



# EASTER SEASON

**"Greater love hath no man  
than this, that a man lay down  
his life for his friends."  
—John 15:13.**

# 40 DAYS TO EASTER

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## **DAY 1 - Jesus at the Temple**

Long ago, a baby named Jesus was born. His mother, Mary, and Joseph loved him deeply. Wise men brought him gifts, and shepherds rejoiced at His birth. But as a baby, King Herod tried to kill Him. His family fled to Egypt and later returned to Nazareth, in Galilee, a land north of Jerusalem, where Jesus grew up. Each year, Mary and Joseph traveled to Jerusalem for Passover. As Luke 2:42 says, "And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast."

Jerusalem was a bustling city, filled with people, animals, and the sounds of celebration. The temple stood tall and magnificent, a sacred place where people came to worship God. Jesus loved being there. He listened intently to the teachers, asking thoughtful questions and sharing answers that amazed everyone who heard Him.

When the feast ended, Mary and Joseph began the journey home, thinking Jesus was with their group. Realizing He was missing, they returned to Jerusalem and searched for three days. They found Him in the temple, learning and teaching. Luke 2:48 says, "And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing." Jesus replied, "How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" Though they didn't fully understand, Mary treasured these words in her heart.

Jesus returned to Nazareth and was obedient to His parents. As Luke 2:52 says, "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." Even as a boy, He showed how to grow by learning, working, loving, and drawing closer to God.

## **DAY 2 - The Baptism of Jesus**

When Jesus was about thirty years old, He came to the Jordan River, where John the Baptist was baptizing. John had spent years in the wilderness, clothed in camel's hair and eating locusts and wild honey, boldly proclaiming, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!"

As Jesus approached, John recognized him, "I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" he asked. But Matthew 3:15 tells us, "Jesus answering said unto him, 'Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness.'"

As Jesus was baptized and came up out of the water, the heavens opened above Him. The Spirit of God descended like a dove, resting upon Him, and a voice from heaven declared, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Soon after, John bore his testimony. In John 1:29 he calls Jesus, "The Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." John told his followers what he saw at Jesus' baptism the day before. Some of the Jewish leaders heard John's testimony.

## **DAY 3 - The Temptations of Jesus**

After his baptism, the spirit led him to the wilderness to prepare for his ministry. While in the wilderness, He fasted for forty days and nights. During this time, Satan tempted Him. In Matthew 4:3, Satan says, "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." Jesus replied, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

Then, Satan set Jesus on the temple's pinnacle, saying, "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee." Jesus answered, "It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."

Finally, Satan showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world, offering them to him if He would worship him. Jesus said, "Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

After the final temptation, Satan left. Angels came and ministered to Jesus.

## **DAY 4 - The Marriage at Cana**

After fasting, Jesus traveled back home to Galilee. Jesus went to a wedding with his mother. Weddings in those days were joyful, multi-day celebrations filled with family, friends, and feasting.

As the festivities continued, Mary noticed a problem—the wine had run out. Concerned, Mary approached Jesus and said, "They have no wine." In John 2:4, Jesus responded, "Mine hour is not yet come." Nevertheless, Mary turned to the servants and said, "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it."

Nearby stood six stone 20-gallon waterpots. Jesus instructed the servants, "Fill the waterpots with water." They filled them to the brim. Then he told them to take them to the host of the wedding. The servants obeyed, and when the governor tasted the water that had been turned into wine, he marveled. He called the groom. John 2:10 says, "And saith unto him, 'Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now.'"

This was the first miracle Jesus performed.

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## **DAY 5 - Jesus' Passover Trip to Judea**

Just like he did as a child, Jesus returned to Jerusalem each year for Passover. After his preparation, baptism, and fasting, this trip marked the start of Jesus' ministry.

Upon entering the temple courts, Jesus was troubled by what He saw. Merchants and moneychangers filled the sacred space, turning it into a bustling marketplace. The clinking of coins and the cries of traders echoed in the air, disrupting the peace of God's house.

John 2:15 tells us, "When he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables." Jesus declared with authority, "Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise."

While in Jerusalem, Jesus began to perform more miracles. And people began to hear about Him. One night, a Pharisee named Nicodemus came to Jesus in secret. In John 3:2 he says, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him."

Jesus taught Nicodemus about the necessity of being born again, saying, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. He spoke of the great love of God, declaring in John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

After the Passover, Jesus and His new followers traveled in the area around Jerusalem, called Judea, teaching and baptizing those who believed.

## **DAY 6 - The Samaritan Woman at the Well**

After His time in Judea, Jesus was ready to travel home to Galilee. Between them was Samaria. Many Jews looked down on Samaritans and avoided the area. But Jesus not only chose to travel through Samaria, but to stop there at a place called Jacob's Well.

As Jesus rested by the well, a Samaritan woman came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me to drink." The woman, surprised that a Jewish man would speak to her, replied, "How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria?"

Jesus said that he could give her living water. Puzzled, the woman asked how He could provide such water, since He had nothing to hold the water with. John 4:13-14 says, "Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

The woman then said, "I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things." Jesus replied, "I that speak unto thee am he."

Leaving her waterpot behind, the woman ran into the city, telling everyone, "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" Many Samaritans came to see Jesus and believed in Him because of the woman's testimony.

## **DAY 7 - Ministry Starts in Galilee**

After returning to Galilee, Matthew 4:17 tells us, "From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." His words and miracles spread, drawing eager crowds.

One morning, Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee. He saw Peter and Andrew, one of John the Baptist's followers, fishing with nets. He told Peter to go out a little bit further and cast the nets. Peter told him that they had been fishing all night and hadn't caught anything. But he trusted Jesus. Peter caught more fish than the nets could handle. When they came back to shore, Matthew 4:19 says, "[Jesus] saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." They left their miraculous catch and followed Jesus. James and John were on the shore fixing their nets. Jesus called them, and they followed Him too.

In Bethsaida, Jesus met Philip, who told Bartholomew, "We have found him, Jesus of Nazareth." Though skeptical, when Bartholomew met Jesus, he said, "Thou art the King of Israel."

Jesus traveled, teaching in synagogues, healing the sick, and casting out demons. He cleansed a leper who said, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean."

In Capernaum, Jesus healed Peter's mother-in-law and many others. While he was teaching in someone's home, a group of friends took the roof off to lower a paralyzed man down. Jesus healed him, saying, "Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house." The crowd glorified God. More gathered around Jesus, amazed at His power.

## **DAY 8 - Gathering the Apostles**

As Jesus walked along, He saw a man named Matthew, a tax collector, sitting at his booth. Tax collectors were often despised by their fellow Jews, seen as dishonest and oppressive. Yet Jesus looked at Matthew and said, "Follow me." Immediately, Matthew rose and followed Him.

Matthew knew many people who lived sinful lives. He invited many of them to have dinner with Jesus.



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Not everyone thought Jesus should meet with them. Matthew 9:11-13 says, "And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

The Pharisees also asked Jesus why His disciples did not fast as often as they did, or accept their baptisms since they followed the full law. Joseph Smith's translation of Matthew 9:19-21, teaches, "Jesus said unto them, Ye keep not the law. If ye had kept the law, ye would have received me, for I am he who gave the law. I receive not you with your baptisms, because it profiteth you nothing. For when that which is new is come, the old is ready to be put away."

Soon after, Jesus went up to a mountain and spent the night praying. When He came down He called his disciples to Him, and chose twelve as Apostles: Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, and Matthew. His brothers Jude and James. And Simon, Thomas, and Judas.

## **DAY 9 - Sermon on the Mount**

As crowds gathered, Jesus went up a mountain to teach.

Jesus began with the beatitudes. He taught we should be poor in spirit, be meek, hunger and thirst for righteousness, be merciful, be pure in heart, be peacemakers. And he promised to comfort those who mourn, and that those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness will gain the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus urged them to let their light shine before others, so their good works would glorify God. Jesus taught us to be righteous not just on the outside, but on the inside. He warned against lust, dishonesty, and seeking revenge, teaching instead to love our enemies, pray for those who persecute us, and trust God. He said to only get divorced for adultery.

Jesus taught in Matthew 6:9-10, "After this manner therefore pray ye," and gave this example, "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."

Jesus warned about false prophets and emphasized the importance of acting on His teachings. Matthew 7:24-27 says, "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock."

## **DAY 10 - Jesus in Nain**

Jesus traveled to the small town of Nain, followed by His apostles and a large crowd. As He approached the city gate, He saw a funeral procession. The only son of a widowed mother had died. She and many of her neighbors were mourning.

Jesus said to the woman, "Weep not." Luke 7:14, says, "And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise." Immediately, the dead man sat up and began to speak. Fear gripped the people, and they said, "A great prophet is risen up among us, and That God hath visited his people."

While in Nain, Jesus dined with a Pharisee named Simon. A well-known sinner in the city, heard Jesus would be there. So she came and began to weep at his feet. She washed them with ointment and her tears. Simon thought that if Jesus were actually a prophet, he would know what kind of woman this was. Jesus knew what he was thinking. He said that Simon never washed Jesus feet, but this woman did, because those who are forgiven more, love more. Jesus turned to the woman and said, "Thy sins are forgiven. Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." The other Pharisees at the dinner wondered who Jesus was to forgive sins. As he continued his travels, several important women began to join him, including Mary Magdalene.

## **DAY 11 - Opposition Rises**

Jesus traveled from city to city, healing, teaching, and casting out demons. Most people marveled. But some of the Pharisees were troubled by his growing influence.

When Jesus healed a man who was blind and mute by casting out a demon, Matthew 12:24 says, "But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils."

Jesus knew their thoughts and said, "if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself." In Matthew 12:28 he finishes, "But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you." The Pharisees then demanded to see a sign. In Matthew 12:39-40, Jesus answered, "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

## **DAY 12 - Jesus Teaches About the Kingdom of Heaven**

While traveling, Jesus taught parables, stories that teach a lesson. While near the Sea of Galilee, crowds gathered, so he took a boat out so they could hear him, and he taught five parables.

The first was about how a sower who planted seeds. Some fell on the path, other rocks, other thorns, and some on good soil that grew. Jesus said the seeds represented the word of God.

The second compared the kingdom of heaven to a mustard seed. It starts out as the smallest but grows to a massive plant. The third compared the kingdom of heaven to leaven that a woman hid in three meals so that they would all grow.

The fourth parable was about a man who found treasure hidden in a field and sold all he had to buy it, and of a merchant who discovered a pearl of great price and did the same.

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The last compared the kingdom of heaven to a net that is cast into the sea. It gathers every kind, but when they get to shore, they pick what is good and bad. Jesus explained in Matthew 13: 49-50, "So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."

Jesus asked His disciples, "Have ye understood all these things?" They answered, "Yea, Lord."

## **DAY 13 - Traveling to Gadara**

As word of Jesus spread, He began to travel farther. He left to go to Gadara, a town to the east across the Sea of Galilee.

As they traveled, a fierce storm arose, with waves crashing into the boat. The disciples were looking for Jesus. Mark 4:38-41 tells us when they found him they said, "Master, carest thou not that we perish? And [Jesus] arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith? And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

Passing the caves on the outskirts of Gadara, Jesus met a man possessed by demons. No one could control him. He broke ropes and chains. But when the demons saw Jesus they begged him not to cast them out. Jesus cast the demons into a herd of pigs that ran over a cliff and drowned. The man came to his right mind, got dressed, and sat down.

The herdsmen nearby ran to the city to tell people what they saw, but when they heard, they were afraid of Jesus and asked him to leave.

As Jesus prepared to depart, the healed man begged to go with Him. But Jesus said in Mark 5:19, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee." The man went throughout the land around Gadara telling everyone what Jesus had done.

## **DAY 14 - Jesus Travels through Galilee performing miracles**

As Jesus returned, Jairus, a synagogue ruler, asked Jesus to heal his sick daughter. In Luke chapter eight, As Jesus went, a woman suffering from a twelve-year illness touched His garment, believing she would be healed. Instantly, she was cured. Jesus turned, saying, "Who touched me?" She confessed, and He reassured her, "Thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace."

Messengers then told Jairus his daughter had died, but Jesus said in Mark 5:36, "Be not afraid, only believe." At Jairus' house, He told the mourners, "The damsel is not dead, but sleepeth." Taking her hand, He said, "Talitha cumi," meaning, "Little girl, arise" (Mark 5:41), and she rose immediately.

Later, two blind men followed Jesus, asking Him to have mercy on them. In Matthew 9:29, he touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith be it unto you," and they were healed. Soon after, He cast a demon out of a mute man, who then spoke. The crowd marveled, but the Pharisees accused Jesus of using demonic power.

Through these miracles, Jesus revealed His power over sickness, death, and spiritual oppression, proving His divine authority.

## **DAY 15 - Jesus Sends His Apostles on Missions**

As word of Jesus spread, more people desired to learn about Him. Jesus brought his apostles to him in Matthew 9:37. He told them, "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few."

He sent them in pairs, saying, "Go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." They were to preach the kingdom of heaven, heal the sick, and cast out devils, giving freely as they had received.

He warned them of opposition: "I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." He assured them that God would give them the words to speak.

The apostles went forth, preaching, healing, and casting out devils. If rejected, they shook the dust off their feet as a testimony. Through their mission, Jesus' message spread.

## **DAY 16 - The Ministry of John the Baptist Ends**

John the Baptist continued to preach the gospel. When Herod, the leader the Romans put in charge of the Jews, married Herodias, the woman who divorced his brother, John the Baptist, said it was a sin. So Herod put John in jail.

But this didn't satisfy Herodias. She wanted John killed. But Herod worried that killing John would make his followers angry. So Herodias and her daughter came up with a plan. At Herod's birthday, her daughter danced so well for Herod, that he promised to do anything she asked. She asked him to execute John. Herod didn't want to, but he did what she asked. John the Baptist's head was brought to her on a platter.

John's disciples came and buried his body, then went to tell Jesus. Jesus was sad, and went alone into the desert to pray. John the Baptist came to prepare the way for the Messiah. His fearless stand for truth cost him his life, but his mission had been fulfilled.

But soon after Herod heard of the miracles Jesus had been performing. In Luke 9:7 Herod worried John had come back from the dead, "John have I beheaded: but who is this, of whom I hear such things?"

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## **DAY 17 - Feeding the Five Thousand**

When they heard what happened to John, the twelve apostles returned to Jesus. The crowds went with them to find Jesus in the desert. Despite His sadness, He was moved with compassion for them, and spent the day ministering to them.

It was near the time of the Passover, and as evening approached, the disciples urged Jesus to send the people away to find food. But He said, "Give ye them to eat." In John 6:9, Andrew pointed out, "There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?" Jesus instructed the people to sit in groups on the grass. Taking the loaves and fishes, He gave thanks, broke them, and distributed them to the disciples to give to the crowd.

Astonishingly, everyone ate and was filled. When they gathered the leftovers, there were twelve baskets full. In John 6:14, the people, seeing the miracle, said, "This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world."

## **DAY 18 - Jesus Walks on Water**

After feeding the five thousand, Jesus sent His disciples ahead by boat while He went up a mountain alone to pray. As night fell, the disciples' boat was in the midst of the sea, tossed by strong winds and waves.

In the early hours of the morning, Jesus came to them, walking on the water. The disciples, seeing Him approach, were afraid and cried out, thinking they had seen a spirit. But Jesus immediately spoke to them, saying, in Matthew 14:27, "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid."

Peter, filled with faith, called out, "Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water." Jesus said, "Come." Peter stepped out of the boat and walked toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind and waves, fear overtook him, and he began to sink. He cried, "Lord, save me!" Immediately, Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said in verse 31, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?"

As they returned to the boat, the wind ceased, and the disciples worshiped Jesus, saying, "Of a truth thou art the Son of God."

## **DAY 19 - His Ministry in Gennesaret**

After crossing the sea, Jesus and His disciples arrived at Gennesaret. As soon as the people recognized Him, they spread the word throughout the region. The sick were brought to Him, and many begged just to touch the hem of His garment.

Meanwhile, Pharisees and scribes from Jerusalem confronted Jesus, questioning why His disciples did not follow the traditions of ceremonial handwashing. Jesus responded in Matthew 15:7-9, "Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." He explained that it is not what enters the mouth that defiles a person, but what comes from the heart.

Many of those who had been with Jesus when he fed the five thousand continued to follow Him and ask for food, like the manna that came to Moses' people. Jesus declared in John 6:35, "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." Some murmured at His words, and many who had once followed Him turned away. When Jesus asked the twelve if they, too, would leave, Peter answered in John 6:68-69, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

## **DAY 20 - Word of Jesus Grows**

As word of Jesus' teaching and miracles reached Jerusalem, opposition grew there, and many wanted to kill him. So Jesus traveled North away from Jerusalem.

Jesus entered a house, hoping for rest. A Canaanite woman sought Him out in Matthew 15:22, crying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil." Since she was not Jewish, the disciples urged Jesus to send her away. Jesus replied, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Still, the woman persisted, kneeling before Him and saying, "Lord, help me." She said that even dogs get to eat crumbs from the master's table. Moved by her faith, Jesus healed her daughter instantly.

Jesus returned into Galilee. The crowds brought the lame, blind, and mute to Him, and He healed them all. Mark 7:37 records, "And were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak." Once again, a large crowd followed Him into the wilderness. For three days, they remained with Him, and He refused to send them away hungry, Jesus performed another miracle of feeding the crowds.

## **DAY 21 - The Pharisees & Sadducees**

Jesus continued his travels, this time to the region of Magdala. But when He arrived the Pharisees and Sadducees confronted Him, demanding a sign from heaven to prove His authority. Jesus rebuked them, saying in Matthew 16:2-3, "When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red. And in the morning, It will be foul weather today: for the sky is red and lowering. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?"

As they sailed across the sea, Jesus warned His disciples, "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." At first, they misunderstood, thinking He spoke of bread. But He explained that He was speaking of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees, whose teachings corrupted the truth, just as a little leaven affects an entire loaf.

Meanwhile, back in Bethsaida, people brought a blind man to Jesus, begging Him to heal him. Taking the man by the hand, Jesus led him out of the village. He spit on his eyes and restored his sight. Jesus told the man in Mark 8:26, "Neither go into the town, nor tell it to any in the town."

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## **DAY 22 - Meeting with the Apostles**

Jesus' next destination was Caesarea Philippi, a town on the edge of the kingdom. While there Jesus held a meeting with His apostles. In Matthew 16:13 He asked, "Whom do men say that I am?" They answered, "John the Baptist, Elias, or one of the prophets."  
"But whom say ye that I am?"

Peter declared, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Jesus blessed Peter, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father in heaven. Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Jesus warned the apostles not to reveal His identity yet.

Jesus then told them that He must go to Jerusalem, suffer, die, and rise again. Peter objected, but Jesus rebuked him in Matthew 16:23, "Get thee behind me, Satan: thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those of men." He then taught his apostles in verses 24-25, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. Whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever loses his life for my sake shall find it."

Jesus concluded, "Some standing here shall not taste of death till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." The apostles were prepared for what was about to come.

## **DAY 23 - The Mount of Transfiguration**

After six days, Jesus took Peter, James, and John up into a high mountain. As they prayed, Jesus was transfigured before them. Mark 9:3 describes, "His raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them."

Suddenly, Moses and Elijah appeared, speaking with Jesus about His coming death and resurrection in Jerusalem. Overwhelmed, Peter proposed making three tabernacles on the mountain, one for Jesus, one for Moses, and one for Elias. But as he spoke, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud declared, in Matthew 17:5, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."

The disciples fell on their faces in fear, but Jesus touched them, saying, "Arise, and be not afraid." When they looked up, only Jesus remained. As they descended the mountain, in Matthew 17:9, Jesus commanded them, "Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead."

## **DAY 24 - Teachings and Miracles After the Transfiguration**

As Jesus and His disciples descended the mountain, they found a crowd around a desperate father and his son, tormented by an unclean spirit. The apostles had failed to heal him, but Jesus said in Mark 9:23, "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." The father cried, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief!" Jesus cast out the spirit, and the boy was healed instantly. In Capernaum, tax collectors asked Peter if Jesus paid the temple tax. Jesus, though exempt, instructed Peter in Matthew 17:27, "Go thou to the sea, and cast an hook... thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee."

When the disciples asked who was the greatest in heaven, Jesus brought forth a child, saying in Matthew 18:3, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Jesus also taught about forgiveness, saying in Matthew 18:22, "I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven." He illustrated this through the parable of the unforgiving servant, who was forgiven a great debt but refused to show mercy. During their travels, Jesus encountered hesitant followers and warned in Luke 9:62, "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

## **DAY 25 - Jesus Sends the Seventy**

Jesus decided it was time to start traveling to Jerusalem. He needed to visit one more time before the end of His ministry. He sent messengers ahead to a Samaritan village. When they were rejected, James and John asked, "Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven?" Jesus rebuked them in Luke 9:56, saying, "The Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them."

Jesus appointed seventy disciples to now go forth to teach Jesus' message. He said, "The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few." They were to go in pairs, take no money and rely on hospitality. Jesus warned unrepentant cities, declaring, "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida!" (He said that if His miracles had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago).

Meanwhile, some of the apostles urged Jesus to attend the Feast of Tabernacles, saying that Jesus needed to draw attention to himself. But He declined, saying, "My time is not yet come."

## **DAY 26 - Feast of the Tabernacles**

Jesus chose to visit the Feast of the Tabernacles in secret, arriving halfway through. The people were astonished as he taught, and Jesus explained, "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God or whether I speak for myself." Some speculated this was the Jesus that the Pharisees wanted to arrest. But Jesus reassured the apostles they wouldn't be able to. On the last day of the feast, the Chief priests sent officers to arrest Jesus, but they returned without him, saying in verse 46, "Never man spake like this man."

The next morning, in the temple, the scribes and Pharisees brought a woman caught in adultery, testing Jesus. He said in John 8:7, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." One by one, they left. Jesus then told her, "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more."

To another group Jesus declared in verse 12, "I am the light of the world." The Pharisees challenged His authority, but He proclaimed, "If ye continue in my word... ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Tensions rose as Jesus told them, "Before Abraham was, I am." Enraged, they took up stones to cast at Him, but He slipped away.



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## **DAY 27 - Ministry in Jerusalem**

Jesus stayed in Jerusalem for a time to minister to the people there. Jesus met a man blind from birth. His disciples asked if the blindness was caused by sin, but Jesus answered in John 9:3, "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him." He made clay, anointed the man's eyes, and sent him to wash in the pool of Siloam. The man returned seeing. But the Pharisees who were watching, condemned Jesus for healing on the Sabbath.

Jesus replied, "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."

## **DAY 28 - The Good Samaritan**

Jesus left the city, but stayed in the area for a while. Some of the seventy he had sent on missions returned. They rejoiced in Luke 10:17, "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name." Jesus responded, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." He prayed thanking Heavenly Father, and invited all who listened in Matthew 11:28, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Jesus visited his friends Mary and Martha. When Martha got upset that Mary was talking to Jesus instead of helping serve dinner, Jesus replied, "Mary hath chosen that good part."

A lawyer asked Jesus who his neighbor was. Jesus told a story about a man who was beaten and left for dead. A priest and a Levite passed by, but a Samaritan stopped, cared for him, and provided for his needs. Jesus then asked, "Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?" When the lawyer answered, "He that shewed mercy on him," Jesus said, "Go, and do thou likewise."

Before he left, some Jews asked in John chapter 10, "How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly." Jesus answered, "I and my Father are one," and said that there law says "Ye are gods." Once again, the crowd grew enraged and took up stones to kill Him, but He escaped their grasp for the last area he had to travel.

## **DAY 29 - Parables in Perea**

Jesus returned to a region called Perea, the place where he had been baptized. He told the parable of the lost sheep, saying in Matthew 18:12, "If a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?"

Jesus continued to heal, including on the Sabbath. He taught the people to be humble. He had dinner with a pharisee and taught, "Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Luke 14:11). He taught a parable about a rich man teaching the dangers of being rich, and of a great banquet, where the master welcomed the poor and outcast instead.

Jesus also taught about mercy and faith with the parables of the lost coin, the prodigal son, the unjust steward, and the mustard seed. As John 10:42 records, "And many believed on him there."

## **DAY 30 - Raising of Lazarus**

A message reached Jesus that Lazarus, the brother of Mary and Martha, was very sick. But Jesus stayed where He was for two more days, seemingly unconcerned. Jesus' disciples didn't understand, finally He said in John 11:14-15, "Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe." Lazarus lived in Perea, but closer to Judea, the apostle Thomas encouraged Jesus to go despite the danger.

When Jesus arrived, Lazarus had been dead four days. Martha met Him, saying, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." Jesus assured her, "Thy brother shall rise again." Martha thought Jesus was talking about the resurrection at the last days. Mary came and Jesus cried with both of them. They walked to the tomb with a crowd of family and followers.

Jesus ordered them to move the stone. They hesitated at his odd request. Jesus, in verse 40, said "if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" Jesus lifted His eyes and said, "Lazarus, come forth." The dead man emerged, still wrapped in burial clothes. Many who saw believed, but others reported to the Pharisees. The chief priests and council feared His growing influence and said, "If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him." From that day, they plotted to kill Him.

## **DAY 31 - Teachings on the Way to Jerusalem**

After raising Lazarus from the dead, Jesus began to travel back toward Jerusalem, and many people approached him along the way. First, a Pharisee tested Him asking, "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?" Jesus responded that marriage was ordained of God and that divorce was not part of His original plan.

Next, a rich young ruler asked Jesus how to gain eternal life. Jesus told him to keep the commandments. When the man claimed he had, Jesus said in Matthew 19:21, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor... and come and follow me." The man left sorrowful. Jesus turned to the crowd and taught, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." He taught a parable of a landowner who hired workers at different times of the day but paid them all equally. When some complained, he answered that he had done no wrong since they had agreed to the wage. He asked, "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?"

As they traveled, Jesus prepared His disciples for what was to come. He taught about his second coming and said in Matthew 20:18, "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed... and they shall condemn him to death."



# 40 DAYS TO EASTER

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## **DAY 32 - Jesus Prepares to Enter Jerusalem**

As Jesus neared Jerusalem, Zacchaeus climbed a tree to see him. Jesus called him down, and said He would stay at his house. Zacchaeus was so joyful he promised to give half his good to the poor. Jesus told him in Luke 19:9, "This day is salvation come to this house."

The mother of James and John approached Jesus, asking that her sons sit at His right and left hand in His kingdom. Jesus reminded her in Matthew 20:27 where true greatness comes from, "Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant."

Jesus also performed many miracles in the final leg of his travels. He healed two blind men. He healed ten lepers, but only one came back to thank him. Jesus continued to teach in parables, including one about servants who invested money well and received more money in return to invest.

## **DAY 33 - Palm Sunday**

As Jesus neared Jerusalem, He sent two disciples to find a donkey and colt. When they came back, Jesus rode into the city, fulfilling the prophecy, "Behold, thy King cometh... meek, and sitting upon an ass."

The crowds spread garments and palm branches, shouting in John 12:13, "Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord!" When the Pharisees told Him to silence them, He replied in Luke 19:40, "If these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out."

That night, a woman anointed Jesus with costly ointment. Some murmured at the cost, but Jesus responded in Matthew 26:10-12, "She hath wrought a good work upon me. For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always. For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial."

## **HOLY WEEK**

### **DAY 34 - Monday**

The next day, Jesus went into the temple and saw merchants and money changers turning His Father's house into a marketplace. Angered, He overturned their tables and said in Matthew 21:13, "It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves."

The blind and lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them. When the chief priests saw the miracles and heard children crying, "Hosanna to the Son of David," they were indignant. Jesus answered, "Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?" (Matthew 21:16).

### **DAY 35 - Tuesday**

The next day, on His way back to the temple, Jesus saw a fig tree without fruit. Jesus cursed the tree, and it withered.

When he arrived and began to teach, the chief priests and scribes tried to trick him "By what authority doest thou these things?" they asked. Jesus answered with a question about John the Baptist. He then told a parable where the landowner's son was killed by the tenants.

They tried again, asking Jesus about paying tribute to Caesar. Jesus replied, "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's." They asked him what the greatest commandment was. Jesus taught in Matthew 22:37-39, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Jesus warned against the hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees, calling them blind guides and whitewashed tombs, beautiful outside but full of corruption.

Seeing a poor widow donate two mites to the temple, Jesus said, "This poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury." As they left, the disciples marveled at the temples' grandeur. Jesus prophesied it would be destroyed. That night he prophesied on the Mount of Olives about the signs of his second coming but warned, "No man knoweth the day nor the hour."

### **DAY 36 - Wednesday**

Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve apostles, noticed how the chief priests attacked Jesus. So, the next day he went to them and asked, "What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you?" They offered him thirty pieces of silver, the price of a slave. From that moment, Judas sought an opportunity to betray Jesus.

### **DAY 37 - Thursday**

The next day began the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Jesus directed His disciples to prepare the Passover in a furnished upper room. That evening, as they ate, He said, "One of you shall betray me." The disciples were sorrowful. Judas asked, "Master, is it I?" Jesus replied, "Thou hast said" (Matthew 26:25). In Matthew 26:26-28, during the meal, Jesus took bread, broke it, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." Then He took the cup, saying, "This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many." He commanded them to remember Him.

After supper, Jesus washed His disciples' feet, teaching, "Ye also ought to wash one another's feet." He warned Peter, "Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice" (Matthew 26:34). Peter insisted, "I will not deny thee" (Matthew 26:35).

At Gethsemane, Jesus prayed, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." There, He suffered for the sins of all mankind. Judas arrived with a multitude and betrayed Him with a kiss. Jesus was arrested.

# 40 DAYS TO EASTER

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## **DAY 38 - Good Friday**

Throughout the night, Jesus was taken to local leaders. Peter followed, but was worried he would be captured. And denied knowing Christ. After the third time, the rooster crowed, and Peter wept.

Jesus was taken to Pilate. When asked, "Art thou the King of the Jews?" He answered, "Thou sayest it." Pilate, finding no fault in Him, offered to release either Jesus or the murderer Barabbas. The crowd, urged by the chief priests, shouted, "Crucify him." Pilate washed his hands and sentenced Jesus to death. After being scourged, soldiers mocked Jesus, placing a crown of thorns on His head. He was led to Golgotha, where Simon helped carry His cross. Nailed between two thieves, Jesus told one in Luke 23:43, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." Jesus forgave the soldiers who killed him. He told His apostles to care for his mother. Jesus cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" His final words were, "It is finished." He let himself die. The earth shook; darkness fell for three hours.

A soldier declared, "Truly, this was the Son of God."

One of Jesus' wealthy followers, Joseph of Arimathea requested His body, wrapped it in linen, and placed it in a tomb.

## **DAY 39 - Holy Saturday**

After Jesus died, He went to the spirits who had died to teach them.

The chief priests and Pharisees went to Pilate, saying, "Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, 'After three days I will rise again'" (Matthew 27:63). Fearing His disciples would steal the body and claim He had risen, they asked Pilate to secure the tomb. Pilate agreed to place a massive stone to block the tomb, and post guards outside it.

Meanwhile, the women who had followed Jesus went to care for his body. Luke 23:56 records, "They returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath day according to the commandment." Mary Magdalene and others planned to return after the Sabbath to anoint Him. As night fell, the tomb was sealed, soldiers stood watch.

## **DAY 40 - Easter Sunday**

At dawn, Mary Magdalene and other women returned. They found the stone rolled away. An angel appeared, saying in Matthew 28:5-6, "Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said."

Mary ran to tell the disciples. Peter and John raced to the tomb and found the linen clothes lying empty. Mary remained, weeping. Jesus appeared to her, but she did not recognize Him until He said, "Mary." She turned and cried, "Rabboni!" Jesus told her in John 20:17, "Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God."

The guards reported to the chief priests that they had seen the angels, but they bribed the guards to say the disciples had stolen it.

That evening, Jesus appeared to His apostles. He said in John 20:19, "Peace be unto you."

He showed them His hands and side. Jesus told them to preach repentance and baptism in His name, promising, "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you."