

GLENKIRK CHURCH



WEEKLY DEVOTIONS

# The DEVO

APRIL 11 - 15, 2022



Holy Week  
at Glenkirk



# MONDAY

Read **Mark 11:12-14, 20-21; Matthew 21:28-22:14**

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It's Holy Week, a.k.a. "Passion (Suffering) Week," culminating in Jesus' crucifixion and His miraculous resurrection commemorated by Easter. A common thread throughout last week's devos: Jesus separating His followers from enemies—the latter facing judgment. That theme intensifies this week as we consider Holy Week's events culminating in history's turning point.

Monday was perhaps when Jesus cursed the fig tree, a peculiar Messianic pronouncement—Scripture repeatedly pictures Israel as a fig tree (Hosea 9:10, etc.). "The 'fathers of Israel' or Patriarchs are seen as the best figs—the first-fruits of the summer crop." (Facts About Israel) Via this curse Jesus foresaw impending judgment upon the country for rejecting Him, confirmed by the disciples' discovery of that same tree withered the next morning (Mark 11:20). Jesus' adjacent teaching on forgiveness toward offenders (v. 25), however, may suggest future hope for Israel.

Afterward, Jesus cleansed the temple for the second recorded time. The first cleansing (John 2:13-17) signified missional sanctification—much like believers' repentant prayers in preparation for usefulness to God. This second cleansing likely pictured judgment upon corporate Israel for rejecting its Messiah—bringing to mind God's glory exiting the temple in Ezekiel 10.

Jesus then taught three parables, each a similar warning wrapped in a history lesson. In the “Parable of the Two Sons,” the reluctant son eventually working the vineyard represents repentant sinners who accept Christ; the initially willing son who ultimately forsakes the vineyard (and Christ) pictures self-righteous religious legalists like most of the Sanhedrin. The “Parable of the Tenants” portrays the general history of Israel’s leaders, the sent and abused servants, God’s prophets, and the Master’s murdered son, Jesus Himself. The “Parable of the Wedding Feast” speaks to Israel’s (the original invitees’) general rejection of the Messiah, the later guests representing the faithful Jewish remnant and believing Gentiles. The “*man who had no wedding garment*” (Matthew 22:11) characterizes pretenders not following the true Jesus Christ, perhaps mere “cultural Christians” and/or cult members.

“*The Stone that the builders rejected*” (Matthew 21:42) had come—those rejecting Jesus, “*the Cornerstone,*” would invite crushing judgment. Battle lines were now clearly drawn, clashes were escalating throughout this week.

## QUESTIONS

What was the significance of Jesus cursing the fig tree? How did the Messiah’s second temple cleansing apparently harmonize with His cursing the fig tree? What did the three parables that Jesus taught have to do with first-century Israel and the forthcoming Christian church?

## PRAYERS FOR SHEPHERD’S PANTRY

Hundreds of households come through the doors at Shepherd’s Pantry each week in need of food, clothing, and household items. As the cost of food and gas continues to rise, these families need us more than ever. Our prayer is that we can continue being a blessing to these friends and a place for hope and comfort.

# TUESDAY

Read **Ezekiel 33:10-11; Luke 13:34-35; Matthew 25**

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Passion Week's Tuesday was busy; however, it was not a day where Jesus' lessons would warm hearts. This is likely when the cursed fig tree was found withered (Mark 11:21), an ominous sign for Israel's elite. Mark 13 shares Jesus' teaching regarding the temple's future destruction— touched upon in last Friday and fulfilled in AD 70 as Rome sacked Jerusalem.

Mark 13 also documents Jesus' prophecy regarding “the end of the age,” passionately disputed within Christendom. “Futurists” interpret this “end” as still future, upon Jesus' return when God re-creates heaven and earth (Revelation 21). “Amillennialists”—including Glenkirk and ECO—view this as the 1st century “end” of biblical Judaism and its relevance, ratified in AD 70.

Regardless, Jesus lamented Israel's general “blindness” as He anticipated Calvary: *“O Jerusalem! ... How often I would have gathered your children together ... and you were not willing! Behold, your house is forsaken”* (Luke 13:34-35). Later, *“He wept over [Jerusalem] and said, ‘If you ... had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from [you]. ... Enemies will ... dash you to the ground ... because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you”* (Luke 19:41-45).

Jesus' teaching in Matthew 25 may also have occurred on Tuesday. His "Parable of the Ten Virgins" included five who foolishly "took no oil with them" (v. 3), possibly representing the emptiness of their "faith." Jesus' "Parable of the Talents" addressed stewardship of divine gifts, the "faithful servants" having multiplied talents for kingdom purposes while the "wicked servant" squandered God's provision to his own damnation (vv. 14-30).

Jesus' final recorded teaching this day dealt with the final "great white throne" judgment of Revelation 20:11-15. The theme of God distinguishing between Christ followers ("sheep") and His enemies ("goats") dominates the latter part of Matthew 25. God's children exhibit faithfulness by the fruits of their walk with Christ. Unbelievers—existing apart from the "true Vine" (John 15:1)—live fruitlessly, prompting judgment.

God "takes no pleasure in [judging] the wicked" (Ezekiel 33:11) and would provide "the Way" (John 14:6) to reconciliation and redemption within days at Calvary's cross. Sadly, many rejected Jesus and still do, thereby spurning salvation.

## QUESTIONS

What are a couple of common interpretations of "the end of the age" about which Jesus taught? What did the "oil" that the "ten foolish virgins" lack in their lamps apparently signify? What are the differences between "sheep" and "goats" as depicted by the Lord?

## PRAYERS FOR SHEPHERD'S PANTRY

Through the Shepherd's Pantry warehouse in Irwindale, homeless individuals receive a small quantity of food three days a week. Without personal storage capacity, cooking ability, or refrigeration, this helps them with two basic needs: food and dignity. We continue to pray with and for those living without a roof over their heads.

# WEDNESDAY

Read **Psalm 41:9; Matthew 26:6-16; John 13:18-30**

Wednesday of Holy Week features Judas' apparent "last straw" in deciding to betray Jesus. Some view today's "anointing at Bethany" as restating Saturday's John 12:1-4 event—Mary washing Jesus' feet and wiping them with her hair. However, Mary anointed Christ "six days before the Passover (Saturday)" (John 12:1); today's anointing seemingly occurred "two days before the Passover (Wednesday)" (Mark 14:1), this time the worshipful act done by an anonymous woman "on His head" (Matthew 26:7).

Regardless, the aftermath synchronized between accounts: disciples complaining that the spikenard's sale could aid the poor and Jesus' rebuking reminder of His waning time with them. Judas then departed and bargained with the chief priests regarding Jesus' betrayal. The bounty was a slave's price, hauntingly echoing Zechariah 11:12: "And they weighed out as my wages thirty pieces of silver." Jesus indicated His knowledge of this at Maundy Thursday's "last supper": "One of you will betray Me ... he (Judas) to whom I will give this morsel of bread" (John 13:21, 26).

Why did Wednesday's anointing presumably make Judas "snap" traitorously? The Bible doesn't say. Following Jesus' unjust Friday morning trial and delivery to Roman execution, "remorseful" Judas unsuccessfully tried returning his fee to the priests, then hung himself (Matthew 27:3-5). Wouldn't Judas' "repentance" prompt God's forgiveness? Apparently not—Jesus had foretold "It would have been better for [Judas] if he had not been born" (Mark 14:21). But why not?

I believe that Judas, like his peers and countrymen, expected the Messiah's political ascension. Judas had witnessed Jesus' miracles firsthand and perhaps—like fellow disciples disputing “*which of them was the greatest*” (Luke 9:46)—saw the Lord as his ticket to high office. Jesus' passive submission to anointing and its death imagery likely frustrated Judas. He may have betrayed Jesus, expecting Him then to “step up,” destroy enemies and seize power. When his selfish plan shockingly backfired, Judas' devastation undoubtedly prompted his next moves.

Though Peter also betrayed Christ, unlike Judas he was recommissioned (John 21:15-19) because “*God looks upon the heart*” (1 Samuel 16:7). Judas' heart was corrupted, whereas Jesus' loving, pure, forgiving heart would burst on the cross within two days.

## QUESTIONS

What's the significance of the price Judas received for his betrayal, “*thirty pieces of silver,*” and Jesus' first coming mission? Why do you believe that Judas betrayed the Savior? Why does it appear Peter was forgiven for denying Christ whereas Judas was not?

## PRAYERS FOR SHEPHERD'S PANTRY

Through the tutoring programs we see children surpass the hopes and dreams their parents had for them. When a child succeeds, the joy on his or her face is priceless! Our prayer is that more people are called to join us as a volunteer tutor to give us the ability to provide help to more children.

# THURSDAY

Read [John 13:3-17](#); [Matthew 26:26-29, 36-46](#); [John 18:1-6](#)

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Today is Maundy Thursday, the day Jesus reinterpreted Passover, instituting the “Lord’s Supper” and our sacrament of Communion. This eventful day also included the climax of Judas’ treachery, Peter’s threefold denial of Christ, Jesus’ ordeal in the Garden of Gethsemane and His subsequent detention. Yet amidst this drama, Jesus continued to teach and love His followers.

At their last pre-crucifixion meal, Jesus and His disciples shared bread and the fruit of the vine—representing His broken body and spilled blood at Calvary—the Savior demonstrating a fruit of abundant life by washing His disciples’ feet. This poignant lesson displayed a means of intimacy with God: self-sacrificing service for kingdom purposes. The Lord urged them, and us, to likewise “*wash one another’s feet*” (John 13:14).

His final lessons that evening impart Christian fundamentals. He taught, “*I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me*” (John 14:6). Jesus proclaimed, “*I am the true Vine*” (15:1), encouraging them to “*abide (live and remain) in Me*” (15:4), commanding that His followers “*love one another as I have loved you*” (15:12). The Lord warned them of forthcoming worldly opposition and trials, while inspiring them to “*take heart, [for] I have overcome the world*” (16:33). Jesus promised the Holy Spirit’s assistance throughout, then prayed for His disciples, providing encouraging insights into His loving, eternal relationship with the Father (John 17).



Next stop was Gethsemane (“olive press”), where Jesus faced final trials while accepting betrayal and impending crucifixion. In His humanity, Jesus appealed three times that “*this cup pass from Me*” (Matthew 26:39)—the Father’s resultant, stony silence reinforced His brutal, atoning sacrifice as the only way to salvation. The Savior willingly submitted, lovingly taking our rightful judgment while satisfying God’s holy justice.

In Gethsemane—preceding His arrest, delivery to the Jewish council, and “trial” in Friday’s early morning hours—the Messiah had a profound exchange with His captors. When advised by this posse that they sought “*Jesus of Nazareth’ ... Jesus [proclaimed], ‘I AM’ ... [which knocked them] to the ground*” (John 18:5-6). This same divine power would raise Christ from the tomb on Easter Sunday.

## QUESTIONS

What does Jesus’ example and teaching, imploring that His disciples “*wash one another’s feet,*” mean for Christians and, particularly, for you? Why do you think Jesus appealed to the Father in Gethsemane three times that “*this cup pass from Me*”? What is the significance of the Father’s resultant silence regarding these three appeals of Jesus?

## PRAYERS FOR SHEPHERD’S PANTRY

Shepherd’s Pantry could not fulfill its mission of helping our neighbors in need without the help of our volunteers. We are extremely appreciative of their support and generosity. Recently some of our volunteers have been struggling with health issues. Our prayer is that all of our volunteers are given healing and strength.

# FRIDAY

Read [Psalm 22](#); [Isaiah 52:13-15](#); [Isaiah 53](#)

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It's Good Friday, whereby Jesus paid fully for our redemption. It wasn't good for Rome's Pontius Pilate, who found himself inseparably sucked into the intrigue enveloping this mortal battle between good and evil, climaxing today.

During their "post-trial" exchange, Pilate gazed upon "*the Truth*" (John 14:6), ironically asking, "*What is truth?*"—he subsequently declared, "*I find no guilt in Him*" (18:38). He knew Jesus was apolitical, "*that it was out of envy that [the Sanhedrin] had delivered Him up*" (Matthew 27:18). Pilate was already "on notice" with Rome due to earlier riots. He hoped that freeing a prisoner would enable Jesus' release, offering Barabbas—an insurrectionist (closer to the Jews' anticipated Messiah)—or Jesus. The Sanhedrin-influenced mob chose Barabbas.

Pilate had Jesus flogged—hoping to pacify them—but they persisted, "*Crucify Him!*" (John 19:6). "*So he delivered Him over to be crucified ... [but insightfully] wrote an inscription ... on the cross ... 'Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews'*" (19:19), rebuffing the priests' related objections.

Roman soldiers mockingly robed Jesus in scarlet and placed a crown of thorns on His head (biblically representing Creation's fall)—an unwitting testimony to how "*God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us*" (2 Corinthians 5:21). While Jesus was crucified, darkness fell from noon to three amidst a legal transaction between Father and

Son: Jesus' perfect life exchanged for our broken, sinful lives. Jesus' related appeal, "*My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?*" (Matthew 27:46), reflected the formality of temporary separation between Father and Son while fulfilling prophecy (Psalm 22:1), publicly declaring His Messiahship, and expressing relational, spiritual, and physical torment.

Then "[Jesus] said, '*It is finished!*' ... and gave up His spirit" (John 19:30). "*The curtain of the temple (signifying prior separation between God and humankind) was torn in two*" (Matthew 27:51).

Passover lambs were inspected and selected Monday and sacrificed Friday. Jesus, the "*Lamb of God*," likewise passed inspections throughout Passion Week—Tuesday by Pharisees, Sadducees, then a scribe; Thursday by the Sanhedrin; Friday by Herod and, finally, Pilate. None found legitimate fault. But who was really on trial here, Jesus or His enemies? Sunday's verdict: He is risen! He is risen indeed!

## QUESTIONS

What were some of the ways in which Pilate was in a "tight spot" as he was pulled into the Sanhedrin's opposition to Jesus? Given that Jesus is God the Son, why His appeal from the cross, "*My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?*"? What's the significances of the Savior's final declaration from the cross, "*It is finished!*"?

## PRAYERS FOR SHEPHERD'S PANTRY

Shepherd's Pantry is now providing personalized case management to clients along with financial support through our Shepherd's Help Fund and Faith & Finance classes. Our prayer request is for ongoing support to grow our Shepherd's Help Fund and increase the interns needed to support our community in new personalized ways.

# Sources

- Facts About Israel's quote is from <https://www.factsaboutisrael.uk/israel-fig-tree/>.



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