

Days Before

Lesson 1

THE LAST WEEK Today we will begin a series of lessons on the last 24 hours of Jesus. While this series of lessons is focused on the last twenty-four hours of Jesus' earthly life, it's important to begin with a brief mentioning of the events leading up to that final day. So, this morning we will look at short synopsis of each day's activities during the last week in His life on earth.

Saturday- (John 12:1-9) Jesus arrived at the house of Lazarus, Mary, and Martha in Bethany. Bethany was to the east and about two miles from Jerusalem. The Kidron valley separated the two. This seems to be where Jesus stayed during his final week. Jesus probably arrived on Friday in time to observe the Sabbath which started Friday at 6:00 PM and lasted until 6:00 PM on Saturday and while there, Mary anoints Jesus' feet with oil and dries them with her hair.

Sunday- Jesus enters into Jerusalem; all four gospels record the triumphal entry into the city by riding on the colt of a donkey. (fulfillment of Zachariah 9:9) This entry gathered such a great crowd that some in Jerusalem were asking, "Who is this?" As Jesus approached the city, some people spread their garments on the road and others threw palm branches on the ground as he passed. This was the kind of entry given to royalty! The enthusiastic crowd hailed him as king. This outburst caused the Pharisees to ask Jesus to "*rebuke thy disciples.*" The multitudes took up the refrain and began to sing. "*Hosanna to the Son of David.*" Jesus allowed himself to be acclaimed as the Messiah. Jesus went into the temple and after looked around. "*Now eventide was come, he went out unto Bethany with the twelve.*"

Monday- Jesus left the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus in Bethany early in the morning and cursed the unfruitful fig tree. The next day it had withered away. From there He goes to the temple. He found the same situation that had angered him three years earlier (John 2:16). Since the Passover was near, there were people there from many

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countries and they had to change their money for the local currency. They also had to offer animal sacrifices. Many waited to buy their animals when they reached Jerusalem instead of bringing them a long distance from their homes. As before, there were money changers and people selling animals for sacrifices in the forbidden area of the temple. These people were desecrating the house of God, so Jesus drove them away. The money changing and the selling of animals should have taken place in the market square instead of inside the temple.

Then toward the end of the day, there were some Greeks request via the disciples a visit with Jesus. It was here that Jesus said *John 12:27-28 Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. (28) Father, glorify thy name.* Then we have the third time during Jesus' ministry the voice for God from heaven. *Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.*

Tuesday- This day was one of the longest, hardest, and most decisive days in Jesus' ministry. He entered the city early in the morning and did not return to Bethany until late. This was a day described as "the great day of controversy" by some and "the great day of rejection" by others. Both are correct. If you notice the gospel accounts of this day spans over several chapters.

It began with Jesus being questioned by his enemies on four different occasions as they were trying to ensnare Him. **FIRST** there was a group from the Sanhedrin (priest and elders) asked by what authority He had taken control over the temple. Instead of answering their question, Jesus gave three parables.

- Parable of the two sons in the vineyard. (Matt 21:28)
- Parable of the wicked husbandman. (Matt 21:33)
- Parable of the marriage feast of the king's son. (Matt 22:1)

SECONDLY, the Pharisees took their turn and they asked whether it was lawful to pay

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tribute to Caesar or not to which Jesus said (Matt 22:21) ***Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.***

THIRDLY, the Sadducees asked a question regarding the resurrection. (Matt 22:23) They wanted to know if a woman had been married to seven brothers, in heaven whose wife would she be. ***Matthew 22:29-30 Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. (30) For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.***

FOURTHLY it was the lawyer's time. He asked which was the greatest commandment. (Matt 22:34)

Matthew 22:46 "And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man FROM THAT DAY FORTH ASK HIM ANY MORE QUESTIONS."

Once the interrogation was over, Jesus denouncing the Scribes and Pharisees (Matthew 23:1-29) accused them multiple times of being hypocrites. Then he gave a long discourse on (1) the destruction of the temple and (2) His second coming.

As this was happening, the Jewish leaders were plotting to put Jesus to death. The raising of Lazarus, the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, plus the rebukes which Jesus had given to the chief priest and scribes emphasized the urgent need to get rid of Him. (i.e. putting Him to death.) What they now needed to decide was how and when to kill Him, but they knew that during the feast days was not a good time to do so.

Mark 14:1-2 "After two days was the feast of the passover, and of unleavened bread: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by craft, and put

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him to death. (2) But they said, not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar of the people.”

Jesus, on the other hand, was telling His disciples that He would be betrayed and be crucified in two days on the Passover. *Matt 26:2 “Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.”* Jesus left Jerusalem for Bethany that day and did not return to Jerusalem until his arrest and trial. He had finished his ministry in Jerusalem.

Later we find Jesus being anointed for burial. When he arrived in Bethany, he and his disciples went in the home of Simon the leper for dinner. While there, a woman poured oil on His head and the disciples of Jesus began to complain because this oil was precious and expensive. *Mark 14:6-8 And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me. (7) For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always. (8) She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying.* This seems to have been a gesture of pre-death anointing of His body. Jesus goes on to say that this woman will be remembered always.

Following the incident with the oil, Judas left with Plans for Betrayal. *Luke 22:1-6 – “Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover. (2) And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him; for they feared the people. (3) Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve. (4) And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray him unto them. (5) AND THEY WERE GLAD, and covenanted to give him money”.* Matthew 26:15 tells us that the Pharisees paid Judas at that time paid thirty pieces of silver. This fulfilled Zech 11:12. Thirty pieces of silver was the price paid

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for a common slave Ex 21:32. (6) *“And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them in the absence of the multitude.”*

Up until this time, Jesus had eluded any attempt by his enemies and critics to arrest Him. The Pharisees were glad when Judas agreed to take them at night to where Jesus would be which would help avoid the crowds of people. They wanted to have Jesus arrested, tried, convicted and executed before the crowd knew what was happening.

Wednesday-no recorded activities if you consider the crucifixion of Jesus to be on Friday. If you conclude that he was crucified on Thursday, then the Thursday events would have occurred on Wednesday.

This bring us to Thursday which really begins the last 24 hours of Jesus and we will begin there next Sunday as we continue this series of lessons which will lead us through the arrest, illegal trials and crucifixion of Jesus.

We want to close today with the Lord’s invitation. If your spiritual life is not right, why not do what you need to do to get it right.