

HOLY WEEK

DEVOTIONAL FOR KIDS

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The story of Easter week—the true story of Jesus’s life, death, and resurrection—is the most important thing you can teach your children. It is the gospel, the good news of how God provided a way for us to be saved from our sins and receive the free gift of eternal life.

To help you share the story, we have put together this family devotional for the week leading up to Good Friday and Easter. Each day there is a Bible passage and a short story that you can read aloud to your kids, as well as some discussion questions and an activity from our [Watermark Kids](#) team.

Feel free to alter or adapt this to fit your style, schedule, or the ages of your kids. Don’t have time to do an activity each day, or have your own crafts you want to try from Pinterest? Go right ahead. Want to read from your children’s storybook Bible instead of your pictureless ESV? Great! The goal here is that you would engage with your kids and disciple them, teaching them the importance of Easter while creating your own [family traditions](#).

JESUS IS ANOINTED

WHEN:

The Saturday Before Palm Sunday (April 9, 2022)

THEME:

Gifts

SCRIPTURE:

John 12:1-11

STORY:

Mary, along with her sister Martha and brother Lazarus, were friends of Jesus. Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead, and many people believed in Jesus because of that amazing miracle (John 11). Mary liked to sit at Jesus's feet and listen to Him teach (Luke 10:38-42). With just a few days left before Jesus's death, she sat and poured special perfume on His feet and wiped them with her hair. She wanted to worship and honor Jesus with everything she had. The perfume cost a lot of money; it was an expensive gift. But Jesus freely gives us everything. He gave the most expensive gift ever. He offered Himself as a sacrifice so that we can have eternal life. Jesus is worthy of any gift or praise we can offer Him.

QUESTIONS:

1. What are some gifts God has given you?
2. How can you use those gifts to serve Him?

ACTIVITY:

Help your child create an Easter mobile using a coat hanger, pieces of string, and various items that represent the events of Holy Week. You can get creative with how and when you make it, using different items or adding one thing to the mobile each day.

- Start with a coat hanger, which you can hang from a doorknob, a hook on the wall, or a ceiling fan pull chain—whatever makes sense for your family.
- Write “Easter” on a piece of paper and decorate it with crayons. Tape this paper across the middle part of the hanger.
- Make (or find) different Holy Week symbols and attach them to the coat hanger using yarn or string. Items can include:
 - A palm branch for Palm Sunday. You can simply draw and cut one out of green construction paper, or use a leaf or small branch from outside.
 - A small paper plate and cup for the Last Supper. Decorate the plate and cup, and punch holes in them for the string to run through.
 - A cross for Good Friday. You can cut one out of brown construction paper, glue two popsicle sticks together, or find two sticks from outside and tie them together into the shape of a cross.
 - A stone to represent the sealed tomb. You can make a lightweight stone by crumpling paper or aluminum foil into a ball.
 - A cloud to represent Jesus's ascension to heaven after His resurrection. Cut a cloud shape out of white paper and glue cotton balls to it.

JESUS ARRIVES

WHEN:
Palm Sunday (April 10, 2022)

THEME:
Praise

SCRIPTURE:
Matthew 21:1-9

STORY:

For a long time—hundreds of years—God’s people had lived through hard times and were waiting for someone to rescue them. God had promised through special messengers called prophets that a Messiah, a King descended from King David, would come to be their Savior. God even told them exactly how the Messiah would arrive, riding on a donkey. And now, finally, He was here! Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, just like God had promised. People were very excited that their Savior had come. They laid their coats and palm branches on the ground to make a soft path, and they shouted out praises to Him. They yelled “Hosanna,” a word that means “Please save us!” Jesus had come to save them, but He would save them in a way that was so much better than they could imagine.

QUESTIONS:

1. Why do we praise Jesus?
2. How can you praise Jesus this week?

ACTIVITY:

Help your children make green palm leaves using their own palms. Either dip your child’s hand in green paint and make several handprints on white construction paper in the shape of a palm leaf, or trace your child’s hand on green construction paper. Cut out the handprints and glue them onto craft sticks or “branches” made from strips of cardboard. You can then pretend to be part of the crowd on Palm Sunday, waving your palm branches and shouting out the praises of Matthew 21:9.

JESUS HEALS

WHEN:
Holy Monday (April 11, 2022)

THEME:
Miracles

SCRIPTURE:
Matthew 21:12-17

STORY:

The religious leaders in charge of the temple had made it harder for people to worship God. The temple was God's house, which means it was also Jesus's house. Jesus went into the temple and cleaned it up so that people could focus on worshiping and praying to God. Jesus also proved that He was God's Son by performing miracles. A miracle is something wonderful that only God can do. Jesus healed people who couldn't see or couldn't walk. The kids who were in the temple were so excited to see Jesus and His miracles that they shouted out praises to Him.

QUESTIONS:

1. Why was Jesus able to do miracles?
2. Why did Jesus heal the people who came to Him?

ACTIVITY:

Get some sidewalk chalk and use it to decorate the sidewalks in your neighborhood with the good news about Easter! You can let your family be as creative as they want in what they write or draw, but here are some ideas:

- Pick your favorite Bible verse that talks about Jesus (John 3:16 and Romans 5:8 are great places to start), write them on your sidewalk, and draw pictures to illustrate them.
- Draw different symbols of Holy Week, like palm leaves or the empty tomb.
- Illustrate your favorite story from the Bible. Don't forget to write the verse reference!
- Share the gospel using helpful tools like one-verse evangelism, the Romans road, or the bridge illustration—[all of which you can find here](#).
- Invite neighbors to join you for [Easter services](#).
- Let each person pick a square of the sidewalk and draw their favorite thing about God.

JESUS TEACHES

WHEN:
Holy Tuesday (April 12, 2022)

THEME:
Love

SCRIPTURE:
Matthew 22:33-40

STORY:

Jesus taught the people using many parables. A parable is a story that teaches a lesson. Some of the religious leaders were listening, and they did not like what Jesus was teaching. They thought they were really smart and important, so they tried to trick Him. They asked Jesus hard questions about God's law, trying to catch Him saying something wrong. But Jesus knew all the answers, and He never said or did anything wrong. Jesus taught them that the whole point of the law is for us to love God and love each other.

QUESTIONS:

1. What is one thing you can do to love God today?
2. What is one thing you can do to love others today?

ACTIVITY:

Help your child make props to retell the story of Jesus and Easter. You can use a wooden clothespin to represent Jesus, and have your child draw a face on it. For clothes, wrap the pin with fabric scraps and tie it with yarn. To make the cross, have your child glue two craft sticks together and decorate with markers. Grab a toilet paper roll, tissue paper, and a rock to make the tomb. Let your child cover the toilet paper roll with tissue paper so that it looks like a cave and seal the tomb with a rock the size of the end of the toilet paper roll. Now your child can act out the story using the props.

JESUS IS BETRAYED

WHEN:
Holy Wednesday (April 13, 2022)

THEME:
Sin

SCRIPTURE:
Luke 22:1-6

STORY:

The religious leaders didn't believe Jesus was the Messiah, and they wanted to get rid of Him. There were a lot of people in Jerusalem for the Passover holiday who did like Jesus, so the leaders planned to wait until after Passover to arrest Him. That way, the holiday crowds would not see them do it. But Judas, one of Jesus's 12 disciples, offered to help them find Jesus and arrest Him at night, away from the crowds. The leaders were happy about this and agreed to pay Judas 30 silver coins for betraying Jesus. They thought they were being sneaky, but Jesus knew what they were doing because it was all a part of God's plan.

QUESTIONS:

1. Why did the religious leaders dislike Jesus and want Him gone?
2. When was the last time you thought, said, or did something that does not please God?

ACTIVITY:

During snack time, provide foods that are these different colors:

- Black - blackberries or Oreos
- Red - strawberries, raspberries, or cherries
- White - cauliflower, ranch dressing, or white cake
- Green - broccoli, celery, or green grapes
- Yellow - bananas or pineapple.

Talk to your child about the gospel while they snack using these colors.

- Black stands for sin, which we all have.
- Red represents Jesus' blood shed on the cross.
- White means forgiveness, which Jesus gives us when we believe in Him.
- Green stands for growing in God by praying and reading His Word.
- Yellow stands for heaven, and that's where all believers will get to be with God forever!

JESUS SERVES

WHEN:
Maundy Thursday (April 14, 2022)

THEME:
Humility

SCRIPTURE:
John 13:1-17

STORY:

People in Jesus's day wore sandals and walked on roads that were dusty or muddy, so their feet got very dirty. Washing feet was a job that usually only the lowest servant would do. When Jesus gathered with His disciples for one last meal together, He surprised them by washing their feet. The disciples didn't think someone as important as Jesus would wash feet, but Jesus told them that He washed their feet to be an example for them—and for us—to follow. Jesus wants us to humbly serve other people just like He did.

QUESTIONS:

1. What does it mean to be humble?
2. What is one way you can humbly serve someone else?

ACTIVITY:

Follow Jesus's example by washing each other's feet. You might choose to go on a walk together barefoot first to get your feet dirty. Then, using a washcloth and a large bowl, pan, or tub filled with water, take turns washing each other's feet. (You'll probably want to do it either outside or in the bathroom, where splashes and spills won't cause problems.) Use a towel to dry feet after they are cleaned. Explain to your kids that there are a lot of different ways you can humbly serve each other. Try to think of one way your family can serve someone else this week.

JESUS DIES

WHEN:
Good Friday (April 15, 2022)

THEME:
Sacrifice

SCRIPTURE:
Mark 15:16-39

STORY:

Jesus was betrayed by Judas, arrested, and put on trial. Jesus had never done anything wrong, so the judges could not find a reason to punish Him. However, the leaders who had arrested Jesus stirred up the crowd against Him, yelling that Jesus should be crucified—hung on a cross to die. Jesus had the power to save Himself from the cross, but He didn't. This was God's plan all along. Jesus, the only person who never sinned, took the punishment for everyone else's sin because He loves us so much. When Jesus died, the curtain in the temple was torn in two, showing that people no longer had to be separated from God. When we admit we are sinners, believe Jesus paid for our sins on the cross, and trust Him with our hearts, we are forgiven and can be friends with God!

QUESTIONS:

1. Why did Jesus allow Himself to be crucified?
2. Why do we call the day Jesus died on the cross "Good Friday"?

ACTIVITY:

Help your child make a cross. It can be made out of almost anything: sticks, pipe cleaners, play dough, paper, etc. Then, have your child draw or write down (or you can write down for them) something they've done that is wrong. It can either be written directly on the cross or written on a piece of paper that you then attach to the cross. Next, take something red—like red paint, a red marker, red stickers, or other red craft supplies—and cover the cross (along with the sin written on it) with red. Explain to your child that the red represents Jesus's blood. When Jesus died on the cross, His blood paid for our sins so He can offer forgiveness to everyone who believes in Him.

JESUS IN THE TOMB

WHEN:
Holy Saturday (April 16, 2022)

THEME:
Waiting

SCRIPTURE:
Matthew 27:57-66

STORY:

After Jesus died on the cross, His body was taken down and placed in a tomb. The tomb was like a cave carved into solid rock. A big stone was rolled in front of the entrance to close the tomb. The stone was so big and heavy that it would take many people to move it (Mark 16:3). The tomb was sealed, and guards were placed in front of it to make sure that no one could open it. Jesus's disciples were afraid and went into hiding. But Jesus had promised them that He would come back to life, and Jesus always keeps His promises.

QUESTIONS:

1. What do you think Jesus's friends were feeling after He was buried?
2. What do you think you would have done that day?

ACTIVITY:

Bake "empty tomb rolls" as a tasty way to talk about Jesus's death and resurrection. You'll need these ingredients:

- Crescent roll dough
- Marshmallows
- 1 stick of butter, melted and then slightly cooled in a small bowl
- 1 cup of cinnamon sugar (about $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar mixed with $\frac{3}{4}$ cup cinnamon, although you can adjust that to taste) in a small bowl
- Baking sheet lined with a nonstick baking mat or parchment paper
- Oven preheated to 375 degrees

Here's how to help your child make the empty tomb rolls:

- Have your child pick up a marshmallow. Explain that, in this activity, the marshmallow represents Jesus. The marshmallow is pure white, which reminds us that Jesus was completely pure and without sin. He never did anything wrong or deserving of punishment, but He died on the cross to pay for our sins.
- Tell your child that, back in Bible times, people who died were anointed in oil and spices before they were buried. Help your child dip the marshmallow in the melted butter, or the "oil," coating it fully. Then roll the buttery marshmallow in the cinnamon sugar "spices" until it is thoroughly covered.
- Jesus's body was put in a tomb. Help your child wrap the marshmallow in a piece of crescent roll dough, representing the sealed tomb. (It's probably best for a parent to do this part, because you want to carefully seal the dough all around the marshmallow, leaving no holes.)

JESUS IN THE TOMB

- Put the dough “tombs” on the lined baking sheet and bake them for 10-15 minutes, checking them occasionally. Talk to your child about how Jesus’s friends had to wait while Jesus was sealed in the tomb. They were very sad that He was dead.
- When the rolls are done, they will have puffed up and the dough will look golden. Take them out of the oven and let them cool briefly.
- When they have cooled, cut open one of the rolls and have your child look inside. The marshmallow will have melted, leaving the “tomb” empty. Discuss with your child how it must have felt to find Jesus’s tomb empty on the third day, and to learn that Jesus was alive!
- Let your child eat their empty tomb roll and enjoy the sweetness of God’s love for us.

JESUS IS ALIVE

WHEN:
Easter Sunday (April 17, 2022)

THEME:
Life

SCRIPTURE:
Matthew 28:1-10

STORY:

On Sunday, some women who were friends of Jesus went to visit the tomb where He was buried. However, when they got there, the big stone had been rolled away, and the tomb was empty. An angel told the women that Jesus was not there, because He was alive! Jesus had come back to life, just as He promised. Filled with joy, the women ran to tell the disciples the amazing news. Jesus Himself appeared to the women and the disciples and spent more time with them before returning to heaven. Jesus is still alive today. When we believe in Him and trust that He paid for our sins on the cross, we can be forgiven and have eternal life. Jesus promised that one day He will come back, and everyone who trusts Him will be with Him forever!

QUESTIONS:

1. How did Jesus's friends react when they saw Him alive on Easter Sunday?
2. How can you celebrate Jesus's resurrection today—or every day?

ACTIVITY:

Help your child make a set of resurrection eggs: 12 Easter eggs that tell the story of Jesus's death and resurrection. You'll need a dozen empty plastic eggs, which you can number from 1-12 with a marker. Each egg will then be filled with small items representing parts of the Easter story. You can either have a family scavenger hunt to find the items, or [print and color these pictures](#) to cut out and put inside the eggs. Once the eggs are filled, you can take turns opening each of them in order and explaining which part of the Easter story that each item represents.

Below are the items for the scavenger hunt, along with their significance to the Easter story and Bible verses you can read for each one:

1. Palm branch (a small leaf): When Jesus first came into Jerusalem, people waved palm branches in honor of Him. (John 12:4)
2. Bread (a small cracker or piece of bread): Jesus broke bread while sharing the Last Supper with His disciples. (Luke 22:19)
3. Coins (three pennies): Judas did a very bad thing and betrayed Jesus for just 30 coins. (Matthew 27:3)
4. Rope (yarn or string): After they brought Him to trial, Jesus was whipped with a big rope. (John 19:1)
5. Robe (a small piece of fabric): The bad people teased Jesus and put a robe on Him after beating Him up. (Matthew 27:28)
6. Crown of thorns (a toothpick or small stick): Because Jesus said He was the King, they took sharp thorns and made a crown. (Matthew 27:29)
7. Nail (thumb tack or small nail): Soldiers nailed Jesus to the cross by His hands and feet. (Acts 2:23)

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8. Cross (two sticks taped together): Jesus was killed on a big cross. (John 19:7)
9. Sponge (cotton ball): While Jesus was on the cross, He got very thirsty, and they sent up a sponge of vinegar. (John 19:29)
10. Spices (cloves or other spice): When Jesus was buried, they brought spices to put on His body to preserve it, sort of like a mummy. (Luke 24:1)
11. Rock (small stone or pebble): When Jesus was buried, a large stone was placed over His tomb so that nobody could come and take His body. (Mark 15:46)
12. Nothing (an empty egg): The last egg is empty because the tomb was empty. Jesus is alive! He is risen! (Matthew 28:5-6)



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