

A Chronology Of Christ's Passion Week

(Mark 11–15)

Intro: Today is Palm Sunday, the Sunday before **Easter**. The final week of Christ's life is known as *Passion Week*. Palm Sunday commences Passion Week, and celebrates Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem on the back of a young donkey. Great throngs of people lined the streets waving palm branches, and shouting Hosanna, "*Lord save us now!*" (Psalm 118:26). I would like to review Mark's record of the events performed by Jesus Christ on each day of His final week, that is, from Palm Sunday through His crucifixion on Friday. Mark devotes 38% of his Gospel to Jesus' Passion Week (chaps. 11-15) and 20% to the day of Jesus' death (chaps. 14–15).

Overview: Jesus' Passion week began with His Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. On Monday the Lord Jesus cursed a barren fig tree and cleansed the Temple, which symbolized the spiritual bareness of the nation of Israel. On Tuesday, Christ taught the crowds and confronted the various religious sects of Israel. On Wednesday, Jesus was anointed by Mary at Bethany, and Judas made a deal with the religious leaders to betray Jesus for thirty pieces of silver. Thursday evening, He shared the Passover meal with His disciples, and prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane. On Friday Judas betrayed Christ with a kiss, He was arrested, tried, crucified, and buried.

I. Sunday: Christ's Triumphal Entry Into Jerusalem Mark 11:12-19 *Commonly referred to as Palm Sunday or the Triumphal Entry*

Christ's Triumphal Entry on the Sunday prior to His crucifixion served as His official presentation of Himself to the nation Israel as Her Messianic King. Now, the Lord Jesus had established Himself as the Messiah and King over and over again by one means after another. He had established it by His teaching ministry. He had established it by His spectacular miracles. Miracles that demonstrated beyond any shadow of a doubt that He had supernatural power, and that He was God in flesh. And now He presents Himself in the exact way that the OT had predicted that the Messiah-King would come. Jesus gives the people of Israel one last opportunity to receive Him in repentance and faith, and embrace Him as their Messianic King.

The story of Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem is found in all four Gospels. And, even though the Gospel writer's accounts differ, they do not in any way contradict one another. Mark's account is rather subdued as compared to that of Matthew, Luke, and John. **Turn in your Bibles to Mark's account of Jesus' Triumphal Entry in Mark 11:1-11.**

A. The background (Mark 11:1-11)

1. The colt provided (Mark 11:1-7)

vv. 1-2—As He approached Jerusalem, coming through Bethany and Bethpage near the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of His disciples into the tiny village of Bethpage to fetch a young colt for Him to ride into Jerusalem. Bethpage is believed to have been located about 1 mile east of Jerusalem. We have no record of Jesus' having made arrangements with the owner of this donkey and colt, but He must have. The owner gives His two disciples permission to take the donkey and colt (v. 6; Mt. 21:2).

2. The travail of Jesus: He weeps for Jerusalem (Luke 19:41-44)

Luke informs us in Luke 19:41-44 that as Jesus approached the city of Jerusalem, ***“He saw the city and wept over it.”*** Jesus wept because He knew the people would refuse to repent or receive Him as their God and Savior. As a result, they would be destroyed by the Romans in A.D. 70.

3. The proclamations of the people (Mark 11:8-10)

v. 9—And those who went before and those who followed after Jesus were crying out “Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Blessed is the coming kingdom of our Father David; Hosanna in the highest!”

Messianic hopes were running high in those difficult days under Roman rule, especially at festive seasons like Passover. The Passover festival at Jerusalem in the days prior to the temple's destruction was an impressive occasion. Jews from all over the Roman Empire traveled to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. During Passover the usual population of Jerusalem, estimated at around 30,000, swelled by some estimates to around 150,000 or more. One can imagine the excitement that surged through the pilgrims who had heard that Jesus, who had recently raised a man from the dead, was drawing near to Jerusalem!

B. The Prophecies Fulfilled

1. **Zechariah 9:9**—*“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, Humble, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.”*

Mark 11:7 says *“They brought the colt unto Jesus and put their garments on it; and He sat upon it.”* Jesus demonstrates His Sovereign Mastery over creation by riding upon an unbroken young colt. While Mark mentions only the colt, Matthew 21:7—informs us that *“They brought unto Jesus the donkey and the colt.”* Notice that the disciples put their garments, their robes and tunics, on both animals. Their garments served as a saddle or a cushion. Apparently they didn’t know which of the animals Jesus would ride on. We see the amazing accuracy of prophecy here, as both animals were involved in Jesus’ Triumphal Entry in order to fulfill the prophecy of **Zechariah 9:9**.

The colt or **donkey** is commonly associated with pursuits of peace (Jud. 10:4; 12:14; 2 Sam. 17:23); *the horse, with warfare* (Rev. 6:4; 19:11).”

2. **Psalm 118:26**—*“Hosanna (Lord save now)! Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the LORD, even the King of Israel (Jesus).”*

The crowds accompanying Jesus cried out “Hosanna, blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel.” The term Hosanna comes from the Hebrew expression meaning “Lord save now!” It had become a popular song of pilgrims coming to the holy city for the annual festivals. **Psalm, 118** is one of a collection of psalms called the Hallel Psalms (113-118). These *Hallel Psalms* were sung by pilgrims during the feasts of Passover and Tabernacles.

What is more, the great multitude declared Jesus to be the Lord and the King of Israel. **In ancient Israel, Psalm 118:21-27 was interpreted as a Messianic title to refer to David’s descendant, the One who would come and restore the Davidic Kingdom to Israel.** The people hailed Jesus as the great miracle worker and the King of Israel, the One who was to re-establish the kingdom of their father David.

3. **Daniel 9:24-27**—The prophecy of Daniel’s 70 Weeks (490 years)

One of the most amazing fulfillments associated with Jesus' Triumphant Entry is the prophecy of Daniel's 70 Weeks (490 years)

Daniel 9:24-27— *“Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy place.”*

The prophecy of “*Daniel's 70 Weeks*” in Daniel 9:24-27 calculated that Messiah would appear 69 weeks or **483 years** after Jerusalem had been rebuilt, and would at that time be cut off, or put to death. **The obvious question is, when did the 483 years begin? The period of 483 years began with a decree issued by the Persian King Artaxerxes I Longimanus on March 5, 444 B.C.** Nehemiah you recall was the cupbearer to King Artaxerxes, who, when he heard that the walls of Jerusalem remained torn down leaving the city defenseless, prayed for God to intervene in the rebuilding of Jerusalem. His prayers resulted in Artaxerxes' issuing of a decree granting the Jews permission to complete their restoration and rebuilding of Jerusalem (Neh. 2:1-8; **Daniel 9:25**).

Jesus made His triumphal Entry into Jerusalem and offered Himself to the nation as her Messianic King 434 years later on March 30th, A.D. 33. Jesus was cut off, put to death by crucifixion, four days later, on Friday April 3rd, A.D. 33.

These prophetic predictions from Zechariah 9:9, Psalms 118:26, and Daniel 9:24-27, and fulfillment in all four Gospel records is amazing. That God should record the very day that His Son, Jesus Christ would present Himself to the nation of Israel as Her promised Messianic King is absolutely astounding to me!

The point here my brothers and sisters is that the Jewish religious leaders knew that the time of Messiah's coming was at hand, but they were hardened in their hearts, and therefore blind to the Scriptures!

II. Monday: Christ Rejection of the Nation of Israel, Cursing of the Barren Fig Tree, and Second Cleansing of the Temple Mark 11:12-19

On Monday the Lord Jesus cursed a barren fig tree (vv. 12-14), and cleansed the Temple (vv. 15-17), both actions symbolized Israel spiritual unfruitfulness.

He condemned the religious leaders for turning His Father's house, the Temple, "into a den of robbers!" The commercial trade in the temple was conducted in the Court of the Gentiles, which in effect barred Gentiles from being able to worship God. Israel was to have been a light to the Gentile nations, but instead of drawing them to worship God, they were preventing them access to God.

Application: We are commanded to live holy lives so that we can reflect the light of Christ to the lost, and thereby attract them to the Savior. If Jesus came today would He commend you for having a clean temple or would He condemn you for having a corrupt temple, which prevents the lost from coming to Him?

III. Tuesday: Christ Confronts the Various Religious Leaders of Israel Mark 11:20–13:37

On what many refer to as "**Super Tuesday**," Christ taught His disciples and confronted the various religious leaders of Israel.

- **Concerning Christ's authority** (Mark 11:27-33). The Jewish religious leaders demanded to know by what authority Jesus did these things. Jesus asked them by what authority did John baptize? When they answered that they did not know. Jesus said, "Neither will I tell you where I derive My authority!"
- **Concerning the nation of Israel's destruction in A.D. 70** (Mark 12:1-12) Jesus tells a parable about a vineyard owner, God, who rented out His vineyard to vine-growers, Israel. Each year He sent His agents, prophets, to collect His share of the produce, but they were wounded and killed. Finally, He sent His Son, the Lord Jesus, and the wicked landowners, Israel's religious rulers said, "*Behold this is the heir, let us kill Him and take over the vineyard!*" (vv. 7-8). The vineyard owner, God, was going to destroy the wicked vine-growers, Israel, and give His blessings to others (v. 9).

Jesus' confrontations with various Jewish leaders:

- **The Pharisees and Herodians** question about tribute to Caesar (12:13-17) v. 17—"*Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesars and to God the things that are God's.*" And they were amazed at Him!
- **The Sadducees** question about resurrection (12:18-27) vv. 24, 26-27—The Sadducees were the liberal elitists of Christ day. They rejected the supernatural, angels, and denied the resurrection. *Jesus tells them that they are greatly mistaken, because they refused to accept the*

Scriptures, or the power of God (12:24). He affirms that *the dead will rise again* (v. 26a), *for God is not the God of the dead, but of the living* (v. 27).

- **The Pharisees** question about the Greatest Commandments (12:28-34) Jesus identifies the Greatest commandment as one's love for God, based on the great *Shema* of Deuteronomy 6:4-5; and adds a second, one's love for his neighbor as much as himself (Lev. 19:18).

Jesus' teaching through *the Olivet Discourse*:

- The Olivet Discourse—The coming Tribulation, Second Coming of Christ, and the End of the World (Mark 13, Matt. 24–25, Luke 21)

IV. Wednesday: Christ is Anointed for His burial by Mary (Mark 14:1-9), and Betrayed to the Religious Rulers By Judas (Mark 14:10-11)

V. Thursday: Christ's Shares the Passover Meal with His Disciples, Institutes the Lord's Supper, and Prays in the Garden of Gethsemane (Mark 14:12-42)

On Thursday evening, Christ sent two of His disciples to prepare the place for them to share the Passover meal (14:12-16); Jesus shared the Passover meal with His disciples and instituted the Lord's Supper (14:17-25), and went forth with His disciples to pray in the Garden of Gethsemane (14:26-42)

VI. Friday: Christ Is Betrayed By Judas, Arrested, Tried, Crucified, And Buried (Mark 14:43–15:47)

- Judas' betrayal, and Jesus arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane (Mark 14:43-52)
- *Three religious (Jewish) trials of Jesus*: Annas (John 18:12-23), Caiaphas, (Mark 14:53-65 and John 18:24-27) Sanhedrin (Luke 22:66-71)
- *Three civil (Roman) trials of Jesus*: Pilate (Mark 15:1-3 and Luke 23:1-5), Herod (Luke 23:6-12), Pilate (Mark 15:4-15 and Luke 23:13-25)
- The Crucifixion of Jesus at 9:00 a.m. (Mark 15:20-32)

After the Roman soldiers had mocked and beaten Jesus, they led Him out and crucified Him (15:20). They crucified Him and divided up His garments at the third hour or 9:00 a.m. (Mark 15:24-25)

- The Death of Jesus at 3 p.m. (Mark 15:33-41)
When the sixth hour, 12:00 noon came, darkness encompassed the whole land until the ninth hour 3:00 p.m. Jesus finally uttered a loud cry, *tetelesti*, “*It is finished!*” and *breathed His last* (15:37). When the Roman centurion who was standing right in front of Jesus saw the way He breathed His last, he said, “Truly this man was the Son of God!”

Application: Have you made that confession? Have you come to recognize that Jesus Christ truly was the Son of God, and Savior of the world? Have you asked God to forgive you of your sin, and invited Jesus Christ to come into your heart? Will you invite Jesus to forgive your sin and come into your life this morning? Accepting Christ on Palm Sunday will make it really easy to remember the day you were saved, or born-again into God’s family!

- The Burial of Jesus (Mark 15:42-47)

Applications:

1. Is your temple clean today? If not, will you take the next few minutes as we close in prayer to talk to God about your sin and get right with the Savior.
2. If you have never done so, we invite you to accept Christ as your Savior this morning. Let Palm Sunday become the day you accepted Christ as your Savior from sin and death. It will be easy to remember when you were born-again by the power of God’s Holy Spirit.
3. May God help each of us not to talk about evangelism, but to pray for opportunities to evangelize—to share the Good News about the love, forgiveness, and salvation that God had made available through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Closing Prayer:

Closing song: *Beautiful Terrible Cross*