and one on the right of where Jesus was to be punished. Then they drove huge nails into Jesus' wrists and feet.

One of the criminals crucified with Him even spoke, angrily asking Jesus to save them all. But the second one said, "Do you not fear God, seeing you are under the same sentence?" He asked Jesus to remember him when Jesus came into His kingdom. Jesus said, "Truly, I tell you, today you will be with Me in paradise."

And with that, Jesus took His last breath saying, "Father, into Your hands I commit My Spirit."

There came a great shaking, and the veil of the Temple tore in the middle.

Day 7: Jesus' Burial

The chief priests are still concerned because Jesus had said that He would rise again in three days. The Sanhedrin want to do everything they can to make sure Jesus' disciples don't come in and steal His body away to validate His claims.

It has been said that a rich man, Joseph of Arimathea had gone to Pilate to ask for Jesus' body. Pilate granted Joseph's request, and they took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth. (Matt. 27:57-60).

Day 8: He is Risen!

I saw Mary Magdalene walking toward the tomb.

Mary went running to her friends. She said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him" (John 20:2)b.

Jesus' friends ran to the tomb and went in, but they did not find the body, only the cloth He had been wrapped in after burial.

But then two men suddenly appeared. One of the men spoke, "Why do you seek the living among the dead?" he asked. "He is not here, but has risen! Remember how He spoke to you while He was still in Galilee, saying, 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again'" (Luke 24:4-8).

Then, in an instant, Jesus appeared in our midst. And He said, "Peace be unto you."

We thought we were seeing a ghost, but he said, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? See My Hands and My feet, that is I myself. Feel Me and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have" (Luke 24:36-39).

It was true. It was the Messiah in the flesh. He told them He would have to suffer these things for the forgiveness of sins. He told them He was sending them out as witnesses to speak of what had happened so that others may believe. {eoa}

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