

PASSION WEEK DAILY DEVOTION

FAMILY
Easter
BASKET

by Heather Noel

Each day of Passion week, your family will read a Passage that tells the account of what Christ experienced for that day then a brief devotion that includes the point, the principles and a prayer. With each day's devotion, there will be a basket object. Have your child (or children) find the object when you begin and hold it (or have them set it outside of the basket for the family to see) as you are reading the devotion. The point of the object is for your children to have a visual as you share the devotion.

As you walk through the Easter story with your kids, my prayer is that you learn from those you will meet along the way. It is not possible to read the incredible events of the Passion Week without examining our own relationship with the Messiah. Am I Mary? Or Judas? Or the Crowd? Following Christ through the events of the week make his obedience to the Cross even more amazing. This year, may your heart learn deeper truth about your Savior on your journey with Him through Passion week.

I pray that during this Holy Week, you stop. Stop to see your Savior. Stop to experience His sacrifice. For you. Stop to experience His resurrection. Allow yourself to understand that He chose to suffer pain for the purpose of your salvation. I pray that as a family, Passion Week stirs deeper passion in your heart for your Savior.

Sunday | Palm Sunday

PASSAGE

Mark 11:1-11, Matthew 21:1-11

POINT

Basket Object: Palm leaf branch

Hosanna: O Lord, Save Us!

Through Jesus, salvation truly has come. Just as the crowd did not understand the kind of Savior Christ would be, so our world today does not understand Christ. They thought he would save them from the oppression of the Roman government and religious leaders. They did not realize they needed an even greater Savior than an earthly king because they had an even bigger problem than their earthly ones. Their sin. Jesus came into Jerusalem riding on a donkey, a symbol of peace, showing us that He came to make peace between us and God. Jesus was a different kind of King. He did not come to take over the government, as the people hoped. What they didn't understand is that He was already Lord over all the earth, because He had made the earth. Now He had come to save it. He came to give Himself for people. He knew we needed a forever King.

PRINCIPLES

1. Jesus understands our need even when we do not. We see only our earthly needs, but He sees the big picture and our eternal need.
2. Sometimes we are just like the crowd, we do not understand how great Jesus is or what He wants to do in our lives.
3. Jesus enters our lives as the Prince of Peace. Just as he rode into town on the donkey proclaiming peace, he comes into our lives to bring us His peace.

PRAISE

Dear Jesus, thank you for being the King of kings. Thank you for coming to make peace between me and God. This Easter, help me better understand who you are and what you want to do in my life.

Monday | Jesus Curses the Fruitless Tree

PASSAGE

Matthew 21:8-19

POINT

Basket Object: Fruit

Early the next morning, Jesus was on His way to the temple and he was hungry! He saw a beautiful fig tree so he decided to pick a piece of fruit off the tree for his breakfast. But this beautiful tree had one problem. It looked good, but it wasn't good because it had no fruit. So Jesus caused the tree to immediately die. This was one of His very last miracles. And a very important one. This tree was a symbol of God's people, the Israelites. Just like the tree, they looked beautiful. They had a fancy temple and they followed many rules and did many impressive things. They had one problem. They didn't actually love God. They just loved looking pretty and impressing people. Jesus used this fruit tree to teach his disciples something very important. It must be important because this was one of the last things Jesus chose to teach them! He was teaching them that He doesn't care how good the outside of us looks, He cares about our fruit. No not apples or oranges! The fruit of our heart that is produced because of our love for him. Just a few days later, on Thursday, he would talk more about fruit. Read John 15: 1-8 and listen to his prayer that we would bear fruit. Now go to Galatians 5:22-23 and find out what kind of fruit Jesus was praying would be in our lives as His followers.

PRINCIPLES

1. People may be impressed by how we look on the outside but Jesus cares about what's in our heart.
2. Jesus knows what's really in our heart.
3. When you truly love Jesus, your heart will have the fruit of Jesus in your life.

PRAISE

Jesus, thank you for teaching me that my life is the most beautiful when it is filled with your love. Help my heart be filled with your fruit. When I do not have fruit in my life, please show me.

Tuesday | Mary Anoints Jesus

PASSAGE

John 12:1-8; Mark 14:3-9

POINT

Basket Object: Empty Jar

**This actually happened on the Saturday before Palm Sunday, but because Tuesday was mostly a silent day and because of the importance of this event, we will look at this event today.*

In those days, Kings would be anointed with oil to show honor and bodies of the dead would be anointed with oil/perfume to be preserved. Mary loved Jesus very much because He had done so much for her. Most likely as her family inheritance, she owned a very expensive bottle of perfume oil worth an entire year of pay. Jesus was resting and enjoying a meal with his friends before the difficult week ahead began. All of the sudden, Mary began to anoint Jesus. Although no one else understood what was about to happen to Jesus, Mary did. And even though no one else understood why she poured out all of her most precious possession to anoint Jesus, it was no sacrifice to Mary. This would be the only time someone served Jesus during this week. She sacrificed her greatest possession, because He was about to sacrifice His very life. What the others saw as a waste, Jesus saw as worship. Her heart was changed by her Savior and she wanted him to know how much she loved him. Mary knew that even though this was the greatest thing she owned, she knew it did not compare to Jesus' love for her.

PRINCIPLES

1. Nothing in this world compares to Jesus' love for us.
2. When we truly love Jesus, we will treasure Him above everything else.
3. What we sacrifice for Christ is worship and it is never a waste.

PRAISE

Dear Jesus, thank you for sacrificing your life for me. Help me worship you like Mary. Help me love you more than anything and everything else.

Wednesday | Judas Betrays Jesus

PASSAGE

Luke 22:3-4; Matthew 26:3-5; 14-16

POINT

Basket Object: Coins

Judas was one of the 12 disciples, but he turned his back on Jesus. Unlike Mary who gave up what would have been thousands of dollars to worship Jesus, Judas betrayed Jesus for what would have been just a few dollars. It's hard to imagine that someone close to Jesus could do such a terrible thing. But Judas loved money more than he loved Jesus. And Satan knew he could use his love for money to trick Judas into making the decision to betray Jesus. Judas knew the religious leaders had been looking for a way to have Jesus killed, so he decided to help them. One terrible decision led to many terrible actions. But Jesus knew all along that Judas would betray him. After Judas made his decision and he saw what a bad decision he made, he regretted it but it was too late to change it.

PRINCIPLES

1. When we make a bad choice it doesn't just hurt us, it also hurts others.
2. When we love anything more than Jesus, it is sin and it will lead us to make sinful, selfish decisions.
3. Being around Jesus, like going to church all the time, doesn't mean our hearts really love Jesus.

PRAISE

Dear Jesus, you loved Judas even though Judas didn't really love you. Help me love you with my whole heart, more than anything else. Jesus, I want to obey you not betray you.

Thursday | The Last Supper

PASSAGE

Luke 22:8-15; John 13:1-25

POINT

Basket Object: Wash Cloth

Every year, the Israelites had a very celebration called The Passover where they remembered God delivering their ancestors from captivity in Egypt. It was time for the Passover Meal and it was no accident that this meal would be Jesus' last meal. Just like the Passover Lamb saved God's people from death, Jesus would be the forever Passover Lamb saving all who believe in Him from death. In those days, because they wore sandals and it was the desert (their feet would get gross!), the host of a meal would have a servant wash the feet of the guests before the meal. Even though Jesus was King of kings, even though he knew that he was about to die, he didn't worry about someone serving him. Instead, he did the job of the servant and washed the feet of his friends. Jesus knew that in just a few hours, he would be facing his arrest and his death. But Jesus cared more about his friends than he did himself. Peter argued with Jesus when he started washing his feet, but Jesus wanted Peter to understand that Jesus makes us clean, or right with God. And just like the dirt has to be washed off our feet from walking, sometimes we as Christians have to have Jesus wash the icky from the world off of us. Jesus had some very important things to tell his friends because he knew it was almost time for him to die. This act of love was the first thing he wanted to teach them. He wanted them to serve each other just like he was serving them.

PRINCIPLES

1. Everything Jesus did was to serve us, He was never selfish. He is always thinking about our needs.
2. He teaches us that we should not care about people serving us, instead should serve others.
3. As Christians, we get dirty with sin just like the disciples feet got dirty from walking, and we need Jesus to wash us clean.

PRAISE

Dear Jesus, thank you for serving me and saving me. Please wash my sin just like you washed the feet of your friends. Help me serve my family and friends the way that you served your family and friends.

Friday | Jesus Dies On The Cross

PASSAGE

Isaiah 53:3-8; Mark 15:16-39; Luke 23:32-49; John 19:16-37

POINT

Basket Object: Nail

After the Last Supper, Jesus made His way to a place called the Garden of Gethsemane. He went to pray to His Father. Even though Jesus always knew he would die, He was filled with sadness and sorrow. He knew how hard his death would be. While he was in the garden praying, Judas led the enemies of Jesus to him and he was arrested. He spent the rest of the night and into Friday morning going from trial to trial until finally an official gave his enemies what they wanted, a death sentence for Jesus, even though they could not find any reason to crucify him. Jesus spent the rest of that awful day suffering at the hands of the Roman soldiers. Even hanging on the cross, after all they had done to Him, He showed his love and forgiveness. And Jesus decided when He would breath his last breath. All kinds of crazy things happened at the moment of His death. It's like his creation was crying out for its Creator. For hundreds of years, God had promised he would send his son to die for our sins. God had kept his promise even though it cost the life of His Son. For hundreds of years, people had to make animal sacrifices for their sin and they had to do this year after year. When Jesus died on the cross, he made himself the once and for all sacrifice for our sin.

PRINCIPLES

1. Even though Jesus was so sad and even though he had to suffer, he made the choice to save us. He knew he was the only one whose sacrifice could pay for our sin.
2. Your life meant more to Jesus than His own. He did what was best for you, not what was best for Himself.
3. God asked His perfect Son to die so that you could live.

PRAISE

Dear God, I know that my sin must be paid for with a sacrifice. Thank you that you chose to make Jesus the sacrifice for my sin. Thank you that his death allows you to forgive my sin and make me right with you. Thank you, Jesus, for giving up your life for me. Help me live my life for you.

Saturday | Jesus' Tomb is Sealed

PASSAGE

Matthew 27:62-66

POINT

Basket Object: Rock

Even though the religious leaders refused to believe that Jesus was the Son of God, they knew he had power. They did not want his power to take away their power. After he was buried (in those days people were buried in something kind of like a cave), they remembered Jesus saying he would rise from the dead, so they came up with a clever idea. They had the Roman officials seal the tomb with a giant rock and soldiers to stand guard. They knew Jesus had the power to do what He said, but they thought they could keep him from leaving the tomb. They thought they could keep his power hidden with a giant rock and soldiers. They were so focused on keeping their own power that they could not see who Jesus was.

PRINCIPLES

1. No matter how much power someone has, no one ever has more power than Jesus.
2. People try to have more power than Jesus, but no one will ever have more power than Him.
3. Sometimes people will see the power of Jesus and still not believe who He is.

PRAISE

Dear God, thank you that you are stronger than anything. Even though it was silly for the leaders to think a rock could keep you in that tomb, help me to not believe anything is stronger than you.

Sunday | Jesus' Raises To Life

PASSAGE

Matthew 20:1-10; Mark 16:1-8; Luke 24:1-11; John 20:1-10

POINT

Basket Object: Spices

After Jesus was buried and the Roman government placed guards at the tomb, those who had followed Jesus were sad and afraid. They had lost hope because they had forgotten that Jesus told them this would happen, that he would die and that he would raise to life again. On Easter morning, the women who had followed Jesus went to the tomb to put spices on his body. To their surprise, the giant stone was rolled away and the tomb was empty! Can you imagine how shocked they must have been? They thought the body of Jesus had been taken. Until Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene! Jesus was ALIVE! It would take his disciples some time to understand all that had happened. Not even death had more power than Jesus and no stone or any amount of soldiers could keep him in a tomb. Jesus truly had risen back to life. Oh this made things so much worse for the religious leaders, their plan to hide Jesus had shown Jesus' power even greater! And for his followers, it made their faith so much stronger. Jesus not only paid for our sin. When He raised back to life, he proved his power over sin.

PRINCIPLES

1. It's hard to remember God's promises when everything around us is sad and scary. Even when everything feels dark, God is doing something that we cannot see.
2. His resurrection means that we are not just forgiven of our sin. It means that we are free from our sin. Just like Jesus was no longer dead in that tomb, we are no longer dead in our sin when we accept Jesus as Savior.
3. His resurrection shows the power of God over sin and the promise of God for eternal life. Our lives will not end when this body dies, we will be raised to live for eternity in heaven with God.

PRAISE

Dear God, thank you for giving your Son to die and for raising him from the grave so that I can be forgiven of my sin and set free from my sin. Thank you that Jesus' resurrection is my promise that I will spend eternity in heaven. Help me to remember and trust your promise when things in my life get hard. Because all of your promises to me are true.