

An open, antique book with a red ribbon bookmark. The book is open, showing the pages and the binding. The pages are aged and slightly discolored. The red ribbon is tied around the book, and the binding is visible in the center. The background is dark and textured.

EASTER 2021

HOLY WEEK

A DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

28 March

PALM SUNDAY

29 March

HOLY MONDAY

30 March

HOLY TUESDAY

31 March

HOLY WEDNESDAY

1 April

MAUNDY THURSDAY

2 April

GOOD FRIDAY

3 April

SILENT SATURDAY

4 April

RESURRECTION SUNDAY

DAY ONE

PALM SUNDAY

"HOSANNA TO THE SON OF DAVID!"

28 MARCH

PALM SUNDAY

BIBLE READING:

Matthew 21:1-11

Zechariah 9:9

ENTER THE STORY

Imagine yourself there as one of the crowd
welcoming Jesus: *What do you see, hear,
experience? What do you feel?*

Imagine yourself there as one of the 12
Disciples, seeing the crowd respond to
Jesus the way they did. *What did you see,
hear, experience? What did you feel?*

28 MARCH

PALM SUNDAY

ALLOW GOD TO SPEAK

Spend some time reflecting, journaling, re-reading the passage and/or praying.

What is God speaking to you?

REFLECT ON DURING THE DAY:

Jesus comes not just to your city, He comes to each of us. The Almighty King, coming in humility, knocking on the doors of our hearts (Rev 3:20).

How do you want to welcome him in your life?

TRAVIS' REFLECTION

I have a friend who started beginning his prayers “*King Jesus*” some time ago. As someone who usually began mine with “*Heavenly Father*” I was taken somewhat aback by the unfamiliarity the first time I heard him pray this way.

It only took me a moment to realise the significance of those words: my friend recognising Jesus’ rightful place over the world and welcoming him as King over his life.

KING JESUS

The King who rode into Jerusalem not for military conquest and political control, but to serve in humility with self-sacrificial love. The King who chose the clothes of the commoner, fishermen for friends, and forgiveness for his enemies. The King who does not impose taxes but gifts abundant life. The King who does not establish borders, but demolishing strongholds and sets captives free. This King I love, this King I gladly serve.

I like to think that many in the crowd shouting ‘*hosanna*’ were as genuine as my friend in welcoming Jesus as King – not just into their city, but as King over their lives. Yet I can’t help but feel uneasy knowing that it is quite likely that many who were swept up into this jubilant welcome would use those same voices to cry “crucify him, crucify him” within the week.

Let no such duplicity ever live in our hearts. King Jesus you are welcome here.

DAY TWO

HOLY MONDAY

"MY HOUSE WILL BE CALLED A HOUSE OF PRAYER"

29 MARCH

HOLY MONDAY

BIBLE READING:

Matthew 21:12-17

Isaiah 56:4-8

ENTER THE STORY

Imagine yourself there as one of the buyers
or sellers: *What do you see, hear, experience?*

What do you feel?

Imagine yourself there as one in need of
experiencing God: *What did you see, hear,
experience? What did you feel?*

HOLY MONDAY

ALLOW GOD TO SPEAK

Spend some time reflecting, journaling, re-reading the passage and/or praying.

What is God speaking to you?

REFLECT ON DURING THE DAY:

The New Testament describes us, our bodies, as the Temple where the Living God dwells by His Spirit.

What might need to be 'cleaned out' to make way for experiencing God as He desires us to?

VALDI'S REFLECTION

At the beginning of Jesus' ministry John 2:14-16 records Jesus clearing the temple courts. Now, at the end of his ministry, he is back doing it again.

Here, in the forecourt of His Father's house, instead of a place of reverence he finds a market born of convenience, pilgrims changing their money for local money prior to offering it, buying doves for sacrifice, other commerce going on. Presumably the oxen and sheep were back also.

It isn't until after he had put the temple in order that the blind and the lame came in and he healed them.

There are two issues this raises for me as a metaphor for my Christian journey:

1. Our physical bodies are the temples where the Holy Spirit dwells. Is my temple in order or has it become a place of convenience and materialism? How would someone visiting know that this is a temple? Is it any different from the other buildings around it? Am I keeping it in proper order? Do I need to eat better, exercise more? Are there things I need to stop doing?
2. Are the frustrations I sometimes have with myself with respect to my spiritual growth partially a result of how I treat the temple? Am I prioritising things correctly? Do I need to put my temple in order first?

DAY THREE

HOLY TUESDAY

"ASTONISHED BY HIS ANSWER, THEY BECAME SILENT"

30 MARCH

HOLY TUESDAY

BIBLE READING:

Luke 20:1-26

ENTER THE STORY

Imagine yourself there as one of the crowd,
seeing your national religious leaders
interact with Jesus this way: *What do you
see, hear, experience? What do you feel?*

As challenging as it might be, imagine
yourself there as one of the chief priests:
Why are you so threatened by Jesus?

HOLY TUESDAY

ALLOW GOD TO SPEAK

Spend some time reflecting, journaling, re-reading the passage and/or praying.

What is God speaking to you?

REFLECT ON DURING THE DAY:

Jesus lived with complete authenticity and authority as the divine Son of God. He refused to be controlled, silenced or conformed to the expectations the religious leaders placed on him.

Where might you have attempted to force Jesus into a “box” or image of your own design?

I never tire of being amazed by Jesus.

Even when confronted with questions that are either thinly veiled accusations or attempts to trap him, his response is one of wisdom and humility. My default response would be to justify or defend my position.

Jesus asked more questions than he gave answers to. His response to the questioning of his authority is to ask a question in return, "John's baptism, from heaven or of human origin?" And his response to the questions of paying taxes is beautiful in its simplicity.

There is wisdom in asking good questions. A good question from someone will cause us to reflect on the assumptions we come with. Or the motives that drive us. A good question invites us to a fresh way of perceiving truth and often does so more effectively than a "correct" answer. Jesus had all authority in heaven and earth, yet he chose not to proclaim or display that authority to the crowd and the religious leaders. Instead, he asks a question and then tells a parable. Wisdom. Humility.

I never want to tire of being amazed as I tell the story of Jesus. His journey to the cross speaks of a love beyond measure and a wisdom beyond my understanding. Jesus could have done anything, yet he chooses the cross. And so, my response is one of humble worship to my Saviour and King.

DAY FOUR

HOLY WEDNESDAY

"SHE HAS DONE A BEAUTIFUL THING TO ME."

31 MARCH

HOLY WEDNESDAY

BIBLE READING:

Mark 14:1-11

ENTER THE STORY

Imagine yourself there as as one of those present, watching this scene unfold: *What do you see, hear, experience? What do you feel?*

Imagine yourself there as the woman anointing Jesus: *What do you see, hear, experience? What do you feel?*

HOLY WEDNESDAY

ALLOW GOD TO SPEAK

Spend some time reflecting, journaling, re-reading the passage and/or praying.

What is God speaking to you?

REFLECT ON DURING THE DAY:

This unnamed woman's action was a costly and beautiful act of genuine worship. It is made even more beautiful against the ugly backdrop of the chief priest's dark intentions and Judas' response.

How can you worship Jesus with heartfelt and unashamed vulnerability today?

Whenever I think of what it means to worship, to truly worship God my mind is taken to two examples in Scripture.

One is King David, dancing before the returning Ark of the Lord with all his might. An explosive, joyful, victorious celebration of all that the presence of the Lord means to him and all Israel. Very public, full of strength and completely unashamed.

The other is this beautifully intimate act of worship.

I find myself actually holding my breath as I read it, because for me there is a sacredness to her vulnerability and incredible act of reverence.

To worship this way is almost confronting in its intimacy, its intensity of emotions and its extravagant cost. As I read my heart realises that this is what worship looks like, the kind of worship that I am invited into – ascribing the highest worth to Jesus and responding with all I am to what he has done for me.

To know that Jesus in his last week was truly treated worthily in this moment makes my heart rejoice.

Her example also convicts me that this is to be the standard for my own worship – for I have every bit as much reason as her to worship Jesus with all I am.

DAY FIVE

MAUNDY THURSDAY

"MY SOUL IS OVERWHELMED WITH SORROW TO THE POINT OF DEATH"

1 APRIL

MAUNDY THURSDAY

BIBLE READING:

Matthew 26:17-75

Hebrews 10:11-23

ENTER THE STORY

Imagine yourself there as as one of the
disciples (especially Peter): *What do you see,
hear, experience? What do you feel?*

As yourself today, over two millennia later:
*What do you feel and experience as you read
through this?*

MAUNDY THURSDAY

ALLOW GOD TO SPEAK

Spend some time reflecting, journaling, re-reading the passage and/or praying.

What is God speaking to you?

REFLECT ON DURING THE DAY:

Observing Easter in our church yearly rhythm ensures time to pause and reflect on what Jesus' experienced, as well as what Easter means for each of us.

As you continue to reflect on Jesus' experience, what is your response to Him this day?

MIREILLE'S REFLECTION

This life we lead is not easy; a broken record circling between work and play. We try for survival in a whirlwind of ignorance. Indulge vain fancies as props to our existence.

We've been told that amidst these shifting sands there is a well of living water to cleanse and fill. One that can slake our thirst for peace and rest. Wade deep into the overflow. This is not an illusion.

And yet...

We betray our Father, ourselves and our faith by turning away. Again and again. Ever-widening our circles of guilt and shame.

Countless others have warned we are not able to sustain ourselves. Not with anything we throw into the fire of our passions apart from God.

And HE knew.

He KNEW our pettiness, our daily betrayal, our gross weakness and He CHOSE in anguish and pain to claim it. Oh Lord, you could SEE the worthlessness you had in exchange for your heart – the ONE good heart, the one TRUE heart. Yet you went, obediently, to clothe our diseased flesh in God light – to be our RESTORATION.

Oh my soul, drink your fill, be unwearied. Wade deep into the overflow of His glory.

MAUNDY THURSDAY

DAY SIX

GOOD FRIDAY

"IT IS FINISHED"

2 APRIL

GOOD FRIDAY

BIBLE READING:

John 19

ENTER THE STORY

Imagine yourself there as someone who loves and follows Jesus: *What do you see, hear, experience? What do you feel?*

As yourself today, over two millennia later: *What do you feel and experience as you read through this?*

GOOD FRIDAY

ALLOW GOD TO SPEAK

Spend some time reflecting, journaling,
re-reading the passage and/or praying.

What is God speaking to you?

REFLECT ON DURING THE DAY:

Today we mourn the cost of our sin laid
upon Jesus. Today we are humbled to
consider the fullness of our forgiveness,
freedom, salvation and restored
relationship with God through Jesus.

*What does it mean to fully embrace the depths
of God's love for you, and to embrace the
completeness of His restoring grace?*

VALDI'S REFLECTION

Good Friday... what words can I possibly wrap around this day?! I see here the physical and spiritual realms overlaying each other.

The pain, the humiliation, the beatings, the crowd that loved Him on Sunday hating Him today. Jesus, fully knowing the whole time what was to happen and allowing it to. The unimaginable agony of the cross itself. The bruises and welts of the beatings. All of this is physical realm pain.

Simultaneously, the spiritual sacrifice is being prepared, Jesus takes the sin of the world upon himself. I can't help but feel that the spiritual agony he felt outweighed the immense physical agony.

Then, all this culminates in the point where Jesus is separated for the first time in eternity from the Father, he says "it is finished" and breathes out His Spirit.

My physical reaction to this is a tightening of the chest, clenching my jaw and my mind shying away from the gory details. My spiritual reaction is my heart aches and I want to cry.

Who am I that he should go through this for me?

The crowd by their actions didn't deserve this sacrifice, and what have I ever done to deserve it? What even could I do to deserve it?

This gift, freely given, unearned, is beyond my comprehension.

**Thank you, Lord.
Thank you.**

GOOD FRIDAY

DAY SEVEN

SILENT SATURDAY

"THE LORD HAS LAID ON HIM THE INIQUITY OF US ALL"

3 APRIL

SILENT SATURDAY

BIBLE READING:

Isaiah 53

ENTER THE STORY

Imagine yourself as one of the disciples on
this Saturday: *What do you see, hear,
experience? What do you feel?*

Imagine that you had an insight into the
host of heaven, the angels who worship at
the throne we read of in Revelation:
*What might they have been thinking?
How might they have responded?*

SILENT SATURDAY

ALLOW GOD TO SPEAK

Spend some time reflecting, journaling, re-reading the passage and/or praying.

What is God speaking to you?

REFLECT ON DURING THE DAY:

The agony of Friday and the victory of Sunday are separated by a single day. A day the Scriptures are basically silent about. It is almost as if Saturday allows the reality of the events of Friday to truly sink in before rushing to the victory of Sunday.

What would it mean for your life if Saturday was where the story ended?

JO'S REFLECTION

We all have silent Saturdays.

Thoughts and questions: *What just happened, where is God, why is he silent, is he angry with me, has he abandoned me, does he love me?*

Yesterday so much happened: the curtain was torn, the graves were opened, the sun was turned to darkness. It was like God was saying so much loud and clearly, but today... nothing... silence.

Silent Saturday reminds me of the days, weeks, months, sometimes years between our struggles and Gods solution. Our cries to him for help and his answers.

Yet we are never alone, even if God is silent amidst our suffering.

If God had raised Jesus to life 20 minutes after his death, would we care so much about Jesus sacrifice? And if God solved all our problems straight away, would we really find strength in him and learn to trust him?

The first disciples were confused, upset, anxious, fearful. They did not truly grasp what would happen next, even though Jesus said he would rise again.

Our silent Saturdays are an opportunity for us to stop, pray, be still and wait in God's presence. To trust him that this is not the end. The resurrection of our situation is coming.

“Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord’s coming.”
(James 5:7 NIV)

DAY EIGHT

RESURRECTION SUNDAY

"MY LORD AND MY GOD"

4 APRIL

RESURRECTION SUNDAY

BIBLE READING:

John 20

ENTER THE STORY

Imagine yourself there as each person we
read of through John chapter 20
(Mary, Peter, John, the disciples, Thomas):

*What did you see, hear, experience as you
encountered the risen Christ?*

What did you feel?

4 APRIL

RESURRECTION SUNDAY

ALLOW GOD TO SPEAK

Spend some time reflecting, journaling, re-reading the passage and/or praying.

What is God speaking to you?

REFLECT ON DURING THE DAY:

Jesus' victory is sure, his promises are true and by believing we have life in His name.

How can we live in light of the resurrection every day until Christ returns or calls us home?

LYNN'S REFLECTION

The disciples and the women were confused and disorientated, trying to make sense of it all. *What had happened?*

Jesus allows them several opportunities for their eyes to see, their hands to feel and their ears to hear His voice. He spoke peace into their troubled hearts. It started to sink in and once they were convinced their lives were changed.

We are slowly making our way out of a year that has had us confused, disorientated and always adjusting to the changes Covid 19 meant for our lives. We are still trying to make sense of it all.

More than ever our eyes need to be fixed on Jesus, to receive His peace and to hear this message again.

To us it *has been* revealed...no confusion here!

Jesus has overcome

Victory is Won

He is risen from the dead

Death has lost its sting

He has made a way for us to come to the Father

Hallelujah!!

May we rejoice in this and may it change the way we face each day.

RESURRECTION SUNDAY

An open book with a red ribbon bookmark is shown in the background. The book's pages are dark, and the binding is visible. The red ribbon is tied around the right page.

THANK YOU

for following our holy week devotional guide. We trust this has blessed you, and helped bring you closer to Jesus.

For those who know and trust Jesus as Lord, continue living for him in all you do.

If you would like to explore who Jesus is further, please reach out through the church office.