



WEEK 7

## WEEK 7

### DAY 43 - MONDAY - JESUS CLEANSSES THE TEMPLE

*Mark 11:12-19, Isaiah 56:1-8*

#### BEARING FRUIT AND WELCOMING ALL

Jesus' first actions, after being hailed by the people as King, are to pass judgment on Jerusalem figuratively through the cursing of the fig tree and the cleansing of the temple, which highlight Jesus' zeal for true worship of God. The way in which Mark organizes his material in these verses suggests a connection between the cleansing of the temple and the cursing of the fig tree.

Jesus' actions here have symbolic importance, signifying the hypocrisy of all who have the appearance that they are bearing fruit but in fact are not. The specific reference, though, is to Israel, since in the OT the fig tree often serves as a metaphor for Israel and its standing before God (e.g., Jer. 8:13; Hos. 9:10, 16; Joel 1:7). Here the cursing of the fig tree signifies the judgment of God on the "fruitless" Jewish people, who had turned away from God into empty ritual and legalism. It is a visual parable to signify Jesus' unrequited search for the true fruit of worship, prayer, and righteousness in the Jewish nation and its religious practices. The business activity (in the temple) turns the house of prayer into a den of robbers (Jer. 7:11). Gentiles in particular were hindered by the temple commerce in the outer court. The goal of Jesus' action is to restore the temple (temporarily) to its function, namely, to serve as a house of prayer for **ALL** the nations (Isa. 56:7).

*Taken from the ESV Study Bible*

**WHAT DID YOU LEARN TODAY  
ABOUT JESUS?**

**HOW DO YOU RESPOND TO  
WHAT YOU READ TODAY?**

**HOW DOES IT MOVE YOU TO  
PRAY?**

## WEEK 7

### DAY 44 - TUESDAY - JESUS TEACHES IN THE TEMPLE

*Luke 21, Luke 22:1-2, Daniel 7:13-14*

#### DO NOT BE TERRIFIED

"When you hear of wars and tumults, do not be terrified, for these things must first take place, but the end will not be at once" (Luke 21:9). Jesus says not to be terrified of these things. He knows it sounds frightening, but He also knows how it ends, so He's the only person who can say this with any kind of authority. He doesn't say things won't be scary or hard; He just promises that we don't go through those things alone and that on the other side of it, we'll live with Him eternally. Whatever darkness comes our way is no threat to His light.

Written by Tara-Leigh Cobble - *The Bible Recap*

**WHAT HOPE DO YOU FIND IN  
JESUS' WORDS TODAY?**

**WHAT NEXT STEP CAN YOU  
TAKE TODAY IN RESPONSE TO  
HIS WORDS?**

## WEEK 7

### DAY 45 - WEDNESDAY - JESUS IS ANOINTED FOR BURIAL

*Mark 14:3-11, Matthew 26:14-16, Luke 22:3-6, Zechariah 11:12-13*

#### A NOBLE THING

**This broken woman pouring her broken flask over the soon to be broken body of her Savior—this is the way of the kingdom of God, Jesus was saying.** Hers is a true act of generosity. "She has done a noble thing for me," He tells them (Mark 14:6).

God saved His precious expression of Himself in flesh for the most opportune moment, the best moment. He saved the costliest offering for the moment of maximum impact. The Bible says, "At the right time Christ died for the ungodly" (Romans 5:6). As this woman poured her alabaster flask over the head of her Savior, we are shown a picture of the emptying of a good thing for the best one, the greatest exchange: Christ's death for our life.

Written by Lore Ferguson Wilbert - *She Reads Truth*

We see the woman willing to give up something expensive for Jesus and then Judas willing to give up Jesus for money. We often hope in this situation we would react like the woman, but our human hearts might lead us to be more like Judas. Would we be willing to give up a good thing for the best thing?

**WHAT STOOD OUT TO YOU IN  
TODAY'S PASSAGES?**

**WHAT WOULD IT LOOK  
LIKE FOR YOU TO "EMPTY  
YOURSELF OF A GOOD THING  
FOR THE BEST ONE" LIKE THE  
WOMAN IN THE STORY?**

## WEEK 7

### DAY 46 - THURSDAY - THE LAST SUPPER

*John 16:16-24, John 32-33, Mark 14:12-72, Psalm 41:7-13, Zechariah 13:7*

#### **SORROW WILL TURN TO JOY**

It's easy to imagine the anguish the disciples must have felt as Jesus moved closer and closer to the hour of His imminent death. These men had spent almost every hour of the last few years with Jesus. He was not only their Lord; He was their dear friend.

In the shadow of the cross, the sorrow of Jesus' looming death would only grow because of their own failure to stand by and support Him as His friends. They failed to support their Savior in Gethsemane. Peter denied his Deliverer in the courtyard. Judas sold the Son of the Most High for mere silver coins. Ultimately, all of the disciples would be scattered into the hills as their only hope seemed to fade away. Sorrow upon sorrow!

It is the sorrow of death and failure that makes the promises of the Lord's Supper even more poignant. This is my body, broken for your sin and failure. This is my blood, a sign of God's promised covenant to make all things new.

I have often believed that for Christians, the Lord's Supper should feel more like a celebration of longing than a funeral feast. The words of promise spoken at the Lord's table, and the symbolic elements consumed by the people of God, are reminders of hope—hope that even in the midst of sorrow in this life, we will one day experience unimaginable joy.

Because of Christ's sacrifice, our failures do not have the last word. Because Christ rose again, death does not have the last word. One day the saints will be gathered around the table of the King in eternity. Until then, let us remember the words of Jesus: "You will become sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn to joy" (John 16:20). As we wait, let us eat, drink, and be joyful. Because one day not so long ago, we were dead in our sin, and one day soon we will be fully alive and in His presence, face to face.

Written by Matt Capps - *He Reads Truth*

**PUT YOURSELF IN THE SHOES OF THE DISCIPLES. HOW DO YOU THINK THEY FELT AS THEY SAT AROUND THIS TABLE WITH THEIR FRIEND JESUS?**

**HOW DO THESE PASSAGES MAKE YOU FEEL AS A DISCIPLE OF JESUS?**

## WEEK 7

### DAY 47 - GOOD FRIDAY

*Mark 15:1-47, Isaiah 52:13-15; Isaiah 53:1-7*

#### OUR GENTLE SAVIOR

Jesus' responses on Good Friday are so shocking. He doesn't defend Himself. The mockers even jeered at Him, saying, "He saved others, but he cannot save himself! He is the King of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him" (Matthew 27:42).

Indeed, as they led Him out to the cross, He went meekly, like a lamb to the slaughter (Isaiah 53:7). They falsely accused Him, and yet He uttered not a word. It is funny how we so easily confuse the signs of weakness and the signs of strength.

Gentleness and meekness confuse us, because our hearts are naturally driven to clamor and strive, making a lot of noise in the process. Maybe in the end, what we don't understand is the humility of obedience—obedience even to the point of death. And so obedience, totally selfless obedience, is confounding to us. It looks like weakness, like foolishness, and our hearts mock it.

We are, if left to ourselves, everything we should not be. He is, even as all the world railed against Him, even as He walked straight into death for the first and final time, all that we need.

Written by Rebecca Faires - *She Reads Truth*

**WHAT DO WE LEARN ABOUT  
JESUS IN THESE PASSAGES?**

**WHAT DO WE LEARN ABOUT  
THE HUMAN HEART IN THESE  
PASSAGES?**

**HOW DOES THIS MOVE YOU  
TO PRAY?**

## WEEK 7

### DAY 48 - HOLY SATURDAY

*Luke 23:54-56, Matthew 27:62-66, Isaiah 53:8-12*

#### ALREADY AND NOT YET

**Holy Saturday is the day we acknowledge that things are not as they should be.** Sitting between Jesus' death and resurrection, this is the one day we are absolutely unable to look away from the tension of faith: what has happened and what is to come. Theologians refer to this as the "already and the not yet." But because we know Christ's resurrection is coming tomorrow, it's easy to overlook the sunrise and sunset that took place while He was dead and buried in a tomb.

While we already know this arrangement is temporary, the people of Jerusalem had no way to be sure. It was the day Jesus' followers had to choose between putting His promises into practice or going back to doubting that He was really the Son of God. All the pain and the unknown of death is real—so real, that Jesus faced it head-on to reverse its power over us.

Sometimes, it's enough to know that He has gone before us, even in this. Because Christ lay in His own grave, we get to lay hope on ours. **We can acknowledge that things are not as they should be, while still holding onto His promises of redemption.**

Written by Kaitlin Wernet - *She Reads Truth*

**SIT WITH THE THOUGHT OF  
LIVING IN THE "ALREADY AND  
THE NOT YET".**

**WHAT DOES THAT MEAN TO  
YOU?**

**WHAT HOPE DOES HOLY  
SATURDAY BRING?**

## WEEK 7

### DAY 49 - RESURRECTION SUNDAY - EASTER

*Luke 24:1-49, Psalm 16:9-11*

#### HOPE FULFILLED

When the risen Jesus dined with the Eleven that evening, He said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms must be fulfilled" (v. 44). **Everything—all the promises and prophecies of God—are fulfilled in Jesus.**

The stories are all true. Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Savior, who lived a life perfectly obedient and pleasing to the Father, bore the punishment of death for our sins, was buried, and rose on the third day, conquering death forever and reconciling us to God the Father.

For every hope that comes up empty, for every grave that remains closed, there is the faithful refrain of a loving, living Savior who calls to us: Repent and receive forgiveness (Acts 2:38). Believe and have life (John 3:16-17). Come to me, and I will give you rest (Matthew 11:28). Jesus Christ is risen! He is risen indeed.

Written by Amanda Bible Williams - *She Reads Truth*



**WHAT WAS THE BIGGEST THING THAT GOD REVEALED TO YOU DURING THESE 7 WEEKS IN HIS WORD?**

**WHAT DID YOU LEARN ABOUT GOD OR YOURSELF THAT YOU DIDN'T KNOW 7 WEEKS AGO?**

## **NOW WHAT?**

If you have made it this far and finished this reading plan, great work! Reading God's Word is one of the most important rhythms we can bring into our lives, and it often does not come without great effort. Our lives are full of responsibilities and distractions which often make the simple act of reading – not just the Bible, but reading anything – a challenge. And then there is the spiritual aspect, as well. The Bible is full of light and life. It has the power to bring us into a closer relationship with God, ourselves, and others. It invites us into a vision of the reality as it really is – a reality created and sustained by the one, true, and living God. It is, in some sense, dangerous ground. When we risk the time and effort and faith to engage the Word of God, we are putting ourselves into a position to receive the truth about who we really are, who God really is, and how much this God loves us. We say this is "dangerous ground" because there are spiritual forces that work against us experiencing these things. Sometimes subtle, sometimes obvious, these forces want nothing more than to prevent us from growing towards God. And the fact that you finished this reading plan, and endured, is an important spiritual victory. Great work. Truly.

But, now what?

Perhaps you are ready for a break in reading the Bible. Perhaps you think that you have "done your duty" and now you are free to "get back to normal life." Yes. This is exactly what you should do. But "normal life" might not mean what you think. The Bible shows us that normal life is precisely what God is about. He sustains everything that surrounds you and, whether good or bad, allows it all to exist so it can be used. For what? As opportunities to meet Him. To grow in obedience. To experience His love.

As you look ahead, we pray that you continue to find God throughout your normal life. And an important part of finding Him in your normal life is staying connected to His Word. Like an oasis in the desert, we can regularly return to God's truth and find refreshment, joy, strength, comfort, hope, and love. These are the things we need most. May we keep pursuing them as we continue on, living our "normal lives," with God in our hearts, our minds, and our souls.

**Adam Dressler - Lead Pastor**