

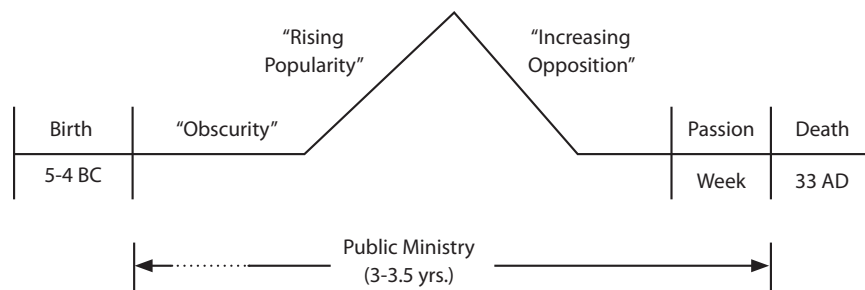
SESSION 5

Passion Week: Part One

I. PRAYER/REVIEW

II. THEMATIC FLOW: Life of Christ

A. Charted



B. Key Themes

OBSCURITY → POPULARITY → OPPOSITION → **PASSION WEEK**

III. PASSION WEEK

A. Defined

"Passion" in this context refers to the suffering leading to the death of Jesus of Nazareth on the Cross. Therefore, "Passion Week" would detail the events leading up to the Friday crucifixion.

Insight: (Jensen, 84)

The Gospels devote much of their space to Passion Week, or the Sacrifice Period of Jesus' life. (The biblical record of this week, up to the crucifixion, takes up one-third of Matthew and John, one-fourth of Mark, and one-seventh of Luke.)

This is because of the week's importance. That was the week for which Jesus was born. Everything else He did and said led up to this, and found its meaning in it. The cross was the crucial experience for Christ, because death and Satan were conquered in it. Jesus' crown was made possible by the cross.

B. Charted

Note the following chart, "Suggested Chronology of the Passion Week." Take note that Biblical scholars are divided over which events occurred on which days of this final week in the earthly life of Jesus. The conclusions taken in this study are adaptations of the chronological work of Harold Hoehner (*Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ*), the insights of Sam A. Smith (privately published essay), and others.

The chart which follows assumes an April 3, 33 AD death of Jesus (as opposed to the 29 AD held by many others). Some events may vary by a day, but the basic outline is generally held (i.e. day of the week to recorded event).

Suggested Chronology of the Passion Week

(Generally using Mark as a Guide)

Day (Date) 33 AD	Recorded Event (Prim. from Mark)	Marcan Account
Saturday (March 28)	Arrival at Bethany Anointing of Mary	Jn 11:54-12:11
Sunday (March 29)	Triumphal Entry	Mk 11:1-11
Monday (March 30)	Cursing of the Fig Tree Cleansing of the Temple	Mk 11:12-19
Tuesday (March 31)	Withered Fig Tree Arrival at Temple Conflict with Religious Leaders Teaching at Temple Courts Olivet Discourse	Mk 11:20-13:37
Wednesday (April 1)	Anointing by Mary (?) [John's Gospel places it on Saturday; Mark's placement seems to be Wednesday; scholarly debate leans more to John's account.] Betrayal Arranged (? by Judas) OR Silent Wednesday (no recorded activity)	Mk 14:1-11
Thursday (April 2)	Passover Meal Celebration Betrayal by Judas Night-time Arrest (Trials begin)	Mk 14:12-72
Friday (April 3)	Trials Continue (3 Jewish/3 Roman) Brutality Crucifixion Burial	Mk 15:1-47
Saturday (April 4)	In the Tomb	
Sunday (April 5)	Resurrection	Mk 16:1-8

IV. BIBLICAL DEVELOPMENT

A. Saturday (March 28, 33 AD)

1. Pre-Passover mood

John 11:54-57

Therefore Jesus no longer moved about publicly among the people of Judea. Instead he withdrew to a region near the wilderness, to a village called Ephraim, where he stayed with his disciples.⁵⁵ When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, many went up from the country to Jerusalem for their ceremonial cleansing before the Passover.⁵⁶ They kept looking for Jesus, and as they stood in the temple courts they asked one another, "What do you think? Isn't he coming to the festival at all?"⁵⁷ But the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that anyone who found out where Jesus was should report it so that they might arrest him.

Notes:

- a. After the resurrection of Lazarus, the opposition to Jesus intensified. Caiaphas ironically declared, "...it is better for you (other religious rulers) that one man (Jesus) die for the people than that the whole nation perish" (Jn 11:50). As a result Jesus left Bethany for a village (some 15 miles or so away) called Ephraim.
- b. Because of the popularity of the Passover Feast, pilgrims from all about the nation came early to properly prepare (ceremonial cleansing or purification). The multitudes were looking out to see if Jesus would appear. The authorities, also, were looking and ordering any who might see Jesus to report the sighting.

2. Arrival at Bethany

John 12:1-8

Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead.² Here a dinner was given in Jesus' honor. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him.

³Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. ⁴But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected, ⁵"Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages." ⁶He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it. ⁷"Leave her alone," Jesus replied. "It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial. ⁸You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me."

Notes:

- a. John's account places this event "six days before the Passover; Matthew (ch. 26) and Mark (ch. 14) place it "two days" before Passover. This is a thorny problem to harmonize and explain (beyond the scope of this study). Gospel writers often place events not in strict chronological order (as moderns do) but theologically and topically.
- b. The story contains some striking contrasts:
 - (1) Lazarus is present (recently raised from the dead (Jn 11); Jesus is the honoree (soon to die by crucifixion).
 - (2) Martha is serving (again – cf. Lk 10:38-42); Mary is at the feet of Jesus (again - yet this occasion anointing him with oil).
 - (3) Judas Iscariot objected to the use of expensive perfume to anoint Jesus. He asked why it was not redirected to the poor; yet Judas had been redirecting funds from the money bag for himself.
- c. Mary's costly and devoted act of anointing Jesus foreshadowed his soon to be death (cf. Jn 19:39-40).

B. Sunday (March 29, 33 AD)

1. "Triumphal Entry"

a. Recorded by all four Gospel writers
(Matt 21:1-9; Mk 11:1-11; Lk 19:29-38; Jn 12:12-15)

b. Fulfilled the Messianic prophecy of Zechariah 9

Zechariah 9:9

Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

c. Accompanied by the multitudes' cries from the pilgrim song of Psalm 118

Psalm 118:26

*Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
From the house of the Lord we bless you.*

d. Narrated by John

John 12:12-15

*The next day the great crowd that had come for the festival heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem.
¹³They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, "Hosanna!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Blessed is the king of Israel!" ¹⁴Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, as it is written:
¹⁵"Do not be afraid, Daughter Zion; see, your king is coming, seated on a donkey's colt."*

Notes:

(1) The crowd placed "palm branches" before the path of Jesus. While the palm tree was considered a symbol of righteousness (Ps 92:12), by NT times it was a nationalistic symbol of Judaism and perhaps expressed Messianic hopes on this occasion.

(2) "Hosanna" is a Hebrew expression meaning, "save," and was an expression of praise (cf. Pss 113-118).

- (3) The kingship of Jesus was emphasized in this account (vv. 14-15), yet ironically, these cries will soon turn to “We have no king but Caesar” (Jn 19:15).
- (4) Zechariah 9:9 was quoted; a conquering king might enter upon a war horse (judgment) yet here Jesus enters upon a colt (peace).
- (5) The enthusiastic crowd will turn into an angry mob only days later.

2. Temple visit

Mark 11:11

Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the temple courts. He looked around at everything, but since it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the Twelve.

Notes:

- a. Jesus entered the temple precincts or courts (Grk. hieron) rather than the central Sanctuary (Grk. naos). See the map on page 5.
- b. Jesus “looked around at everything.” This assessment will be the basis of His return visit the next day and subsequent actions (“cleansing of the Temple”).
- c. The time was late in the day, so Jesus and the Twelve returned to Bethany, a few miles away.

C. Monday (March 30, 33 AD)

1. Cursing of the fig tree

- a. The cursing occurred on Monday morning on the way to the Temple (cf. Matt 21:18-22; Mk 11:12-14).
- b. Matthew’s account notes, “Immediately the tree withered” (21:19); Mark’s account does not indicate that the disciples saw the withering process but only that the next day the tree had “withered from the roots” (11:21).

Mark 11:21

Peter remembered and said to Jesus, “Rabbi, look! The fig tree you cursed has withered!”

- c. The story illustrates two truths:
 - (1) The necessity of faith and prayer for the disciples' mission ahead
 - (2) The picture of Israel's unfruitfulness (unfaithfulness) as the fig tree (a symbol of Israel: Jer 8:13 and Hos 9:10,16) which appeared to be ready for fruit was in actuality fruitless.

2. Cleansing of the Temple

- a. Recorded by all four Gospel writers (Matt 21:12-16; Mk 11:12-19; Lk 19:45-47; Jn 2:13-16).
- b. John's account is either out of chronological order (it appears early in Jesus' ministry), or likely, there were two cleansings in Jesus' public ministry: one early (recorded by John) and one late (recorded by the others).
- c. As recorded in Mark, note the following:

Mark 11:15-18

On reaching Jerusalem, Jesus entered the temple courts and began driving out those who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves,¹⁶ and would not allow anyone to carry merchandise through the temple courts.¹⁷ And as he taught them, he said, "Is it not written: 'My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations'? But you have made it 'a den of robbers.'"¹⁸ The chief priests and the teachers of the law heard this and began looking for a way to kill him, for they feared him, because the whole crowd was amazed at his teaching.

Notes:

- (1) The band of disciples and Jesus left Bethany (a few miles away) and came to the Temple in Jerusalem.
- (2) "Temple area" would refer to the court area outside of Herod's Temple (Holy Place, Holy of Holies), i.e. the Court of the Gentiles.

- (3) At this place a kind of market was permitted by Caiaphas, the High Priest. Here pilgrims could purchase items necessary for the Feast: wine, oil, salt, sacrificial animals, and birds (ceremonially approved).
- (4) Jesus had observed this religious commerce the previous day (11:11). Seeing those “buying and selling” and observing the money-changers at work making their profits and finding that merchants passed through the holy site (“carry merchandise through the temple courts”), Jesus became (righteously) enraged.
- (5) The commerce was obstructing the true purpose of the Temple: a place of worship and prayer. In doing this, Jesus was displaying His authority over the sacred Temple.
- (6) The response of the chief priests and teachers of the law was predictable: fear and murderous anger.

d. Conclusion of Monday

Mark 11:19

When evening came, Jesus and his disciples went out of the city.

D. Tuesday (March 31, 33 AD)

1. Withered fig tree

Mark 11:20-26

In the morning, as they went along, they saw the fig tree withered from the roots.²¹ Peter remembered and said to Jesus, “Rabbi, look! The fig tree you cursed has withered!”

²²“Have faith in God,” Jesus answered. ²³“Truly I tell you, if anyone says to this mountain, ‘Go, throw yourself into the sea,’ and does not doubt in their heart but believes that what they say will happen, it will be done for them. ²⁴Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. ²⁵And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.”

Notes:

- a. This account continues the story begun on Monday as Jesus and the disciples entered Jerusalem (11:12-14). Then (in Mark's account), Jesus cursed the tree, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again" (11:14).
- b. On Tuesday, the fig tree was "withered from the roots" (11:20). Peter called this to the attention of Jesus. Recall from the previous remarks on Monday's cursing that the incident was likely a picture of judgment on Israel, a nation that should have been fruitful was in reality quite barren.
- c. Jesus took the opportunity to instruct the disciples (20-25):
 - (1) That faith in God could do even more miraculous things than withering a fig tree (cf. Matt 21:21).
 - (2) That successful prayer requires faith (11:24).
 - (3) That forgiveness of others also plays a part in believing prayer. "In other words, God will be responsive to the petitioner who has paid attention to how he or she relates to others" (Bock, 323).

Insight: Prayer

- (1) Requires faith
- (2) Often requires forgiveness
- (3) Must be within God's will (1 Jn 5:14-15)
- (4) Needs to be persistent (Lk 18:1-5)
- (5) May require wisdom to know how to pray (Jas 1:5-8)

2. Arrival at the Temple

Tuesday was a full day of controversy and teaching. What follows is a selective, brief overview.

a. Challenge to Jesus' authority

Mark 11:27-33

They arrived again in Jerusalem, and while Jesus was walking in the temple courts, the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders came to him. ²⁸“By what authority are you doing these things?” they asked. “And who gave you authority to do this?” ²⁹Jesus replied, “I will ask you one question. Answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I am doing these things. ³⁰John’s baptism—was it from heaven, or of human origin? Tell me!” ³¹They discussed it among themselves and said, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will ask, ‘Then why didn’t you believe him?’ ³²But if we say, ‘Of human origin’...” (They feared the people, for everyone held that John really was a prophet.) ³³So they answered Jesus, “We don’t know.” Jesus said, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.”

Notes:

- (1) Jesus has returned to the temple area where on the previous day He had overturned the tables of the moneychangers.
- (2) The chief priests, teachers of the law, and the elders challenged the authority by which Jesus had cleansed the Temple of crass commercialism. “By what authority are you doing these things?” (11:28). And further, **who** gave it to you?

b. Entrapment question on the Roman poll tax

The religious leaders (Pharisees and Herodians) posed a question of taxation to Rome (cf. Matt 22:15-22; Mk 12:13-17; Lk 20:20-26). This story is discussed in Session 4, p. 85.

The reply of Jesus was skillful and wise. “Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s” (Mk 11:17).

c. The Greatest Commandment

One of the teachers of the law posed a question to Jesus, "of all the commandments, which is the most important?"

This encounter is discussed in Session 4, p. 88.

Jesus boiled down the multitude of laws into a two-fold obligation: love God; love neighbor.

3. Teaching at the Temple

a. Christ (Messiah) and David's relationship

Matthew 22:41-46

While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, ⁴²"What do you think about the Messiah? Whose son is he?" "The son of David," they replied.

⁴³He said to them, "How is it then that David, speaking by the Spirit, calls him 'Lord'? For he says, ⁴⁴"The Lord said to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet.'" ⁴⁵If then David calls him 'Lord,' how can he be his son?" ⁴⁶No one could say a word in reply, and from that day on no one dared to ask him any more questions.

Notes:

(1) In counterpoint following the question of the Greatest Commandment, Jesus questioned the Pharisees with a theological problem: with respect to the Messiah (Christ), whose son is He?

(2) The Pharisees reply, "the son of David." Note the following passages that support their answer:

2 Samuel 7:12-14 (God speaking to King David)
When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³ He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. ¹⁴ I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with a rod wielded by men, with floggings inflicted by human hands.

Jeremiah 23:5-6 (God about David's descendant)
"The days are coming," declares the Lord, "when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land. ⁶ In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: The Lord Our Righteous Savior."

Also, see Ps 89:29-37; Isa 9:2-7; 11:1-9; et al.

(3) Jesus' reply to the Pharisees was startling:

- (a) David (in an accepted Messianic passage) refers to the Messiah as "lord."
- (b) David (in Ps 110) acknowledges that the Lord (God) said to my (David's) lord, sit at my right hand (a place of privilege and authority)...
- (c) The point is clear: Messiah (as son of David —see v. 42) has an authoritative position beyond/over King David. The descendant is superior to the ancestor.
- (d) The true identity of David's descendant, the Messiah, has divine authority. The religious leaders were stunned into silence.

b. Seven woes upon the Pharisees (and Scribes)

(1) Setting

Matthew 23:1-7

Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples:

² "The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. ³ So you must be careful to do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach.

⁴ They tie up heavy, cumbersome loads and put them on other people's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them. ⁵ "Everything they do is done for people to see: They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels on their garments long; ⁶ they love the place of honor at banquets and the most important

seats in the synagogues; ⁷ they love to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces and to be called 'Rabbi' by others."

(2) Seven woes

Matthew 23 has the full account (as seen in the chart below). Also, the shorter version is found in Mark 12:38-40; Luke 20:41-44.

Seven Woes of Matthew 23				
WOE (vv.)	DIRECTED TO...	Labeled	OFFENSE	SUMMARY
1 (13)	"teachers of the law and Pharisees"	"hypocrites"	"shut (the entrance to the kingdom" for yourselves and others	hypocritical obstruction
2 (15)	"teachers of the law and Pharisees"	"hypocrites"	turn your "converts" into legalists ("twice as much a son of hell as you")	hypocritical legalism
3 (16-22)	"blind guides"		tricky evasion techniques to sidestep their oaths	hypocritical oaths
4 (23-24)	"teachers of the law and Pharisees"	"hypocrites"	major on the minors when both are expected duties ("strain a gnat, swallow a camel")	hypocritical ministry
5 (25-26)	"teachers of the law and Pharisees"	"hypocrites"	practice outward rituals without inward character ("greed," "self-indulgence")	hypocritical purity
6 (27-28)	"teachers of the law and Pharisees"	"hypocrites"	look good–outside look bad–inside ("full of hypocrisy and wickedness")	hypocritical posturing
7 (29-32)	"teachers of the law and Pharisees"	"hypocrites"	honor the past prophets while acting like the ones who shed the prophet's blood	hypocritical superiority

c. From Anger (Seven Woes) to tears

Matthew 23:37-39

"Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing.

³⁸ Look, your house is left to you desolate. ³⁹ For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

d. A lesson from a poor widow

Mark 12:41-44

Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. ⁴² But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a few cents. ⁴³ Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. ⁴⁴ They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on."

Notes:

- (1) From controversies, opposition, and denunciations, both Mark and Luke record an alternative look at an act of true worship.
- (2) Jesus sat down near the trumpet-shaped coffers where the devout placed their gifts. He noticed:
 - rich people putting in large sums
 - a poor widow putting in a paltry sum
- (3) Jesus did not condemn or commend the rich (refer to 1 Tim 6:17-19 for the obligations expected of the rich); He did highly commend the poor widow.
- (4) The poor widow provided an example of faith, obedience, and dependence upon God for her very real needs; her gift was small (fraction of a penny by comparison) but (spiritually) accounted for more than that of the rich.

4. Olivet Discourse

As Jesus and His disciples were leaving the Temple, one of the disciples remarked to Jesus, "Teacher, behold what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings" (Mk 13:1). To which Jesus replied that a day was coming where "not one stone will be left upon another." In other words Jesus predicted the utter destruction of the Temple.

The three Synoptic Gospels each record their version of what is called "The Olivet Discourse" (Matt 24-25, Mk 13, Lk 21).

For the purpose of this study the focus will be upon the broad themes addressed (as opposed to verse-by-verse exposition).

a. The disciples' question: when?

Matthew 24:3

As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately. "Tell us," they said, "when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?"

b. Jesus' reply: watch out! don't be deceived (Matt 24:3-8)

There will be false Messiahs, wars and rumors of wars, famines, earthquakes. "Such things must happen, but **the end** is still to come" (24:6).

c. Jesus' reply: persecutions to come

Matthew 24:9-11

"Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. ¹⁰ At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, ¹¹ and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people.

d. Jesus' reply: "the abomination that causes desolation"

(1) In light of Daniel 9:27 this occurred historically in 167 BC by Antiochus Epiphanes (referenced in the historical apocryphal book of 1 Maccabees).

(2) Also, this could be seen in the soon destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD (Lk 21:20-21); yet this event itself may also foreshadow a yet future time during the Tribulation. Note the following passages:

(a) 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4

Concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to him, we ask you, brothers and sisters, ² not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by the teaching allegedly from us—whether by a prophecy or by word of mouth or by letter—asserting that the day of the Lord has already come. ³ Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. ⁴ He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God.

(b) Daniel 9:27

"He will confirm a covenant with many for one 'seven.' In the middle of the 'seven' he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And at the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him."

e. Jesus' reply: false Christs and false Prophets

Matthew 24:23-24

"At that time if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Messiah!' or, 'There he is!' do not believe it. ²⁴ For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect."

f. Jesus' reply: signs of the coming of the Son of Man

Matthew 24:29-31

"Immediately after the distress of those days "the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light;

*the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.’³⁰ “Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. And then all the peoples of the earth will mourn when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory.
³¹ And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.”*

g. The application: be prepared

Matthew 24:32-51 issues the warning to those of that day, therefore “keep watch” and “be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect Him” (Matt 24:44).

h. The parables

(1) Parable of ten virgins (Matt 25:1-13)

Five virgins were prepared to meet the bridegroom; five were not. The lesson? “Therefore, keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour” (25:13).

(2) Parable of talents (Matt 25:14-30)

The primary lesson seems to be, don’t waste your opportunities and resources in light of Christ’s (Master’s) return.

(3) Parable of sheep and goats (Matt 25:31-46)

At the return of the Son of Man a judgment will occur separating “sheep” and “goats.” Bock (353) indicates, “Thus, the Son of Man and allegiance to him and his people are seen as the basis for the judgment, an authority that he possesses and will exercise in the final judgment at his coming.”

E. Wednesday (April 1, 33 AD)

Most Biblical scholars consider Wednesday of Passion Week to be “silent Wednesday.” The reason for this is that there seems to be no recorded activity.

Mark 14:1 indicates that the Passover was “only two days away” and then records the intent of the religious leaders “to arrest Jesus and kill him” (14:1). Then, Mark records the anointing of Jesus by Mary (14:3-11) which would have been Wednesday. But most interpreters place the event (as recorded in John 11-12) on Saturday prior to Sunday’s Triumphal Entry. The apparent discrepancy may be due to Mark’s theological arrangement as opposed to a strict chronological approach. The event itself is not under question, simply the time sequence.

This study places the anointing early and thus supports the “silent Wednesday,” perhaps a day of rest and preparation for the rigorous events ahead.

F. Thursday (April 2) through Sunday (April 5)

Session 6 of “Life of Christ” will detail the final events of the earthly life and ministry of Jesus, the Messiah-King.

V. TAKEAWAYS

A. Culmination

The Passion Week culminates the three and one-half year public ministry of Jesus. It was always the place and time for which He had prepared. As early as Luke 9, this was His focus. “As the time approached for him to be taken up into heaven, Jesus **resolutely set out** for Jerusalem” (9:51).

B. Plotting (His Death)

By this final week the die had been cast. With unknowing predictive irony, Caiaphas had uttered memorable words:

John 11:49-53

Then one of them, named Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, spoke up, “You know nothing at all! ⁵⁰ You do not realize that it is better for you that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish.” ⁵¹ He did not say this on his own, but as high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the Jewish nation, ⁵² and not only for that nation but also for the scattered children of God, to bring them together and make them one. ⁵³ So from that day on they plotted to take his life.

Caiaphas believed Jesus must die for the good of the nation (especially the entrenched religious leaders). Jesus believed that He must die for the world: "For even the son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mk 10:45).

Caiaphas saw Jesus' death as an end. Jesus saw His death as a beginning (cf. Jn 10:10^b).

C. Presentation (of the King)

The Triumphal Entry formally presented Jesus to the nation as their Messiah-King. He had performed miraculous signs attesting to His identity as one who had come from God (cf. Jn 3:1-2) and He had preached His kingdom message, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near" (Matt 4:17).

The King had come; His Kingdom was near; would the nation receive their Messiah-King and the Kingdom He presented?