

Tuesday, April 7, 2020—The Memorial of Christ’s Death

During the Memorial season each year, many Christians meditate on the two greatest expressions of love ever shown—those of Jehovah God and of his Son, Jesus Christ. (Joh 3:16; 15:13) Using this chart, you can compare the Gospel accounts of Jesus’ final ministry in Jerusalem. These events are discussed in section 6 of the book *Jesus—The Way, the Truth, the Life*. How will the love of God and of Christ motivate you?—2Co 5:14, 15; 1Jo 4:16, 19.



FAMILY WORSHIP SUGGESTION

Watch and discuss the videos ‘*For a Certainty God Made Him Lord and Christ*’—*Parts I and II*:

<https://www.jw.org/en/library/videos/jesus-lord-christ/movie-part-1/>

<https://www.jw.org/en/library/videos/jesus-lord-christ/movie-part-2/>

(John 3:16) “For God loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, so that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life.

(John 15:13) No one has love greater than this, that someone should surrender his life in behalf of his friends.

(2 Cor. 5:14, 15) For the love the Christ has compels us, because this is what we have concluded, that one man died for all; so, then, all had died. ¹⁵ And he died for all so that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for him who died for them and was raised up.

(1 John 4:16) And we have come to know and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and the one who remains in love remains in union with God and God remains in union with him.

(1 John 4:19) We love, because he first loved us.

JESUS' FINAL MINISTRY

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Main Events of Jesus' Earthly Life—Jesus' Final Ministry in Jerusalem (Part 1)

TIME	PLACE	EVENT	MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
33, Nisan 8	Bethany	Jesus arrives six days before Passover				11:55–12:1
Nisan 9	Bethany	Mary pours oil on his head and feet	26:6-13	14:3-9		12:2-11
	Bethany- Bethphage- Jerusalem	Enters Jerusalem triumphantly, riding on a donkey	21:1-11,14-17	11:1-11	19:29-44	12:12-19
Nisan 10	Bethany- Jerusalem	Curses fig tree; cleanses temple again	21:18, 19;21:12, 13	11:12-17	19:45, 46	
	Jerusalem	Chief priests and scribes scheme to destroy Jesus		11:18, 19	19:47, 48	
		Jehovah speaks; Jesus foretells his death; disbelief of Jews fulfills prophecy of Isaiah				
Nisan 11	Bethany- Jerusalem	Withered fig tree lesson	21:19-22	11:20-25		
	Jerusalem, temple	His authority challenged; illustration of two sons	21:23-32	11:27-33	20:1-8	
		Illustrations: murderous cultivators, marriage feast	21:33–22:14	12:1-12	20:9-19	
		Answers questions on God and Caesar, resurrection, greatest commandment	22:15-40	12:13-34	20:20-40	
		Asks crowd if Christ is David's son	22:41-46	12:35-37	20:41-44	

TIME	PLACE	EVENT	MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
		Woes to scribes and Pharisees	23:1-39	12:38-40	20:45-47	
		Observes widow's contribution		12:41-44	21:1-4	
	Mount of Olives	Gives sign of future presence	24:1-51	13:1-37	21:5-38	
		Illustrations: ten virgins, talents, sheep and goats	25:1-46			
Nisan 12	Jerusalem	Jewish leaders plot to kill him	26:1-5	14:1, 2	22:1, 2	
		Judas arranges betrayal	26:14-16	14:10, 11	22:3-6	
Nisan 13 (Thursday afternoon)	Near and in Jerusalem	Prepares for last Passover	26:17-19	14:12-16	22:7-13	
Nisan 14	Jerusalem	Eats Passover with apostles	26:20, 21	14:17, 18	22:14-18	
		Washes feet of apostles				13:1-20

Main Events of Jesus' Earthly Life—Jesus' Final Ministry in Jerusalem (Part 2)

TIME	PLACE	EVENT	MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
Nisan 14	Jerusalem	Jesus identifies Judas as traitor and dismisses him	26:21-25	14:18-21	22:21-23	13:21-30
		Institutes the Lord's Evening Meal (1Co 11:23-25)	26:26-29	14:22-25	22:19, 20,24-30	
		Foretells Peter's denials and scattering of apostles	26:31-35	14:27-31	22:31-38	13:31-38
		Promises helper; illustration of true vine; gives command to love; last prayer with apostles				14:1–17:26
	Gethsemane	Agony in the garden; Jesus' betrayal and arrest	26:30, 36-56	14:26, 32-52	22:39-53	18:1-12
Jerusalem	Questioned by Annas; trial by Caiaphas, Sanhedrin; Peter denies him	26:57–27:1	14:53–15:1	22:54-71	18:13-27	
	Judas the betrayer hangs himself	27:3-10				

TIME	PLACE	EVENT	MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
		(Ac 1:18, 19)				
		Before Pilate, then Herod, and back to Pilate	27:2, 11-14	15:1-5	23:1-12	18:28-38
		Pilate seeks his release but Jews ask for Barabbas; sentenced to death on the torture stake	27:15-30	15:6-19	23:13-25	18:39–19:16
(c. 3:00 p.m., Friday)	Golgotha	Dies on torture stake	27:31-56	15:20-41	23:26-49	19:16-30
	Jerusalem	Body taken from the stake and placed in tomb	27:57-61	15:42-47	23:50-56	19:31-42
Nisan 15	Jerusalem	Priests and Pharisees get guard for tomb and seal it	27:62-66			
Nisan 16	Jerusalem and vicinity; Emmaus	Jesus resurrected; appears five times to disciples	28:1-15	16:1-8	24:1-49	20:1-25
After Nisan 16	Jerusalem; Galilee	Makes more appearances to disciples (1Co 15:5-7; Ac 1:3-8); instructs; commissions disciple-making	28:16-20			20:26–21:25

TIME	PLACE	EVENT	MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
Iyyar 25	Mount of Olives, near Bethany	Jesus' ascension, 40th day after his resurrection (Ac 1:9-12)			24:50-53	



The Lord's Evening Meal

MATTHEW 26:21-29 MARK 14:18-25 LUKE 22:19-23 JOHN 13:18-30

- ◆ **JUDAS IS IDENTIFIED AS A TRAITOR**
- ◆ **JESUS INSTITUTES A MEMORIAL MEAL**

Earlier this evening Jesus taught his apostles a lesson in humility by washing their feet. Now, apparently after the Passover meal, he quotes David's prophetic words: "The man at peace with me, one whom I trusted, who was eating my bread, has lifted his heel against me." Then he explains: "One of you will betray me."—Psalm 41:9; John 13:18, 21.

The apostles look at one another, and each asks: "Lord, it is not I, is it?" Even Judas Iscariot does so. Peter urges John, who is next to Jesus at the table, to find out who it is. So John leans close to Jesus and asks: "Lord, who is it?"—Matthew 26:22; John 13:25.

Jesus answers: “It is the one to whom I will give the piece of bread that I dip.” Dipping some bread in a dish on the table, Jesus hands it to Judas, saying: “The Son of man is going away, just as it is written about him, but woe to that man through whom the Son of man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born.” (John 13:26; Matthew 26:24) Satan then enters Judas. This man, already corrupt, now gives himself over to do the Devil’s will and thus becomes “the son of destruction.”—John 6:64, 70; 12:4; 17:12.

Jesus tells Judas: “What you are doing, do it more quickly.” The other apostles imagine that Judas, who is holding the money box, is being told: “‘Buy what we need for the festival,’ or that he should give something to the poor.” (John 13:27-30) Instead, Judas goes off to betray Jesus.

On this same evening as the Passover meal, Jesus introduces an entirely new type of meal. He takes a loaf, says a prayer of thanks, breaks it, and gives it to his apostles to eat. He says: “This means my body, which is to be given in your behalf. Keep doing this in remembrance of me.” (Luke 22:19) The piece of bread is passed around, and the apostles eat of it.

Now Jesus takes a cup of wine, says a prayer of thanks over it, and passes it to them. Each drinks from the cup, about which Jesus says: “This cup means the new covenant by virtue of my blood, which is to be poured out in your behalf.”—Luke 22:20.

Thus Jesus arranges for a memorial of his death that his followers are to hold each year on Nisan 14. It will call to mind what Jesus and his Father have done to enable men of faith to escape from the condemnation of sin and death. Even more so than did the Passover for the Jews, it highlights true liberation for believing mankind.

Jesus says that his blood “is to be poured out in behalf of many for forgiveness of sins.” Among the many to gain such forgiveness are his faithful apostles and others like them. They are the ones who will be with him in the Kingdom of his Father.—Matthew 26:28, 29.

- ◆ What Bible prophecy does Jesus quote about a companion, and how does he apply it?
- ◆ Jesus tells Judas to do what, but how do the other apostles understand Jesus’ direction?
- ◆ What new event does Jesus introduce, and what purpose does it serve?

Last Day's of Jesus Last Week on Earth:

Nisan 9 – Friday 3rd April - Mary pours oil on his head and feet

Mark 14: 3-9 - Questions From Readers

Three of the Gospels relate the complaint about Jesus 'being anointed with costly oil. Did many apostles complain, or was it primarily Judas?

We find this event related in the Gospels by Matthew, Mark, and John. It seems that Judas took the lead in complaining, with at least some other apostles then agreeing with him. This incident illustrates why we can be thankful for having four Gospel accounts. What each writer penned was accurate, but not all provide the same details. By comparing parallel accounts, we gain a fuller, more detailed view of many events.

The account at Matthew 26:6-13 gives the location—the house of Simon the leper, in Bethany—but does not name the woman who began pouring perfumed oil on Jesus' head. Matthew notes: "On seeing this *the disciples* became indignant" and complained that the oil could have been sold and the funds given to the poor.

Mark's account includes most of those details. But he adds that she broke open the container. It held perfumed oil that was "genuine nard," such as may have been imported from India. As to the complaint, Mark reports that "there were *some* expressing indignation," and "*they* were feeling great displeasure at her." (Mark 14:3-9) So the two accounts show that more than one apostle was involved in the complaining. How did it start though?

John, who was an eyewitness, added pertinent details. He names the woman—Mary, sister of Martha and Lazarus. John provided also this detail, which we can take as complementary rather than contradictory: "She greased the *feet* of Jesus and wiped his feet dry with her hair." Combining the accounts, we can see that Mary must have put the oil, which John confirms was "genuine nard," on Jesus' head and feet. John was very close to Jesus and was inclined to be indignant over slights to Him. We read: "Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples, who was about to betray him, said: 'Why was it this perfumed oil was not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor people?'"—John 12:2-8.

Of course, Judas was “one of his disciples,” but you can sense John’s indignation that someone in this position was planning on betraying Jesus. Translator Dr. C. Howard Matheny observed about John 12:4: “The present participle ‘being about’ [or, “was about to”] and the present infinitive ‘to be betraying’ [or, “was about to betray”] both express linear or continuous action. This shows that the betrayal of Jesus by Judas was not a momentary action done on the spur of the moment for it was thought about and planned during many days.” John added the insight that Judas complained “not because he was concerned about the poor, but because he was a thief and had the money box and used to carry off the monies put in it.”

It thus seems logical that the thief Judas initiated the complaining because he would have more to steal if the costly oil were sold and the funds put in the money box that he carried. Once Judas raised this complaint, some other apostles may have murmured assent at what seemed a valid point. Judas, however, was the main instigator of the complaint.

Nisan 9 - Enters Jerusalem triumphantly, riding on a donkey

Matthew 21:1-11,14-17

19, 20. Contrast the haughtiness of conquering Roman generals with Jesus’ lowliness of mind.

¹⁹ Jesus was the finest example of one who was lowly in mind. He was God’s only-begotten Son, the future King of God’s heavenly Kingdom. When he presented himself to the people as such, he did not do as the conquering generals of Roman times did. They were given huge parades—processions—and rode in chariots decorated with gold and ivory, drawn by white horses, or even by elephants, lions, or tigers. In the processions were musicians singing victory songs, along with carts loaded with booty and huge floats illustrating battle scenes. There were also captive kings, princes, and generals, with their families, often stripped naked to humiliate them. The events reeked of pride, haughtiness.

²⁰ Contrast that with the way Jesus offered himself. He was willing to submit humbly to fulfilling the prophecy about him, which foretold: “Look! Your king himself comes to you. He is righteous, yes, saved; humble, and riding upon an ass.” He humbly rode on a beast of burden, not in a chariot pulled by magnificent parade animals. (Zechariah 9:9; Matthew 21:4, 5) How happy humble people are that Jesus will be Jehovah’s appointed King over the entire earth in the new world, one who is truly lowly in mind, humble, loving, compassionate, merciful!—Isaiah 9:6, 7; Philippians 2:5-8.

Nisan 10 – Saturday 4th April - Mark 11:12-19

Curses fig tree; Why did Jesus curse that tree since, as Mark explains, “it was not the season of figs”? (Mark 11:13) Well, when a fig tree bears leaves, normally it also produces early figs. It was unusual for a fig tree to have leaves at that time of year. But since it had leaves, Jesus rightly expected to find figs on it. (See the picture above.) The fact that the tree had borne only leaves meant that it would be unproductive. Its appearance was deceptive. Since fruit trees were taxed, an unfruitful tree was an economic burden and needed to be cut down.

Jesus used that unfruitful fig tree to illustrate a vital lesson regarding faith. The following day, his disciples were surprised to see that the tree had already withered. Jesus explained: “Have faith in God. . . . All the things you pray and ask for have faith that you have practically received, and you will have them.” (Mark 11:22-24) In addition to illustrating the need to pray in faith, the withered fig tree graphically showed what would happen to a nation lacking faith.

Before long, Jesus and his disciples reach Jerusalem. He goes to the temple, which he inspected the previous afternoon. Today he does more than make an inspection; he takes action similar to what he did three years earlier at the Passover of 30 C.E. (John 2:14-16) This time Jesus throws out “those selling and buying in the temple.” He also overturns “the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves.” (Mark 11:15) He does not even let anyone carrying things to another part of the city take a shortcut through the temple courtyard.

Why is Jesus taking decisive action against those changing money and selling animals in the temple? He says: “Is it not written, ‘My house will be called a house of prayer for all the nations’? But you have made it a cave of robbers.” (Mark 11:17) His reason for calling these men robbers is that they demand exorbitant prices from those who have to buy animals needed for sacrifice. Jesus views their dealings as extortion, or robbery.

Malachi 3:1—“The true Lord” is Jehovah God, and “the messenger of the covenant” is Jesus Christ. The initial fulfillment of the prophecy took place when Jesus cleansed the temple. (Mark 11:15-17) This was three and a half years after he was anointed as King-Designate. Similarly, three and a half years after Jesus was enthroned as King in the autumn of 1914, he accompanied Jehovah to the spiritual temple and found God’s people in need of refining and cleansing.

Nisan 10 - Saturday 4th April - Jehovah speaks; Jesus foretells his death; disbelief of Jews fulfils prophecy of Isaiah

John 12:38

Jehovah: In this quote from Isa 53:1, the original Hebrew text uses the divine name only once, in the expression “the arm of Jehovah.” John, however, apparently quotes from the *Septuagint* translation of Isaiah’s prophecy, where the Greek text begins with the form of the word *Ky’ri-os* (Lord) used for direct address. (See Ro 10:16, where Isa 53:1 is also quoted.) The translators may have inserted the divine name in this first occurrence in order to clarify to the reader that the prophet addresses his questions to God. As previously noted, *Ky’ri-os* in later copies of the *Septuagint* is often used as a substitute for the Tetragrammaton in the original Hebrew text (as is the case in the second occurrence of *Ky’ri-os* in this quote). Therefore, the divine name has here been used in the main text. A number of translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew (referred to as J^{12, 14, 16-18, 22, 23} in App. C4) use the divine name at its first occurrence at Joh 12:38.

arm of Jehovah: In this quote from Isa 53:1, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated *YHWH*), occurs once in the original Hebrew text. (See study note on the first occurrence of **Jehovah** in this verse and App. A5 and C.) The Hebrew and Greek terms for **arm** are often used figuratively in the Bible to represent the ability to exert strength or power. Through the signs and miracles that Jesus performed, Jehovah revealed His “arm,” His might and ability to exercise power.

Nisan 10 – Daytime – Saturday 4th April

John 12:20-50

12, 13. (a) Shortly before Jesus’ death, what aroused the interest of some Greek proselytes? (b) How did Jesus handle the potential distraction?

¹² The last week of Jesus' human life was very stressful. (Matt. 26:38; John 12:27) He had much work to do, and he faced a humiliating trial and a cruel death. Consider, for example, what happened on Sunday, Nisan 9, of the year 33 C.E. As foretold, Jesus entered Jerusalem on a colt, and the crowds hailed him as "the one coming as the King in Jehovah's name." (Luke 19:38) The next day, Jesus entered the temple and courageously threw out the greedy businessmen who were using God's house for extorting money from fellow Jews.—Luke 19:45, 46.

¹³ Among the crowds in Jerusalem were some Greek proselytes who evidently were so impressed with Jesus that they asked the apostle Philip to arrange a meeting with him. Jesus, however, refused to be distracted from the more important matters that lay ahead. He certainly did not want to try to gain popularity in order to avoid a sacrificial death at the hands of God's enemies. So after explaining that he would soon die, he said to Andrew and Philip: "Whoever is fond of his life destroys it, but whoever hates his life in this world will safeguard it for everlasting life." Rather than satisfy the curiosity of those Greeks, he recommended following his self-sacrificing course and promised: "If anyone would minister to me, the Father will honor him." No doubt, Philip carried this positive message back to the inquirers.—John 12:20-26.

tp chap. 14 p. 162 pars. 26-28 Respect for the Gift of Life

²⁶ Thus, though we should be concerned over our health and seek to protect our lives, there are certain limits to observe. Jesus made this clear when he said: "He that is fond of his soul [or, life] destroys it, but he that hates his soul in this world will safeguard it for everlasting life."—John 12:25.

²⁷ If it is a question of facing death for obeying God or of disobeying him to avoid death, the servant of God will prefer death to disobedience. By disobeying God, Jesus could have escaped death. But he did not. And men before him had shown the same unbreakable devotion to God. (Matthew 26:38, 39, 51-54; Hebrews 11:32-38) They did not let their present life stand in the way of their qualifying for everlasting life.

²⁸ Is that how you too view life? Do you appreciate that for life to have real meaning, you must live it in harmony with the will of God? Cultivating that viewpoint now is part of preparation for life in God's New Order. How secure and safe we will then feel, anywhere and at any time, knowing that all those living on earth have genuine respect for God's gift of life!

w89 12/1 p. 8 God's Voice Heard a Third Time

WHILE at the temple, Jesus has been agonizing over the death that he soon must face. His main concern is how his Father's reputation will be affected, so he prays: "Father, glorify your name."

At that, a mighty voice comes from the heavens, proclaiming: "I both glorified it and will glorify it again."

The crowd standing around are bewildered. "An angel has spoken to him," some begin to say. Others claim that it thundered. But, indeed, it is Jehovah God who spoke! This, however, is not the first time God's voice was heard in connection with Jesus.

At Jesus' baptism, three and a half years earlier, John the Baptizer heard God say of Jesus: "This is my Son, the beloved, whom I have approved." Then, sometime after the previous Passover, when Jesus was transfigured before them, James, John, and Peter heard God declare: "This is my Son, the beloved, whom I have approved; listen to him." And now, for the third time, on Nisan 10, four days before Jesus' death, God's voice is again heard by men. But this time Jehovah speaks so that multitudes can hear!

Jesus explains: "This voice has occurred, not for my sake, but for your sakes." It provides proof that Jesus is indeed God's Son, the promised Messiah. "Now there is a judging of this world," Jesus continues, "now the ruler of this world will be cast out." Jesus' faithful life course, in effect, confirms that Satan the Devil, the ruler of the world, deserves to be "cast out," executed.

Nisan 11 – [Daytime] Sunday 5th April - Withered fig tree lesson

Mark 11:12 – 17 & 20-25

Curses fig tree; Why did Jesus curse that tree since, as Mark explains, "it was not the season of figs"? (Mark 11:13) Well, when a fig tree bears leaves, normally it also produces early figs. It was unusual for a fig tree to have leaves at that time of year. But since it had leaves, Jesus rightly expected to find figs on it. (See the picture above.) The fact that the tree had borne only leaves meant that it would be unproductive. Its appearance was deceptive. Since fruit trees were taxed, an unfruitful tree was an economic burden and needed to be cut down.

Jesus used that unfruitful fig tree to illustrate a vital lesson regarding faith. The following day, his disciples were surprised to see that the tree had already withered. Jesus explained: “Have faith in God. . . . All the things you pray and ask for have faith that you have practically received, and you will have them.” (Mark 11:22-24) In addition to illustrating the need to pray in faith, the withered fig tree graphically showed what would happen to a nation lacking faith.

Nisan 11 – [Daytime] Sunday 5th April

Matthew 21:19-22

Withered fig tree lesson

My chap. 105 p. 244 pars. 3-6 A Fig Tree Is Used to Teach a Lesson About Faith

En route from Bethany over the Mount of Olives toward Jerusalem, Peter notices the tree that Jesus cursed the previous morning. “Rabbi, see!” he exclaims, “the fig tree that you cursed has withered.”—Mark 11:21.

But why did Jesus cause the tree to wither? He reveals the reason in his response: “Truly I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only will you do what I did to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, ‘Be lifted up and thrown into the sea,’ it will happen. And all the things you ask in prayer, having faith, you will receive.” (Matthew 21:21, 22) He is thus repeating the point he made earlier about faith being able to move a mountain.—Matthew 17:20.

So by causing the tree to wither, Jesus provides an object lesson on the need to have faith in God. He states: “All the things you pray and ask for, have faith that you have received them, and you will have them.” (Mark 11:24) What an important lesson for all of Jesus’ followers! It is especially appropriate for the apostles in view of the difficult tests they will soon face. There is yet another connection between the withering of the fig tree and the quality of faith.

Like this fig tree, the nation of Israel has a deceptive appearance. The people of this nation are in a covenant relationship with God, and they might outwardly appear to observe his Law. However, the nation as a whole has proved to be both lacking faith and barren of good fruitage. They even reject God’s own Son! Hence, by causing the unproductive fig tree to wither, Jesus demonstrates what the end will be for this fruitless, faithless nation.

Nisan 11 – Sunday 5th April - Answers questions on God and Caesar, resurrection, greatest commandment

Lesson for us: No matter what - Jesus was still faithful with his Ministry and Service to Jehovah even knowing that the when his earthly life would end was fast approaching – the question is ‘Can or do We Desire to Imitate Jesus in our Service Despite what problems we might or are facing at present?’

Matthew 22:15-40

Matthew 22:15

to trap him: Lit., “to ensnare him,” like a bird in a net. (Compare Ec 9:12, where the *Septuagint* uses the same Greek hunting term to render a Hebrew word with the meaning “to catch with a snare; to ensnare.”) The Pharisees used flattery and insincere questions (Mt 22:16, 17) solely designed to elicit an answer they could use against Jesus.

Nisan 11 – Sunday 5th April Matthew 22:17

Head tax: An annual tax, probably amounting to a denarius, or one day’s wages, which the Romans levied on all those who had been registered by census.—Lu 2:1-3.

Caesar: Or “the Emperor.” The Roman emperor during Jesus’ earthly ministry was Tiberius, but the term was not restricted to the ruling emperor. “Caesar” could refer to the Roman civil authority, or the State, and its duly appointed representatives, who are called “the superior authorities” by Paul, and “the king” and his “governors” by Peter.

Matthew 22:21

Pay back: Lit., “Give back.” Caesar minted the coins, so he had a right to ask for some of them back. But Caesar did not have the right to ask a person to dedicate or devote his life to him. God gave humans “life and breath and all things.” (Ac 17:25) So a person can “give back” his life and devotion only to God, the one who has the right to require exclusive devotion.

Caesar's things to Caesar: Jesus' reply here, and in the parallel accounts at Mr 12:17 and Lu 20:25, is his only recorded reference to the Roman emperor. "Caesar's things" include payment for services rendered by the secular government as well as the honor and relative subjection that is to be shown to such authorities.—Ro 13:1-7.

God's things to God: This includes a person's wholehearted worship, whole-souled love, and complete, loyal obedience.

Matthew 22:39

The second: At Mt 22:37, Jesus' direct answer to the Pharisee is recorded, but Jesus now goes beyond the original question and quotes a second commandment (Le 19:18), teaching that the two commandments are inextricably linked and that the whole Law and the Prophets are summed up by them.—Mt 22:40.

neighbor: This Greek word for "neighbor" (lit., "the one near") can include more than just those who live nearby. It can refer to anyone with whom a person interacts.

Matthew 22:40

Hangs: The Greek verb with the literal meaning "to hang on" is here used in the figurative sense "to be dependent on; be based on." Jesus thus indicated that not just the Law with the Ten Commandments but the entire Hebrew Scriptures are based on love.

Nisan 11 – Sunday 5th April

Jesus in the Temple and still active in his Ministry – still giving valuable lessons to his disciples: [**What a full day of service to Jehovah**]

Observes widow's contribution

Mark 12:41

treasury chests: Ancient Jewish sources say that these contribution boxes, or receptacles, were shaped like trumpets, or horns, evidently with small openings at the top. People deposited in them various offerings. The Greek word used here also occurs at Joh 8:20, where it is rendered "the treasury," apparently located in the area called the Court of the Women. (See study note on Mt 27:6 and App. B11.) According to rabbinical sources, 13 treasury chests were placed around the walls of that court. It is believed that the temple also contained a major treasury where the money from the treasury chests was brought.

money: Lit., "copper," that is, copper money, or copper coins, though the Greek word was also used as a general term for all money.

Valuable Lesson in Prov 3:9 * 1 Chronicles chp 29 : 9 – Luke 21:4

Prov 9 Honor Jehovah with your valuable things, With the firstfruits* of all your produce;

1Ch 29:9

9 The people rejoiced over making these voluntary offerings, for they made the voluntary offerings to Jehovah with a complete heart,

Luke 21:4

For all of these put in gifts out of their surplus, but she, out of her want, put in all the means of living she had.”

Disciples asked Jesus for a sign of his future presence: Yet despite what was looming ahead for Jesus he still found time to help them and give an answer to their question – what a lesson for us today – not being pre-occupied with our own problems in life:

Gives sign of future presence – Matt 24: 1-51 – [Mark 13: 1-37] [Luke 21: 5-38]

Illustrations: ten virgins, talents, sheep and goats Matt 25: 1-46

Nisan 12 Daytime – Monday 6th April

All this is going on but what does Jesus continue doing? Worshiping Jehovah and caring for his disciples and teaching them many things:

Jewish Leaders Plot to Kill Jesus – Matt 26: 1-5 – Mark 14: 1-2 Luke 22: 1-2

Judas Arranges to Betray Jesus Matt 26: 14-16 – Mark 14:10-11 – Luke 22: 3-6

Jesus’ Life and Ministry Jesus’ Final Passover Is At Hand

AS Nisan 11, draws to a close, Jesus finishes teaching the apostles on the Mount of Olives. What a busy, strenuous day it has been! Now, perhaps while returning to Bethany for the night, he tells his apostles: “You know that two days from now the passover occurs, and the Son of man is to be delivered up to be impaled.”

The following day, Nisan 12, Jesus apparently spends in quiet retirement with his apostles. On the day before, he had rebuked the religious leaders publicly, and he realizes that they are seeking to kill him. So on Wednesday he does not openly show himself, since he does not want anything to interfere with his celebrating the Passover with his apostles the following evening.

In the meantime, the chief priests and the older men of the people have gathered in the courtyard of the high priest, Caiaphas. Smarting from Jesus' attack the previous day, they are making plans to seize him by crafty device and have him put to death.

Did you notice a lesson for us today as to what Jesus did on Nisan the 12th - Jesus apparently spends in quiet retirement with his apostles reason he does not openly show himself, since he does not want anything to interfere with his celebrating the Passover with his apostles the following evening.

Sometimes we should take time out and reflect on what lies ahead: [Remember the phrase – 'Pause – Reflect & Meditate]

w08 9/1 p. 25 Did You Know?

Why was Judas offered 30 pieces of silver to betray Jesus?

When Judas Iscariot met the chief priests to see how much they would give him to betray Jesus, they offered him "thirty silver pieces." (Matthew 26:14, 15) This sum appears to show the contempt that they felt for Jesus and how little they valued him.

The coins in question may have been silver shekels, the standard monetary unit among the Jews. What was the buying power of 30 shekels? The Mosaic Law established this as the price of a slave. Thirty shekels could also buy a plot of land.—Exodus 21:32; Matthew 27:6, 7.

When the prophet Zechariah called for his wages from the unfaithful Israelites for his work as shepherd of God's people, they weighed out to him "thirty pieces of silver." This was a demeaning and deliberate gesture toward God's prophet, suggesting that they valued him as no more than a slave. Hence, Jehovah ordered Zechariah: "Throw it to the treasury—the majestic value with which I have been valued from their standpoint." (Zechariah 11:12, 13) Zechariah's action in obedience to this command reminds us of what Judas would do with the sum obtained for betraying the One whom Jehovah had designated as Israel's shepherd.—Matthew 27:5.

Nisan 12 Daytime – Monday 6th April

Matt 26: 14-16 – Note the Lesson of not giving to much information as to what was going to happen and where?

w90 6/1 p. 9 Jesus' Final Passover Is At Hand

While the religious leaders are wickedly conspiring to kill Jesus, they receive a visitor. To their surprise, it is one of Jesus' own apostles, Judas Iscariot, the one into whom Satan has implanted the base idea of betraying his Master! How pleased they are when Judas inquires: "What will you give me to betray him to you?" They gladly agree to pay him 30 silver pieces, the price of a slave according to the Mosaic Law covenant. From then on, Judas seeks a good opportunity to betray Jesus to them without a crowd around.

Nisan 13 begins at sundown -Jesus had arrived from Jericho on Nisan 9, so this is the sixth and final night that he spends in Bethany. The next day, Nisan 13, final preparations will need to be made for the Passover, which commences at sundown, when the Passover lamb must be slaughtered and then roasted whole. Where will they celebrate the feast, and who will make the preparations?

Jesus has not provided such details, perhaps to prevent Judas from informing the chief priests so that they might apprehend Jesus during the Passover celebration. But now, probably early Thursday afternoon, Jesus dispatches Peter and John from Bethany, saying: "Go and get the passover ready for us to eat."

Nisan 13 Afternoon – Tuesday 7th April:

Prepares for last Passover

w90 6/1 p. 9 Jesus' Final Passover Is At Hand *

Jesus has not provided such details, perhaps to prevent Judas from informing the chief priests so that they might apprehend Jesus during the Passover celebration. But now, probably early Thursday afternoon, Jesus dispatches Peter and John from Bethany, saying: "Go and get the passover ready for us to eat."

Note now that the Passover time and date had arrived Jesus now instructs his disciples where to go and what to say and do – AGAIN – information at the right time: A valuable lesson for us all:

“Where do you want us to get it ready?” they ask.

“When you enter into the city,” Jesus explains, “a man carrying an earthenware vessel of water will meet you. Follow him into the house into which he enters. And you must say to the landlord of the house, ‘The Teacher says to you: “Where is the guest room in which I may eat the passover with my disciples?”’” And that man will show you a large upper room furnished. Get it ready there.”

No doubt the landlord is a disciple of Jesus who perhaps anticipates Jesus’ request to use his house for this special occasion. At any rate, when Peter and John arrive in Jerusalem, they find everything just as Jesus foretold. So the two of them see to it that the lamb is ready and that all the other arrangements are made to care for the needs of the 13 Passover celebrants, Jesus and his 12 apostles

w13 8/1 p. 10 Why Are Some Bible Characters Left Unnamed?

To prepare for his final Passover meal, Jesus told his disciples to “go into the city to So-and-so [“a certain man,” *The New English Bible*]” and get things ready at his home. (Matthew 26:18) Are we to assume that the man referred to as “So-and-so” in this verse was a bad man or that he was too insignificant to be named? Not at all; the “certain man” mentioned here no doubt was a disciple of Jesus. Since his name was not vital to the account, it was omitted.

Nisan 14 – After Sunset – 7th April

Jesus Eats Passover with apostles and after Judas has been dismissed

Jesus identifies Judas as traitor and dismisses him

Institutes the Lord’s Evening Meal (1Co 11:23-25)

Jesus then opens up an avenue by celebrating the ‘Lords Evening Meal’

Matthew 26:26

took a loaf . . . broke it: The loaves common in the ancient Near East were thin and, if unleavened, brittle. There was no spiritual significance to Jesus' breaking the bread; this was the normal way to divide that type of loaf.—See study note on Mt 14:19.

saying a blessing: This expression evidently refers to a prayer offering praise and thanks to God.

means: The Greek word *e-stin'* (literally meaning "is") here has the sense of "signifies; symbolizes; stands for; represents." This meaning was evident to the apostles, since on this occasion Jesus' perfect body was there in front of them and so was the unleavened bread that they were about to eat. Therefore, the bread could not have been his literal body. It is worth noting that the same Greek word is used at Mt 12:7, and many Bible translations render it "means."

Matthew 26:28

blood of the covenant: The new covenant, between Jehovah and anointed Christians, was made operative by Jesus' sacrifice. (Heb 8:10) Jesus here uses the same expression Moses used when acting as mediator and inaugurating the Law covenant with Israel at Mount Sinai. (Ex 24:8; Heb 9:19-21) Just as the blood of bulls and goats validated the Law covenant between God and the nation of Israel, Jesus' blood made valid the new covenant that Jehovah would make with spiritual Israel. That covenant went into effect at Pentecost 33 C.E.—Heb 9:14, 15.

Nisan 14 – After Sunset – 7th April

Jesus taught his disciples and us today a valuable lesson in Humility and Love:

Washes feet of apostles - John 13:1-20

“Jesus . . . Loved Them to the End”

AS HE gathers his apostles in an upper room of a house in Jerusalem, Jesus knows that this is his last evening with them. The time is near for him to return to his Father. In a matter of hours, Jesus will be arrested and his faith tested as never before. Yet, not even his impending death can distract him from the needs of the apostles.

Jesus has prepared the apostles for his departure, but he still has more to say to strengthen them for what lies ahead. So he spends these last precious moments teaching them vital lessons that will help them to remain faithful. His words are among the warmest and most intimate that he has ever shared with them. Why, though, is Jesus more concerned about his apostles than about himself? Why are these final hours with them so dear to him? The answer is, in a word, love. His love for them is profound.

Decades later when introducing his inspired account of the events of that evening, the apostle John wrote: “Because he knew before the festival of the passover that his hour had come for him to move out of this world to the Father, Jesus, having loved his own that were in the world, loved them to the end.” (John 13:1) Jesus did not wait until that night to demonstrate love to “his own.” Throughout his ministry, in ways large and small, he gave proof of his love for his disciples. We do well to examine some of the ways he showed his love, for by imitating him in this regard, we prove ourselves his genuine disciples.

The Greatest Man Performs a Humble Service

JESUS knew that his final hours with his apostles would be precious. Before long, he would be arrested, and his faith would be tested as never before. Jesus was also aware that great blessings lay ahead. Soon he would be exalted to the right hand of God and be given “the name that is above every other name, so that in the name of Jesus every knee should bend of those in heaven and those on earth and those under the ground.”—Philippians 2:9, 10.

Yet, neither anxiety over his impending death nor eagerness for his promised reward distracted Jesus from the needs of his apostles. He “loved them to the end,” John later recorded in his Gospel. (John 13:1) And in these crucial last hours of his life as a perfect human, Jesus taught his apostles a vital lesson.

A Lesson in Humility

The apostles were with Jesus in an upper room in Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. Previously, Jesus had heard them arguing about who was the greatest among them. (Matthew 18:1; Mark 9:33, 34) He had discussed this matter with them and had endeavored to correct their viewpoint. (Luke 9:46) Now, however, Jesus emphasized those lessons using a different approach. He chose not only to talk to them about humility but to demonstrate it.

Jesus “got up from the evening meal and laid aside his outer garments,” John writes. “Taking a towel, he girded himself. After that he put water into a basin and started to wash the feet of the disciples and to dry them off with the towel with which he was girded.”—John 13:4, 5.

In the warm climate of the ancient Middle East, people usually wore open sandals as they walked on dusty roads. Upon entering the home of a common person, they would be greeted by a host, who would provide vessels and water so that they could wash their feet. In wealthier homes, a slave would perform the task of foot washing.—Judges 19:21; 1 Samuel 25:40-42.

In the upper room, Jesus and his apostles were not someone's guests. There was no host to provide vessels, and there were no slaves to do the foot washing. When Jesus began washing their feet, the apostles were put in an awkward situation. Here the One who was the greatest among them performed the humblest task!

At first, Peter refused to let Jesus wash his feet. But Jesus told him: "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me." When Jesus finished washing the feet of all the apostles, he said: "Do you know what I have done to you? You address me, 'Teacher,' and, 'Lord,' and you speak rightly, for I am such. Therefore, if I, although Lord and Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash the feet of one another. For I set the pattern for you, that, just as I did to you, you should do also."—John 13:6-15.

Jesus was not instituting a ritual of foot washing. Rather, he was helping his apostles adopt a new frame of mind—one of humility and a willingness to perform the lowliest of tasks in behalf of their brothers. Evidently, they got the point. Consider what happened years later when the question of circumcision arose. Though "much disputing" took place, those present maintained good order and listened respectfully to one another's views. Furthermore, it seems that the one who presided over that meeting was the disciple James—not one of the apostles, as we might have expected, since they were present. This detail in the account in Acts indicates that the apostles had made considerable progress in manifesting humility.—Acts 15:6-29.

Lesson for Us

By washing the feet of his disciples, Jesus provided a powerful lesson in humility. Indeed, Christians should not think that they are so important that others should always serve them, nor should they aspire to positions of honor and prestige. Instead, they should follow the pattern set by Jesus, who "came, not to be ministered to, but to minister and to give his soul a ransom in exchange for many." (Matthew 20:28) Yes, followers of Jesus should be willing to perform the humblest services for one another.

For good reason Peter wrote: "Gird yourselves with lowliness of mind toward one another, because God opposes the haughty ones, but he gives undeserved kindness to the humble ones." (1 Peter 5:5) The Greek word for "gird" is derived from the word meaning "a slave's apron," under which a loose garment was girded up. Could Peter have been making reference to Jesus' act of girding himself with a towel and washing the feet of his apostles? This cannot be stated with certainty. Nevertheless, Jesus' humble service made an indelible impression on Peter's heart, as it should upon the hearts of all who would be Christ's followers.—Colossians 3:12-14.

Learn From Jesus' Exemplary Love

Love is a prominent theme throughout these chapters containing Jesus' parting counsel to his followers. In fact, various forms of the word "love" occur there 31 times. Jesus' deep love for his Father, Jehovah, and for his disciples is nowhere made more apparent than in these chapters. Jesus' love for Jehovah can be deduced from all the Gospel accounts of his life, but only John records that Jesus explicitly stated: "I love the Father." (John 14:31) Jesus also stated that Jehovah loves him and explained why. He said: "Just as the Father has loved me and I have loved you, remain in my love. If you observe my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have observed the commandments of the Father and remain in his love." (John 15:9, 10) Yes, Jehovah loves his Son because of his implicit obedience. What a fine lesson for all followers of Jesus Christ!

Jesus' profound love for his followers is underscored at the very beginning of John's account of Jesus' final meeting with the apostles. John related: "Now, because he knew before the festival of the passover that his hour had come for him to move out of this world to the Father, Jesus, having loved his own that were in the world, loved them to the end." (John 13:1) On that memorable evening, he gave them an unforgettable lesson in lovingly serving others. He washed their feet. This was something that each of them should have been willing to do for Jesus and for their brothers, but they held back. Jesus performed this humble task and then said to his disciples: "If I, although Lord and Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash the feet of one another. For I set the pattern for you, that, just as I did to you, you should do also." (John 13:14, 15) True Christians should be willing and happy to serve their brothers.—Matthew 20:26, 27, footnote; John 13:17.

Hold to the Pattern Jesus Set

"I set the pattern for you, that, just as I did to you, you should do also."—JOHN 13:15.

IN ALL the history of mankind, only one person has lived his whole life without sinning. That is Jesus. Apart from Jesus, "there is no man that does not sin." (1 Kings 8:46; Romans 3:23) For that reason, genuine Christians view Jesus as a perfect model to be imitated. Indeed, on Nisan 14, 33 C.E., shortly before his death, Jesus himself told his followers to imitate him. He said: "I set the pattern for you, that, just as I did to you, you should do also." (John 13:15) During that last night, Jesus mentioned a number of ways in which Christians should strive to be like him. In this article, we will consider some of them.

The Need for Humility

When Jesus urged his disciples to follow the pattern he set, he was specifically speaking of humility. On more than one occasion, he had counseled his followers to be humble, and on the night of Nisan 14, he demonstrated his own humility by washing the feet of his apostles. Then Jesus said: “If I, although Lord and Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash the feet of one another.” (John 13:14) Thereafter, he told his apostles to follow the pattern he set. And what a fine pattern of humility that was!

The apostle Paul tells us that before coming to earth, Jesus was “existing in God’s form.” Nevertheless, he emptied himself and became a lowly human. More than that, “he humbled himself and became obedient as far as death, yes, death on a torture stake.” (Philippians 2:6-8) Think of it. Jesus, the second-highest person in the universe, consented to become lower than the angels, to be born a helpless baby, to grow up subject to imperfect parents, and finally to die like a despised criminal. (Colossians 1:15, 16; Hebrews 2:6, 7) What humility! Is it possible to imitate that “mental attitude” and cultivate such “lowliness of mind”? (Philippians 2:3-5) Yes, but it is not easy.

The opposite of humility is pride. (Proverbs 6:16-19) Pride led to Satan’s downfall. (1 Timothy 3:6) It easily takes root in human hearts, and once there, it is hard to remove. People are prideful because of their country, their race, their possessions, their education, their secular achievements, their social standing, their looks, their sporting abilities, and many other things. Yet, none of those things are important to Jehovah. (1 Corinthians 4:7) And if they cause us to be proud, they damage our relationship with him. “Jehovah is high, and yet the humble one he sees; but the lofty one he knows only from a distance.”—Psalm 138:6; Proverbs 8:13.

Humble Among Our Brothers

Even our contributions to and achievements in Jehovah’s service should not make us proud; neither should responsibilities in the congregation. (1 Chronicles 29:14; 1 Timothy 6:17, 18) In fact, the weightier our responsibilities, the more humble we need to be. The apostle Peter urged elders not to be “lording it over those who are God’s inheritance, but [to become] examples to the flock.” (1 Peter 5:3) Elders are appointed to be servants and examples, not lords and masters.—Luke 22:24-26; 2 Corinthians 1:24.

Elders are not alone in needing humility. To younger men, who may be proud of their quicker minds and stronger bodies compared with those of older ones, Peter wrote: “Gird yourselves with lowliness of mind toward one another, because God opposes the haughty ones, but he gives undeserved kindness to the humble ones.” (1 Peter 5:5) Yes, Christlike humility is vital for all. It takes humility to preach the good news, especially in the face of indifference or hostility. It takes humility to accept counsel or to simplify our life in order to enlarge our share in the ministry. In addition, we need humility as well as courageous faith when enduring bad publicity, legal attacks, or violent persecution.—1 Peter 5:6.

How can a person overcome pride and conduct himself “with lowliness of mind considering that the others are superior” to him? (Philippians 2:3) He needs to view himself as Jehovah does. Jesus explained the right attitude when he said: “You, also, when you have done all the things assigned to you, say, ‘We are good-for-nothing slaves. What we have done is what we ought to have done.’” (Luke 17:10) Remember, nothing we can do compares with what Jesus did. Yet, Jesus was humble.

Further, we can ask for Jehovah’s help to cultivate the proper view of ourselves. Like the psalmist, we can pray: “Teach me goodness, sensibleness and knowledge themselves, for in your commandments I have exercised faith.” (Psalm 119:66) Jehovah will help us to develop a sensible, balanced view of ourselves, and he will bless us for our humble attitude. (Proverbs 18:12) Jesus said: “Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.”—Matthew 23:12.

So in the course of eating the Passover meal, he got up, girded himself with a towel, and proceeded to wash the feet of his disciples. He left no doubt as to the lesson he wanted them to learn. “If I, although Lord and Teacher, washed your feet,” said Jesus, “you also ought to wash the feet of one another.” (John 13:14) Pride must be replaced by its opposite—humility.

Pride, though, is not easy to conquer. Later that evening after Jesus had dismissed Judas Iscariot, who was about to betray him, a heated argument erupted among the 11 apostles. Their concern? Which one of them seemed to be greatest! Rather than scolding them, once again Jesus patiently stressed the importance of serving others. He said: “The kings of the nations lord it over them, and those having authority over them are called Benefactors. You, though, are not to be that way. But let him that is the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the one acting as chief as the one ministering.” Reminding them of his example, he adds: “I am in your midst as the one ministering.”—Luke 22:24-27.

Did the apostles get the point? Evidently so. Years later the apostle Peter wrote: “All of you be like-minded, showing fellow feeling, having brotherly affection, tenderly compassionate, humble in mind.” (1 Peter 3:8) How vital that we too conquer pride with humility!

In this respect, one of the outstanding lessons that Jesus taught his disciples is found in John chapter 13. We suggest that you read verses 1 to 17. In those days the roads were dusty, and it was the custom to have a servant wash the visitors’ feet. Jesus took that menial task upon himself. What is the quality that he highlighted by washing his disciples’ feet? He gave them a practical lesson in humility. What do we learn here about the mind of Christ? Jesus’ words give the answer: “A slave is not greater than his master, nor is one that is sent forth greater than the one that sent him. If you know these things, happy you are if you do them.”—John 13:16, 17.

Do we have the mind of Christ in this respect? Are we willing to perform humble, menial tasks in the home and in the congregation? Or do we want to do only those things that seem “important” or that will make us seem “special”? Are we willing to participate in the sometimes humiliating work of preaching the good news from house to house? Or do we only want assignments on the Kingdom Hall platform? Really, having the mind of Christ will keep us humble and approachable, even as Jesus was

Betrayed and Abandoned!

It was foretold that the Messiah would be betrayed by a treacherous associate. David prophesied: “The man at peace with me, in whom I trusted, who was eating my bread, has magnified his heel against me.” (Ps. 41:9) A person who ate bread with someone was thought to be his friend. (Gen. 31:54) So the betrayal of Jesus by Judas Iscariot was treachery of the worst sort. Jesus called attention to the fulfillment of David’s prophetic words when He referred to his betrayer and told his apostles: “I am not talking about all of you; I know the ones I have chosen. But it is in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled, ‘He that used to feed on my bread has lifted up his heel against me.’”—John 13:18.

The Messiah’s betrayer would receive 30 pieces of silver—the price of a slave! Drawing on Zechariah 11:12, 13, Matthew showed that Jesus was betrayed for such a paltry sum. But why did Matthew say that this had been foretold “through *Jeremiah* the prophet”? In Matthew’s day, Jeremiah may have been placed first in a group of Bible books that included Zechariah. (Compare Luke 24:44.) Judas never spent his ill-gotten sum, for he threw the money into the temple and went off and committed suicide.—Matt. 26:14-16; 27:3-10.

Foretells Peter's denials and scattering of apostles

Even the Messiah's disciples would scatter. "Strike the shepherd," wrote Zechariah, "and let those of the flock be scattered." (Zech. 13:7) On Nisan 14, 33 C.E., Jesus told his disciples: "All of you will be stumbled in connection with me on this night, for it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered about.'" And that is exactly what happened, for Matthew reported that "all the disciples abandoned [Jesus] and fled."—Matt. 26:31, 56.

But even at this point Jesus still shows that there will be something that will reunite the disciples - Promises helper; illustration of true vine; gives command to love; last prayer with apostles

Matthew 26:30

after singing praises: Or "after singing hymns (psalms)." According to one Jewish tradition, the first Hallel Psalms (113, 114) were sung, or recited, during the Passover meal; the last four (115-118) at its conclusion. The latter contain some of the prophecies that apply to the Messiah. Ps 118 begins and ends with the words: "Give thanks to Jehovah, for he is good; his loyal love endures forever." (Ps 118:1, 29) These may well have been the last words of praise that Jesus sang with his faithful apostles on the night before his death.

Gethsemane

Agony in the garden; Jesus' betrayal and arrest

keep on the watch: Lit., "stay awake." Jesus had emphasized the need for his disciples to stay awake spiritually because of not knowing the day and hour of his coming. (See study notes on Mt 24:42; 25:13.) He repeats that exhortation here and again at Mt 26:41, where he links staying awake spiritually with persevering in prayer. Similar exhortations are found throughout the Christian Greek Scriptures, showing that spiritual alertness is vital for true Christians.—1Co 16:13; Col 4:2; 1Th 5:6; 1Pe 5:8; Re 16:15.

Matthew 26:39

fell facedown: Or "threw himself down with his face to the ground," perhaps resting on his hands or elbows. In the Bible, several postures for prayer are mentioned, including standing and kneeling. However, a person in fervent prayer might actually lie facedown with his body outstretched.

let this cup pass away: In the Bible, “cup” is often used figuratively of God’s will, or the “assigned portion,” for a person. (See study note on Mt 20:22.) Jesus no doubt felt great concern over the reproach that his death as one charged with blasphemy and sedition could bring on God, moving him to pray that this “cup” pass away from him.

Matthew 26:41

spirit: Here referring to the impelling force that issues from a person’s figurative heart and causes him to say and do things in a certain way.—See Glossary.

flesh: In the Bible, the term is often used to represent man in his imperfect sinful state.

Luke 22:43

an angel: Of the four Gospel writers, only Luke mentions the angel appearing from heaven and strengthening Jesus.

What a blessing from Jehovah to allow an angel to go and strengthen Jesus - Think – When we are faced with pressures of life Jehovah will do the same for you:

Luke 22:44 – Interesting point in this verse

his sweat became as drops of blood: Luke may have been drawing a comparison by indicating that Christ’s perspiration formed like drops of blood or by describing how the dripping of Jesus’ sweat resembled the dripping of blood from a wound. On the other hand, some have suggested that Jesus’ blood may have exuded through his skin and may have been mixed with his sweat, a condition that has reportedly occurred in certain cases of extreme mental stress. Blood or the elements thereof will seep through unruptured walls of blood vessels in a condition called diapedesis. In a condition known as hematidrosis, there is an excreting of perspiration tinged with blood pigment or blood or of bodily fluid mingled with blood, thus resulting in the ‘sweating of blood.’ These, of course, are only possible explanations for what may have taken place in Jesus’ case.

. . . falling to the ground: Verses 43, 44 appear in some early manuscripts, though others omit them. However, they are found in most Bible translations.

As the guards approached - Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his right ear. The name of the slave was Malchus. struck the slave of the high priest: This incident is recorded by all four Gospel writers, and their accounts are complementary. (Mt 26:51; Mr 14:47; Lu 22:50) Only Luke, “the beloved physician” (Col 4:14), mentions that Jesus “touched the ear and healed him.” (Lu 22:51) John is the only Gospel writer to mention that Simon Peter wielded the sword and that Malchus was the name of the slave whose ear was cut off. John was evidently the disciple “known to the high priest” as well as to his household (Joh 18:15, 16), so it is natural that his Gospel would mention the injured man by name. John’s familiarity with the high priest’s household is further shown at Joh 18:26, where John explains that the slave who accused Peter of being a disciple of Jesus was “a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off.”

Nisan 14 – Wednesday 8th April Day time Mark 15: 1-47

Jesus stands before Pilate (15:1-15)

Soldiers mock Jesus (15:16-20)

Jesus nailed to stake at Golgotha (15:21-32)

Death of Jesus (15:33-41)

Joseph of Arimathea and the burial of Jesus (15:42-47) Joseph of Ar·i·ma·the’a, a reputable member of the Council, who also himself was waiting for the Kingdom of God. He took courage and went in before Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.

Nisan 15 – Thursday 9th April Daytime Matthew 27: 62 -66 - Matthew 27:62

Next day: That is, Nisan 15. The day after Nisan 14 was always observed as a Sabbath, or holy day of rest, no matter what day of the week it fell on. Additionally, in 33 C.E., Nisan 15 fell on the regular weekly Sabbath, making the day a “great,” or double, Sabbath.—Joh 19:31;

Preparation: A name applied to the day preceding the weekly Sabbath. During this day, the Jews got ready for the Sabbath by preparing extra meals and finishing any work that could not wait until after the Sabbath. In this case, the day of Preparation fell on Nisan 14.

Matthew 27:63

Three days: This expression can mean parts of three days. This is evident from the request that the tomb “be made secure *until the third day,*” and not until the fourth.

Nisan 16 – Thursday After sunset – Mark 16:1 So when the Sabbath was over, Mary Mag'da·lene, Mary the mother of James, and Sa·lo'me bought spices in order to come and apply them to his body.

bought spices . . . apply them to his body: Jesus' body had already been prepared for burial "according to the burial custom of the Jews." (Joh 19:39, 40) However, since Jesus died about three hours before the start of the Sabbath and the Jews were not allowed to do such work during the Sabbath, this task was likely done hastily. Now, on this first day after the Sabbath, that is, the third day from Jesus' execution, the women may have come to add more spices and oils, perhaps as a means of preserving the body for a longer period. (Lu 23:50–24:1) Likely, they would apply the spices and oils over the wrapped body.

<p>Matthew 28: 5-6 Parallel Account - 5 But the angel said to the women: "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus who was executed on the stake. 6 He is not here, for he was raised up, just as he said. Come, see the place where he was lying.</p>
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