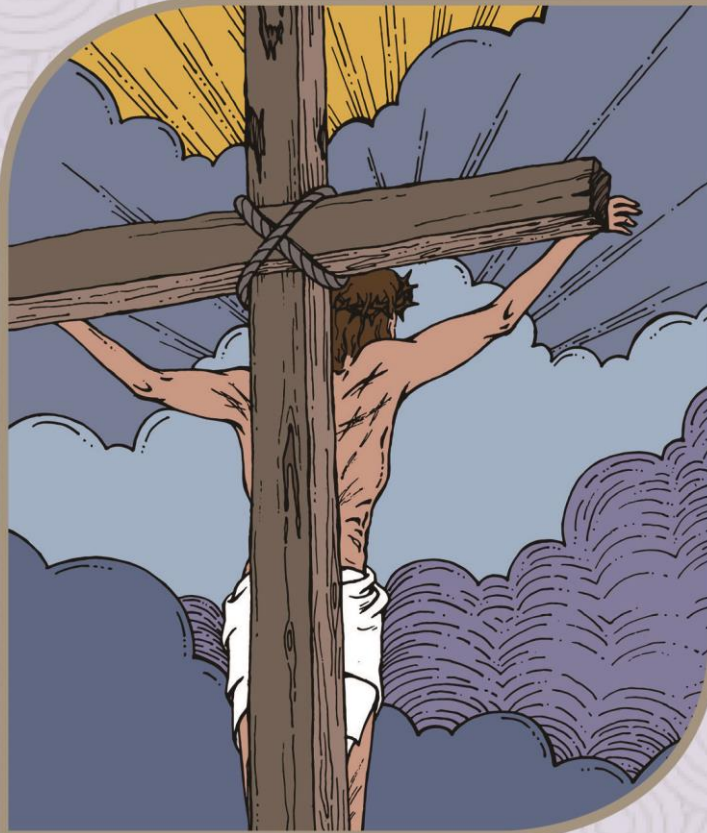




## Living in Faith

Discipleship Series



The central  
story of the  
Christian  
faith

# The Death and Rising of Jesus Christ



# **The Death and Rising of Jesus Christ**

*The Central Story of the Christian Faith*



Multi-Language Publications  
Bringing the Word to the World

# THE DEATH AND RISING OF JESUS Christ

## *Living in Faith* Discipleship Series

*Adapted from* The Bible Teaching Series

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Evangelical Lutheran Synod

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### **LIVING IN FAITH** Discipleship Series 2018

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# Getting Started

This book will help you learn some exciting things about Jesus Christ, your Savior. Each section will walk you through another part of the story of Jesus fulfilling the prophecies that would eventually lead to his death.

## READ THE TEXT

Each lesson is broken up into smaller sections with a review question after each section. Feel free to stop at any of the passages to make sure you understand them or to dig more deeply into what they are saying. Circle, underline, or highlight key words.

## GRAPPLE WITH THE QUESTIONS

In this book there are also questions to start, review and end the lesson. If you are studying this on your own, think through the questions for yourself. If you are studying in a group, use the questions for deeper discussion. Designate someone as a facilitator. Allow each individual a level of comfort to ask questions and freedom to discover and grow.

## NOTICE OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER STUDY

Each page also includes additional references on the sidebar for those who want to dig deeper (You will need a Bible or a Bible app to read those sections). They are available to use in group or in personal study.



= Location of Bible Story



= Search options – related passages

## MAP OUT YOUR NEXT STEPS



After connecting the timeless truths to your life, make sure you map out Next Steps before ending the lesson.



## Chapter One

# JESUS' LAST DAYS



Countries and people groups often point to historic events that shape their story and their identity. Those are the stories taught to the next generation. They are celebrated annually so people don't forget.

1. Chose a historic event celebrated by a country or people group and discuss why it has special significance for them.

Usually no one wants to die. Yet each one of us will die. Death cannot be avoided. Can you imagine someone being willing to die? Can you imagine someone standing in the governor's office with the governor offering him freedom, and turning it down? That is exactly what Jesus Christ did. Christianity is shaped from the events that led to his death.

There are four writers of the Gospel story (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John). They each tell unique aspects of Jesus' life. But all of them slow down their accounts to tell the important details of Jesus death. In this course we will learn how his death came about. We will also find out why Jesus died and how it defines Christianity.

In this first chapter we will see what happened during Jesus' last week before his death. By the end of this chapter you will be able to:

- \* tell who Jesus' enemies were;
- \* tell why they wanted to kill him; and
- \* tell why the Passover was important.

## EXPECTATIONS FOR A MESSIAH

You know from the Bible that he is the Son of God. He came into the world to be the Savior from sin.

Only one nation in ancient times still believed God's promise to send a Savior. That was the Jewish nation. They called the coming Savior the Messiah. The Hebrew word "Messiah" means the "the anointed one," or the one whom God has chosen. The Jews had been waiting for him for hundreds of years.



**Prophecies of a  
Coming  
Messiah**

Isaiah 9:6-7

Matthew 2:4-6



That was a long time to wait. Many of the Jews began

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**People had different  
hopes about the  
Messiah**

---

to get some strange  
ideas about what the  
Messiah would do.  
Different groups of  
people had different

hopes about the Messiah. Three of these groups of  
people stand out.



First, there were the common people. They thought the Messiah would be a great earthly king. He would lead the Jews to power over the entire world. They wanted such a Messiah very much by the time Jesus lived on earth.

You see, the Romans had conquered the land of the Jews. A Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, ruled over them. He collected taxes from them to send away to Rome, the capital of the Roman Empire. Roman armies marched through their land. People hated the Romans and wanted them gone. They were sure the Messiah would do what they wanted him to do. He would chase the Romans away.

The second group of people was called the Pharisees. They also wanted the Messiah to come quickly. But the Pharisees wanted him to do something more than merely save them from the Romans. They wanted him to pat them on the back and tell them what good and holy people they were.

The Pharisees were proud men who believed that they were almost holy. They felt that they had obeyed the laws of God very well. They even added laws of their own and expected everyone else to obey them. The Pharisees wanted a Messiah who would be as proud of them as they were of themselves.

The third main group of people was the chief priests, the men who were in charge of the religion of the Jews. Their leader, the high priest, was a man named Caiaphas. Their center of power was the great Temple of God in Jerusalem. These men had great power among the Jews. They did whatever they had to do to keep their power. Sometimes they even cooperated with the Romans.

The chief priests did not want a Messiah to come. They feared that the Romans would not like it and would send in Roman armies to destroy the Jewish nation. Then the chief priests would lose their power. They did not want any Jew to claim he was the Messiah. That was too dangerous for the chief priests.

2. Review the three different groups and their expectations for a Messiah.



### **Pharisees**

Matthew 23:1-7

Matthew 6:1-8



### **Chief Priests**

Matthew 21:14-23

# THE PASSOVER

The common people wanted the Messiah to be an earthly king. The Pharisees wanted him to be proud of them. The chief priests did not want any Messiah at all. These were the people who were planning to kill Jesus when he entered the city of Jerusalem for the last time during the week before his death.

Jesus came to a crowded city. It was the time of the Passover festival. Every Jew who could get to Jerusalem was supposed to be there. The Passover was a big celebration for them. It was as big as Christmas is for Christians today. The Passover was all about how their nation was freed from slavery.

Fourteen centuries earlier, in the days of Moses, the Jews were slaves in the land of Egypt. God freed them by sending the famous ten plagues to punish the Egyptian king. In the final plague God sent the angel of death to kill all the first-born among the Egyptians.

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**They were to paint the blood of the lamb on the top and sides of their doorframes**

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The Jews, however, were told to take a flawless lamb, kill it. They were to paint the blood of the lamb on the top and sides their

doorframes. They were to roast and eat the meat of the lamb. The angel of death would see that the blood of the lamb was on the doorframes. He would pass over their houses.



## Passover Event

Exodus 12:1-14,  
29-36

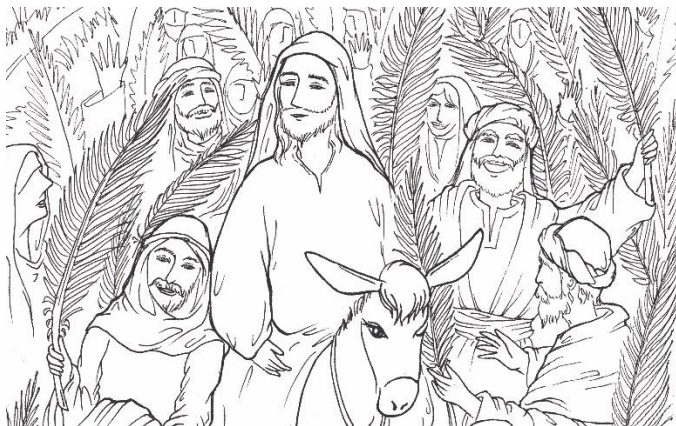


Every year after that event, they celebrated what became known as the Passover festival. They would kill and eat their best lamb. This would remind them how a lamb's death saved them from death and helped free them from slavery. In the same way, Jesus' death has saved us from eternal death and freed us from the slavery of sin.

3. Discuss the symbolism that was part of the Passover festival.

## **PALM SUNDAY**

Jesus entered Jerusalem on the Sunday before the Passover Festival. People remembered how they were saved from the Egyptians in the days of Moses. They hoped to be saved from the Romans now.



## **Palm Sunday Event**

Matthew 21:1-11

Zechariah 9:9-10

As Jesus entered Jerusalem, he was known as a person who had done many miracles. He proved that God sent him. The common people were thrilled. They were sure that Jesus was the king they were waiting for.

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### **The prophets of ancient times said he would be an everlasting king**

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Jesus knew that he was the King of the Jews. But he did not want to be an earthly king. The prophets of

ancient times said he would be an everlasting king. One of the prophets even wrote a prophecy to help identify the eternal king when he would come. He said the king would enter Jerusalem as a mild man, not a proud earthly king. And the king would come riding on a humble donkey, not on a splendid horse.

So, Jesus asked his disciples to borrow a donkey from a small village and rode it into Jerusalem. The crowds of common people were thrilled.

The people ran out to give Jesus a hero's welcome. They shouted "Hosanna" and sang about the coming of their king, the promised son of David. They threw down their coats in his path and cut down branches from the palm trees to cover the road before him. That is how that day became known as Palm Sunday.

4. What were the people expecting of Jesus on Palm Sunday? How did they show that expectation to Jesus?

## THE PLOT THICKENS

The Pharisees in the crowd were not happy. Jesus had not been the kind of Messiah they wanted. He was not proud of them. He spent much of his time criticizing them because they thought their man-made laws were as important as God's law, and sometimes more important! When the Pharisees saw the crowds greeting Jesus as a king, they were angry. Some of them forced their way through the crowd. They said to Jesus, "Stop the people from doing this!" But Jesus only replied, "If they were silent, the stones under your feet would start to shout and sing!"

The chief priests were not thrilled about the way Jesus entered their city, either. They knew the Roman



### **Plot to Kill Jesus**

**John 11:45-57**

**Matthew 26:1-5,  
14-16**

governor, Pontius Pilate, was in town. The Roman troops were at their barracks next to the Temple. The chief priests were afraid the people would start a riot. Then Pilate would send the Roman soldiers out to shed a lot of blood. "We must stop this Jesus," they complained. "The whole world is running out to meet him!"

But the chief priests had a plan. Their leader, the high priest Caiaphas, suggested it a few weeks earlier. They had been worrying about Jesus. They were sure he

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**It is better if one man  
dies for the people**

---

would cause a riot and Pilate would then destroy the Jews.

Caiaphas then said,

*"You do not realize that it is better for you that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish"* (John 11:50).



So they were going to have Jesus arrested and killed. They even had someone close to Jesus who was ready to help them. Jesus had twelve disciples, or students, who followed him everywhere. One of them, Judas

Iscaiot, was also his treasurer. This man agreed to betray Jesus to the chief priests. And it would be at a bargain price, too; thirty silver coins. "But let's wait until after the Passover," they said. If they waited until all the visitors left Jerusalem, they could kill Jesus without a big uproar from the common people.

During the days before the Passover, Jesus did nothing to make the chief priests and Pharisees love him. He started the week by cleaning out the Temple of God. The chief priests allowed all kinds of storekeepers and bankers to set up their business on the Temple grounds. This made it hard for visitors to concentrate on God, so Jesus threw all of them out of the Temple grounds. He shouted at them, *"It is written...My house will be a house of prayer"; but you have made it 'a den of robbers'"* (Luke 19:46).

Jesus spent the next few days in the Temple, preaching and teaching. The chief priests and the Pharisees kept coming to him with trick questions. They hoped that Jesus would say something that would get the common people angry with him. Or maybe he would say something against the Romans. Then Governor Pontius Pilate would kill him.

But they could not trap Jesus in his words. Instead, he continued to show how the chief priests and Pharisees did not follow God's will. Then Jesus left the city to have a time of rest. He would not return until Thursday, the day of the Passover.



**Jesus'**  
**Response to the**  
**Religious**  
**Leaders**

Matthew  
23:25-28, 37

Mark 11:15-18;



5. Explain why the religious leaders plotted against Jesus.
6. How did Jesus respond to them?

### **Words and Concepts to Remember**

**Moses** – the leader of the Jews who would lead them out of slavery in Egypt and guide them to the promised land

**Passover** – the annual Jewish remembrance of their freedom from slavery with the Passover lamb as the main focus.

**Pharisees** – a group of religious leaders that emphasized and expanded the requirements of the Jewish law

**Palm Sunday** – the day Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey with crowds cheering him.

**Hosanna** – a Hebrew (and Greek) expression for “salvation is near”

**Messiah** – “the anointed one,” the one God has chosen as king and savior



## CONNECTING TO YOUR DAILY LIFE

1. What kind of a “Messiah” do people wish they had today?
2. Why do we continue to see resistance to Jesus?
3. How can the Passover help you understand why Jesus came for you?
4. Pick out the one point that was most meaningful for you in this lesson.
5. Please pray to God based on this.



## YOUR NEXT STEPS

### **Memorize it!**

Memorize the details of the story to be able to retell it.

### **Apply it!**

Discuss how you can put this into your life this week.

### **Share it!**

Who especially needs to hear this? Determine how you will share this chapter with others. (You can use this lesson to help you).

*Go on to Lesson Two to learn how Jesus was betrayed and arrested.*

## Chapter Two

# BETRAYED AND ARRESTED



Jesus was in Jerusalem and prepared to celebrate the Passover there. However, instead of being welcomed by the leaders, he would be arrested. Jesus was arrested for no crime at all. He was arrested only because his enemies wanted him out of the way. He easily could have run away and hid. But instead he went quietly to meet the soldiers who had come to arrest him. He did this because he was willing to die for our sins.

But Jesus did not let anyone think he was merely another prisoner. He proved in many ways that he was in control of everything that was happening. We will see that again and again in this chapter.

At the end of this chapter you will be able to:

- \* tell what each of Jesus' followers did when Jesus was arrested;
- \* tell how Jesus showed he was in control of his arrest; and
- \* tell how Jesus showed what true greatness is all about.

## JESUS CELEBRATES THE PASSOVER ONE LAST TIME

On Thursday night Jesus returned to Jerusalem. He wanted to eat the Passover supper with his twelve disciples. Even these trusted followers hoped that Jesus would be an earthly king. They sat down to the meal arguing about which of them would be the greatest in Jesus' kingdom.

Jesus listened for a while. Then he arose. He wrapped a towel around his waist and washed the disciples' feet. People in Jesus time wore sandals when they went out and the lands in Israel are mainly hill and desert, so their feet easily got dirty. There were big stone water jars placed near the door of the wealthy household. The work of using the water to wash the guests' feet was given to the lowest slave. Jesus told them he had done bend down and washed their feet to teach them a

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**True greatness means  
serving others**

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lesson. True greatness means serving others. He was about to do



**Lessons in  
Humility**

**John 13:1-17,  
31-35**

**Mark 10:41-45**

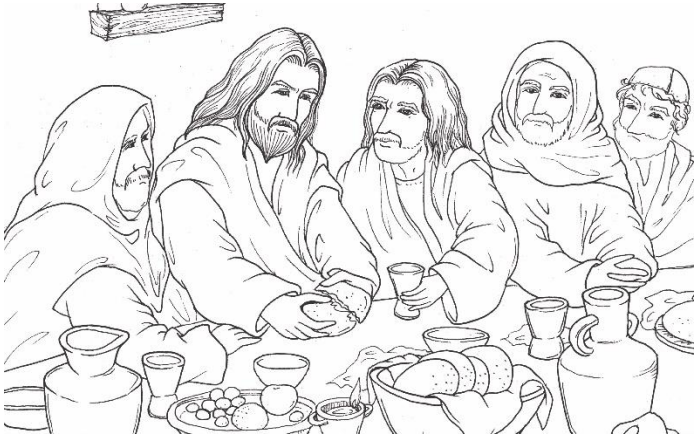
that by giving his life for the sins of the world.



Even though it was the big festival night, Jesus was very troubled. He finally told his disciples that one of them was about to betray him, that is, turn him over to his enemies. When this happened, Jesus said, all the rest of the disciples would run away from him and hide. One of them, Peter, would say three times that he did not even know Jesus.

All the disciples were shocked, except for Judas Iscariot. Judas was the betrayer. He knew that the chief priests did not want to arrest Jesus during the Passover. But Jesus had other plans. He told Judas, "Do it now." Judas left the meal to go to the chief priests.

Jesus spent a long time with the rest of his disciples. He spoke to them about what to do when he was gone. He promised to come back for them. They were confused, of course. They could not believe what he was saying.



Jesus also gave them a new meal to celebrate. The Passover recalled the Jews' release from slavery in Egypt. The new meal would remember and celebrate our release from the slavery of sin and death. It is called the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion. In the bread and wine, he provided his body and blood as the testimony of forgiveness he would provide for us when he died. By continuing to come to the Lord's Supper, Christians honor Jesus for his greatness in giving us forgiveness for all of our sins. His death for us and the forgiveness it gives, motivates us to serve others in love as he has done for us.

1. Jesus washed His disciples' feet at the Passover Feast. What do we as disciples learn today from this?



### **Jesus Celebrates His Last Passover**

**Matthew  
26:17-30**

**1 Corinthians  
11:23-29**

## THE ARREST



### Jesus Prays for Strength

Matthew  
26:36-46

After the meal, Jesus led his disciples out of the city. They went to a nearby garden called Gethsemane. There he went a short distance away from his disciples to pray to God. He begged his Heavenly Father to spare him from what was about to happen. But he also prayed, “Not my will, but yours be done.” In the meantime, his disciples had fallen asleep.

Judas Iscariot was not asleep. When Jesus sent him out, he ran to the chief priests. The priests did not want to arrest Jesus during the Passover festival. Nevertheless, they sent soldiers and priests to go with Judas.

Judas knew the place where Jesus would go. He led the mob of soldiers and priests to arrest Jesus. He did not want the mob to grab the wrong man in the darkness. So he arranged a signal with them. He would go up to Jesus and give him the traditional kiss of greeting.



Jesus saw the mob coming. He awoke his disciples and went out to meet his enemies. Judas came up and kissed Him. Jesus asked, "Judas, are you betraying me with a kiss?" Then he turned to the mob and asked them, "Whom are you looking for?"

"Jesus of Nazareth," they shouted back.

"I am he," Jesus replied. At those words, the whole mob fell backwards to the ground. Jesus was showing

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**With a simple word, he  
could defeat them and  
escape**

---

them that, with a simple word, he could defeat them and escape. But he let them get back to their feet

and then quietly let them arrest him.



But his disciple, Peter, was not ready for what was happening. He pulled out a sword and started swinging it. He cut off one man's ear before Jesus stopped him. Jesus healed the man and ordered the mob to let his disciples go free. The disciples then ran away and hid, as Jesus had said they would.



## Jesus Arrested

Matthew  
26:47-56

2. How does Jesus show he is in control of what appeared to be a hopeless situation?

## THE TRIAL

The mob led Jesus back to the city of Jerusalem. The chief priests called together the ruling council of the Jews, known as the Sanhedrin. While they were assembling, the father-in-law of Caiaphas the high priest held a private questioning of Jesus. Such things were not allowed under Jewish law. The chief priests were more concerned with killing Jesus than with obeying their laws.



Peter and another disciple, John, had followed the mob. They were now in the yard outside the high priest's palace. It was a cold night, and many of the servants were standing together around a fire. Peter



**Peter Denies  
Knowing Jesus**

**Matthew  
26:69-75**

joined them. Three times people asked him whether he was a follower of Jesus. Three times Peter denied, or said he did not know Jesus, as Jesus had said he would.

After the third time, the rooster crowed. It was nearly dawn. Jesus happened to be in the courtyard, and he looked at Peter. Peter was overcome with sorrow and ran away.

Finally, Jesus was led in to his trial. The chief priests gathered a crowd of witnesses to lie about Jesus. With this false testimony they felt they could condemn him. Unfortunately for their plans, the false witnesses could not agree on their testimony.

Jesus remained silent through it all. Everyone there knew if they could not get two witnesses to agree, Jesus would have to be released. Finally, the high priest, Caiaphas, put Jesus under oath and asked him, "Are you the Son of God?"

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### **Jesus could have saved himself**

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Now Jesus could have saved himself. But he would not lie. Instead,

he wanted to give his unbelieving judges a chance to repent by telling them that their words spoke the truth. "Yes, I am," he answered.

The Sanhedrin condemned Jesus for the crime of blasphemy, insulting God by claiming to be his Son. They sentenced him to death. Then the soldiers, who had arrested him, along with some of the priests,



### **Jesus on Trial with Religious Leaders**

**Matthew  
26:57-68**

began to spit on him and hit him and make fun of him.

3. Which aspects of the way this trial was conducted were problems?
4. How did Jesus show that he is still in control of everything while he was put on trial?

### **Words and Concepts to Remember**

**Lord's Supper** – the meal that replaced the Passover for Jesus followers as he gave them his body and blood for the forgiveness of sins

**Garden of Gethsemane** – the place outside of Jerusalem where Jesus went to pray and where he was arrested

**Judas Iscariot** – the follower (disciple) of Jesus who betrayed him in to the hands of his enemies by giving him a kiss

**Sanhedrin** – the ruling council of the Jews

**Caiaphas** – a high priest of the Jews who tried to build a credible case to condemn Jesus

**Blasphemy** – the crime of insulting God



## CONNECTING TO YOUR DAILY LIFE

1. What lessons in humility do you learn from Jesus? How can you apply that to your life?
2. Although Jesus knew the painful days ahead of him, he prayed, “Not my will but yours be done.” How does Jesus’ prayer help us to pray correctly?
3. Jesus was in control of himself and the situation when he was being arrested and put on trial. When can that understanding help you in your hard times?
4. Pick out the one point that was most meaningful for you in this lesson.
5. Please pray to God based on this.



## YOUR NEXT STEPS

### **Memorize it!**

Memorize the details of the story to be able to retell it.

### **Apply it!**

Discuss how you can put this into your life this week.

### **Share it!**

Who especially needs to hear this? Determine how you will share this chapter with others. (You can use this lesson to help you).

*Go on to Lesson Three to learn what led to Jesus' conviction for a death sentence.*

## Chapter Three

# CONDEMNED TO THE CROSS



Jesus was betrayed by his disciple Judas and was put on trial before the Sanhedrin. Jesus already knew the verdict and his sentence. He was willing to be found guilty, and he was willing to die. That way he could pay for our sins with his death. The Jewish ruling council, the Sanhedrin, condemned him to die. But now they had to convince the Roman governor to kill Jesus for them. In this chapter you will find out how it happened. At the end of this chapter you will be able to:

- \* tell what happened at Jesus' trials before Pontius Pilate and King Herod; and
- \* tell how the Jewish ruling council turned everyone against Jesus.

## TRIAL BEFORE THE ROMAN GOVERNOR

Early on Friday morning the Sanhedrin took Jesus to the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate. The Roman government ruled over the Jews. The Roman governor alone was allowed to put prisoners to death and no Jews had the authority to do this. Now the chief priests had to convince Pilate to put Jesus to death.

But Judas, the one who betrayed Jesus was having

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**I have betrayed innocent  
blood**

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second thoughts. He came to the priests and wanted to return the thirty pieces of

silver. They had given the silver coins to him to pay for betraying Jesus. *"I have sinned,"* he confessed. *"I have betrayed innocent blood."* The priests answered that they did not care. Judas threw the money at them. Then he went out and hanged himself.

Meanwhile, the priests and Pharisees took Jesus to the courtroom of Pontius Pilate. Pilate came out to meet them. They told him Jesus was a troublemaker who stirred up the people to riot and told them not to pay their taxes. Why, he even called himself the Messiah, a king! To call yourself a king was a crime against the Roman emperor. Surely the Roman governor needed to do something about it.



**Jesus on Trial  
with  
Government  
Leaders**

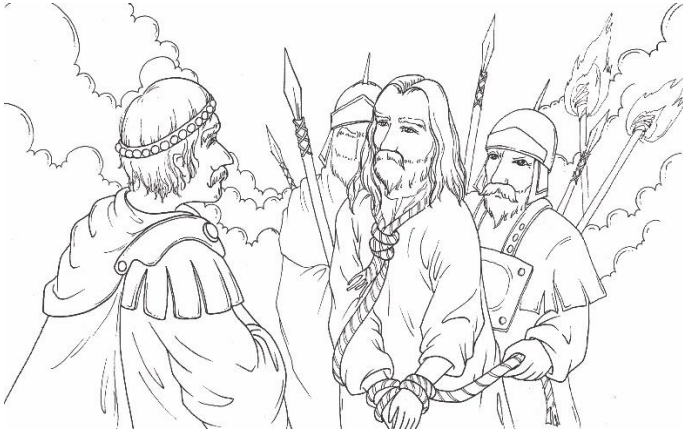
**Matthew  
27:1-31**



**Jesus Remains  
Silent**

**Isaiah 53:7  
1 Peter 2:19-24**





Pilate had Jesus brought inside and questioned him for a few minutes. Then he came out and said that the charges were false. He said Jesus would be released. The priests would not agree to that, of course. They protested that Jesus had been causing trouble throughout the land, starting in his home region of Galilee.

Pilate was happy to hear the name Galilee. King Herod was the king of Galilee. Herod happened to be in Jerusalem for the Passover. So Pilate sent Jesus to Herod for judgment.

Herod was glad to see Jesus. He heard a lot about him. He hoped to see a miracle. But Jesus kept silent while Herod questioned him.

Herod knew that people were calling Jesus a king. He decided to make fun of him. He threw a royal robe over Jesus' shoulders and had his soldiers beat him a little. Then he sent Jesus back to Pilate with the message that he, too, found Jesus innocent.

1. Did the priests want to execute Jesus because Jesus committed a sin? What is the real reason?

## THE QUESTIONING

By now a crowd was forming at Pilate's courthouse. People knew something was happening and wanted to see what it was. The priests' plan for getting Jesus killed quietly was wrecked. But they went through the crowd and turned the people against Jesus.

It was not hard to turn the people against Jesus. People wanted Jesus to be a great king who would throw out the Romans. Now he was a prisoner of the Romans. The people started to doubt about who is Jesus. The priests said Jesus was a fake. He deserved whatever he got! The people agreed.

Pilate was starting to get worried about this trial. The priests now told him the real reason they wanted Jesus dead. "He claims to be the Son of God," they said.

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**His kingdom is not of  
this world**

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Pilate asked him, "Are you a king?" Jesus replied, "I am" but

made it clear that his kingdom is not of this world but from another place. Pilate questioned him again. He asked where Jesus was from, and why he was here. Jesus replied, "*You say that I am a king. In fact, the*



**Jesus Explains  
His Kingship**

**John  
18:28-40**

*reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me"* (John 18:37).

2. Describe what you understand so far about Jesus' kingdom.

## THE CONVICTION



**Soldiers Mock  
Jesus**

**Matthew  
27:27-31**

Pilate came up with a plan to release Jesus. Every year at Passover he let one prisoner go free. He would offer the crowd a choice. First, he had Jesus whipped. He hoped the bloodied sight of Jesus would make the crowd feel sorry for him. Then he gave them the choice. They could have Jesus back, or they could have a murderer released from prison, a man named Barabbas. But they no longer wanted Jesus as their king. They shouted, "Give us Barabbas!" (John 18:40).

One of the first accusations the Jewish mob had brought against Jesus was, “*He claims to be Messiah, a king*” (Luke 23:2). So Pilate used that fact to make the

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**What shall I do with  
your king?**

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crowd stop and think.  
He asked, “What shall I  
do with your king?”

Then the priests’ anger exploded. They challenged Pilate: “*If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar’s!*” (John 19:12). “*We have no king but Caesar,*” (John 19:15) they shouted. “*Crucify Him.*” Finally, Pilate gave in. He released Barabbas and handed Jesus over to his soldiers to crucify him. “Crucify” means to nail someone to a cross and leave him there to die.



The soldiers then took Jesus and mocked him by putting a scarlet robe on him, pushing a crown of thorns on his head, and spitting at him before leading him away to be crucified.

3. What made the claims of the crowd so illogical?

### **Words and Concepts to Remember**

**Pontius Pilate** – the Roman governor who had authority to release Jesus to sentence him to die

**Barabbas** – a jailed murderer that the crowd was willing to release instead of Jesus

**Crucify** – the Roman method of capital punishment by nailing a person to a cross to leave him there until he died (crucifixion)

**Caesar** – the emperor of the Roman Empire



### **CONNECTING TO YOUR DAILY LIFE**

1. When Judas felt crushed that he had sinned and betrayed Jesus, his response was to commit suicide. What should our response be when we realize we have sinned or failed others?
2. The enemies of Jesus envied and hated Jesus, so they were willing to see Caesar as their king and even release the murderer Barabbas. What lessons in jealousy and hatred do we learn from this?

3. Jesus kept silent when he was falsely accused and convicted, yet he still was willing to lead people to understand the truth. How does this teach us to witness for Jesus even in our hard time?
4. Pick out the one point that was most meaningful for you in this lesson.
5. Please pray to God based on this.



## NEXT STEPS

### **Memorize it!**

Memorize the details of the story to be able to retell it.

### **Apply it!**

Discuss how you can put this into your life this week.

### **Share it!**

Who especially needs to hear this? Determine how you will share this chapter with others. (You can use this lesson to help you).

*Go on to Lesson Four to learn the special words Jesus spoke before he died*

## Chapter Four

# THE DEATH OF JESUS CHRIST



Jesus was brought to Pilate for trial by the Jewish people. He was going to be crucified. Jesus knew that he would have to die. He was ready to die. He was willing to die. The Bible has given us a very full picture of what happened when he died. At the end of this chapter you will be able to:

- \* briefly tell the major events of Jesus' death;
- \* describe what the crowd, the priests, and the soldiers did when he died;
- \* recognize the words Jesus said before he died and
- \* tell what happened at his tomb on Friday evening and Saturday.

# THE CRUCIFIXION

Crucifixion was the cruelest form of death ever thought up by mankind. The victim would be beaten until nearly dead. Then he would be forced to carry a cross, or the crossbeam of the cross, to the place he would die. He would be stripped of his clothing. They would nail him through the wrists and feet to the cross. Then they would raise it up and wait for him to die a slow and painful death.

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**Crucifixion is the  
cruelest form of death**

---



Jesus was led through the streets of Jerusalem to a place outside the city. On Sunday he had been cheered as a king in Jerusalem. Now people spit at him. He fell beneath the weight of the cross he carried. The Roman guards ordered a man from the crowd to carry it the rest of the way. Finally, outside the walls of Jerusalem, they reached a low hill called Golgotha that means the



**Jesus is Led to  
His Death**

**Matthew  
27:31-44**



place of the skull. This hill is also called Calvary. There they crucified Jesus.

1. Was the punishment of Jesus excessively cruel?  
What does this have to do with us?

## JESUS SPEAKS TO OTHERS WHILE ON THE CROSS

They crucified two other prisoners, one at Jesus' right and one at his left.

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**Father, forgive them.  
They don't know what  
they are doing**

---

The pain was unbearable. Yet, Jesus prayed to God,  
"Father, forgive them, for

*they do not know what they are doing"* (Luke 23:34).

A crowd gathered to watch, and people going into the city stopped to stare. The Romans would usually nail a sign to the cross to show the crime the person was dying for. Pilate had this sign nailed above Jesus, "*This is Jesus, the King of the Jews*" (Matthew 27:37). The priests and Pharisees could not get Pilate to change it. So they started to make fun of Jesus as he hung there dying.

Many in the crowd did the same. Even one of the criminals who was crucified with him began to make fun of Jesus. The other one, though, asked Jesus to remember him when he came into his eternal



**Jesus Speaks  
from the Cross**

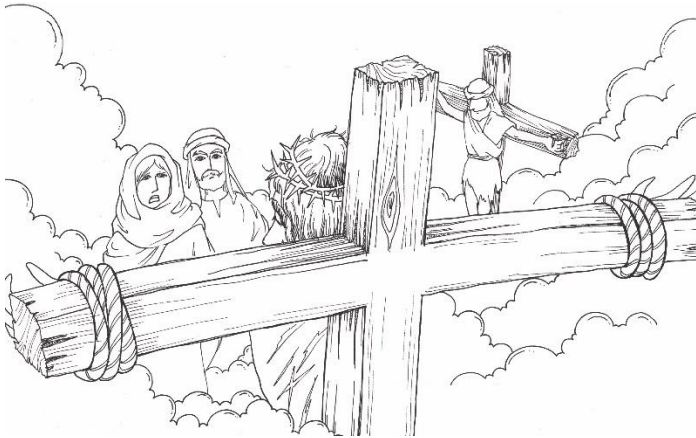
**Luke  
23:32-43**

kingdom. Jesus answered him, "*Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise*" (Luke 23:43).

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**Today you will be with  
me in Paradise**

---



Some of Jesus' friends and family came to the foot of the cross. There Jesus saw his mother and John, one of his disciples. He said to Mary, "*Woman, here is your son,*" and to John, "*Here is your mother*" (John 19: 26, 27). So John began to care for her.

2. Jesus spoke several important messages from the cross. Explain what you learn about Jesus from these comments.

## JESUS DIES

A man on a cross died slowly. He became weaker hour after hour. At noon, when Jesus had been on the cross

for three hours, the sky grew dark over the entire world. It was not an eclipse of the sun or a sandstorm. It was as if the sun refused to shine. Jesus was to die in the darkness. In the middle of the afternoon he cried out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me [left me alone!]" (Mark 15:34).

Finally, Jesus spoke to the guards and said, "*I am thirsty*" (John 19:28). One of them put some sour wine on a sponge, attached it to a stick, and lifted it to Jesus' lips. When Jesus had taken the drink, he cried out in a loud voice, "*It is finished* [fulfilled!]" (John 19:30). Then he prayed, "*Father, into your hands I commit my spirit*" (Luke 23:46). With these words, Jesus died.



At that moment, a violent earthquake shook the city. It split the rocks and opened the tombs. It even tore

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**Surely this man was the  
Son of God**

---

the great curtain in the temple. When the Roman soldier in charge of the

crucifixion heard what Jesus said and saw how he died,



## **Jesus' Final Words**

**Matthew  
27:45-56**

he exclaimed, "*Surely this man was the Son of God*" (Mark 15:39).

One of the soldiers wanted to make sure Jesus was dead. So he pierced Jesus' side with his spear. Blood and water came running out of the wound.

3. Jesus said, "*My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?*" Discuss the significance of Jesus crying out that his heavenly Father had deserted him.

## JESUS IS BURIED

As the sun was going down, two men came near to the cross. They were Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea. They were members of the Sanhedrin, but they had not voted to kill Jesus. They were secretly Jesus' followers.

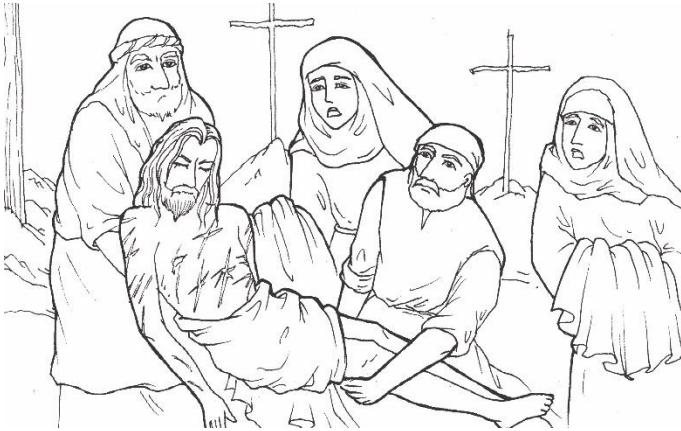
They had permission from Pilate to bury the body of Jesus. But they had to hurry. It was almost the Sabbath day. The Sabbath always began at sundown on Friday and lasted until sundown on Saturday. Jewish law said you could not do any heavy work on the Sabbath Day.

So they took down the body of Jesus and wrapped it in a linen cloth, or burial sheet, with spices. They carried it to a garden near the place of Jesus' death. Joseph owned a tomb, a small cave, cut into a large rock in that garden. There they buried Jesus.



### Jesus' Burial

Matthew  
27:57-66



Some women who believed in Jesus were watching. They decided that at first light on Sunday after the Sabbath, they would return with more spices. They wanted to complete the anointing of Jesus' body.

The body was put into the tomb. A huge stone was rolled in front of the mouth of the tomb. Joseph, Nicodemus, and the women left. The sun set, and the day of Christ's death was over.

Saturday morning some Roman soldiers were sent to the grave. The priests had asked Pilate to set a guard at the tomb. They were afraid Jesus' followers would steal the body and tell everyone he had risen from the dead.

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**The guards put a seal  
on the tomb so no one  
could enter, and they  
kept watch**

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The guards put a seal on the tomb so no one could enter, and they kept watch. They stayed the whole day and night, right into Sunday morning.

4. What do you learn about the loyalty to Jesus shown by his followers who buried him after he had died?

### **Words and Concepts to Remember**

**Golgotha** – the hill on which they hung criminals and Jesus on crosses to die (also called Calvary)

**Crucifixion** – the cruel way of punishing criminals by nailing them up on a cross of wood to die slowly out in public

**Paradise** – another term for heaven, the perfect place where the faith-filled followers of Jesus will dwell with God himself far away from pain and suffering

**Joseph of Arimathea** – the wealthy member of the Sanhedrin who followed Jesus, asked to take his body down from the cross, and buried him in his own tomb.

**Tomb** – a cave cut into the hillside outside for burial of a dead body



## CONNECTING TO YOUR DAILY LIFE

1. While Jesus hung on the cross full of pain, he still had energy to say out loud, “Father forgive them.” What can you learn for your life from the words Jesus spoke there.
2. The curtain in the temple divided the holy place from the most holy place which represented God’s presence. Only the high priest could enter and only once a year on the day of Atonement. What was God communicating to us by splitting in half the curtain of the temple when Jesus died? How will this impact your life?
3. Nowadays, some people may say that Jesus did not die at the cross. They might say he was just very weak and was rescued by his disciples after he had been buried. Then they lied to the people that he had come alive. What will you respond to such thought after you studied this lesson?
4. Pick out the one point that was most meaningful for you in this lesson.

5. Please pray to God based on this.



## YOUR NEXT STEPS

### **Memorize it!**

Memorize the details of the story to be able to retell it.

### **Apply it!**

Discuss how you can put this into your life this week.

### **Share it!**

Who especially needs to hear this? Determine how you will share this chapter with others. (You can use this lesson to help you).

*Go on to Lesson Five to learn the real reason for Jesus death*



## Chapter Five

# THE REASON JESUS DIED



After a person in a prison has been put to death, or executed, people start to ask questions. Some are curious. What was the prisoner's death like? What did he say? Did it hurt?

But the biggest question is always, "Why did he have to die like that? What led to his execution?" The answer lies in his past; what his crimes were and how he came to commit them. The answer also lies in the law, and what it had to say about his crime and his punishment.

In talking about Jesus' death, though, the answers are not that simple. Many people think his death was unfair. They blame the Jewish leaders, or Pilate, or the soldiers. In this chapter, we will talk about God, the

sinless Judge and loving Father, who decided that the death of Jesus Christ was necessary. At the end of this chapter, you will be able to:

- \* tell God's reason for Jesus' death;
- \* tell what Jesus' death did about our sins; and
- \* tell why it is important that Jesus rose from the dead.

## THE CAUSE OF JESUS' DEATH

For hundreds of years people have wanted to blame someone for Jesus' death. Some have pointed their fingers at the chief priests and the Pharisees. Others have accused Pontius Pilate of the deed. Because the Jewish mob cried out to Pontius Pilate, "We and our children will accept the guilt for his death," some have blamed the entire Jewish race. This has led to many horrible crimes against Jews for many centuries.

The men who wanted to kill Jesus that Friday during the Passover Festival certainly are guilty—guilty of blind unbelief. Blaming the whole Jewish race of all ages is foolish and wrong, however.

Nothing is as simple as it seems when we talk about the end of Jesus' life. For example, Jesus spoke about his death this way, "*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son*" (John 3:16). And Jesus also said, "*No one takes it (my life) from me, but I lay it down of my own accord [will]*" (John 10:18). What does this mean? It means that God the Father sent his Son into



**God the Father  
Sent his Son to  
Die...for Us**

**John 3:10-18**

the world to live a holy life and to give his life as a perfect sacrifice. He would suffer the punishment that we sinners deserve. God wanted his Son to die for us, and Jesus was willing to do it.

Why did God want his Son to die? Why did God want to put to death the one man in all of history who never sinned? The reason is this. God is a holy Judge and a loving Father who wanted to save us from eternal death.

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**God is a holy judge and  
a loving Father who  
wanted to save us**

---

We deserved eternal death from God as punishment for our sins. In the beginning,

God made the human race perfect and sinless. He said that if we sinned against his commandments, we would die. And death came into the world because of sin. Death means more than simply lying in a grave forever. It means being separated from God and the blessings he intended for us. It means your body and soul deserve to suffer in hell as punishment for the wrongs you have done. It is like the worst prison imaginable. There is no way out.

1. Was the reason for Jesus' death that he committed a sin? If not, what is the real reason?



**Death is a Curse  
of Sin**

[Genesis 2:15-17;  
3:17-19](#)

[Romans 5:12-19](#)

[Galatians 3:10-14](#)

**IN JESUS, GOD SATISFIES JUSTICE**

God is our Judge, a just and holy judge. He would not set aside the sentence of death for all of us. He has made that clear in the Bible. The whole human race has to pay for its sins. And the punishment for sinning is eternal death.

But God is also our loving Father. He does not want to send people to hell. He wants them to live with him in heaven. The Bible is very clear about this, too. *"For I take no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Sovereign LORD" (Ezekiel 18:32). "God our Savior... wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 2:4).*

How would God be able to save us? We deserved to go to hell. Because he is just, God had to condemn us to eternal death. But because he is loving, God wanted to give us eternal life.



The answer was Jesus Christ, the Son of God. God sent Jesus to earth to be our substitute. A substitute is someone who takes our place. Jesus came here because

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**God placed the sins of  
all people on Jesus**

---

he was willing to take the sentence of death away from us by dying in our place. He even

was willing to die on a cross! Think of it! Sinful men who hated Jesus nailed him to the cross in order to get rid of him. But at the same time, Jesus fulfilled his work as the Savior of the world. God placed the sins of all people on Jesus at the cross. He suffered the punishment we all deserved. Jesus suffered death in our place. He gave his life as a sacrifice to pay for our sins.

Not one sin went unpunished. Jesus was treated as if he were the one who committed every sin that has ever been done. And because Jesus, the holy Son of God, died for us, God forgave all of our sins.

2. Explain how Jesus' death satisfies both the justice of God and the love of God.



**The Substitute  
Bears our  
Punishment**

**Hebrews 9:22-28**

**2 Corinthians  
5:16-21**

## IT IS FINISHED

But the story of Jesus did not end with his death. As stated earlier, hell is a punishment that goes on

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**If Jesus had remained  
dead, it would prove  
that he was not the holy  
Son of God**

---

forever. If Jesus had remained dead, it would prove that he was not the holy Son of God. It would prove that his death had not

really paid for all our sins. It would mean we have to pay for them ourselves by going to hell.

But listen! In the moments before he died, Jesus cried out in a loud voice, so everyone could hear it, "*It is finished!*" He had fulfilled God's promise to save the world. His work of paying for our sins was finished. He said so. And here is how we can know that it is true.

If you disobey a law, you may be sent to prison. When you get to the end of your prison sentence, they let you go. You leave the prison and are a free man or woman. You have paid your debt and "It is finished" for you. The same was true of Jesus. When he had finished the entire sentence for our sins, he was able to leave his prison, of death and come back to life.

If he did not, it would mean that the punishment for sin was not finished at all, and each of us would have to pay for his own sins. But if Jesus rose from the dead, as he promised to do, it would mean that our sins were all paid for, forever.



**Jesus Must Rise  
from Death**

**1 Corinthians  
15:12-19**

That's why we want to look at everything that happened after Jesus died. The priests and Pharisees had asked Pilate to place Roman soldiers at Jesus' grave. They were to keep Jesus' followers from breaking in to steal his body. But if Jesus is the Son of God, how would they ever keep him from coming out of the grave?

3. Jesus spoke the words, "It is finished" just before he died. What did he mean?



## CONNECTING TO YOUR DAILY LIFE

1. Some Christians think that Jesus died only for believers. What is your view on it? How does this affect our message when we share the Gospel?
2. God's justice and love were both satisfied in Jesus. How should now we view our sinful behavior after we believe in Christ?
3. How can the words of Jesus, "It is finished" bring you comfort and confidence in your daily life?

4. Pick out the one point that was most meaningful for you in this lesson.

5. Please pray to God based on this.



## YOUR NEXT STEPS

### **Memorize it!**

Memorize the details of the story to be able to retell it.

### **Apply it!**

Discuss how you can put this into your life this week.

### **Share it!**

Who especially needs to hear this? Determine how you will share this chapter with others. (You can use this lesson to help you).

*Go on to Lesson Six to learn the importance of Jesus rising from the dead.*



## Chapter Six

# THE RISING OF JESUS CHRIST

If this book were about anyone else, it would have ended at chapter five. For every other person in history, death has been the end. Maybe the ideals of some people live on or perhaps their works survive, but when they are dead, that is the end of their life story.

1. Name some of the leaders who brought hope and change but eventually died.

But this is a book about Jesus Christ. Unlike all other leaders, death was not the end for him. Every year on Easter Sunday we remember that he rose from the dead. In this chapter we will find out what happened on the first Easter Sunday. We also will find out what it all means. By the end of this chapter you will be able to:

- \* describe briefly the events of the first Easter Sunday; and
- \* tell the three things which Jesus' rising from the dead proves.

### ALIVE!

Early on Sunday morning, there was another earthquake. The soldiers on guard at the tomb felt the

ground shake beneath them. But it was what they saw that filled them with fear.

Out of the sky of early dawn, an angel came down to the tomb. He was shining like the sun. He rolled the huge stone away from the tomb and sat on it. The soldiers fainted dead away. When they woke up, they ran into the city.

When the sun was rising, the women who watched Jesus' burial on Friday came back to the tomb. They had spices and ointments with them. They were going to complete the burial. Then they remembered the stone that men had rolled in front of the entrance. As they walked to the tomb, they wondered how they would ever get it moved.



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**He has risen, just as he said**

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Mary Magdalene, ran back into the city. She wanted to



**Jesus comes  
alive again**

Matthew  
28:1-10

Acts 2:22-33

But as they came near the tomb, they saw the stone was already moved. One of them,

tell Jesus' disciples. The other women went on to the tomb. They found it was empty! The body of Jesus was not there. Then the angel appeared to them and said, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said." He also told them to tell the disciples about it.

As the women went back to the city, two of Jesus' disciples came to look at the tomb. They were Peter, the man who said he did not know Jesus, and John. They found that the burial sheet, the one that had been wrapped around Jesus' body for his burial, was still there. They then went back to the city.



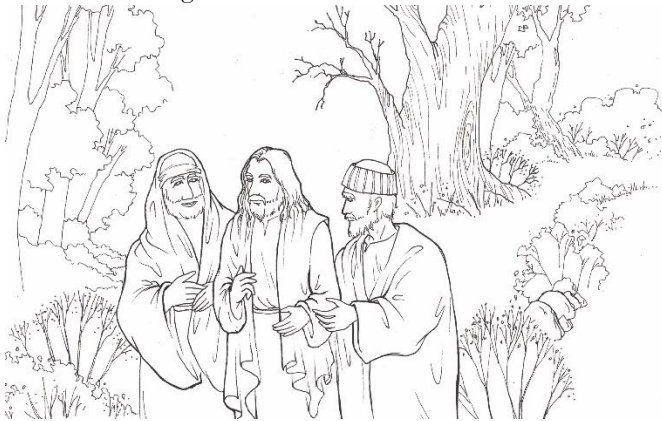
But Mary Magdalene came back to the tomb and started to cry. She loved Jesus dearly. She could not stand the thought she had that his body had been stolen. She heard someone ask her why she was crying. She thought it was the caretaker of that place. But when he spoke her name, she recognized it was Jesus.

She told Jesus' disciples that she had seen Jesus. The other women told them about the angel they saw. But the men did not believe them. They thought the women were seeing things.

2. Discuss who God used as the first group of messengers to announce that Jesus was live.

## THE PROPHETS SAID ALL THIS WOULD HAPPEN

Later that day, two men, who were followers of Jesus were on their way to a village a few miles from Jerusalem. The village was named Emmaus. A stranger started walking with them.



**On the Road to  
Emmaus**

**Luke 24:13-35**

They were talking about what had happened to Jesus. The men were sad and confused about his death. But

the stranger said that they did not understand the Bible. Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he explained what was said in all the

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**He explained what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself**

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Scriptures concerning himself. "Jesus had to suffer for sins," he said. "Then he would rise again in glory."



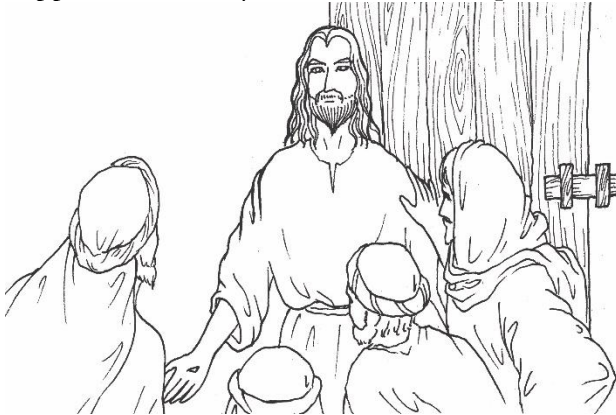
When they reached Emmaus, the men asked the stranger to stay the night at their house. He came with them. They went in and got dinner ready. At the table, the stranger said a prayer and started handing them the bread. He was acting as if he were the owner of the house. Suddenly, the men recognized him. It was Jesus! No sooner did they realize this than he disappeared from their sight.

The two men from Emmaus ran back to Jerusalem to tell Jesus' disciples what had happened. They found that Peter had also seen Jesus alive.

3. What importance do you see in Jesus referring to Scripture to show he had to die and come alive again?

## STOP DOUBTING AND BELIEVE

Suddenly, even though the doors were locked, Jesus was in the room with them. They were startled and could not believe it was Jesus. He told them not to be so unbelieving. This was what he had told them would happen. Then they believed and were glad.



One of them, Thomas, was not there. He did not believe the others when they told him they had seen Jesus. Thomas said, *"Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe"* (John 20:25).



**Jesus Proves  
He is Alive**

Luke 24:36-49

John 20:24-31

1 Corinthians  
15:1-8

The next week the disciples were all gathered together in the same room. This time Thomas was with them. Jesus came and stood among them once again. He said

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**Blessed are those who  
have not seen me but  
still have believed**

---

to Thomas, *"Put your  
finger here. See my hands.  
Reach out your hand and  
put it into my side. Stop  
doubting and believe!"*

(John 20:27).

Thomas fell to his knees and believed. Then Jesus said, *"Because you have seen me you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen me but still have believed"* (John 20:29).

Those words of Jesus speak about our faith. We have not seen him alive. We are surrounded by all kinds of people who tell us that Jesus is dead. But we know differently. The Bible says he is alive, and he is. We believe this to be true.

4. Thomas doubted the reports that Jesus was alive and felt he needed actual proof. What blessings do we have as a Christian today who do not see Jesus in person but still believe in him?



**New Hope  
New Life**

**John 11:21-27**

**Ephesians**

**1:18-23**

**1 Peter 1:3-7**

## JESUS WILL RETURN

Because Jesus is raised from the dead, you know that all your sins have been paid for. We discussed this in chapter five. If Jesus did not rise, we still struck in our sins.

Because Jesus has risen from the dead, we also know that he really is the Son of God. Do you remember Jesus' trial before the Jewish council? He swore that he was the Son of God. Jesus would not have been able to defeat death if he had been lying about that. So when Jesus rose from the dead, he proved that what he said was true. He is the Son of God.

His rising from the dead proves one more thing. It proves that we will rise from the dead one day. Jesus said he will return to the earth some day, and everyone will see him. That day is Judgment Day. He will raise us from our graves, and we will live with him forever. That is his promise to all who believe in him. He proved he can raise us from the dead by rising from the dead himself.

For forty days after his rising from death Jesus stayed in this world with his disciples. He came to them in many different places. One time he came to a group of five hundred people who had followed him during his life.

Finally, Jesus led his disciples to a tall hill outside Jerusalem. There he went up into the sky, until a cloud covered him. That is how he returned to heaven. The



### The Return on the Last Day

Matthew  
25:31-46

1 Thessalonians  
4:13-18



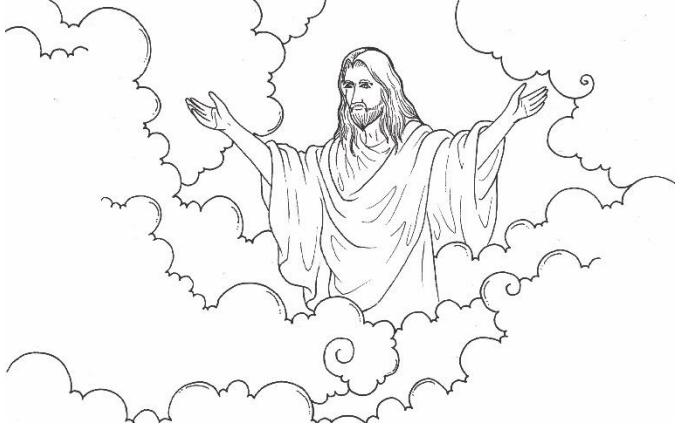
disciples stood there, staring into the sky. Then two angels were suddenly next to them asking them what they were looking at. "Men of Galilee," the angels said, "Why do you stand here looking at the sky? Jesus has been taken away from you into heaven. But he will come back in the same way you saw him go" (Acts 1:11).



## Jesus Ascends into Heaven

Acts 1:1-11

John 14:1-7



And he will. He came once to die for your sins. He will come again to take you to be with him in heaven. The

---

**He will come again to  
take you to be with him  
in heaven**

---

story of the death and rising of Jesus Christ is the story of how much he loves you. He gave his life for you.

Jesus will come again to give you a life in heaven that will never end.

5. List three truths that the resurrection of Jesus proves for us.

## **Names, Words and Concepts to Remember**

**Mary Magdelene** – a follower of Jesus who was one of the women who first saw the open tomb

**Peter and John** – the first two male disciples (followers) of Jesus who saw his tomb was empty

**Thomas** – a disciple (follower) of Jesus who doubted the reports that Jesus was alive – until Jesus appeared to them and Jesus let Thomas touch his fresh wounds from being on the cross

**Ascension** – the term used for the event when Jesus returned to heaven. He gave his final instructions to his disciples and was lifted up (ascended) into the clouds until they couldn't see him anymore.

**Judgment Day** – the day that Jesus will return to separate those who follow him by faith from those who do not believe in him.



## **CONNECTING TO YOUR DAILY LIFE**

1. Christians today are fond of special testimony. What importance do you see in Jesus referring to Scripture on the road to Emmaus to show he had to die?
2. The resurrection of Jesus is not just an historical event. Discuss the impact Jesus' resurrection should have on a Christian's daily life.

3. Pick out the one point that was most meaningful for you in this lesson.
4. Please pray to God based on this.



## YOUR NEXT STEPS

### **Memorize it!**

Memorize the details of the story to be able to retell it.

### **Apply it!**

Discuss how you can put this into your life this week.

### **Share it!**

Who especially needs to hear this? Determine how you will share this chapter with others. (You can use this lesson to help you).

# The Death and Rising of Jesus Christ



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