

Celebrating Holy Week through a New Look at the Gospel Texts

Eric D. Huntsman

3/18/24

To help better celebrate Holy Week, we have prepared these blocks of scriptural text for individuals to use in their personal study or to read aloud with their families. The King James Version, of course, remains the official translation used by the English-speaking Church, and it is the version we normally use when speaking in church meetings or teaching in classes. However, when studying the Bible or teaching it to our children, we have often found it helpful to use a more contemporary version to get a better feeling for the meaning of the text, after which we can move back to the KJV.¹ To provide such a study aid for a devotional treatment of Holy Week, rather than endorse any particular version or edition,² we have chosen to produce our own translation from the Greek text,³ which we have formatted as a “reader’s edition.” That is, we have set it in paragraphs and used modern conventions for punctuation and discourse, which should make it easier for readers of all ages to follow.

Because of Marcan priority and the often striking Johannine additions to the story, the passages we have translated are mostly from Mark, regularly supplemented by passages from John, occasionally drawing from Matthew and Luke when their accounts add something of particular significance. Most early Christians heard scripture read aloud, and we have found that reading from Mark to our families or with our friends can be particularly powerful because of its fast-paced and dramatic style.⁴

These passages from the Gospels are arranged below according to the working, primarily devotional chronology that we have used in the book-length study *Greater Love Hath No Man: A Latter-day Saint Guide to Celebrating the Easter Season*, which I co-authored with Trevan Hatch and that was released in February 2023 (Religious Studies Center and Deseret Book, xviii and 326 pp.). Recognizing that biblical scholars still disagree about some aspects of the historical chronology, our working chronology is based upon three main considerations. First, the passion narratives in all four Gospels follow a basic sequence of events, which can be tentatively assigned days by working backward from Jesus’s resurrection on Easter morning by using relative time markers in the Gospel of Mark. Second, when there are historical uncertainties or when there are conflicts in when different Gospels place events, these differences can often be explained by theological or symbolic considerations that might have led an evangelist to depict the timing differently. Finally, accepting the traditional timing of the events of Jesus’s last week has the important benefit of allowing us to commemorate them at the same time that so many other Christian communities are celebrating them.⁵

Each block of readings is also keyed to pages of *Greater Love Hath No Man* for in-depth discussion of each episode. See its discussion in the section “Texts and Traditions: Studying and Celebrating the Passion and Resurrection Narratives” on pages 4–6. In *Greater Love Hath No Man* we have provided these reading blocks from the familiar King James Version, formatted as a reader’s edition, but we felt that some might enjoy using the fresh translation we prepared for our book and to which we refer in its discussion of each day’s episodes.

¹ *General Handbook* 38.8.39.1 notes, “When possible, members should use a preferred or Church-published edition of the Bible in Church classes and meetings. This helps maintain clarity in the discussion and consistent understanding of doctrine. Other editions of the Bible may be useful *for personal or academic study*” (emphasis added).

² The standard academic and student translation is the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV), which is published in the very useful study edition *The Harper Collins Study Bible*, revised and updated, eds. Wayne A. Meeks and Harold W. Attridge (New York: HarperCollins, 2006). A very solid and usable translation for members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has been produced by Thomas A. Wayment as *The New Testament: A Translation for Latter-day Saints* (Provo: Religious Studies Center; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2018), and a new rendition of Mark has been published by Julie M. Smith, *The Gospel according to Mark*, BYU New Testament Commentary (Provo: BYU Studies, 2018).

³ Our translation is based on the Nestle Aland 28th edition of the critical Greek text and seeks to find a balance between formal equivalence, which strives to render a literal, word-for-word translation, and dynamic equivalence, which endeavors to produce a more readable, sense-for-sense rendition of the original. Because the Gospels were written in a vernacular form of Hellenistic Greek called *Koine*, we have aimed for a more common register that is more true to the original without becoming overly colloquial or familiar in tone. Also, given the devotional intent of this fresh translation, at times we have sacrificed some aspects of the style of the original authors—such as literally repeating “and,” “but,” or other conjunctions at the beginning of many sentences—to make it more readable for a modern audience. Additionally, we have sometimes provided proper names to clarify passages where a number of different characters are referred to by the same pronoun. In this effort, I am particularly grateful to our capable assistant, Jackson C. Abbau, who helped review and improve the translation in each stage of its production.

⁴ R. T. France, *The Gospel of Mark*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 9–11, 15–20.

⁵ *Greater Love Hath No Man*, 7–8. For a detailed discussion of chronological issues, see Appendix B, “The Chronology of Jesus’s Final Week,” *Greater Love Hath No Man*, 267–77.

For ease of use, the list of Bookmarks below provides hot links, which readers can use to quickly and easily move to each day of Holy Week.

Bookmarks:

- [Prelude: Before Holy Week](#)
- [Palm Sunday](#)
- [Monday](#)
- [Tuesday](#)
- [Wednesday](#)
- [Maundy Thursday](#)
- [Good Friday](#)
- [Saturday](#)
- [Easter Sunday](#)
- [Postlude: Later Appearances and the Ongoing Apostolic Witness](#)

Prelude Before Holy Week

Although our book suggests devotionals starting with Palm Sunday, some families might want to start a week before, using the ideas discussed in chapter 1. Readings for this week could be as follows:

Sunday: Mark 8:22–26.

Monday: Mark 8:27–30 and parallels in Matt
16:13–20 and Luke 9:18–21.

Tuesday: Mark 8:31–38.

Wednesday: Mark 9:30–37.

Thursday: Mark 10:32–45.

Friday: Mark 10:46–52.

Lazarus Saturday: John 11:1–12:11.

Blindness and Passion Predictions: Mark 8:22–38; 9:30–37; 10:32–52

The “second act” of Mark begins with Jesus healing an unnamed blind man near Bethsaida in the northern part of the Holy Land (Mark 8:22–26). It concludes with the healing of a second blind man, a beggar named Bartimaeus, as Jesus and his disciples leave Jericho on the last stage of their journey up to Jerusalem (10:46–52; parallels Matthew 20:29–34; Luke 18:35–43). This type of literary framing is called an inclusio, by which an author begins and ends a discrete portion of his or her text with the same term, motif, image, theme. Prominent between these two healings are Peter’s confession that Jesus was the Christ (8:27–30) and the three passion predictions (8:31–38; 9:30–37; 10:32–45) that prepared his disciples—and by extension us—for the events of Passion Week.

See the discussion in Greater Love Hath No Man, 14–20, 290–91.

8²²Next they came to Bethsaida. Then they brought a blind man to Jesus and implored him to touch him. ²³After he had taken the blind man’s hand, he brought him out of the village. When he had spit on his eyes and laid his hands on him, he asked him, “Do you see anything?” ²⁴When the man looked up, he said, “I see people who look like trees walking around!” ²⁵Then Jesus laid his hands on his eyes again, and the man looked intently, was restored, and saw everything clearly. ²⁶Jesus sent him to his house, saying, “Don’t even go into the village!”

²⁷Then Jesus and his disciples left for the villages of Caesarea Philippi. Along the way he began to question his disciples, asking them, “Whom do people say that I am?” ²⁸Some replied, saying to him, “John the Baptist,” others, “Elijah,” and still others, “One of the prophets.” ²⁹So he kept questioning them, “But whom do you say that I am?” Peter, answering, said to him, “You are the Christ!” ³⁰Then Jesus insisted that they should not speak about him to anyone.

³¹Next he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo much suffering, be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and the experts on the law, be put to death, and after three days rise again. ³²He was saying this openly, so Peter, taking him aside, began to rebuke him. ³³After Jesus had turned around and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind me, Satan, for you do not have the things of God in mind but rather human concerns.”

³⁴When he had called the crowd to him together with his disciples, he said to them, “If anyone wants to follow behind me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. ³⁵For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for me and the good news will save it. ³⁶For how will it profit someone to gain the whole world but forfeit his life? ³⁷What can someone offer in return for his life? ³⁸Indeed, whoever is ashamed of me and my word in this unfaithful and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

9³⁰When they had left that place, they passed through Galilee, but Jesus did not want anyone to know, ³¹for he kept teaching his disciples and saying to them, “The Son of Man is being handed over into the hands of men—they will put him to death, and three days after he has been put to death, he will rise again.” ³²They did not understand the saying but were afraid to ask him.

³³Then they came to Capernaum, and while Jesus was in the house, he began to ask them, “What were you arguing about along the way?” ³⁴They kept quiet, for along the way they had argued with each other over who was greater. ³⁵So when he had sat down, he called the Twelve and said to them, “If anyone wants to be first, he will be last of all and servant of all.” ³⁶Then taking a child, Jesus placed him in the middle of them and, taking him into his arms, said to them, ³⁷“Whoever receives one of these children in my name receives me, and whoever receives me does not receive me but rather the one who sent me.”

10³²They were on the road going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was leading them. They began to be astonished, and those who were following started to feel afraid. So, when he had taken the Twelve aside again, he began to tell them what things were going to happen to him: ³³“Look, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and the experts on the law, and they will condemn him to death and hand him over to the Gentiles. ³⁴And they will mock him, spit on him, scourge him, and kill him, and after three days he will rise again.”

³⁵Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him, asking him, “Teacher, we want you to do whatever we ask you.” ³⁶So he asked, “What do you want me to do for you?” ³⁷They said to him, “Grant to us that we may sit, one at your right hand and one at the left, in your glory.” ³⁸But Jesus said, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink or be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?” ³⁹They said to him, “We are able!” But Jesus said to them, “You will drink the cup that I drink and be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized, ⁴⁰but to sit at my right hand or on my left is not mine to grant; this is for those for whom it is prepared.” ⁴¹When the other ten heard this, they began to be angry with James and John. ⁴²So when he had called them to him, he said to them, “You know that those who appear to rule the Gentiles domineer over them, and their great ones tyrannize them. ⁴³Yet it is not so among you. Rather, whoever wants to become great among you, he will be your servant. ⁴⁴And whoever wants to be first among you will be the slave of all. ⁴⁵For indeed the Son of Man did not come to be served, rather to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

⁴⁶Then they came to Jericho, and as he was leaving Jericho with the disciples and a considerable crowd, Bartimaeus (or “son of Timaeus”), a blind beggar, was sitting by the road. ⁴⁷When he heard that Jesus of Nazareth was there, he began to cry out and say, “O Son of David, have mercy on me!” ⁴⁸Many started to rebuke him, telling him to be quiet, but he cried out even more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!” ⁴⁹When Jesus stopped, he said, “Call him.” So they called the blind man, saying, “Take heart, get up! He is calling you.” ⁵⁰When Bartimaeus had thrown off his cloak and jumped up, he came to Jesus. ⁵¹Jesus said to him in response, “What do you want me to do for you?” The blind man said to him, “My master, I want to see again!” ⁵²So Jesus said to him, “Go, your faith has saved you.” Immediately he received his sight and followed him in the way.

The Raising of Lazarus and the Supper in Bethany: John 11:1–12:11

The Bethany episodes, consisting of the story of the death and miraculous raising of Lazarus followed by a feast that Martha and Mary held for Jesus and their brother afterwards, occupy a pivotal position in Gospel of John, overlapping with and serving as a bridge between “The Book of Signs,” which narrates the miraculous signs and the doctrinal discourses of Jesus’ ministry (John 2:1–11:57), and “The Book of Glory,” that chronicles Jesus’ final days and resurrection (12:1–20:31). Just as these “bridge episodes” prepare the reader for the coming passion narrative, they can help us in our preparation for Holy Week. The expression “the Jews” (Greek, hoi Ioudaioi) appears several times in this selection. We have placed it in quotations to signal to readers that John seems to be using it to refer to a specific group and not to all Jewish people.

See the discussion in Greater Love Hath No Man, 21–28.

11 ¹There was a certain man, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha, who was sick. ²Now Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair whose brother was sick. ³So the sisters sent to him, saying, “Lord, see, the one whom you love is sick!” ⁴Yet when Jesus heard this, he said, “This sickness is not to the point of death; rather it is for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it,” ⁵for Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. ⁶Therefore, when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he still stayed in the place where he was for two days. ⁷After this he said to his disciples, “Let us go back to Judea.” ⁸His disciples said to him, “Master, recently the ‘the Jews’ were seeking to stone you, and they still are! Are you going back there again?” ⁹Jesus answered,

“Are there not twelve hours in the day?
Whoever walks about in the daytime does not stumble,
because he sees the light of the world.

¹⁰ But whoever walks about in the nighttime stumbles,
because there is no light in him.”

¹¹He said these things, and after this he told them, “Our friend Lazarus is sleeping, but I am going to wake him up.” ¹²His disciples said to him, “Lord, if he is sleeping, he will recover.” ¹³Now Jesus had spoken about Lazarus’ death, but they thought that he was speaking about getting rest through sleep. ¹⁴So Jesus spoke openly to them, “Lazarus has died. ¹⁵Yet I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe. Now let us go to him.” ¹⁶Then Thomas, who is called “the Twin,” said to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with him!”

¹⁷When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. ¹⁸Now Bethany was close to Jerusalem, about two miles away, ¹⁹and many of the “the Jews” had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. ²⁰When Martha heard that Jesus had come, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed sitting at home. ²¹Then Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died! ²²Yet even now I know that whatever you ask God, God will grant it to you.” ²³Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” ²⁴Martha said to him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.” ²⁵Jesus said to her,

“I am the resurrection and the life.
Whoever believes in me,
even if he dies,
he will live.

²⁶ And whoever lives and believes in me
will not die forever.

Do you believe this?” ²⁷She said to him, “Yes indeed, Lord, I have come to believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God who is coming into the world.”

²⁸After she had said this, she went back and secretly called her sister Mary, saying, “The teacher has arrived and is calling you.” ²⁹Then when Mary had heard this, she quickly got up and went to him. ³⁰Now Jesus had not yet come into the village but was still in the place where Martha had met him. ³¹Therefore when the “the Jews” who were in the house with Mary and had been consoling her saw her quickly get up and go out, followed her, thinking that she was going to the tomb to mourn there.

³²So, after Mary came to where Jesus was, when she saw him, she fell at his feet, saying to him, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died!” ³³Now when Jesus saw her mourning deeply and the “the Jews” who had come with her also mourning, he was greatly distressed in his spirit and troubled, ³⁴and he asked, “Where have you laid him?” They said to him, “Lord, come and see.” ³⁵Jesus wept. ³⁶Therefore “the Jews” said, “Look how much he loved him!” ³⁷But some of them said, “Could not the one who opened the eyes of the blind man bring it about that this man would not have died?”

³⁸Then Jesus, again deeply upset within himself, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was set upon it. ³⁹Jesus said, “Remove the stone.” Martha, the sister of the one who had died, said, “Lord, he already smells, for it is the fourth day.” ⁴⁰Jesus said to her, “Did I not say to you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?” ⁴¹So they removed the stone, and Jesus raised his eyes and said,

“Father, I give thanks to you,
because you have heard me.
⁴² And I know that you always hear me,
but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing around,
that they may believe that you sent me.”

⁴³After he had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” ⁴⁴He who had been dead came forth, bound hand and foot with strips of grave clothes and his face wrapped in a face cloth. Jesus said to them, “Unbind him and let him go.”

⁴⁵Therefore, many of the “the Jews” who had come to Mary and had seen what he had done believed in him. ⁴⁶Yet some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done.

⁴⁷Then the chief priests and the Pharisees called the Sanhedrin into session and said, “What are we doing? This man is performing many miraculous signs! ⁴⁸If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and the Romans will come and remove both our place and our nation. ⁴⁹But one of their number, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, “You do not know anything! ⁵⁰You do not understand that it is advantageous for you that one man die for the people and the whole nation not be destroyed.” ⁵¹This he did not say of himself, but because he was high priest, he prophesied that Jesus was about to die for the nation, ⁵²and not for the nation only but also to gather together all the scattered children of God. ⁵³And so, from that day they planned to put him to death.

⁵⁴Therefore, Jesus no longer walked around openly among the “the Jews,” but he went from there to a region near the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and he stayed there with his disciples.

⁵⁵Now it was almost the Jewish Passover, and many went up to Jerusalem from the countryside for the Passover, that they might purify themselves. ⁵⁶Then they were looking for Jesus and kept saying to each other as they stood in the temple, “What do you think? He won’t come to the festival, will he?” ⁵⁷But the chief priests and Pharisees had given orders that if anyone knew where he was, they should report it, that they might arrest him.

12¹Six days before Passover, Jesus came to Bethany where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. ²Then they made a feast for him there. Martha served, but Lazarus was among those who reclined with him at the table.

³Then Mary, having brought a pound of very expensive, pure nard ointment, anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped them with her hair, and the house was filled with the fragrance of the ointment. ⁴Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples, who was about to betray him, said, ⁵“Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?” ⁶He did not say this because the poor mattered to him but because he was a thief and, being the one who held the moneybag, used to pilfer from what was put in it. ⁷So Jesus said, “Leave her alone so she may keep it for the day of my burial, ⁸for you always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me.”

⁹A great crowd of “the Jews” came to know that he was there, and they came not only on account of Jesus but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. ¹⁰But the chief priests deliberated how they might put Lazarus to death also, ¹¹because on account of him many of “the Jews” were changing sides and beginning to believe in Jesus.

[Return to Bookmarks](#) §

Palm Sunday

Episodes

- Triumphal Entry (Mark 11:1–10; Matt 21:1–11; Luke 19:28–40; John 12:12–19).
- Jesus' First Lament over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41–44).
- Jesus and the Temple (Mark 11:11; Matt 21:12–17; Luke 19:45–48).

For devotional ideas for this day, see *Greater Love Hath No Man*, 291–92.

The Triumphal Entry: Mark 11:1–10; Matthew 21:1–9; John 12:12–19; Luke 19:41–44

The earliest account of the triumphal entry comes from Mark, which begins that Gospel's "third act," the climax in Jerusalem with what was, in effect, a prophetic enactment demonstrating that he was the true King of Israel. Matthew and Luke largely follow Mark's version, but we have also provided Matthew's account because of that evangelist's particular use of the prophecies of Zechariah. The Johannine account also appears here because it is what gives Palm Sunday its name (see John 12:13). It also notes the effect that Jesus' reception had on his opponents, galvanizing their violent opposition to him (12:19). Finally, Luke differs from the other Synoptics in that he adds a lament over Jerusalem by Jesus even as he approaches the city, adding a note of sadness or passion to an otherwise joyful episode.

See the discussion in *Greater Love Hath No Man*, 36–42.

Mark

11¹When they drew near to Jerusalem, to Bethany and Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, he sent ahead two of his disciples,² and he said to them, "Go to the village facing you, and right as you enter it, you will find a colt tied up, upon which a man has never sat. Untie it and bring it.³ If someone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' say, 'The Lord needs it,' and right away he will send it back here."⁴ So, they went and found the colt tied up near a doorway, outside in the street, and they untied it.⁵ Some of the people who were standing there said to them, "What are you doing untying the colt?"⁶ They said to them just what Jesus had told them, and they gave them permission.⁷ Then they brought the colt to Jesus and put their cloaks on it, and Jesus took his seat on it.⁸ Many people spread out their cloaks on the road, and others, after they had cut leafy branches in the fields, spread them out.⁹ And both those who were going ahead and those who were following kept crying,

"Hosanna!

Blessed is he who is coming in the name of the Lord!

¹⁰ Blessed is the kingdom of our father David that is coming!

Hosanna in the highest heavens!"

Matthew

In addition to refining the wording of Mark's original material, Matthew also added the additional lines that appear in italics.⁶

21¹When they drew near to Jerusalem and had entered Bethany on the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent out two disciples,² saying to them, "Go ahead into the village that is facing you, and right away, you will find *a donkey* tied

⁶ Nolland, *Gospel of Matthew*, 832–835.

and a colt *with her*. After you have untied them, bring them to me. ³If anyone says anything to you, you will say that the Lord needs them. Then right away he will send them.” ⁴*This happened that what had been spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying,*

⁵ “Say to the daughter of Zion,
Look, your king is coming,
unassuming and having taken his seat on a donkey,
and on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.”

⁶After the disciples had gone and done just as Jesus had ordered them, ⁷they brought *the donkey and* the colt, laid their cloaks *on them, and he took his seat upon them*. ⁸Then a *very large crowd* spread *their own* cloaks in the road, and others cut branches from *trees* and began to spread them in the road. ⁹And the crowds that were going ahead of him and those that were following kept crying out, *saying,*

“Hosanna *to the Son of David*,
blessed is the one who is coming in the name of the Lord,
hosanna in the highest heavens!”

John

12¹²On the next day a great crowd, which had come to the feast because they had heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, ¹³took fronds of palm trees, went out to meet him, and kept crying out,

“Hosanna!
Blessed is the one who is coming in the name of the Lord,
the King of Israel!”

¹⁴Then Jesus, after he had found a young donkey, took his seat on it, just as it is written,

¹⁵ “Do not be afraid, daughter of Zion,
Look, your king is coming,
sitting on the foal of a donkey.”

¹⁶His disciples did not understand these things at first, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about him and they had done these things for him. ¹⁷The crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead kept testifying. ¹⁸It was for this reason that the crowd went out to meet him, because they had heard that he had performed this miraculous sign. ¹⁹So the Pharisees said to each other, “Do you see that you are not accomplishing anything? Look, the world has gone after him!”

Luke

19⁴¹Yet as he approached, when he saw the city, he grieved over it, ⁴²saying, “If you, even you, had realized on this day what would have brought you peace! But as it is, it has been concealed from your eyes. ⁴³Because the days are coming upon you when your enemies will throw up a siege-work around you, and encircle you, and press you hard on every side, ⁴⁴and they will raze you to the ground and your children with you, and they will not leave one stone on top of another within you because you did not recognize the moment of your visitation.”

Jesus and the Temple (Mark 11:11; Matt 21:12–17; Luke 19:47–48).

Mark’s account has Jesus enter Jerusalem, ascend to the temple, and simply look around before returning to Bethany to spend the night. While Mark delays his discussion of the temple incident until the next day for symbolic reasons, Matthew, paralleled by Luke, places Jesus’s cleansing of the temple directly after the triumphal entry, using it to demonstrate his authority to judge its so-called authorities, alluding to the

prophecies of Jeremiah and again to Zechariah in the process. Matthew adds the details that Jesus followed the cleansing of the temple with miraculous healings, which led children to praise him as the Son of David.

See the discussion in Greater Love Hath No Man, 36–42.

Mark

11¹¹Then he entered Jerusalem and came into the temple, and when he had looked around at everything, because it was already evening, he went out to Bethany with the Twelve.

Matthew

21¹⁰When he had entered Jerusalem, the entire city was in commotion, saying, “Who is this?”¹¹The crowds kept saying, “This is the prophet, Jesus of Nazareth in Galilee!”¹²And Jesus went into the temple and cast out all who were selling and buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the moneychangers and the seats of those who were selling doves.¹³And he said to them, “It is written, ‘My house will be called a house of prayer, but you are making it a lair of bandits!’”

¹⁴Then the blind and lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them.¹⁵Yet when the chief priests and the experts at the law saw the amazing things that he was doing and [heard] the children in the temple crying out and saying, “Hosanna to the Son of David,” they were indignant.¹⁶So, they said to him, “Do you hear what they are saying?” Jesus said, “Yes indeed! Have you never read, ‘Out of the mouths of infants and those who are nursing I have prepared praise?’”¹⁷After he had left them, he went out of the city to Bethany, and he spent the night there.

Luke

19⁴⁷Now Jesus was daily teaching in the temple. The chief priests and the experts at the law, however, kept seeking to destroy him, as did the leaders of the people.⁴⁸Nevertheless, they could not find anything they could do, for all the people were hanging on his words.

[Return to Bookmarks](#) §

Monday

Episodes

- Cursing of the Fig Tree (Mark 11:12–14; Matt 21:18–19a)
- The Cleansing of the Temple in Mark (Mark 11:15–19)
- Lesson from the Withered Fig Tree (Mark 11:20–26; parallel Matt 21:19b–22)
- Jesus’ Pattern of Teaching in the Temple (Luke 19:47–48)
- Teachings in the Temple: Rejection of the Unbelieving in Israel (Mark 11:27–12:12; Matt 21:23–22:15; Luke 20:1–19)
- Jesus and the Coming Hour (John 12:20–36)

For devotional ideas for this day, see Greater Love Hath No Man. 293–94.

The Fig Tree and the Temple: Mark 11:12–25

The cursing of the fig tree Monday and its withering the next morning frame Mark's account of Jesus' actions in the temple. This structure was deliberate, leading Mark to place the temple incident here rather than immediately following the triumphal entry. The framing also provides the interpretive key to the incident, giving it a different meaning in Mark than it had in Matthew and Luke's versions.

See the discussion in Greater Love Hath No Man, 54–56.

11 ¹²On the following day, after they had left Bethany, he was hungry. ¹³When he saw from a distance a fig tree that had leaves, he approached it in case he might find something on it. Yet when he reached it, he found nothing except leaves, for it was not the season for figs. ¹⁴In response he said to it, “May no one ever eat fruit from you again!” And his disciples heard this.

¹⁵Then they came to Jerusalem, and when he had come into the temple, he began to cast out those who were selling and buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the moneychangers and the chairs of those who were selling doves. ¹⁶Nor would he allow anyone to carry vessels through the temple. ¹⁷So he began to teach, saying to them, “Is it not written that my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations? But you have made it a lair of bandits!” ¹⁸The chief priests and the experts at the law heard this and began deliberating how they might put him to death, for they were afraid of him because the entire crowd was amazed at his teaching. ¹⁹And when it was evening, he left the city.

²⁰As they were passing by in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered away from the roots up. ²¹Remembering, Peter said to him, “Master, look, the fig tree that you cursed has withered!” ²²In response Jesus said to them, “Have faith in God. ²³Truly, I say to you, that whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be pulled up and cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart but believes what he says will happen, it will turn out for him. ²⁴Because of this I say to you, all things you pray and ask for, believe that you will receive, and they will come about for you. ²⁵When you stand to pray, forgive anything you have against someone, so your Father in heaven may forgive your wrongdoings too.” [²⁶But if you do not forgive, your Father in heaven will not forgive your wrongdoings.”]⁷

Teachings in the Temple: Rejection of the Unbelieving in Israel

Two short notices in Luke establish Jesus's pattern of teaching daily in the temple and returning each night to Bethany, where he presumably stayed with friends like the family of Lazarus. The earliest versions of Jesus's temple teaching are found in Mark, the first two episodes of which are given here. John also has Jesus teaching in the temple, but as is typical for that Gospel, Jesus's teaching is much more direct about his mission and his relationship with the Father.

See the discussion in Greater Love Hath No Man, 56–61.

Luke

19 ⁴⁷And he was teaching every day in the temple, but the chief priests and the experts at the law, and also the leaders of the people, kept seeking to put him to death, ⁴⁸but they were not able to find what they might do, because all the people were clinging to what they were hearing from him.

21 ³⁷And during the days he was teaching in the temple, and during the nights, after leaving, he spent the night on the mount that is called Olivet. ³⁸And all the people would get up early in the morning to come to him in the temple to listen to him.

⁷ Verse 26, which is translated as “But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses” in the KJV, is only found in later, Byzantine manuscripts. It is missing in the earliest, most reliable Greek manuscripts and was probably inserted here by later scribes by comparison with Matthew 6:15 (see Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 93)

Mark

11²⁷And they come again to Jerusalem: and as he was walking in the temple, there come to him the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders,²⁸And say unto him, “By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority to do these things?”²⁹“And Jesus answered and said unto them, I will also ask of you one question, and answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things.³⁰The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men? answer me.”³¹And they reasoned with themselves, saying, “If we shall say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say, ‘Why then did ye not believe him?’³²But if we shall say, ‘Of men;’ they feared the people: for all men counted John, that he was a prophet indeed.”³³And they answered and said unto Jesus, “We cannot tell.” And Jesus answering saith unto them, “Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things.”

12¹And he began to speak unto them by parables. “A certain man planted a vineyard, and set an hedge about it, and digged a place for the winefat, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country.²And at the season he sent to the husbandmen a servant, that he might receive from the husbandmen of the fruit of the vineyard.³And they caught him, and beat him, and sent him away empty.⁴And again he sent unto them another servant; and at him they cast stones, and wounded him in the head, and sent him away shamefully handled.⁵And again he sent another; and him they killed, and many others; beating some, and killing some.⁶Having yet therefore one son, his well-beloved, he sent him also last unto them, saying, ‘They will reverence my son.’⁷But those husbandmen said among themselves, ‘This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours.’⁸And they took him, and killed him, and cast him out of the vineyard.⁹“What shall therefore the lord of the vineyard do? he will come and destroy the husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto others.¹⁰And have ye not read this scripture; ‘The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner:’¹¹This was the Lord’s doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?”

¹²And they sought to lay hold on him, but feared the people: for they knew that he had spoken the parable against them: and they left him, and went their way.

The Johannine Passion Prediction: John 12:20–36

*John also has Jesus teaching in the temple, but as is typical for that Gospel, Jesus’ teaching is much more direct about his mission and his relationship with the Father. As is common in many of the discourses of Jesus in John, his words are in semi-poetic form, signaling the difference between his divine speech and that of other characters in the Gospel.*⁸

See the discussion in Greater Love Hath No Man, 61–64.

12²⁰Now there were some Greeks among those who had gone up to worship at the festival.²¹They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, saying, “Sir, we want to see Jesus.”²²Philip went and told Andrew, then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus.²³Jesus answered them, saying, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.²⁴Truly, truly, I say to you,

Unless a grain of wheat dies after it has fallen to the earth,
it remains one grain.
Yet if it dies,
it yields much fruit.
25 The one who loves his life,
loses it;
and the one who hates his life in this world,
will guard it to life eternal.
26 Whoever serves me,
let him follow me.

⁸ Brown, *Gospel according to John*, cxxxii–cxxxv; Huntsman, “The Gospel of John,” 314.

Where I am,
 There my servant will be also.
 Whoever serves me,
 my Father will honor.

²⁷Now my soul is troubled, so what should I say? ‘Father, rescue me from this hour?’ Yet for this I came to this hour.

²⁸Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven,

 “I have both glorified it,
 and I will glorify it again.”

²⁹Then the crowd that was standing there and had heard it kept saying it had thundered, but others started to say, “An angel has spoken to him.” ³⁰Jesus answered and said, “This voice has come not for my sake but for yours.

³¹ Now is judgment upon this world.
 Now will the ruler of this world be cast out.
³² And when I am lifted up from the earth,
 I will draw all to myself.”

³³This he said, indicating by what kind of death he was about to die. ³⁴Then the crowd answered him, “We have heard from the Law that the Christ continues to live forever. How are you saying that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?” ³⁵Jesus said to them,

 “The light is with you for a little while more.
 Walk around while you have the light,
 so that the darkness does not overtake you.
 The one who walks around in darkness
 does not know where he is going.
³⁶ While you have the light,
 believe in the light,
 that you may become the children of light.”

Jesus said these things, and after he had left, he hid from them.

[Return to Bookmarks](#) §

Tuesday

Episode

- Jesus Examined: Attempts to Catch Him in His Words (Mark 12:13–37; parallels Matt 22:15–46, Luke 20:20–47)
- Hypocrisy of Jesus’ Opponents (Mark 12:38–40; parallels Matt 23:1–12; Luke 20:45–47)
- Seven Prophetic Woes (Matt 23:13–36)
- The Widow’s Offering (Mark 12:41–44; parallel Luke 21:1–4)
- Jesus’ Second Lament over Jerusalem (Matt 23:37–39)
- The Olivet Discourse (Mark 13:1–38; parallels Matt 24:1–25:46; Luke 21:5–38)
- [Summary of Jesus’ Teaching (Luke 21:37–38; John 12:37–50)]

For devotional ideas for this day, see Greater Love Hath No Man. 293–94.

Temple Teachings: Mark 12:13–44; Matthew 23:37–39

The second set of Jesus' temple teachings focus on his responses to questions posed to him by different groups within the ruling hierarchy, each of which tried to catch him in his words. Then, after posing a question of his own to them, he denounces them for their hypocrisy and contrasts them with the selfless faithfulness of a poor widow. The earliest versions of this material are preserved by Mark. Matthew adds a poignant lament that Jesus utters over Jerusalem.

See the discussion in Greater Love Hath No Man, 70–77.

12¹³Next, they sent some of the Pharisees and of the Herodians to him to catch him in what he said. ¹⁴When they got there, they said to him, “Teacher, we know that you are truthful and are not partial to anyone, for you do not look upon the people’s appearance but teach the way of God in truth. Is it permissible to pay a tax to Caesar or not? Should we pay or should we not pay?” ¹⁵Because he recognized their hypocrisy, he said to them, “Why are you testing me? Bring a *denarius* to me so I may see it.” ¹⁶So they brought it, and he said to them, “Whose image is this, and whose inscription?” They said to him, “Caesar’s.” ¹⁷Jesus said to them, “Give back to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” And they were amazed at him.

¹⁸Then some Sadducees, who say that there is no resurrection, came to him and questioned him, saying, ¹⁹“Teacher, Moses wrote to us, ‘If someone’s brother dies and leaves behind a wife but does not leave a child, his brother should marry the wife and raise up a posterity for his brother.’” ²⁰There were seven brothers. The first married a wife and, when he died, did not leave any posterity. ²¹Next the second married her, and he died, not leaving a posterity. Then the third did the same thing. ²²And so the seven men married her and did not leave any posterity. Last of all, the woman died, too. ²³In the resurrection, to which of them will the wife belong? For seven men had her as wife.” ²⁴Jesus said to them, “Is this not why you are making a mistake, because you understand neither the scriptures nor the power of God? ²⁵For when they rise again from the dead, they neither enter into marriage nor are given in marriage, but they are like the angels in the heavens. ²⁶But concerning the dead being raised, have you not read in the book of Moses how God spoke to him at the bush, saying, ‘I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?’” ²⁷He is not the God of the dead but the God of the living. You are making a great mistake!”

²⁸Next one of the experts at the law, when he had heard them debating and had seen that he had answered them well, came to him and asked him, “Which commandment is the most important of them all?” ²⁹Jesus answered, “This is the first: ‘Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God, the Lord is one, ³⁰and you shall love the LORD your God with your whole heart, with your whole soul, with your whole mind, and with your whole strength.’” ³¹This is the second: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is not any commandment greater than these.” ³²Then the expert at the law said, “Quite right, Teacher! You have spoken truly that he is one and there is no other except for him. ³³Indeed loving him with the whole heart, and with the whole understanding, and with the whole strength, and loving your neighbor as yourself is greater than all the burnt offerings and sacrifices.” ³⁴When Jesus saw that he had answered thoughtfully, he said to him, “You are not far from the kingdom of God!” After that no one dared to ask him anything.

³⁵Then while Jesus was teaching in the temple, he said in response, “How can the experts at the law say that the Christ is the Son of David? ³⁶David himself said by the Holy Spirit, ‘The LORD said to my lord, “Sit here at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet.”’” ³⁷David himself called him ‘lord.’ How then is he his son?” And the great crowd heard him gladly.

³⁸So in his teaching he said, “Look out for experts at the law who take pleasure in walking about in long robes, receiving greetings in the marketplaces, ³⁹having seats of honor in the synagogues, and getting places of honor at banquets. ⁴⁰They are the ones who devour the houses of widows and make long prayers for the sake of appearance. These will receive much greater condemnation.”

⁴¹When Jesus had sat down across from the treasury, he saw how the crowd was putting money into the treasury, and many rich people were contributing a lot. ⁴²When one poor widow came, she put in two small copper coins, which are worth a *quadram* or penny. ⁴³Calling his disciples to him, he said, “Truly, I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all those who are putting into the treasury, ⁴⁴for they have all contributed out of their abundance, but out of her poverty she put in all that she had, her whole means of subsistence.”

Matthew

23³⁷“Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you did not want me to!
³⁸Look, your house is left empty! ³⁹For I say to you, you will see me no longer until you say, ‘Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.’”

The Olivet Discourse: Mark 13:1–37; Matthew 25:1–13, 31–46

Mark 13 comprises the longest single discourse of Jesus in that Gospel; elsewhere in Mark, Jesus’ sayings comprise short parables or teaching sayings. This discourse, which consists of a prophecy that Jesus delivered on the Mount of Olives, treats both the coming destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world, before which Jesus will return in glory. Parallels appear in Matthew 24:1–25:46 and Luke 21:5–38. Matthew’s version is the longest of the three and includes several parables about preparing for the end, two of which are provided here.

See the discussion in Greater Love Hath No Man, 77–83.

Mark

13¹As he was leaving the temple, one of his disciples said to him, “Teacher, look! What wonderful stones and buildings!” ²In response Jesus said to him, “Do you see these great buildings? A stone shall not be left here upon another stone that is not thrown down.”

³Then, as he was sitting on the Mount of Olives across from the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew began to ask him privately, ⁴“Tell us, when will these things happen, and what will the sign be when all these things are about to be fulfilled?” ⁵Jesus began to say, “See to it that no one leads you astray. ⁶For many will come in my name who will say, ‘I am he!’ and they will lead many astray. ⁷Whenever you hear about wars and reports of wars, do not be upset. These must happen, but the end is not yet. ⁸For nation will rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be earthquakes in various regions, and there will be famines. These are the beginning of labor pains.

⁹“But watch yourselves. They will hand you over to city councils, and you will be beaten in synagogues, and be arraigned before governors and kings on my account as a testimony to them. ¹⁰First the good news must be proclaimed to all nations. ¹¹Yet whenever they arrest you and hand you over, do not be anxious about what you will say, but say whatever is given to you in that hour, for you are not the one who is speaking—it is rather the Holy Spirit. ¹²Now brother will hand over brother for death, and a father his child, and children will rise up in rebellion against their parents and put them to death. ¹³Then you will be hated by all on account of my name, but whoever stands his ground until the end will be saved.

¹⁴“But when you see the devastating sacrilege standing where it should not be—let the one who reads understand—then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, ¹⁵and let one who is on top of a house not go down or go into it to take anything out of the house, ¹⁶and let one who is in the field not turn back to pick up his cloak. ¹⁷But woe to those who are pregnant or who are nursing in those days! ¹⁸Pray that it does not happen during winter. ¹⁹For those will be days of affliction, such as have not occurred since God created the world until now and will not be again. ²⁰Unless the Lord shortens those days, no mortal life would be saved, but because of the elect whom he has chosen, he has shortened those days. ²¹If anyone says at that time, ‘Look, the Christ is here, look, he is there!’ do not believe it. ²²For false Christs and false prophets will appear, and they will perform miraculous signs and wonders to mislead, if possible, even the elect. ²³Yet look out! I have warned you in advance about all these things.

²⁴“But in those days, after that tribulation, ‘The sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, ²⁵and the stars will be falling from the sky,’ and the heavenly bodies will be shaken. ²⁶Then they will see ‘the Son of Man as he comes in the clouds’ with great power and glory. ²⁷Then he will send his angels and gather together his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the sky.

²⁸“From the fig tree, learn a parable: When its branch becomes tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹Thus it is even with you: When you see these things happening, you know that it is near, even at the doors. ³⁰Truly I say to you that this generation will not pass away until these things come about. ³¹Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

³²“Now no one knows about the day or the hour, neither the angels in heaven nor the Son, but only the Father. ³⁴Look out, stay alert, and pray! For you do not know when the appointed time is. ³⁴It is like a man who is away on a journey, who left his house, gave authority to his slaves, an assignment to each one, and ordered the doorkeeper to keep watch. ³⁵Therefore stay alert! For you do not know when the master of the house is coming—in the evening, in the middle of the night, at the cockcrow, or in the morning, ³⁶lest coming suddenly, he finds you sleeping. ³⁷What I say to you I say to all: Stay alert!”

Matthew

25 ¹“At that time the kingdom of heaven will be compared to ten virgins, who, after taking up their lamps, went out to meet the bridegroom. ²Five of them were foolish, and five were thoughtful. ³Although the foolish took their lamps, they did not take oil with them. ⁴But the thoughtful ones took oil in flasks with their lamps. ⁵Because the bridegroom took his time, all the women grew drowsy and began to sleep. ⁶In the middle of the night there was a shout, ‘Look, the bridegroom! Go out to meet him!’ ⁷Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. ⁸The foolish said to the thoughtful, ‘Give us some of your oil, because our lamps are sputtering out.’ ⁹But the thoughtful women responded by saying, ‘No, there will not be enough for us and for you. Rather go to those who sell and buy for yourselves.’ ¹⁰And while they were gone to buy it, the bridegroom came, and the women who were prepared went into the wedding feast with him, and the door was closed. ¹¹Later the remaining virgins came, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open the door for us!’ ¹²But in response he said, ‘Truly, I do not know you.’ ¹³Stay alert, therefore, because you do not know the day nor the hour.”

³¹“When the Son of Man comes in his glory and all the angels come with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. ³²All the nations will be gathered together before him, and he will separate them from one another, just as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³Then he will put the sheep on his right hand and the goats on his left. ³⁴At that time the King will say to those on his right hand, ‘Come, O blessed of my Father! Inherit the kingdom which has been prepared for you from the foundation of the world. ³⁵For I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited me in. ³⁶I was naked, and you clothed me; I was sick, and you cared for me; I was in prison, and you came to visit me.’ ³⁷Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘When did we see you hungry and gave you something to eat, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? ³⁸When did we see you as a stranger and invited you in, or naked and clothed you? ³⁹When did we see you sick or in prison and came to visit you?’ ⁴⁰And in response the King will say to them, ‘Truly, I say to you, to the extent that you have done this for one of the least of my brothers or sisters, you have done it for me.’ ⁴¹Then he will say to those on his left hand, ‘Go from me, O cursed, into the eternal fire that has been prepared for the devil and his angels. ⁴²For I was hungry, and you did not give me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you did not give me something to drink; ⁴³I was a stranger, and you did not invite me in; I was naked, and you did not clothe me; I was sick and in prison, and you did not take care of me.’ ⁴⁴At that time they will answer him, saying, ‘When did we see you hungry, or thirsty, or as a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison and not help you?’ ⁴⁵And he will answer them, saying, ‘Truly, I say to you, to the extent that you have not done this for one of the least of these, you did not do it for me.’ ⁴⁶These will go to eternal punishment, but the righteous will go into eternal life.”

[Return to Bookmarks](#) §

Wednesday

Episodes

- The Plot to Kill Jesus (Mark 14:1–2; parallels Matt 26:1–5; Luke 22:1–2)
- An Unnamed Woman Anoints Jesus (Mark 14:3–9; Matt 26:6–13)
- Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus (Mark 14:10–11; parallels Matt 26:14–16; Luke 22:3–6)

For devotional ideas for this day, see Greater Love Hath No Man. 295.

Conspiracy and an Anointing: Mark 14:1–11

The story of the unnamed woman who anointed Jesus' head in Bethany (Mark 14:3–9; parallel Matt 26:6–13) is framed by the plot of the Jerusalem authorities to put Jesus to death (Mark 14:1–2; parallels Matt 26:1–5; Luke 22:1–2) and the decision of Judas Iscariot to hand Jesus over to them (Mark 14:10–11; parallels Matt 26:14–16; Luke 22:3–6).

See the discussion in Greater Love Hath No Man, 90–98.

14¹Now when the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were two days away, the chief priests and the experts at the law began to deliberate how they could take him by cunning and put him to death, ²for they said, “Not during the festival so there will not be a commotion among the people.”

³While he was in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he was reclining at the dinner table, a woman who had an alabaster flask of very expensive ointment of pure nard came in. After breaking the flask, she poured it on his head.

⁴There were some who began to complain indignantly to each other, saying, “Why has this ointment been wasted? ⁵For this ointment could have been sold for over three hundred denarii and given to the poor.” And they scolded her. ⁶But Jesus said, “Leave her alone. Why are you distressing her? She has done a fine thing for me. ⁷For you always have the poor with you, and whenever you want, you can do something good for them, but you do not always have me. ⁸She has done what she could: she has anointed my body ahead of time for its burial. ⁹Truly, I say to you, wherever the good news is proclaimed throughout the whole world, this also which she has done will be recounted in her memory.”

¹⁰Then Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve, went to the chief priests to hand him over. ¹¹When they heard this, they were delighted and promised to give him money. So, he began to look for a convenient opportunity to hand him over.

[Return to Bookmarks](#) §

Maundy Thursday

Episodes

- The Last Supper (Mark 14:12–31; parallels Matt 26:17–35; Luke 22:7–38. John 13:1–14:31. Cf. 1 Cor 11:23–26)
- The Farewell Discourses (John 14:1–17:26)
- Jesus at Gethsemane (Mark 14:32–42; Matt 26:36–47; Luke 22:39–46; John 18:1)
- Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus (Mark 14:43–52; Matt 26:47–56; Luke 22:47–53; John 18:2–3)
- Jesus before the Jewish Authorities (Mark 14:43–65; Matt 26:57–68; Luke 22:54–71; John 18:4–27)

For devotional ideas for this day, see Greater Love Hath No Man. 291–92.

The Last Supper: Mark 14:12–25; John 13:1–35

While Matthew 26:17–30 and Luke 22:7–38 largely follow Mark in their portrayal of the Last Supper as a Passover meal at the end of which Jesus instituted the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, John portrays it simply as the last meal that Jesus shares with his disciples, at which he performs another ritual, the washing of their feet.

See the discussion in Greater Love Hath No Man, 104–114.

Mark

14¹²On the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they sacrificed the paschal lamb, his disciples said to him, “Where do you want us to go to make preparations that you may eat the Passover?”¹³So he sent two of his disciples and said to them, “Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him,¹⁴and wherever he enters, say to the master of the house, ‘The Teacher asks, “Where is my guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?’”¹⁵Then he himself will show you a large room upstairs, furnished and ready. There make preparations for us.”¹⁶And so the disciples went out and came into the city, found just what he told them, and prepared the Passover.

¹⁷When it was evening, he arrived with the Twelve.¹⁸While they were reclining at the table and eating, Jesus said to them, “Truly I say to you that one of you who is eating with me will hand me over.”¹⁹They began to be upset and said one after another, “It isn’t me, is it?”²⁰Then he said to them, “It is one of the Twelve who dips into the bowl with me.²¹Yes, the Son of Man is going as it has been written about him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is handed over! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born.”

²²Then as they were eating, after Jesus had taken bread and blessed it, he broke it, gave it to them, and said, “Take it, this is my body.”²³And after he had taken the cup and given thanks, he gave it to them, and they all drank from it.²⁴He said to them, “This is my blood of the covenant that is poured out for many.²⁵Truly I say to you that I will no longer drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.”

John

13¹Before the festival of the Passover, because Jesus knew that his time had arrived to pass on from this world to his Father, because he had loved his own who were in the world, he loved them until the end.²Then, while the dinner was in progress and when the Adversary had already put it into the heart of Judas the son of Simon Iscariot to betray him,³because Jesus knew that the Father had put all things into his hands and that he had come from God and was returning to God,⁴he arose up from the feast, set aside his outer clothing, and, after picking up a linen cloth, tied it around himself.⁵Then he poured water into a wash basin and began to wash the feet of his disciples and dry them with the linen cloth that was tied around him.⁶He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, “Lord, are you washing my feet?”⁷Jesus answered and said to him, “You do not understand what I am doing just yet, but after these things you will come to understand.”⁸Peter said to him, “You will never wash my feet!” Jesus answered him, “If I do not wash you, you do not have a place with me.”⁹Simon Peter said to him, “Lord, not just my feet but also my hands and my head!”¹⁰Jesus said to him, “Whoever has bathed does not need to wash, except his feet, but is clean all over. You are clean but not all of you,”¹¹for he knew who was about to betray him. For this reason, he said, “You are not all clean.”

¹²So, when he had washed their feet, picked up his outer clothes, and reclined again at the table, Jesus asked them, “Do you know what I have done for you?¹³You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and you have spoken well, for that is what I am.¹⁴Then if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other’s feet.¹⁵You see, I have given a pattern to you: namely, you should also do just what I have done for you.¹⁶Truly, truly I say to you,

A servant is not greater than his master,
Nor is a messenger greater than he who sent him.

¹⁷ If you understand these things,

You are blessed if you do them.

¹⁸I am not speaking about all of you—I know those whom I have chosen—but that the scripture may be fulfilled: ‘He who has eaten bread with me has lifted up his heel against me.’ ¹⁹From now on, I am telling you this before it happens, so that when it does happen, you may believe that I AM. ²⁰Truly, truly I say to you,

Whoever receives one whom I send,
Receives me.
Whoever receives me,
Receives the one who sent me.”

²¹After Jesus had said these things, he was deeply upset in spirit, testified, and said, “Truly, truly I say to you, one of you will betray me.” ²²The disciples began looking at one another, uncertain as to which one he meant. ²³One of the disciples was reclining at the table, leaning in Jesus’ embrace—he was the one whom Jesus loved. ²⁴Simon Peter motioned to him to ask whom it was he was talking about. ²⁵So he, leaning back further against Jesus’ chest, asked, “Lord, who is it?” ²⁶Jesus answered, “He is the one for whom I will dip a piece of bread and to whom I will give it.” Then after he had dipped the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas son of Simon Iscariot. ²⁷After he had taken the piece of bread, Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him, “That which you are about to do, do quickly.” ²⁸No one reclining at the table knew why Jesus said this to him. ²⁹Some of them were thinking that because Judas kept the common purse, Jesus was saying to him, “Buy what we need for the festival” or that he might give something to the poor. ³⁰So, when he had taken the piece of bread, he left immediately, and it was night.

³¹And so when he had gone out, Jesus said,

“Now has the Son of Man been glorified,
And God has been glorified in him.
³² Since God has been glorified in him,
God will also glorify him in himself
And will glorify him right away.

³³Little children, I am with you for yet a short time. You will seek for me, yet as I said to ‘the Jews,’ even so now I say to you now: ‘Where I am going, you cannot come.’

³⁴ A new commandment I give to you:
Love one another.
Even as I have loved you
You, too, should love one another.
³⁵ In this will all know,
You are my disciples
If you have love one for one another.”

Excerpts from the Farewell Discourses: John 14:1–21; 15:1–17; 17:1–26

Following John’s account of the Last Supper, the Fourth Gospel features a series of extended discourses that Jesus delivered to his disciples, first in the Upper Room and then, apparently, as they walked from the city through the Qidron Valley to the Garden of Gethsemane. Often known as the “Farewell Discourses,” though delivered in the first instance to his closest followers, they are written in a way that they apply to disciples in every age. They conclude in John 17:1–26 with a powerful prayer of Jesus to the Father, known as either the “Intercessory Prayer” or sometimes as the “Great High Priestly Prayer.” As is often the case in John, the words of Jesus are frequently poetic or semi-poetic, which we have tried to indicate by laying out such lines in verse.

See the discussion in Greater Love Hath No Man, 121–23.

14¹ “Do not let your heart be troubled:
Believe in God,
Believe also in me.

²In my Father’s house are many places to live. If not, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you?
³Yet if I go and prepare a place for you, I will return and take you to myself, so that where I am, you may be also. ⁴You know the way to where I am going.” ⁵Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” ⁶Jesus said to him,

“I AM the Way,
And the Truth,
And the Life.
No one comes to the Father,
Except he comes through me.
7 If you had known me,
You would have known the Father.
From now on you know him,
And you have seen him.”

⁸Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and that is enough for us.” ⁹And Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you this long, and you have not known me, Philip?

Whoever has seen me,
He has seen the Father.

How are you saying, ‘Show us the Father’? ¹⁰Do you not believe

That I am in the Father,
And the Father is in me?
As to the things that I am saying to you
I am not speaking of myself,
But the Father who dwells in me,
He performs his works.
11 Believe in me,
That I am in the Father,
And the Father in me.
If you do not believe in me,
Believe because of the works themselves.

¹²Truly, truly I say to you,

Whoever believes in me,
The works that I do,
He will do.
And he will do greater works than these,
Because I am going to the Father.

¹³And whatever you ask in my name, that I will do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

14 If you ask me anything in my name,
I will do it.
15 “If you love me,
You will keep my commandments.
16 I will ask the Father,
And he will give you another Intercessor,
That he may be with you forever.
17 The Spirit of Truth,

Whom the world cannot receive,
 Because it neither sees nor knows him.
 You know him,
 Because he dwells in you,
 And he will be in you.
 18 I will not leave you as orphans,
 I am coming to you.
 19 In a little while the world will no longer see me,
 but you see me:
 Because I live,
 You, too, will live.

²⁰In that day you will know,

 I am in my Father
 And you in me,
 And I in you.
 21 Whoever has my commandments and keeps them,
 He is the one who loves me.
 Whoever loves me,
 Will be loved by my Father.
 I also will love him,
 And I will reveal myself to him.

15¹ I AM the True Vine,
 And my Father is the Vinedresser.
 2 Every branch in me that does not bear fruit,
 He cuts off,
 And every branch that does bear fruit,
 He prunes it,
 That it may bear more fruit.

³You are already pure through the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴Dwell in me as I dwell in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it dwells in the vine, neither can you unless you dwell in me.

5 I AM the Vine,
 You are the branches.
 Whoever dwells in me and I in him,
 This one bears much fruit.
 Because apart from me,
 You cannot do anything.
 6 Unless someone dwells in me,
 He is cast out and withers like a branch,
 People gather such branches,
 And they cast them into the fire
 And the branches burn.
 7 If you dwell in me,
 And my proclamation remains in you,
 Whatever you wish to ask,
 It will come about for you.
 8 In this has my Father been glorified,
 That you should bear much fruit,
 And should become my disciples.
 9 Just as my Father has loved me,
 Even so have I loved you.

Dwell in my love.
 10 If you keep my commandments,
 You will dwell in my love.
 Just as I have kept my Father's commandments,
 And I dwell in his love.
 11 I have spoken these things to you,
 That my joy may be in you,
 And that your joy may be complete.
 12 This is my commandment,
 That you love one another,
 Just as I have loved you.
 13 No one has greater love than this,
 Than to lay down his life for his friends.
 14 You are my friends,
 If you do whatever I command you.
 15 I am no longer calling you servants,
 because a servant does not know
 what his master is doing.
 I have called you friends,
 because everything I have heard from my Father
 I have made known to you.
 16 You did not choose me,
 but I chose you and appointed you
 to go out and bear fruit,
 and your fruit remains,
 so that whatever you ask the Father in my name
 he will give it to you.
 17 These things I command you:
 love one another.”

17¹ Jesus spoke these words, and after he had lifted up his eyes to heaven, he said,

“Father, the hour has come.
 Glorify your Son,
 That the Son may glorify you,
 2 Just as you have given him power over all flesh,
 To give eternal life to those,
 To each one that you have given him.
 3 Now this is eternal life,
 That they may know you, the only true God,
 And Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.
 4 I have glorified you on the earth,
 By completing the work that you gave me to do.
 5 And now glorify me in your presence, Father,
 With that glory I had with you before the world was.

 6 I have revealed your name
 to those people whom you gave me out of the world.
 They were yours,
 and you gave them to me,
 and they have kept your word.
 7 Now they know
 that everything you have given me
 comes from you.
 8 The sayings that you gave to me

I gave to them,
 and they received them
 and know with certainty
 that I have come from your side,
 and they have believed
 that you sent me.

9 I pray for them,
 I do not pray for the world,
 Rather I pray for those whom you have given to me,
 Because they are yours.

10 And all mine are yours,
 And yours mine,
 And I have been glorified in them.

11 I am no longer in the world,
 But they are in the world,
 And I am coming to you.
 Holy Father, keep them in your name,
 The name that you gave to me,
 That they may be one,
 Even as we are one.

12 When I was with them,
 I kept them in your name,
 The name you gave to me,
 And I protected them,
 And not one of them has perished,
 Except the son of destruction,
 That the scripture might be fulfilled.

13 But now I am coming to you,
 And I am speaking these things in the world,
 That they may have my joy,
 Joy fulfilled in them.

14 I have given them your word,
 And the world hated them,
 Because they are not of the world,
 Just as I am not of the world.

15 I am not praying that you take them out of the world,
 But that you preserve them from the Evil One.

16 They are not of the world,
 Just as I am not of the world.

17 Make them holy in your truth,
 Your word is truth.

18 Just as you sent me into the world,
 So, I have sent them into the world.

19 For them I make myself holy,
 That they, too, may be made holy in truth.

20 I am not praying for them alone,
 But also for those who will believe in me through their word,

21 That they may all be one,
 Just as you, Father, are in me,
 And I in you,

That they also may be one in us,
 That the world may believe that you sent me.

22 And the glory that you gave to me,
 I have given to them,
 That they may be one,
 Just as we are one.

23 I am in them, and you in me,
 That they might attain perfect unity,
 That the world may know that you sent me,
 And that you have loved them
 just as you have loved me.

24 Father, I want those whom you have given me
 to be with me where I am,
 that they may see my glory,
 which you have given me,
 because you have loved me
 from before the foundation of the world.

25 Righteous Father, the world has not known you,
 But I have known you,
 And they know that you sent me.

26 I have made known your name,
 And I will make it known
 So that the love with which you have loved me,
 May be in them,
 And I in them.

Gethsemane: Mark 14:26–42; Luke 22:39–46

Matthew and Luke largely parallel Mark's description of Jesus' experiences in Gethsemane, with Luke making some important changes and additions. Changes include reducing the number of times that Jesus prays and finds his three closest disciples sleeping, which reduces their implicit condemnation, and important additions include recording the appearance of an angel to strengthen him and his "sweating great clots of blood" as a result of his agony, which has led us to include the Lucan passages below.

See the discussion in Greater Love Hath No Man, 123–131.

Mark

14²⁶After they had sung a psalm, they left for the Mount of Olives. ²⁷Then Jesus said to them, "All of you will fall away because it is written, 'I will strike down the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.'²⁸Yet when I have been raised, I will go ahead of you to Galilee."²⁹But Peter said to him, "Even if everyone else falls away, I will not!"³⁰Jesus said to him, "Truly, I say to you, this very night, before the rooster crows twice, you yourself will deny me three

times.”³¹ But he kept insisting, “Even if it is necessary that I die with you, I will not deny you!” And they all kept saying the same thing.

³² Then they came to a place named Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, “Sit here while I pray.”³³ He took Peter, James, and John with him, and he began to feel overwhelmed and distressed. ³⁴ Then he said to them, “My soul is consumed with grief, to the point of death. Remain here and keep watch.”

³⁵ After he went a bit further, he fell on the ground and prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass him by. ³⁶ And he said, “Abba! Father! All things are possible for you. Take this cup from me, yet not what I want but what you desire.”

³⁷ Then he returned and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter, “Simon, are you sleeping? Were you not able to keep watch for a single hour? ³⁸ Keep watching and praying that you not come into trial. While the spirit is willing, the flesh is weak.”

³⁹ After he had gone back, he prayed again, saying the same thing.

⁴⁰ When he returned, he found them sleeping again, for their eyes were weighed down, and they did not know how to answer him.

⁴¹ He came back a third time and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and feeling drowsy? Enough! The hour has come. Look, the Son of Man is being delivered into the hands of sinful men. ⁴² Get up, let us go! The one who is betraying me is almost here.”

Luke

22³⁹ Then after he had gone out, he came, as was his habit, to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him. ⁴⁰ And when he had arrived at the place, he said to them, “Pray that you are not brought to trial.”

⁴¹ Next after he had withdrawn about a stone’s throw from them, kneeling down, he began to pray, ⁴² saying, “Father, if you are willing, take this cup away from me, but let it not be according to my will but yours. [⁴³ Then an angel from heaven appeared to him to strengthen him. ⁴⁴ And because he was in agony, he kept praying more fervently, and his sweat became like clots of blood falling onto the ground.]

⁴⁵ Then after he had arisen from prayer, when he had come to his disciples, he found them asleep because of grief. ⁴⁶ And he said to them, “Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you are not brought to trial.”

Arrested, Abandoned, Examined, and Denied: Mark 14:43–72; John 18:2–27

Matthew and Luke parallel Mark’s version of these events, with Luke shortening the account at times to lessen the failings of the disciples, even of Judas, and depicting a more compassionate Jesus, adding, for instance, that Jesus healed the ear of the high priest’s servant (see Luke 22:51). John adds considerable details, adding to the usual assumption that the source of or authority behind this Gospel, the Beloved Disciple, was in fact present at many of these events.

See the discussion in Greater Love Hath No Man, 131–38.

Mark

⁴³ Then right away, while he was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived together with a crowd armed with swords and clubs that had been sent by the chief priests, the experts at the law, and the elders. ⁴⁴ Now the one who was betraying him had given them a signal, saying, “The one whom I kiss is the one. Arrest him and lead him away securely.” ⁴⁵ So when he had arrived and had come straight up to him, he said, “Master!” and kissed him. ⁴⁶ Then they laid hands on him and arrested him. ⁴⁷ Then one of those who was standing by, after he had drawn a sword, struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear. ⁴⁸ In response Jesus said to them, “Have you come with swords and clubs to arrest me as

you would against a bandit? ⁴⁹I was right in front of you every day, teaching in the temple, and you did not lay hold of me—but let the scriptures be fulfilled.”

⁵⁰Then they all fled, abandoning him. ⁵¹But one young man, who was wearing a light linen shirt around his otherwise naked body, began following him. They laid hold of him, ⁵²but he, by slipping out of the light shirt, fled from them wearing nothing at all.

⁵³Then they led Jesus to the high priest, and all the chief priests, elders, and experts at the law gathered together. ⁵⁴Peter followed him at a distance right up into the courtyard of the high priest, and he took a seat with the guards and warmed himself by the fire.

⁵⁵The chief priests and the entire Sanhedrin were seeking testimony against Jesus in order to put him to death, but they were not finding any. ⁵⁶For many kept giving false testimony against him, but their testimonies were not consistent. ⁵⁷Some standing up gave false testimony against him, saying, ⁵⁸“We heard him saying, ‘I will destroy this temple built by human hands, and in three days I will build another not built by human hands.’” ⁵⁹But even in this their testimony was not consistent. ⁶⁰So the high priest, after he stood up in the middle of the assembly, asked Jesus, saying, ⁶¹“Are you not giving any answer? What is this that these men are testifying against you?” ⁶¹But he was silent and did not give any answer. Again the high priest asked him and said to him, “Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?” ⁶²And Jesus said, “I AM. And you will see ‘the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, coming with the clouds of heaven.’” ⁶³But the high priest, after he had torn his tunic, said, “What witnesses do we need anymore? ⁶⁴You have heard blasphemy! What is your decision?” Then they all condemned him as one deserving of death. ⁶⁵Some of them started spitting on him, blindfolding his face and striking him with their fists, and saying to him, “Prophecy!” And their retainers took him with slaps on the face.

⁶⁶Then while Peter was down below in the courtyard, one of the servant girls of the high priest came, ⁶⁷and when she saw Peter warming himself, as she looked at him she said, “You, too, were with Jesus, the man from Nazareth!” ⁶⁸But he denied it, saying, “I neither know nor understand what you are talking about!” And he went out into the forecourt, [and the rooster crowed.] ⁶⁹And the maid, seeing him again, began to say to those standing around, “This man is one of them!” ⁷⁰But he denied it again. Then a little while later, those standing around began to say again to Peter, “Certainly you are one of them, for you, too, are a Galilean.” ⁷¹But he began to curse and swear an oath, “I do not know this man whom you are talking about.” ⁷²Right then the rooster crowed a second time, and Peter remembered the prediction, how Jesus had said to him, “Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times.” Then when he reflected on this, he began to weep.

John

18²Judas, who was betraying him, knew the place, because Jesus often met with his disciples there. ³So Judas, after he had put together a contingent of retainers from both the chief priests and Pharisees, came there with lamps, torches, and weapons.

⁴Then Jesus, because he knew everything that was going to happen to him, went out and said to them, “Whom are you looking for?” ⁵They answered him, “Jesus, the man of Nazareth.” Jesus said, “I AM he.” Judas also, who was betraying him, was standing with them. ⁶So when he said to them, “I AM!” they withdrew backwards and fell on the ground. ⁷Again, he asked them, “Whom are you looking for?” And they said, “Jesus, the man of Nazareth.” ⁸Jesus answered, “I told you, ‘I AM he!’ So if you are looking for me, let these men go away.” ⁹This was so the word that he had said could be fulfilled, “Of those whom you have given me I have not lost any.” ¹⁰Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the servant of the high priest, and he cut off his right ear. Now the name of the servant was Malchus. ¹¹Then Jesus said to Peter, “Put your sword in its sheath! Should I not drink the cup that the Father has given to me?”

¹²Then the contingent, both its commander and the retainers of “the Jews,” arrested Jesus and bound him. ¹³They took him first to Annas, for he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was the high priest that year. ¹⁴Now Caiaphas was the one who had advised “the Jews” that it was advantageous for one man to die for the people.

¹⁵Now Simon Peter and another disciple were following Jesus. That disciple was an acquaintance of the high priest, and he went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest. ¹⁶Peter, however, stood outside at the gate. Then the other disciple, the acquaintance of the high priest, went and spoke to the woman stationed at the gate and brought Peter in.

¹⁷Then the servant girl on duty at the gate said to Peter, “You are also one of this man’s disciples, aren’t you?” He said, “I am not.” ¹⁸Now the servants and guards who were standing there had made a charcoal fire, because it was cold, and they were warming themselves. Peter, too, was standing with them and warming himself.

¹⁹Meanwhile the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching. ²⁰Jesus answered him, “I have spoken openly to the world—I always taught in synagogue and in the temple, where all ‘the Jews’ assemble, and I did not speak anything secretly. ²¹Why are you asking me? Ask those who have heard what I said to them. Look, they know what I said.” ²²After he had said these things, one of the retainers standing there slapped Jesus in the face, saying, “Is that the way you answer the high priest?” ²³Jesus responded to him, “If I have spoken badly, give evidence of the wrong. If I spoke correctly, why are you beating me?” ²⁴Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas, the high priest.

²⁵Now Simon Peter was standing there and warming himself. Then they said to him, “Aren’t you also one of his disciples?” He denied and said, “I am not.” ²⁶One of the servants of the high priest, who was a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, said, “Did I not see you in the garden with him?” ²⁷Then Peter denied again, and right away the rooster crowed.

[Return to Bookmarks](#) §

Good Friday

Episodes

- Jesus in the Hands of the Romans (Mark 15:1–20; parallels Matt 27:1–31; Luke 23:1–25. John 18:28–19:16)
- Jesus Is Crucified; Activities on the Cross (Mark 15:21–32; parallels Matthew 27:32–44; Luke 23:26–43. John 19:17–24)
- Jesus’ Last Moments and Words (Mark 15:33–36; parallels Matthew 27:45–49; Luke 23:44. John 19:25–29)
- The Death of Jesus (Mark 15:37–41; parallels Matthew 27:50–56; Luke 23:45–49. John 19:30–37)
- The Burial of Jesus (Mark 15:42–47; parallels Matthew 27:57–66; Luke 23:50–56. John 19:38–42)

For devotional ideas for this day, see *Greater Love Hath No Man*, 297–300.

Jesus Tried and Condemned: Mark 15:1–15; Matthew 27:3–10; Luke 23:4–12; John 18:28–19:16

Mark’s account of Jesus’ trial before the Roman governor Pontius Pilate is supplemented by the other Synoptics, each of which adds episodes lacking in the Marcan original. Matthew adds an account of the remorse and suicide of Judas Iscariot. Luke provides the story of Jesus’ examination by Herod Antipas, the tetrarch of Galilee who was in Jerusalem for Passover. John provides a longer account of the Roman trial, which includes an important exchange between Pilate and Jesus.

See the discussion in *Greater Love Hath No Man*, 148–165.

Mark

15 ¹Then first thing in the morning, when the chief priests had reached a decision together with the elders, the experts at the law, and the whole Sanhedrin, after they had bound Jesus, they led him away and handed him over to Pilate. ²Pilate asked him, “Are you the king of the Jews?” In response he said, “That is what you say.” ³The chief priests then

began accusing him of many things. ⁴So Pilate asked him again, “Are you not giving any response? Look at how many accusations they are making against you!” ⁵Yet Jesus gave no further response, which astonished Pilate.

⁶At each festival Pilate used to release a prisoner, whomever they requested. ⁷Now a man called Barabbas was in prison with revolutionaries who had committed murder during an uprising. ⁸When the crowd had arrived, they began asking that he do what he had always done for them. ⁹Pilate answered them, saying, “Do you want me to release for you the king of the Jews?” ¹⁰for he understood that the chief priests had handed Jesus over out of envy. ¹¹The chief priests, however, incited the crowd to have Pilate release Barabbas to them instead.

¹²So in response Pilate said to them again, “What, then, do you want me to do with him whom you call the king of the Jews?” ¹³They cried out in turn, “Crucify him!” ¹⁴Pilate said, “Why, what crime has he committed?” Yet they cried out even more loudly, “Crucify him!” ¹⁵Then Pilate, because he wanted to offer a favor to the crowd, released Barabbas to them, and after having Jesus scourged, he handed him over to be crucified.

Matthew

27³When Judas, who had handed Jesus over, saw that he was condemned, he returned the thirty silver pieces to the chief priests and elders, because he regretted it, ⁴saying, “I have sinned by handing over innocent blood!” They said to him, “What concern is that to us? See to it yourself!” ⁵After he had thrown the silver pieces into the temple, he withdrew, and after he had gone out, he hanged himself. ⁶Then the chief priests, when they had picked up the silver pieces, said, “Putting these into the temple treasury is not permitted, for they are the reward for a bloody deed.” ⁷So they reached the decision to buy the potter’s field with the money to use as a burial place for foreigners. ⁸Because of this, that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. ⁹Then was that which was said through Jeremiah the prophet fulfilled, when he said, “And they took thirty silver pieces, the price set upon him by the children of Israel, ¹⁰and they used them to buy the potter’s field, just as the Lord had directed me.”

Luke

23⁴Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, “I do not find any grounds for legal action against this man.” ⁵But they insisted, saying, “He has been inciting the people with his teaching throughout all Judea, beginning in Galilee even to right here.” ⁶When Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. ⁷After he learned that he was from Herod’s jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who was himself in Jerusalem during those days.

⁸When Herod saw Jesus, he was delighted, for he had wanted to see him for a long time because he had heard about him and wanted to see some miraculous sign performed by him. ⁹He questioned him at length, but Jesus did not give him any answer. ¹⁰But the chief priests and the experts at the law had arrayed themselves against Jesus, accusing him vehemently. ¹¹After Herod, together with his guards, had treated him with disdain, ridiculed him, and dressed him in brightly shining clothing, they sent him back to Pilate. ¹²Now Pilate and Herod became friendly with each other that day, for they had been in a state of enmity with each other before this.

John

18²⁸Then they led Jesus from the house of Caiaphas to the governor’s official residence. It was morning, and they themselves did not want to go into the governor’s residence so they could avoid making themselves ritually impure and still eat the Passover. ²⁹Therefore, Pilate went out to them and said, “What charge are you bringing against this man?” ³⁰They answered and said to him, “If he were not someone who had done something wrong, we would not have handed him over to you.” ³¹And so Pilate said to them, “Take him yourselves and judge him according to your law.” “The Jews” said, “We are not permitted to put anyone to death,” ³²so that the word of Jesus might be fulfilled that he spoke to indicate by what kind of death he was going to die.

³³Then Pilate went back into the governor’s residence, summoned Jesus, and said to him, “Are you the king of the Jews?” ³⁴Jesus answered, “Are you saying this on your own, or did others tell you about me?” ³⁵Pilate responded, “I am not a Jew, am I? Your own people and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?” ³⁶Jesus replied, “My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my retainers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to ‘the Jews.’ Yet in truth my kingdom is not from here.” ³⁷Pilate said to him, “So you are a

king, then?” Jesus responded, “You are saying that I am a king. I was born for this, and for this I came into the world: to bear witness to the truth. Every person who is on the side of truth hears my voice.” ³⁸Pilate said to him, “What is truth?”

After he had said this, he went back to “the Jews” and said to them, “I do not find any grounds for legal complaint against him. ³⁹Yet you have a custom that I release one person to you during the Passover. Do you want me, then, to release to you the king of the Jews?” ⁴⁰They shouted back, saying, “Not this man! Barabbas instead!” Now Barabbas was an insurgent.

19 ¹So Pilate took Jesus and had him whipped. ²Then the soldiers, after they had woven a crown out of thorns, put it on his head and dressed him in a purple robe. ³They kept coming up to him and saying, “Hail, king of the Jews!” and slapping him in the face. ⁴Pilate came back out and said to them, “Look, I am bringing him back out to you so that you may know that I have found no grounds for complaint against him.” ⁵Jesus came out, wearing the thorny crown and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, “Look at the man!”

⁶When the chief priests and their retainers saw him, they cried out, saying, “Crucify him, crucify him!” Pilate said to them, “You take him and crucify him. I find no grounds for complaint against him.” ⁷“The Jews” responded to him, “We have a law, and according to our law, he ought to die because he pretended to be the Son of God.” ⁸When Pilate heard this, he grew more afraid.

⁹Then he went back into the governor’s residence and said to Jesus, “Where are you from?” But Jesus did not give him an answer. ¹⁰So Pilate said to him, “Are you not speaking to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you?” ¹¹Jesus responded,

“You do not have any authority over me
except what was given to you from above.
For this reason, the one who handed me over to you
has the greater sin.”

¹²From that point on, Pilate kept trying to release Jesus, but “the Jews” shouted, saying, “If you release him, you are not a friend of Caesar. Everyone who pretends to be a king acts in opposition to Caesar.” ¹³When Pilate had heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the tribunal platform in a place called “Strewn Stones,” or in Aramaic *Gabbatha*. ¹⁴Now it was the day of preparation for the Passover, about noon, and he said to “the Jews,” “Look at your king!” ¹⁵They shouted, “Take him away, take him away! Crucify him!” Pilate said to them, “Should I crucify your king?” The chief priests responded, “We have no king except for Caesar.” ¹⁶So he handed him over to them to be crucified, and they took charge of Jesus.

The Crucifixion: Mark 15:16–37; Luke 23:27–46; John 19:17–37

Mark’s concise account of Jesus’ crucifixion serves as the foundation for the Synoptic portrayal of the episode, yet while Matthew largely follows the Marcan prototype, Luke makes important additions. As always, the Johannine account stands apart, largely because of its high Christology and the symbolism that it marshals.

See the discussion in Greater Love Hath No Man, 165–178.

Mark

15 ¹⁶Then the soldiers led him into the courtyard of the governor’s residence, and they called together the entire cohort. ¹⁷Next they clothed him in purple and, after weaving a crown out of thorns, they put it on him ¹⁸and began to salute him, “Hail, king of the Jews!” ¹⁹They kept striking him on the head with a staff and spitting on him, and, kneeling down, they bowed before him. ²⁰After they had mocked him, they stripped the purple off of him and dressed him in his own clothes. Then they led him out to crucify him.

²¹They pressed into service a certain man passing by who was coming in from the country, Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry his cross. ²²Then they brought him to the place *Golgotha*, which is translated “The Place of the Skull.” ²³Next they gave him some wine mixed with myrrh, but he would not take it. ²⁴So they crucified him, and they divided his articles of clothing, casting lots for them to see who would take what.

²⁵It was at nine o’clock when they crucified him. ²⁶The inscription of the charge against him that had been written was “The King of the Jews.” ²⁷And with him they crucified two insurgents, one on his right hand and one on his left. ²⁸[So the scripture was fulfilled that read, “And he was counted among the criminals.] ²⁹Then those who were passing by demeaned him, shaking their heads and saying, “Ha! You who would destroy the temple and build it within three days! ³⁰Save yourself by coming down from the cross!” ³¹In the same way the chief priests and the experts of the law, mocking him among themselves, said, “He saved others. He cannot save himself!” ³²Let this Christ, the king of Israel, now come down from the cross, that we may see and believe.” Even those who had been crucified with him started insulting him.

³³When it was noon, darkness arose over the whole earth and lasted until three o’clock. ³⁴At three o’clock, Jesus cried out with a loud voice, *Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani*, which translated is, “My God, my God, why have you deserted me?” ³⁵Some of those who were standing nearby, when they heard this, said, “Look! He is calling Elijah!” ³⁶And someone, running to fill a sponge with wine vinegar, by putting it on a reed, gave him a drink, saying, “Wait, let us see whether Elijah comes to take him down.” ³⁷Then Jesus, after letting out a great cry, drew his last breath.

³⁸And the veil of the temple was torn into two, from the top to the bottom. ³⁹Now a centurion who was facing him, when he saw how he had drawn his last breath, said, “Truly this man was the Son of God!” ⁴⁰There were also women watching at a distance, among whom were Mary of Magdala, Mary the mother of the younger James and Joses, and Salome. ⁴¹They had followed and served him when he was in Galilee. Indeed, many other women had accompanied him to Jerusalem.

Luke

23 ²⁷A great crowd followed him, including women who beat their breasts and bewailed him. ²⁸But Jesus, when he turned to them, said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not mourn for me, only mourn for yourselves and for your children! ²⁹For look, the days are coming when they will say, ‘Blessed are the barren, the wombs that have not given birth, and the breasts that have not nursed.’ ³⁰At that time they will begin saying to the mountains, ‘Fall on us!’ and to the hills, ‘Cover us up!’ ³¹for if they do these things to a green tree, what will happen to a dry one?”

³²Two other criminals were also led there to be executed with him. ³³When they came to the place that was called “The Skull,” there they crucified him and the criminals, one on the right and the other on the left. ³⁴[Then Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”] And they cast lots to divide his clothing. ³⁵The people stood by, watching, but the leaders ridiculed him, saying, “He saved others, let him save himself if he is the Anointed of God, the Chosen One!” ³⁶The soldiers also mocked him by coming up to him and offering him wine vinegar ³⁷and saying, “If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself!” ³⁸There was a superscription over him, “This is the King of the Jews.”

³⁹One of the criminals who had been hung there insulted him, saying, “You are not the Christ, are you? Save yourself and us!” ⁴⁰But the other, rebuking him in response, said, “Do you not fear God, since you are under the same condemnation? ⁴¹We have been condemned justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for what we have done, but this man has done nothing wrong.” ⁴²Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” ⁴³Jesus said to him, “Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.”

⁴⁴By this time it was about noon, and darkness arose over the whole earth until three o’clock. ⁴⁵When the sun ceased shining, the veil of the temple was torn in the middle. ⁴⁶Jesus, after he had cried out with a loud voice, said, “Father, into your hands I entrust my spirit.” After he had said this, he drew his last breath.

John

19 ¹⁷Carrying his own cross, Jesus came to what is called The Place of the Skull, which is called *Golgotha* in Aramaic. ¹⁸There they crucified him and with him two others, one on each side and Jesus in the middle. ¹⁹Then Pilate wrote a notice and put it on the cross. That which was written was, “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.” ²⁰Many of “the Jews” read this notice, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and it was written in Aramaic,

Latin, and Greek. ²¹So the chief priests of “the Jews” started to say to Pilate, “Do not write ‘the King of the Jews’ but ‘This man said, I am the King of the Jews.’” ²²Pilate responded, “What I have written, I have written.”

²³Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier. Likewise, they took his inner tunic, and the tunic was seamless, woven from the top all the way through.

²⁴Therefore they said to each other, “Let’s not tear it. Rather, let us cast lots for it to decide whose it shall be.” This was so the scripture could be fulfilled, which says, “They divided my clothing for themselves, and they cast lots for my apparel.” These are the things that the soldiers did.

²⁵Next to the cross stood the mother of Jesus, the sister of his mother, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala.

²⁶When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, “Woman, look, your son!” ²⁷Then he said to the disciple, “Look, your mother!” From that hour the disciple took her into his own household.

²⁸After this, because Jesus knew that everything had been completed, in order that the scripture might be fulfilled, said, “I am thirsty.” ²⁹A vessel of wine vinegar was standing there, so after they put a sponge full of wine vinegar on a hyssop, they held it to his mouth. ³⁰When Jesus had taken the wine vinegar, he said, “It is completed!” and, after bowing his head, he handed over his spirit.

³¹Then “the Jews,” because it was a preparation day, to avoid having the bodies remain on the cross during the Sabbath—for the day was an especially important Sabbath—asked Pilate that their legs be broken and their bodies removed. ³²So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him. ³³But after they came to Jesus, and when they saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. ³⁴Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and immediately blood and water flowed out. ³⁵The one who saw this has borne witness, and his witness is trustworthy. He knows that he speaks the truth so that you, too, may continue to believe. ³⁶These things happened so that the scripture might be fulfilled, “No bone of his shall be broken.” ³⁷And another scripture reads, “They will look on him whom they have pierced.”

The Burial: Mark 15:42–47; John 19:38–42

See the discussion in Greater Love Hath No Man, 178–182.

Mark

15⁴²Now as it was already evening, because it was the day of preparation, which is the day before the Sabbath, ⁴³Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent member of the council, who was himself anticipating the Kingdom of God, came and, mustering his courage, went in to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. ⁴⁴Now Pilate was amazed that he was already dead, so after summoning the centurion, he asked whether Jesus had been dead for long. ⁴⁵When he learned from the centurion that he had been, he granted the corpse to Joseph.

⁴⁶After he had bought a piece of linen cloth and taken the body down from the cross, Joseph wrapped it in the cloth and placed it in a tomb that had been hewn from the rock. Then he rolled a stone in front of the tomb’s entrance. ⁴⁷Mary of Magdala and Mary the mother of Joseph were watching where he was laid.

John

19³⁸After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple, although secretly due to his fear of “the Jews,” asked Pilate to allow him to take the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave his permission. And so, he came and removed his body. ³⁹Nicodemus, who was the one who first came to Jesus by night, came too, bringing an ointment compounded from myrrh and aloes weighing about one hundred pounds. ⁴⁰So they took the body of Jesus and bound it with linen cloths together with spices as was the custom for “the Jews” to prepare a body for burial.

⁴¹There was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. ⁴²So they laid Jesus there on account of the preparation day of “the Jews,” because the tomb was close by.

[Return to Bookmarks](#) §

Saturday

Episodes

- A Guard is Placed at the Tomb (Matthew 27:62–66)
- Darkness Prevails among the Nephites (3 Nephi 9–10)
- Jesus Goes to the Spirit World and Organizes His Work There (1 Peter 3:18–19, 4:6; D&C 138)

For devotional ideas for this day, see Greater Love Hath No Man, 300–301.

Selected Texts and Translations: Matthew 27:62–66; 1 Peter 3:18–19, 4:6; D&C 138:11–23, 30–39

Matthew’s short treatment of the guard and seal placed upon the tomb is unique in the Gospel narratives. Although it is sometimes seen in the polemical context of the Matthean community’s struggle with emerging Rabbinic Judaism in the period immediately after the destruction of the temple in A.D. 70, there is no need to doubt its basic historicity.⁹ The letter of 1 Peter deals largely with the alienation and growing persecution that early Christians felt in the face of broader pagan society; the two short excerpts presented here are part of a larger discussion on how Christians should respond in the face of such hostility (3:13–4:19). As noted above, D&C 138 is a Latter-day vision in October 1918 to Joseph F. Smith, which was placed at the end of the Doctrine and Covenants in 1978.

See the discussion in Greater Love Hath No Man, 196–204.

Matthew

27⁶²On the next day, which was the day after the preparation day, the chief priests and the Pharisees were gathered before Pilate, ⁶³saying, “Sir, we remember that this impostor while he was still alive say, ‘After three days, I will be raised.’ ⁶⁴Accordingly, order that the tomb be made secure until the third day, so that his disciples not come, steal the body, and tell the people, ‘He was raised from the dead!’ Then the last deception will be worse than the first.” ⁶⁵Pilate said to them, “Take a guard. Go, make it as secure as you can.” ⁶⁶So, after they went, they made the tomb secure with the guard, setting a seal on the stone.

1 Peter

3¹⁸For even Christ suffered once for sins, a righteous man for the unrighteous, to bring you to God, having been put to death in the flesh yet made alive in the spirit, ¹⁹in which he, having gone among the spirits in prison, preached ²⁰to those who had once been disobedient while God waited patiently in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared in which a few people—that is just eight souls—were brought safely through the water.

4⁶For this reason the gospel was preached even to the dead, so that they might be judged in the flesh as humans are but live in the spirit as God does.

⁹ Nolland, *Gospel of Matthew*, 1235.

Doctrine and Covenants

138 ¹¹As I pondered over these things which are written, the eyes of my understanding were opened, and the Spirit of the Lord rested upon me, and I saw the hosts of the dead, both small and great. ¹²And there were gathered together in one place an innumerable company of the spirits of the just, who had been faithful in the testimony of Jesus while they lived in mortality; ¹³And who had offered sacrifice in the similitude of the great sacrifice of the Son of God, and had suffered tribulation in their Redeemer's name. ¹⁴All these had departed the mortal life, firm in the hope of a glorious resurrection, through the grace of God the Father and his Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ. ¹⁵I beheld that they were filled with joy and gladness, and were rejoicing together because the day of their deliverance was at hand. ¹⁶They were assembled awaiting the advent of the Son of God into the spirit world, to declare their redemption from the bands of death. ¹⁷Their sleeping dust was to be restored unto its perfect frame, bone to his bone, and the sinews and the flesh upon them, the spirit and the body to be united never again to be divided, that they might receive a fulness of joy.

¹⁸While this vast multitude waited and conversed, rejoicing in the hour of their deliverance from the chains of death, the Son of God appeared, declaring liberty to the captives who had been faithful; ¹⁹And there he preached to them the everlasting gospel, the doctrine of the resurrection and the redemption of mankind from the fall, and from individual sins on conditions of repentance. ²⁰But unto the wicked he did not go, and among the ungodly and the unrepentant who had defiled themselves while in the flesh, his voice was not raised; ²¹Neither did the rebellious who rejected the testimonies and the warnings of the ancient prophets behold his presence, nor look upon his face. ²²Where these were, darkness reigned, but among the righteous there was peace; ²³And the saints rejoiced in their redemption, and bowed the knee and acknowledged the Son of God as their Redeemer and Deliverer from death and the chains of hell.

³⁰But behold, from among the righteous, he organized his forces and appointed messengers, clothed with power and authority, and commissioned them to go forth and carry the light of the gospel to them that were in darkness, even to fall the spirits of men; and thus was the gospel preached to the dead. ³¹And the chosen messengers went forth to declare the acceptable day of the Lord and proclaim liberty to the captives who were bound, even unto all who would repent of their sins and receive the gospel. ³²Thus was the gospel preached to those who had died in their sins, without a knowledge of the truth, or in transgression, having rejected the prophets. ³³These were taught faith in God, repentance from sin, vicarious baptism for the remission of sins, the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, ³⁴And all other principles of the gospel that were necessary for them to know in order to qualify themselves that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit. ³⁵And so it was made known among the dead, both small and great, the unrighteous as well as the faithful, that redemption had been wrought through the sacrifice of the Son of God upon the cross.

³⁶Thus was it made known that our Redeemer spent his time during his sojourn in the world of spirits, instructing and preparing the faithful spirits of the prophets who had testified of him in the flesh; ³⁷That they might carry the message of redemption unto all the dead, unto whom he could not go personally, because of their rebellion and transgression, that they through the ministration of his servants might also hear his words. ³⁸Among the great and mighty ones who were assembled in this vast congregation of the righteous were Father Adam, the Ancient of Days and father of all, ³⁹And our glorious Mother Eve, with many of her faithful daughters who had lived through the ages and worshiped the true and living God.

[Return to Bookmarks](#) §

Easter Sunday

Episodes

- The Women and the Empty Tomb (Mark 16:1–8; parallels Matthew 28:1–10; Luke 24:1–11)
- Mary Magdalene, Peter, and the Beloved Disciple at the Tomb (Luke 24:12; John 20:1–10)
- Mary Magdalene and the Risen Lord (John 20:11–18; Mark 16:9–11^[Longer Ending])
- Two Disciples on the Road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13–35; Mark 16:12–13^[Longer Ending])
- First Appearances to the Disciples in Jerusalem (Luke 24:36–48; parallel Mark 16:14^[Longer Ending]; John 20:20–25)
- Jesus Later Appears to Thomas (John 20:26–29)
- The Purpose of the Gospel according to John (John 20:30–31)

For devotional ideas for this day, see Greater Love Hath No Man, 301–302.

The Women at the Tomb: Mark 16:1–8; Matthew 28:1–15; Luke 24:1–11

Because of the important contributions of each of the Synoptic accounts of the empty tomb, we have included all three here. The earliest account from Mark is also—at least in the most secure manuscript traditions—the shortest, leaving the women who came to the tomb fleeing in amazement. Matthew’s version provides the additional detail of an angel descending to remove the stone that blocked the tomb’s entrance, frightening the guards. It also records an appearance of the Risen Lord as the women went to tell the other disciples that the tomb was empty. In many ways Luke’s is the most refined, and it also includes an element that we will see is common to John’s account, that of Peter’s visit to the empty tomb.

See the discussion in Greater Love Hath No Man, 212–218.

Mark

16¹Now when the Sabbath was over, Mary of Magdala, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go and anoint him. ²Then very early in the morning on the first day of the week, after the sun had risen, they came to the tomb. ³They began to say to each other, “Who will remove the stone from the entrance of the tomb for us?” ⁴Yet when they looked up, they saw that the stone—which was very large—had already been dislodged. ⁵Then after they had gone into the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a long white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed. ⁶But he said to them, “Don’t be alarmed! You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen and is not here! See the place where they laid him. ⁷Now go, tell his disciples, and Peter, that he is going ahead of you to Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.” ⁸Then, having gone out of the tomb, they fled, for they were out of their wits with amazement, and they did not say anything to anyone, because they were afraid.

Matthew

28¹After the Sabbath, as the first day of the week dawned, Mary of Magdala and the other Mary came to see the tomb. ²Then look, a great earthquake occurred! For an angel of the Lord, who had descended from heaven and come to the tomb, dislodged the stone and sat on top of it. ³Now his face was like lightning, and his clothing was as white as snow. ⁴The men who were on guard were shaken out of fear of him, and they became like dead men. In response, the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid! I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. ⁶He is not here, for he has risen just as he said. Come, see the place where he lay! ⁷Now go quickly and tell his disciples that he has been raised from the dead, and look, he is going ahead of you into Galilee! There you will see him. Look, I have told you!”

⁸Then after they had quickly left the tomb, with both fear and great joy they ran to make the proclamation to his disciples. ⁹Then look, Jesus met them, saying “Rejoice!” When they came up to him, they took hold of his feet and worshipped him. ¹⁰Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid. Go, proclaim to my brothers that they should go to Galilee. There they will see me.”

¹¹Now as they were going, look, when some of the guard had gone into the city, they reported to the chief priests all that had happened. ¹²After the chief priests had gathered with the elders and made a plan, they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers, ¹³saying, “This is what you should say: When his disciples came during the night, they stole him while we were sleeping,” ¹⁴and if this is heard by the governor, we will reassure him and keep you out of trouble.” ¹⁵So after they had taken the money, they did as they had been directed, and this story has been spread widely among the Jews until today.

Luke

24¹On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came to the tomb, bringing the spices that they had prepared. ²Then they found that the stone had been dislodged from the tomb. ³Yet when they entered it, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁴While they were uncertain as to what this meant, look, two men in gleaming clothing suddenly stood near them. ⁵Now while the women were afraid and were bowing their faces to the ground, the men said to them, “Why are you looking for one who is alive among the dead? ⁶He is not here but has risen! Remember what he said to you when he was still in Galilee, ⁷saying, ‘The Son of Man must be handed over into the power of sinful men, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again.’” ⁸Then they remembered his predictions.

⁹When they had returned from the tomb, they proclaimed all these things to the Eleven and all the others. ¹⁰Now they were Mary of Magdala, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them—they told the apostles, ¹¹but these reports seemed to them to be nonsense, and they refused to believe them. ¹²Peter, however, got up and ran to the tomb, but when he stooped down to look, he only saw the linen wrappings. Then he went home, wondering to himself about what had happened.

Mary Magdalene, the Empty Tomb, and the Risen Lord: John 20:1–18

John’s account of the events at the empty tomb that first Easter morning is different enough to warrant particular attention. First, it portrays Mary of Magdala coming to the tomb alone, without the other women. She informs the male disciples, which leads Peter and the Beloved Disciple to come to the tomb (although we have seen that Luke preserves an independent memory of Peter visiting the burial site). Second, it records the moving encounter of Mary with the Risen Lord, a unique scene with particular power and significant interpretive potential.

See the discussion in Greater Love Hath No Man, 218–224.

20¹On the first day of the week, early in the morning Mary of Magdala came to the tomb when it was yet dark, and she saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. ²She ran and came to Simon Peter and to the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.”

³So Peter and the other disciple set out and came to the tomb. ⁴Now the two had been running together, but the other disciple ran more quickly than Peter and arrived at the tomb first. ⁵After he had stooped down to look, he saw the linen wrappings lying there, though he did not go in. ⁶Then Simon Peter, who had been following him, arrived, went into the tomb, and saw the linen wrappings lying there ⁷as well as the face cloth, which had been on his head, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself. ⁸Then the other disciple, who had arrived at the tomb first, also went in, and he both saw and believed, ⁹for they had not known before this time the scripture that he must rise again from the dead. ¹⁰Then the disciples went back to where they had been staying.

¹¹Mary, however, remained standing there outside the tomb, mourning. As she mourned, she stooped to look into the tomb ¹²and saw two angels in white sitting there, one at the head and one at the feet, where the body of Jesus had been

lying. ¹³They said to her, “Woman, why are you mourning?” She said to them, “They have taken my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.”

¹⁴After she had said these things, she turned herself around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you mourning? Whom are you looking for?” She, thinking that he was the gardener, said to him, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him.”

¹⁶Jesus said to her, “Mary!” After she turned towards him, she said in Aramaic, “Rabbouni!” that is to say, “My Master!”

¹⁷Jesus said to her, “Stop clinging to me! I have not yet ascended to my Father. Go to my brothers and sisters and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and to your God.’”

¹⁸Mary of Magdala went, proclaiming to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord” and the things he had said to her.

Two Disciples on the Road to Emmaus: Luke 24:13–35

Unique to Luke is the episode about two disciples who encounter the Risen Lord on the road to Emmaus. This account is significant because, like the story about Mary of Magdala, it emphasizes the witness of everyday disciples rather than just the special apostolic witnesses of the remaining members of the Twelve.

See the discussion in Greater Love Hath No Man, 224–28.

24¹³Now look, that same day two of them were traveling to a village named Emmaus, which was about seven miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁴and they were talking together about all these things that had happened. ¹⁵Then it came about that while they were talking together and discussing it, Jesus himself, after he had come up to them, started walking with them. ¹⁶But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. ¹⁷He said to them, “What are these things that you are discussing as you walk along?” Then they stood still, looking downcast. ¹⁸One of them, Cleopas by name, said to him in response, “Are you only a visitor in Jerusalem, one who does not even know what has happened these past days?”

¹⁹Then he asked them, “What sort of things?” They answered him, “All about Jesus from Nazareth, who was a prophet powerful in deed and in word before God and all the people. ²⁰Also, how our chief priests and rulers handed him over to a death sentence and crucified him, ²¹but we had been hoping that he himself was about to redeem Israel. Yet as it happens, it is now the third day since all these things happened. ²²But now, some women from our group have confused us. When they were at the tomb early in the morning ²³and did not find his body there, they came back, telling us they had even seen a vision of angels, who told them that he was alive! ²⁴And some of those who were with us went to the tomb, and they found it just as they women had described, but they did not see him.”

²⁵Then he himself said to them, “O, how foolish you are and slow in heart to believe all the things that the prophets have declared! ²⁶Didn’t the Christ need to suffer these things to enter into his glory?” ²⁷Then, beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he began to explain everything about himself in the scriptures.

²⁸Then they came up to the village where they had been heading, but he walked as if he would go farther. ²⁹But they prevailed upon him, saying, “Please stay with us, because it is nearly evening and the day is waning.” So, he went inside to stay with them. ³⁰And it came about that while he was reclining at dinner with them, after he took some bread, he blessed it, and after he broke it, he gave it to them. ³¹Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him, but he vanished from their sight. ³²So they said to each other, “Weren’t our hearts burning within us as he spoke to us along the road, and as he opened up the meaning of the scriptures to us?”

³³Getting up that very hour, they returned to Jerusalem and found the Eleven and those who were with them gathered together, ³⁴who told them, “The Lord has arisen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!” ³⁵And these men, for their part, related all the things that had transpired along the road, and especially how he was recognized by them in the breaking of bread.

First Appearances to the Disciples in Jerusalem: Luke 24:36–49; John 20:19–31

Only Luke and John provide accounts of a visit later that day to the disciples. In both versions he gives them tangible proof that he has bodily risen from the dead.

See the discussion in Greater Love Hath No Man, 228–232.

Luke

24³⁶Then, while they were talking about these things, Jesus himself stood in the middle of them and said to them, “Peace be with you!”³⁷But they, alarmed and frightened, thought they were seeing a spirit.³⁸He said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why are doubts arising in your hearts?³⁹Look at my hands and my feet, how it is really me! Touch me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.”⁴⁰After he had said this, he presented his hands and feet to them.

⁴¹While they could hardly believe it because of their joy and were still marveling, he asked them, “Do you have anything here to eat?”⁴²So they gave him a piece of broiled fish.⁴³After he picked it up, he ate it in front of them.⁴⁴Next he said to them, “This is the meaning of the sayings that I spoke to you while I was still with you, how all that was written about me in the law of Moses, in the prophets, and in the psalms must be fulfilled.”⁴⁵Then he opened up their minds so that they could understand the scriptures.⁴⁶He told them, “Thus it was written that the Christ must suffer and rise again on the third day⁴⁷and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins must be preached in his name to all nations, starting in Jerusalem.⁴⁸You are witnesses of these things.⁴⁹Look, I am sending what my Father has promised to you, but stay here in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”

John

20¹⁹When it was evening on that same day, the first day of the week, and when the doors of the room were shut where the disciples were because of fear of “the Jews,” Jesus came, stood among them, and said, “Peace be with you!”²⁰After he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were filled with joy because they had seen the Lord!²¹So he said to them again, “Peace be with you. Just as the Father sent me, I also am sending you.”²²After he had said this, he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit.²³Whosever sins you forgive will be forgiven for them; whosever sins you retain will be retained.”

²⁴Yet Thomas, one of the Twelve, who was called “the Twin,” was not with them when Jesus came.²⁵So the other disciples said to him, “We have seen the Lord!” He said to them, “Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, put my finger into the mark of the nails, and put my hand in his side, I will never believe.”

²⁶Then eight days later the disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Even though the doors were shut, Jesus came, stood in the middle of them, and said, “Peace be with you!”²⁷Then he said to Thomas, “Bring your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand here and put it in my side. Stop being unbelieving but be believing!”²⁸Thomas responded and said to him, “My LORD and my God!”²⁹Jesus said to him, “Have you come to believe because you have seen me? Fortunate are those who do not see yet believe.”

³⁰Now there were many other signs that Jesus performed in the presence of his disciples, which have not been written in this book.³¹But these have been written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

[Return to Bookmarks](#) §

Postlude

Later Appearances and the Ongoing Apostolic Witness

The Risen Lord by the Sea of Galilee: John 21:1–25

The final chapter of the Gospel according to John constitutes an “epilogue,” which many scholars believe was written after the rest of the Gospel. Apparently intended to show how the Risen Lord provided for the continuing needs of the Church,¹⁰ it constitutes an important Resurrection appearance that also teaches important lessons about discipleship in any age.

See the discussion in Greater Love Hath No Man, 240–44.

21¹After these things, Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias. Now he revealed himself this way: ²Simon Peter, Thomas who was called “the Twin,” Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples were together. ³Simon Peter said to them, “I am going fishing,” and they said, “We’ll go with you as well.” They went and embarked on a boat, but they did not catch anything that night. ⁴Just as the morning was breaking, Jesus stood on the seashore. However, the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus. ⁵Then Jesus said to them, “Children, you don’t have anything to eat, do you?” They answered him, “No.” ⁶He said to them, “Cast your net on the right side of the boat, and you will find something.” So they cast it and were no longer able to haul it back because of the large number of fish.

⁷Then that disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, “It is the Lord!” When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment—because he was not wearing much—and he threw himself into the sea. ⁸But the other disciples came in a little boat, towing the net full of fish, for they were not far from land, only about a hundred yards. ⁹When they got to land, they saw that a charcoal fire had been made, fish had been set on it, and there was bread laid out too. ¹⁰Jesus said to them, “Bring some of the fish that you just caught.” ¹¹So Peter went aboard and hauled the net to land, full of large fish, one hundred and fifty-three of them. Yet although there were so many, the net was not torn. ¹²Jesus said to them, “Come, eat breakfast.” Yet not one of the disciples dared ask him, “Who are you?” because they knew it was the Lord. ¹³Jesus came, took bread, and gave it to them, and he did the same with the fish. ¹⁴Now this was the third time that Jesus had appeared to the disciples after he had risen from the dead.

¹⁵After they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?” Peter said to him, “Of course, Lord, you know that I love you!” Jesus said to him, “Tend my lambs.” ¹⁶A second time Jesus said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” Peter said to him, “Of course, Lord, you know that I love you!” Jesus said to him, “Shepherd my sheep.” ¹⁷A third time he asked him, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” Peter was pained that Jesus had asked him a third time, “Do you love me?” So he said to him, “Lord, you know everything. You know that I love you!” Jesus said to him, “Tend my sheep. ¹⁸Truly, truly I say to you, when you were a younger man, you used to dress yourself and walk around where you wanted. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands and someone else will dress you and take you where you do not want to go.” ¹⁹Now he said this to signify by what kind of death Peter would glorify God. After saying that, he told him, “Follow me!”

²⁰When Peter turned around, he saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following, who at dinner had leaned into the embrace of Jesus and had asked, “Lord, who is the one who is going to hand you over?” ²¹When Peter saw him, he asked Jesus, “Lord, what about him?” ²²Jesus said to him, “If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you? You just follow me.” ²³Then this story went out among the brothers and sisters that this disciple would not die. Yet Jesus did not say to Peter that the disciple would not die, rather, “If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you?”

²⁴This is the disciple who has given his witness of all these things, even the one who wrote them, and we know that his witness is true. ²⁵Now there were many other things that Jesus did, which, if they were each written down, I do not think the world would have room for the books that would be written!

¹⁰ For instances, see Brown, *Gospel according to John*, 1077–82, and Michaels, *Gospel of John*, 1026–28. On the other hand, Keener, *Gospel of John*, 1219–24, argues essentially for the unity of the Gospel.

Final Injunctions: Matthew 28:16–20; Luke 24:50–52; Acts 1:6–12

Whereas Matthew (and presumably Mark before its ending was lost) ends its account on a mountain in Galilee, Luke ends with Jesus in Jerusalem on the Mount of Olives. The scene of Jesus' ascension is then recapitulated at the beginning of Acts.

See the discussion in Greater Love Hath No Man, 244–47.

Matthew

28¹⁶Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to a mountain where Jesus had arranged to meet them. ¹⁷When they saw him, they worshiped him, but some hesitated. ¹⁸When Jesus came, he spoke to them, saying, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Go forth, therefore, and make disciples of all nations by baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit ²⁰and by teaching them to keep all the commandments that I have given you. Now look, I am with you for all time until the end of the age!”

Luke

24⁵⁰Then he led them as far as Bethany. After lifting up his hands, he blessed them, ⁵¹and while he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven. ⁵²So after they had worshiped him, they returned to Jerusalem with great joy, ⁵³and they were always in the temple, praising God.

Acts

1⁶When they had gathered together, they asked him, saying, “Lord, is this the time you are restoring the kingdom to Israel?” ⁷He said to them, “Yours is not to know the times or the seasons that the Father has set by his own authority, ⁸but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea, in Samaria, and to the farthest part of the earth.” ⁹After he had said these things, as they were watching, he was taken up and a cloud took him from their sight.

¹⁰While they were gazing into heaven as he went, look, two men in white clothing stood by them ¹¹and said to them, “Men of Galilee, why are you standing here looking into heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will return in the same way that you have seen him go into heaven.”

¹²So they returned to Jerusalem from the mountain that is called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath’s journey away.

Further Witnesses: 1 Corinthians 15:1–8; Revelation 1:10–18

Paul’s list of resurrection witnesses in the opening verses of his of his first letter to the Corinthians constitutes an example of kerygmatic preaching (Greek, kērygma for “proclamation”).¹¹ In such preaching, an apostolic witness shares the fundamental testimony of Jesus, his ministry, and especially his saving suffering, death, and resurrection. The appearance of the glorified Risen Lord to John in the first chapter of Revelation is part of a larger apocalyptic vision.

See the discussion in Greater Love Hath No Man, 247–251.

¹¹ Eric D. Huntsman, “The Petrine *Kērygma* and the Gospel according to Mark,” *The Ministry of Peter, the Chief Apostle*, eds. Frank F. Judd Jr., Eric D. Huntsman, and Shon D. Hopkin (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2014), 177–82.

1 Corinthians

15¹Now I am making known to you, brothers and sisters, the good news that I proclaimed to you, which you received, in which you stand, ²and through which you are also being saved if you hold fast to the word that I proclaimed to you—otherwise you have believed to no avail. ³For I have handed on to you the most important things, which I, too, received: namely, that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, ⁴that he was buried, that he rose on the third day according to the scriptures, ⁵and that he was seen by Cephas and then the Twelve. ⁶Next he was seen by over five hundred brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still living but some have passed away. ⁷He was seen by James and then by all the apostolic messengers. ⁸Last of all he was seen by me, as one born at the wrong time.

Revelation

1¹⁰I was in the spirit on “the Lord’s Day.” Then I heard a great sound behind me like a trumpet, ¹¹ saying, “What you see, write in a scroll and send it to the seven churches—which are in Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea.”

¹²I turned to see the voice that was speaking with me, and after I had turned, I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³and among the lampstands was one like the Son of Man, dressed in a long robe and with a golden sash tied around across his chest. ¹⁴His head and his hair were like white wool, like snow; his eyes were as a fiery flame; ¹⁵his feet were like fine brass as if they had been refined in a furnace; and his voice was like the sound of many waters. ¹⁶He had in his right hand seven stars, a sharp, two-edged sword was coming out from his mouth, and his face was like the sun shining in its power.

¹⁷When I saw him, I fell at his feet like a dead man, but he put his right hand on me, saying,

“Don’t be afraid!

I am the first and the last,
¹⁸ and I am the one who lives,
 even though I was dead.
 Look, I am alive forever and ever,
 and I have the keys of death and hell.”

The Risen Lord and the Restoration: Joseph Smith—History 1:16–17; D&C 76:22–24; D&C 110:2–5

Although Joseph Smith had several powerful visions and other witnesses of Jesus Christ, his First Vision in a grove of trees in Palmyra, the vision now published as Doctrine and Covenants 76, and the revelation of the glorified Jesus Christ to him and Oliver Cowdery, in many ways similar to the apocalyptic vision of John the Revelator, may be the most powerful witness of the Risen Lord.

See the discussion in Greater Love Hath No Man, 251–53.

Joseph Smith—History

1¹⁶I saw a pillar of light exactly over my head, above the brightness of the sun, which descended gradually until it fell upon me. ¹⁷It no sooner appeared than I found myself delivered from the enemy which held me bound. When the light rested upon me I saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the

air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name and said, pointing to the other—This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!

Doctrine and Covenants

76²²And now, after the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: That he lives! ²³For we saw him, even on the right hand of God; and we heard the voice bearing record that he is the Only Begotten of the Father—²⁴That by him, and through him, and of him, the worlds are and were created, and the inhabitants thereof are begotten sons and daughters unto God.

110²We saw the Lord standing upon the breastwork of the pulpit, before us; and under his feet was a paved work of pure gold, in color like amber. ³His eyes were as a flame of fire; the hair of his head was white like the pure snow; his countenance shone above the brightness of the sun; and his voice was as the sound of the rushing of great waters, even the voice of Jehovah, saying: ⁴I am the first and the last; I am he who liveth, I am he who was slain; I am your advocate with the Father. ⁵Behold, your sins are forgiven you; you are clean before me; therefore, lift up your heads and rejoice.

[Return to Bookmarks](#) §

