

Joyful Life Bible Studies

Easter Study

1996

*I will proclaim the glory of the risen Lord,
Who once was slain to reconcile man to God.
Forever He will be the Lamb upon the throne,
I gladly bow my knee and worship Him alone.*

N. and T. Richards

FIRST DAY: Read Matthew 28:1-8

1. From today's reading, Matthew 28:1-8, who was given the first assignment of proclaiming Christ's resurrection? verse 7(8)
 - a. If a roving reporter asked you why you celebrate Easter, what would you *proclaim*?
2. Read the words to the song in the opening of this lesson. How do they speak to you about your commemoration of Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection this Easter season?
3. Many of the liturgical churches observe Lent beginning forty days before Easter. It is a time of spiritual discipline and reflection in preparation for Easter. Although we do not observe Lent, this is a good time for us to prepare our hearts for proclamation and true celebration of the greatest event that ever impacted our planet, the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. If ever we needed to be *prepared to proclaim* Him, it is at the close of this century when we're encountering determined individuals and groups who are diligently laboring to eliminate any Christian influence in our nation. Begin this lesson by asking the Lord to grant to you knowledge, wisdom, and boldness to *proclaim* (share) the Gospel this Easter Season. Ask Him, also, to help you to not become so encumbered with other things that you have no time to prepare your heart for remembering Him. Write your prayer here.

*Lead us, we pray Thee to the grave that is empty,
into the garden of the Resurrection
where we may meet our risen Lord.
May we never again live as if Thou were dead!*

-Peter Marshall

SECOND DAY: Read Luke 19:28-40

1. Palm Sunday, March 31, 1996, marks the beginning of Holy Week for the Christian. Explain as you would to a non-Christian friend or neighbor why Christians celebrate this day. Luke 19:28-40; John 12:12,13

- a. Share Jesus' sorrow by reading Luke 19:41(42-44). What present day application can you see in this for our nation?

Challenge: To what day is Psalm 118:24(25,26) referring?

- a. How do we know the exact date of this event? Use scripture to support your answer.
2. Follow in the footsteps of Jesus the last week of His ministry by scanning or reading the following references. Choose one event from these. Summarize the event and tell why it is especially significant to you. (Record several of these if you have time.)
 - a. Matthew 21,22,23
 - b. Mark 11,12,13
 - c. Luke 19:45-48; 20; 21; 22:1-6
3. One of the most precious acts of love and worship in the days preceding Jesus' death is recorded in John 12:1-8 (also in Matthew 26:6-13; Mark 14:3-9). What did this woman do and why?
 - a. It seems that Mary of Bethany comprehended what the disciples did not about Jesus' declaration concerning His death and burial. In what way might Luke 10:39b,42 be a key to her having understood?
 - (1.) What example is there in this for your heart's preparation for Good Friday communion?
 - (2.) From the three gospel accounts of this, what particular aspect of her devotion in action ministers to you the most? Why?

*Mary took that which was costly to her to lavish on Jesus.
The fragrance of her love still perfumes the world today.*

-selected

THIRD DAY: Read Mark 14:12-31. (If you have time, read and compare each of the Gospel accounts of The Last Supper.)

1. It is quite amazing that on the evening of April 3, 1996, observant Jews all over the world will be celebrating for eight days their deliverance from slavery in Egypt over 3,000 years ago. What do you know about the first Passover? Briefly describe this feast telling how and why it was kept. See Exodus 12:1-14, 42.

- a. Why was the bread of the first Passover unleavened (without yeast)? Exodus 12:(33)34,39

(1.) What is leaven a type of in the Bible? I Corinthians 5:(7)8

Challenge: Share how our custom of Spring housecleaning evolved from the observant Jews' preparation for Passover.

- b. How does the slain lamb of Exodus 12:3b pertain to Jesus? John 1:29,36

(1.) Take a moment now to *behold* the Lamb of God Who has taken away our sin. Gaze on Him through Isaiah 53:5-7 and write a note of thanksgiving for His willingness to be the sacrificial Lamb that would take away our sins and reconcile us unto the Father.

Advanced Students: Research the Seder Feast (Jewish Passover meal). List the foods used and what they represent.

- a. How is Christ, the promised Messiah, our Passover, revealed in this Seder Feast?

2. Describe Judas' betrayal of Jesus from Luke 22:1-6.

- a. What additional information do the following verses contain:

(1.) Matthew 26:14-16

(2.) John 12:6

3. Read Jesus' instructions to the disciples concerning their preparation for the Passover Feast from Mark 14:12-16. Pause for a moment and think about how incredible this passage is. What impresses you most?

4. Enter the upper room with Jesus and His disciples. Listen to Jesus as He speaks to them. Closely observe the interaction between Jesus and the disciples through the following scriptures. Summarize what took place:
 - a. Matthew 26:20
 - b. Matthew 26:21-25; John 13:2, 21-30
 - c. Luke 22:24-27
 - d. John 13:(2,3)4-17
 - e. John 13:(30-33)34,35
 - f. Matthew 26:31-35
 - g. John 14-17 Try, if possible, to create time to read Jesus' words to the disciples before His arrest and betrayal.
 - h. Which of these events touches you most deeply? Why?
5. After the Passover meal Jesus distributed to the disciples the elements which were to signify His work of redemption. Listen lovingly and intently to our Lord as He gives to them those things by which He is to be remembered. Write them here and state what each represents using Luke 22:19,20. Selah.
 - a. From I Corinthians 11:(23)24,25 why are we Christians to receive the *bread* and *cup*?

(1.) How does partaking of Communion enrich your remembrance of Him?

*In broken bread and the cup that we share,
we remember You.*

FOURTH DAY: Read Luke 22:39-62

1. Follow Jesus and the disciples from the upper room to the Garden of Gethsemane by reading Matthew 26:30-38. Briefly list the events recorded in verses:
 - a. vs. 30
 - b. vss. 31,32
 - c. vss. 33-35
 - d. vss. 36-38

1.) Consider Matthew 26:37b,38a in relationship to Isaiah 53:3,4a. What is prophesied (about the Messiah)?

2. The meaning of *Gethsemane* is *oil press*. How might this crushing (of the olive) relate to Jesus' agony in the Garden of Gethsemane?

3. Choose one of the following references (read all if you have time) and briefly record in your own words the events that took place in the Garden of Gethsemane. Matthew 26:36-56; Mark 14:32-52; Luke 22:39-53
 - a. Which of these is most offensive, painful, or crushing to you? Why?

4. Walk with Jesus, bound, from Gethsemane to the *hall of judgment* by reading John 18:12-28. Briefly record in your own words the people mentioned and what they did. If you have time review this journey in the other gospels to give you a fuller picture of these sad, dark hours.

5. Trace Peter's pathway to denial of Christ through Luke 22:54-62. Identify Peter's behavior that contributed to his denial from the following verses:

Luke 22:45

John 18:10

John 18:18

Luke 22:54

Luke 22:55

 - a. What do you think Jesus' look at Peter after his denial communicated to Peter?

 - b. Contrast Peter's response to his failure (Luke 22:62) with Judas'. (Matthew 27:5)

 - c. We may not overtly deny our Lord as Peter did, but we for fear or favor refuse to speak up for Him. How are you encouraged to speak up for the Lord?

*In the hour of trial, Jesus plead for me,
 Lest, by base denial, I depart from Thee;
 When Thou seest me waver, with a look recall;
 Nor for fear or favor suffer me to fall.*

-J. Montgomery

FIFTH DAY: Read Isaiah 53:3-7

1. Stand with Jesus through the crushing ordeal of each appearance before the corrupt religious leaders who hated Him and the most powerful leaders in Israel who collaborated against Him. See the words of the Prophet Isaiah being fulfilled through Jesus' cruel humiliation, ridicule, and scourging. Read the accounts of these trials in the following verses. Briefly record what you observe as you stand with Jesus.

TRIAL BEFORE:

- a. Annas - John 18:12,13,19-24
 - b. Caiaphas and Sanhedrin - Matthew 26:57-68
 - c. Pilate - Luke 23:1-7
 - d. Herod - Luke 23:6-12
 - e. Pilate - Matthew 27:15-26; Luke 23:13-26
2. Ponder Matthew 27:27-31 and observe the humiliations and suffering of your Savior revealed in these verses. Picture them in your mind. What affect do they have on your life this Easter season?
 3. Read and record Peter's eyewitness account of Jesus' response to His cruel accusers and to the inhumane treatment He suffered. I Peter 2:21-23(24)
 - a. What example is there in this for you? See I Peter 4:19
 4. Reflect for a few moments on what it must have been like for Jesus to have had a crown of thorns placed on His head. See John 19:2,3. Write your response to Him for being willing to bear this for your salvation.

*The thorns on Your brow,
they tell me how You bore so much shame to love me.*

-Richard Cimino

SIXTH DAY: Read Matthew 27:32-56

1. Our focus today will be on Christ's crucifixion. Fanny Crosby, the blind hymn writer, contemplating Jesus' death, wrote: *Near the cross O Lamb of God, bring its scenes before me; help me walk from day to day, with its shadow o'er me.* Read these words again. Will you ask the Lord in prayer now to imprint on your heart such a powerful revelation of the crucifixion in your study today that it will overshadow your life always. It is so easy to forget the awful cost of our salvation and live as though He had not died for us. Write or speak your prayer.

2. Crucifixion was Rome's punishment for slaves, foreigners, and criminals who were not Roman citizens. It was the most agonizing death a cruel age could devise. Nails were driven through the hands and feet, and the victim was left hanging there in agony, starvation, insufferable thirst and excruciating convulsions of pain. Record the prophecy from Psalm 22:16b concerning Messiah's (Christ's) death. (When this prophecy was written the Jewish form of execution was stoning. The Roman form of execution, crucifixion, was not put into practice until almost a thousand years later.)

- a. Considering this, why is the prophecy concerning Jesus' death so remarkable?
- b. Thoughtfully read the sentence above that begins, "nails were driven." Now read Psalm 22:14,15. Record one facet of Christ's suffering revealed through these verses.

(1.) Why did He endure this? Hebrews 12:2b

(2.) What was the *joy* that was set before Him?

(a.) Gratefully write II Corinthians 5:21 personalizing it. Selah

3. Carefully read Matthew 27:32-37 and record verse by verse each event. The verses in brackets are to amplify your study:

- a. Matthew 27:32
- b. Matthew 27:33 (Luke 23:33)
- c. Matthew 27:34 (Psalm 69:21)
- d. Matthew 27:35 (Psalm 22:18; John 19:23,24)
- e. Matthew 27:37; Mark 15:26; Luke 23:38; John 19:19 (write complete inscription)
- f. Matthew 27:38 (Isaiah 53:12)
- g. Add to this any information from John 19:23-37 that enriches your knowledge of the awful cost of our redemption.

Challenge: It is impossible in one study to cover all the events or prophecies concerning Christ's crucifixion. Pinpoint key events from the other Gospel accounts such as the seven cries from the cross; who was standing by the cross; the cruel, caloused, or indifferent behavior of the world as they were viewing the cross. Read Mark 15:16-41 and Luke 23:26-49 for this.

4. Don't let time pressure prevent your sitting at the foot of the cross and gazing on your beloved Lord through His Word. Read the following hymn and write your name above the word *me* or *I* or *my*. Thoughtfully, thankfully, and lovingly reverence each phrase that depicts His pouring out His life for us that we might have life.

Wounded for me, wounded for me; There on the cross He was wounded for me.

Gone my transgressions, and now I am free, All because Jesus was wounded for me.

Dying for me, dying for me, There on the cross He was dying for me;

Now in His death my redemption I see, All because Jesus was dying for me.

Ovens and Roberts

5. Reflect on your observations of Christ's suffering and death through your study this Easter Season. How has this increased your appreciation and love for Him and affected your commitment to live for Him and proclaim Him as your Lord and King?

*Worthy, worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain
Raised in power and glory, He bears the Name above all names
He reigns through all the universe,
His glory covers all the earth,
His power's displayed in mighty works
And we proclaim Him as our Lord and King.*

-Janet Grossman

* * * * *

Easter Celebration 96

* * * * *

Good Friday Service

April 5th

12:00 Noon

LeBard Stadium-CCC

Easter Sunrise Service

Sunday, April 7th

*5:30 a.m. Pacific Standard Time**

LeBard Stadium-CCC

Easter Sunday

Morning Services

7:45 a.m. 9:30 a.m. 11:15 a.m.

Calvary Chapel of Costa Mesa

* Please don't change your clocks until after the third Sunday morning service at Calvary Chapel