



Holy Week Devotions

Introduction:

These devotions were written with the mindset that we will be homebound during Holy Week. The hope is that these devotions will enhance everyone's Holy Week, not only this year, but every year to come.

In addition to these devotions, Pastor will be live streaming messages on FaceBook for Palm Sunday, Good Friday and Easter. He will also pre-record a special family service for Maundy Thursday. All of these services will be recorded to YouTube and the link for each will be on our website stpaulseden.com.

We hope you enjoy and use these devotions each day of Holy Week to help you focus on the most important week of the Christian Calendar.

Palm Sunday

Reading

Zechariah 9:9–12

⁹Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!

Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem!

Behold, your King is coming to you;

righteous and having salvation is He, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

¹⁰I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim

and the war horse from Jerusalem;

and the battle bow shall be cut off,

and He shall speak peace to the nations;

His rule shall be from sea to sea,

and from the River to the ends of the earth.

¹¹As for you also, because of the blood of my covenant with you,

I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit.

¹²Return to your stronghold, O prisoners of hope;

today I declare that I will restore to you double.

DEVOTIONALS

*Join us as we journey
to the cross together*

Devotion

Zechariah's writings are during the time when the Israelites were returning from their long exile from the Promised Land. Most of his writings have to do with the rebuilding of the 2nd temple, since the 1st temple, the one Solomon built, had been destroyed.

The above verse tells those that labor in the building of this temple that it will still be standing when the Savior of the world comes. The Israelites had been waiting for the Messiah to come ever since the promise was made to Abraham that the Messiah would be one of his descendants. The Israelites had been severely chastised by God when He sent the Empire of Babylon to destroy the nation and take its people to what we know now as Iraq. Upon their return to their homeland there had been great ups and down, but the message that the Messiah would come and walk the streets of the New Jerusalem and its new Temple was very uplifting to the people.

We have the benefit of celebrating not the promise of the coming of the Messiah, but

the actual coming into Jerusalem and then going to the temple, His sacrifice, and finally His resurrection. Palm Sunday is the recognition that Zechariah's prophecy had finally come true. The people carrying palms that day may not have understood it, but we do! Christ has come to die with the burden of all sins upon Him. The sentence due for our sins is His death.

We shout hosanna to the King, because He is our King and will always be the King of our souls. So let your souls soar with joy, for the King has come, riding on a donkey, bringing salvation that has been prepared for all, from the foundation of the world!

Prayer

O Lord, as Jesus road into Jerusalem, it is the beginning of the fulfillment of a plan You conceived before the foundation of the world. Impress this upon my heart today and every day that follows: You sent Your Son to save me, a lost sinner. May this humble me this week and the weeks that follow, that I may proclaim this love of God to the world. Amen.

Holy Monday

Reading

John 12:1-11

New International Version (NIV)

Jesus Anointed at Bethany

12 Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. ² Here a dinner was given in Jesus' honor. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with Him. ³ Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

⁴ But one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray Him, objected, ⁵ "Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages. ⁶ He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it.

⁷ "Leave her alone," Jesus replied. "It was intended that

she should save this perfume for the day of my burial. ⁸ You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me."

⁹ Meanwhile a large crowd of Jews found out that Jesus was there and came, not only because of Him but also to see Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead. ¹⁰ So the chief priests made plans to kill Lazarus as well, ¹¹ for on account of him many of the Jews were going over to Jesus and believing in Him.

Devotion

This reading takes place shortly after Lazarus is resurrected from the dead. It is this event, the resurrection, that started the wheels in motion for what was about to happen the following week in Jerusalem. Mary anoints Jesus' feet with a very expensive perfume. Was it because He had raised her beloved brother from the dead or was it because she understood what was about to happen? We don't know for sure, but the evidence shows that Mary understood that Jesus was the Messiah and that He would die. This comes from the

discussion Mary had with Jesus asking Him to bring her brother back. She said that she believed that Jesus was the Messiah, which is why she knew He could do what she was asking. Mary anoints Jesus' feet to prepare Him for the journey He is about to take.

Bethany is not far from Jerusalem, so the journey would not be long in distance, but it would be tortuous because it was the final leg of the journey to the cross. The intent of an anointing is to set apart a person, place, or thing for divine use. It is meant to empower people to accomplish God's work. The high price of the fragrant oil used to perform the anointment further shows the understanding Mary had of the extent of Jesus' sacrifice.

As we continue this Journey with Christ to the Cross and the Empty Tomb, may our focus be on the cost that Jesus paid for our sins. May we seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit this week, to focus not on ourselves as Judas did, but on Christ as Lazarus, Martha and Mary did. (After all, the oil most likely belonged to all three of them.)

Prayer

O Lord, keep my focus on Your Son and His sacrifice for me. Let my heart and my mind be set not on the things of this world but on your Heavenly love. Amen.

Holy Tuesday

Reading

John 12:20-36

²⁰ Now there were some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the festival.

²¹ They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, with a request. "Sir," they said, "we would like to see Jesus." ²² Philip went to tell Andrew; Andrew and Philip in turn told Jesus.

²³ Jesus replied, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. ²⁴ Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.

²⁵ Anyone who loves their life will lose it, while anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

²⁶ Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.

²⁷ "Now my soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. ²⁸ Father, glorify your name!"

Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and will glorify it again." ²⁹ The crowd that was there and heard it said it had thundered; others said an angel had spoken to Him.

³⁰ Jesus said, "This voice was for your benefit, not mine. ³¹ Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the Prince of this world will be driven out. ³² And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself." ³³ He said this to show the kind of death He was going to die.

³⁴ The crowd spoke up, "We have heard from the Law that the Messiah will remain forever, so how can You say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this 'Son of Man'?"

³⁵ Then Jesus told them, "You are going to have the Light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the Light, before darkness overtakes you. Whoever walks in the dark does not know where they are going. ³⁶ Believe in the Light while you have the Light, so that you may become children of light." When He had finished speaking, Jesus left and hid Himself from them.

Devotion

Jesus knows exactly what's about to happen He is going to die. His soul is being troubled, thus showing He knows the nature of His death. However, that is only part of what He knows. Jesus also knows that His death will change everything, for He is only a seed being planted. From His seed dying, will come life for everyone. Therefore, He is willing to be lifted up. He is willing to die in agony because He is the kernel of wheat that falls to the earth and dies. He dies for a purpose and that purpose is you! He died to bring you life!

Prayer

O Lord, teach me the depth of Your love for me and all of humanity. Teach me to follow You as Jesus did. Help me drown out the world and its enticements and focus on something that truly matters, Your love. Amen.

Holy Wednesday

Reading

Isaiah 50:4-9

⁴ The Sovereign Lord has given me a well-instructed tongue, to know the word that sustains the weary. He wakens me morning by morning, wakens my ear to listen like one being instructed.

⁵ The Sovereign Lord has opened my ears; I have not been rebellious, I have not turned away.

⁶ I offered my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who pulled out my beard; I did not hide my face from mocking and spitting.

⁷ Because the Sovereign Lord helps me, I will not be disgraced. Therefore have I set my face like flint, and I know I will not be put to shame.

⁸ He who vindicates me is near. Who then will bring charges against me? Let us face each other! Who is my accuser? Let him confront me!

⁹ It is the Sovereign Lord who helps me. Who will condemn me? They will all wear out like a garment; the moths will eat them up.

Devotion

Today let us focus on how Jesus went to the cross, not just this week, but since the beginning. His ministry was marked by a humility that no one had ever seen before. During Holy Week, Jesus endures all of the scorn and shame that humanity can fling at Him. Yet in all of this, He listens, not to the words of those shouting at Him, but to the eternal Word of God, because it is that Word that lasts forever. God's Word guided

Jesus to make His ultimate sacrifice. As we walk with Christ to the cross, let us set aside all of our pride, and walk humbly with our God. May we put away all petty feelings of justified anger and embrace the life of Christ, who was a devoted servant to all, even the people who hated Him. May we live by the love that God has shown us.

Prayer

O Lord, teach me to walk humbly, not only before You, but before the world. Help me to put aside my prejudices, insecurities, and my need to be in control of things. Teach me to walk before You, as Jesus did with unwavering faith. Amen.

Maundy Thursday

Reading

Luke 22:14-20

¹⁴ When the hour came, Jesus and His apostles reclined at the table. ¹⁵ And He said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.

¹⁶ For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the Kingdom of God."

¹⁷ After taking the cup, He gave thanks and said, "Take this and divide it among you. ¹⁸ For I tell you I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until the Kingdom of God comes."

¹⁹ And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

²⁰ In the same way, after the supper He took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.

Devotion

Jesus gathers His disciples on one of the most sacred nights of the Jewish year: Passover. Passover is the celebration of when the angel of death passed over the people who believed and trusted in God. Jesus stands before them, as their Rabbi, friend and Messiah. He gathers them to feed them both physically and spiritually. This night is different though, for this is the night when Jesus begins a new tradition. This night, He

institutes the Lord's Supper as part of the sacred meal, knowing that what He is about to do over the next three days will fulfill everything God had promised. Jesus transitions us from the Passover to the Lord's Supper. The blood upon the doorpost was the blood of the lamb that was killed for the meal. The blood in the cup is the blood of the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world! All of the Passover meals over thousands of years pointed to this very night, the night the Lamb of God would be slain, so that death would "pass-over" all who believed in Jesus. Today, remember that you don't have blood to put on your door posts, because you have been washed in the blood of the Lamb of God that has taken all of your sins away.

Prayer

O Lord, let me never forget what the Lord's Supper is all about, Your desire to feed me spiritually, so that I may be strong in this world of sin. Let me desire communion with You and my fellow brothers and sisters in Christ, so that I may proclaim Your love in the world. Amen.

Good Friday

Reading

John 19:1-6

Then Pilate took Jesus and had Him flogged. ² The soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on His head. They clothed Him in a purple robe ³ and went up to Him again and again, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they slapped Him in the face.

⁴ Once more Pilate came out and said to the Jews gathered there, "Look, I am bringing Him out to you to let you know that I find no basis for a charge against Him." ⁵ When Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe, Pilate said to them, "Here is the man!"

⁶ As soon as the chief priests and their officials saw Him, they shouted, "Crucify! Crucify!"

Devotion

We read this and we get angry, how dare they shout "Crucify! Crucify!" But I tell you, I too shout "Crucify! Crucify!" Why? Because it is necessary, it is God's plan. But you and I shout

“Crucify! Crucify!” for a much different reason than the crowd did that day. They believed they were ending a threat to the religious establishment of the time. We shout it because He is the only one that can save us from our sins. We do not do this with joy in our hearts, for Christ is being crucified because of our sins. Today is a bitter sweet day; bitter because we are the ones who are responsible for His crucifixion, sweet because our God goes uncomplaining to the cross because He loves us. In the end, this day is about love lived out in the midst of man’s own darkness, and love wins.

Prayer

Father, please forgive me for all I have done (take a moment of silence to reflect upon your own sins). Let Your love shine in my heart so that Your Son’s sacrifice may be evident in my life, not just by my words but by my actions as well. Amen.



Holy Saturday

Reading

John 19:38-42

³⁸ Later, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly because he feared the Jewish leaders. With Pilate’s permission, he came and took the body away.

³⁹ He was accompanied by Nicodemus, the man who earlier had visited Jesus at night. Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds.

⁴⁰ Taking Jesus’ body, the two of them wrapped it, with the spices, in strips of linen. This was in accordance with Jewish burial customs.

⁴¹ At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had ever been laid.

⁴² Because it was the Jewish day of Preparation and since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

Devotion

The disciples didn't know what we know, just think about that!

Think about not knowing. Think about what it would be like to believe everything you believed and have it all die before your very eyes.

We color our Easter Eggs and get our clothes ready for Easter. The disciples waited for the authorities to come for them and perhaps end their lives.

Easter is the celebration it is because they didn't know the Disciples didn't know the world didn't know they didn't understand the point of His death but we do!!

We know why Christ died.

We know what the women will find on Easter morning: everlasting life.

We, who have been dead, have been made alive, because we know that Jesus didn't just die for us. We know that He will be raised to life everlasting and the impossible will be given to all who believe.

Prayer

O Lord, let me not lose focus today! Let today be a day I meditate on Your Son's sacrifice for all of humanity! Let me focus on a love that words cannot describe, so that Your love fills my thoughts, words, and deeds. Amen.

Easter Sunday

Reading

John 20:1–18

¹Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. ²So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." ³So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb. ⁴Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he

did not go in. ⁶Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, ⁷and the face cloth, which had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself. ⁸Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; ⁹for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that He must rise from the dead. ¹⁰Then the disciples went back to their homes.

¹¹But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept she stooped to look into the tomb. ¹²And she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet. ¹³They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him."

¹⁴Having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?"

Supposing Him to be the gardener, she said to Him, "Sir, if

you have carried Him away, tell me where you have laid Him, and I will take Him away."

¹⁶Jesus said to her, "Mary."

She turned and said to Him in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means Teacher).

¹⁷Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'"

¹⁸Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord" — and that He had said these things to her.

Devotion

Christ has risen, Alleluia! He has risen indeed, Alleluia! It is this empty tomb that gives meaning to everything, even Jesus' death upon the cross! Christ's death without the resurrection is still an act of love that overwhelms us, it is still a sacrifice, but what meaning would it have without Easter Sunday?

Easter announces to the world that man was not created to be

the grass of the field, here today, and gone tomorrow. That's what Jesus' came to fix ... our mortality. He came to give us our mortality. This of course is sometimes confusing since we all do die. We even have pandemics that alter everything in our lives.

Easter tells us that this mortality, this pain and sorrow in our lives was not God's idea. It is a result of sin entering the world because of when man sinned. Sin is dealt with on the cross and it is this sacrifice that makes Easter possible. Therefore, we can reverse what I said at the beginning of this devotion; without the death of Jesus, Easter cannot happen!

Jesus' life shows us that as we live in this world of sin, we will encounter both joys and sorrows. After all, did Jesus not find joy in His disciples and the people that loved Him? Did He not suffer the taunts and jeers of those who despised Him?

The death and resurrection of Jesus tell us that we are never left alone, and the biggest problems of our lives have been dealt with in this Gospel. So as we endure and enjoy this life,

we can celebrate Easter, knowing that whatever may come, we will live before God in love and peace forever.

I'll leave you with this quote from Romans 8, "¹⁸ I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us."

Prayer

O Lord, in this time of uncertainty, be with me as I celebrate the resurrection of Your Son. May I know deep in my heart that I was not created to be here today and gone tomorrow, but I was created to be with You forever, in perfect love and harmony. And most of all, may I learn this was not done just for me, but for all of humanity. May Your grace be with me, that I may proclaim your Gospel, in the good times and in the bad. Amen.



