

“The Passion of God in Christ”

Today we begin Passion [Holy] Week, it is set off by our Lord entering Jerusalem on a Sunday. The people praise Him as the Messiah as He rides through the town on a donkey; but five days later, on Friday, the people will cry out for Him to be crucified, and He will be put to death, then laid in a tomb, and on Sunday morning, one week from when He entered Jerusalem, He will rise from the dead, just like He said that He would!

There is much written in Scripture about Jesus’ last week in Jerusalem (**Matthew 21-28** (8 chapters), **Mark 11-18** (8 chapters), **Luke 19-24** (6 chapters), **John 12-20** (9 chapters), for a total of 29 chapters. Out of the 89 chapters that comprise all four Gospel accounts, almost 1/3 of them are devoted to this one week period of Jesus’ life!

When I taught through the Book of Mark, I prepared 20 sermons on this one-week period of Jesus’ life; when I taught through the Book of Matthew, I prepared 22 sermons on this same one-week period of time; and when I taught through the Book of John, I prepared 29 sermons (4 months of Sundays) on this one-week period in the life of Jesus.

Holy Week is sovereignly supercharged and prophetically rich, mostly because it contains Christ’s sacrificial death on a cross (paying for all our sins) and His sovereign resurrection from the grave (demonstrating eternal life).

Apart from Creation Week when everything was made that has been made, Passion Week, from the time of Christ’s arrival in Jerusalem, to His arrest, crucifixion, burial and resurrection, is the most fulfilled prophecy week recorded in God’s Word.

The OT records many prophecies to be fulfilled during Passion Week by the Messiah [Hebrew], the Christ [Greek], meaning the Anointed One, Holy One, Rescuer, Deliverer, Redeemer; this is Jesus Christ, God’s Son, Lord & Savior. Through Him, God’s sovereign plan to save us from sin’s curse was made effectual.

The prophets declare:

Isaiah 53:1-12 (700 BC)... He will be despised and forsaken, led like a lamb to slaughter, and put to death for our sins.

Exodus 12:46 (1400 BC)... None of His [Passover Lamb’s] bones will be broken.

Psalms 22:16 (1000 BC)... His hands & feet pierced.

Psalms 22:18 (1000 BC)... Lots [i.e., dice] will be thrown for His garments.

Psalms 69:21 (1000 BC)... He will be given vinegar to drink.

Zechariah 9:9 (500 BC)... He will enter Jerusalem on a the colt of a donkey.

Zechariah 11:12 (500 BC)... He will be betrayed for 30 pieces of silver [cf.

Exodus 21:32 (1400 BC), tells us that is the price of a slave].

Zechariah 13:7 (500 BC)... His friends will desert Him.

Psalms 16:8-11 (1000 BC)... He will rise from the dead.

Psalms 110:1 (1000 BC)... He will ascend back into heaven.

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Next Friday at 3 pm, we'll study the events that occurred on the day that Jesus was crucified; and next Sunday, we'll study the events of the day He rose from the grave, but today we begin Passion Week.

Read **Mark 11:1-3...** Jesus and the Twelve approach Bethphage, a town near Bethany [home to Mary, Martha, and Lazarus (cf. **John 11:1**), friends of Jesus].

Bethany (2 miles from Jerusalem) is near the Mount of Olives where Jesus taught about the End Times (see **Matthew 24**); it is where Jesus ascended back into heaven (see **Acts 1:9-12**), and it is where Jesus will return to earth (cf. **Zechariah 14:3-5**). **Revelation 1:7** says Jesus will be, “coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him.”

Read Mark 11:4-7... We are told that Jesus sends two of His disciples into Bethphage to find a young donkey. They find and untie the colt and when asked why they are doing so, they respond, “the Lord has need of it,” and the owner of the donkey tells them to go ahead and take it. The people in that area knew of Jesus and His disciples, and that He was referred to as “the Lord,” and His Disciples were called “the Twelve.”

In Matthew's account of this event he mentions the donkey, her colt, and the fulfillment of a messianic prophecy (given in **Zechariah 9:9** **Matthew 21:5**, “Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, humble, and mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.”

Read Mark 11:8-10... This display on the part of the people is reminiscent of an ancient practice of showing homage to a new king. In Mark's narrative the people seem to be expressing their acceptance of Christ's claim as Messiah, the One who will sit on the throne of David, as King over Israel.

The people are throwing down their outer garments, along with branches (cf. **John 12:13**, *palm branches*), as they express their hope and desire to be freed from Roman occupation and oppression, and for their Messiah-King to bring back peace to Israel.

Scripture is very clear that Jesus Christ, is the Messiah who was to come. **Isaiah 7:14**, “Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel.” **Matthew 1:1**, “The record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ [the Messiah], the son of David, the son of Abraham.” **18**, “Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: when His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit. **22-23**, “Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet: ‘Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,’ which translated means, ‘God with us.’”

Matthew 2:1-2, “Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, ‘Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him.’”

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In **Matthew 27:11**, Jesus standing before Pilate (the governor), is asked, “Are you the King of the Jews?” And Jesus said to him, ‘It is as you say.’”

In **Mark 11:9-10**, the people are shouting, “Hosanna!” This is a contraction of the words “save” and “please,” forming a prayerful supplication with great expectation that leads to adoration, praise, and joy (**Psalm 118:25-26**), “O Lord, do save, we beseech You; O Lord, we beseech You, do send prosperity! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord; We have blessed you from the house of the Lord.”

The name Jesus [Greek], is translated from the name Yeshua [Hebrew], which means “God saves,” or “God rescues,” simply put, this is God’s Salvation in human flesh, Immanuel [God with us], God’s Son, Savior.

The Jews were waiting for their Deliverer to come and liberate them from gentile rule [at this time it was Rome]; they believed the Messiah would destroy Israel’s oppressors and bring peace and prosperity, but Jesus did not do that, so they rejected Him then, and orthodox Jews still reject Him (**John 1:11**) “He came to His own [the Jews], and those who were His own did not receive Him,” i.e., they rejected Him.

But Jesus is coming again (**Revelation 19:11**), “And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war.”

13, “His name is called The Word of God.”

16, “And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, “KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.”

Jesus is the God’s Son, the Messiah-King (**Philippians 2:9-11**), “For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Read Mark 11:11... Jesus looks around the inner and outer courts of the Temple, nothing is hidden from His gaze; He then returns to Bethany for the night (about 2 miles distance), as it had been a very long day.

And so, the first day of Passion Week comes to a close; but there is much more to take place over the next five days, as Jesus pours out God’s compassion on those in Jerusalem, on Monday and Tuesday, sharing God’s great love for them and His plan to save them. Scripture is silent about Wednesday, it seems Jesus stayed outside the city, resting.

Thursday was Passover, but it would forever be changed to the Lord’s Supper. *(The Old Covenant of Law, through the shed blood sacrifices of yearling lambs; would give way to the New Covenant of Grace, through the shed blood of Jesus Christ, God’s Lamb, who was the once for all sacrifice for all sin, for all time, for all those who believe in Him for the forgiveness of sin.)*

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All of this, according to the sovereign plan and purpose of God; that we might be made acceptable to God, having been rescued from sin’s condemnation, by believing in Jesus Christ for salvation.

Jesus took our sins upon Himself, because there was no other way to save us.

Romans 3:10-12, “There is none righteous, not even one; there is none who understands, there is none who seeks for God; all have turned aside, together they have become useless; there is none who does good, there is not even one.”

23-24, “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified [made righteous] as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.”

Romans 5:8, “God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

Romans 6:23, “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Romans 8:1-2, “Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.”

The divine and sovereign creativity of God is demonstrated and exemplified in Creation Week; but the divine and sovereign love and compassion of God for lost sinners is demonstrated and exemplified in Passion Week.

Romans 10:9-10, “If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth confesses, resulting in salvation.”

John 14:6, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.” He is the only way to God, the only truth from God, and the only Life with God (*for all who repent of sin, believing in Jesus Christ as Savior*).

There are only two groups of people in the world: saved sinners and unsaved sinners.

Those who belong to God through Christ, called Christians, are forgiven sinners, saved by God’s grace for all of eternity. Those who reject Christ remain unforgiven.

As we prepare to take Communion, the Lord’s Supper, please search your heart and consider (**Romans 10:13**), “Whoever will call on the name of the Lord [for the forgiveness of their sins] will be saved.” Have you done that? Have you asked Him to forgive you sins? If not, why haven’t you?

I’m a sinner, you’re a sinner, we’re all sinners. But are you a forgiven sinner?

Don’t leave here today without accepting the free gift of forgiveness for sin and eternal life through Jesus Christ the Lord. God loves you, He wants to save you, but you have to come to Him by faith, repenting of sin, believing in Jesus Christ for salvation.

Why did God do away with Passover and establish the Lord’s Supper?

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Because God’s Grace, Mercy, and Love supersedes the Law, and does away with the condemnation of sin, for everyone who believes in Jesus Christ to save them.

Hebrews 9:22, “according to the Law, *one may almost say*, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.”

Hebrews 10:3-4, “But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins year by year. For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins”

9-10, “He takes away the first in order to establish the second. We have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”

16-18, “This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws upon their heart, and on their mind I will write them,’ He then says, ‘and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.’ Now where there is forgiveness of these things, there is no longer *any* offering for sin.”

John 1:29 says Jesus is, “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”

1John 5:11-13, “And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.”

God wants everybody to be saved and to have the assurance of salvation. Jesus Christ was put to death for our sins, He was buried, and on the third day He rose from the grave; everyone who believes in Him for the forgiveness of sins is saved.

In a moment we are going to pass out the bread, at which time I will give you a little instruction, and then we will do the same with the juice. If you have any doubts about your relationship with God, if you are not sure you are saved, simply ask God to settle it in your heart right now (**Romans 10:13**), “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord [for the forgiveness of their sins] will be saved.”

In **1Corinthians 11:23-26**, Paul writes, “For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, ‘This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me.’ In the same way He took the cup also after supper, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.’ For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes [again, until He returns].”

John 14:1-3, “Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.”

When we take the Lord’s Supper we remember how much God loves us, what God has done to save us; and that He is coming back to take us to be with Him in heaven, forever

Pastor Mike

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