

THE FINAL DAYS OF JESUS

40-DAY DEVOTIONAL READING GUIDE

by David Schrock

It has been said of Mark's Gospel that it is a passion narrative with an extended introduction.¹ The same could be said of all the Gospels. In each account, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John introduce Jesus of Nazareth as the long-awaited Messiah of Israel. In various ways they display his divine power and human personality. Yet, with each evangelist, the focus of each Gospel turns to the final and climactic week of his life, the days leading up to Christ's execution and his miraculous resurrection from the dead.

Most recently, Andreas Köstenberger and Justin Taylor have provided the church with an orderly account of these final days. Broken down into forty events, they have written an annotated guide to the Passion Week. This outline depends exclusively on their book *The Final Days of Jesus (TFDJ)* and commends a forty-day devotional that Christians and non-Christians alike can read to better appreciate and understand all that happened in "the most important week of the most important person who ever lived."

To help you as you use this devotional reading guide, please note a few things:

1. The forty events of Jesus's final week are broken down into forty days of reading. Some days of reading will cover two events. Other events will take two or more days to consider (e.g., Jesus teaching in John 13–17).
2. With a few exceptions, each New Testament reading should take less than ten minutes and is intended to be useful for personal devotions or family worship.
3. The Old Testament passages are citations either quoted in the New Testament passage of the day or provide pertinent background information about the events taking place (e.g., the New Covenant or Passover).
4. Days 1–7 (Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday in the Passion Week) must be read in your own Bible, with supplementation from *TFDJ*. The full text of Scripture begins in *TFDJ* on Day 8 (Wednesday) and continues until Days 39 and 40.
5. On Days 1–7, you should select either Matthew's Gospel or Mark's gospel and supplement your reading with Luke and John. If you have more time, you can read all Scripture passages on the given day, but on Day 7, for instance, that would include four chapters of Scripture.
6. Beginning on Day 8, you can continue to read in your own Bible and supplement your reading with *TFDJ*, or, more simply, you can read the assigned pages of *TFDJ*. By reading *TFDJ* you can seamlessly weave between Scripture and commentary. If time is short, focus on the New Testament reading.
7. The Old Testament promises are not necessary for reading but provide illumination for those pastors or parents who may desire to know more of the background to each event. You may also find other Old Testament references by keeping alert to the cross-references in your own Bible.
8. Three other notes: (a) On Day 2, the predictions of Jesus's death have been included in brackets, though they do not occur in the final week. (b) Be advised: because John 13–17 in *TFDJ* is not versified, the starting and ending point on Days 11–15 are ambiguous but not unrecognizable. (c) On Days 33–34, a selection of exilic psalms have been included to help you feel the sorrow of Israel's exile and Christ's death.
9. Most importantly, as you read, pray and give praise. Do not simply read these events with an eye to historical scholarship, but read with a heart that marvels at the sinless Son of God who laid down his life for you. If you do not know Jesus as your personal Savior, ask the Lord to open your eyes to behold the wonder of his law, and even more, the gift of his Son.

¹Martin Kähler, *The So-called Historical Jesus and the Historic, Biblical Christ*, (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1964), 80n11.

DAY	EVENT	NEW TESTAMENT FULFILLMENT				OLD TESTAMENT PROMISE	THE FINAL DAYS OF JESUS (TFDJ)
		Matthew	Mark	Luke	John		
Sunday							
1	Jesus enters Jerusalem.	21:1-11	11:1-10	19:29-44	12:12-19	<i>Ps. 118:25-26</i> <i>Isa. 62:11</i> <i>Zech. 9:9-13</i>	pp. 31-32
2	Jesus predicts his death.	<i>[16:21-23]</i> <i>[17:22-23]</i> <i>[20:17-19]</i>	<i>[8:31]</i> <i>[9:30-32]</i> <i>[10:32-34]</i>	<i>[9:22-27]</i> <i>[9:43-45]</i> <i>[18:31-33]</i>	12:20-36	<i>See Jesus's predictions left in brackets</i>	pp. 32-33
	Jesus visits the temple.	21:14-17	11:11			<i>Psalm 8</i>	p. 32
Monday							
3	Jesus curses a fig tree.	21:18-19	11:12-14			<i>Jer. 24:1-10</i>	p. 35
4	Jesus cleanses the temple.	21:12-13	11:15-18	19:45-48		<i>Isa. 56:7</i> <i>Ezekiel 44-45</i>	pp. 35-36
Tuesday							
5	The lesson from the fig tree.	21:20-22	11:20-26			<i>Ps. 46:2</i>	p. 39
6	Jesus teaches and engages in controversies in the temple.	21:23-23:39	11:27-12:44	20:1-21:4		<i>Isa. 50:4-9</i> <i>Jer. 7:11</i>	pp. 39-43
7	Jesus predicts the future.	24:1-25:46	13:1-37	21:5-36		Matthew 24: <i>Daniel 7, 9, 12</i> <i>Zechariah 14</i> Matthew 25: <i>Isa. 54:4-6</i> <i>Ezek. 16:8, 45</i> <i>Hos. 2:19</i>	pp. 43-44
Wednesday							
8	Jesus continues his daily teaching in the temple complex.			21:37-38		A Better Priest: <i>Jer. 30:18-22</i> <i>Zech. 3:1-10; 6:9-15</i>	p. 47
	The Sanhedrin plots to kill Jesus.	26:3-5	14:1-2	22:1-2		<i>Mal. 2:1-9; 3:1-5</i>	pp. 47-49

DAY	EVENT	NEW TESTAMENT FULFILLMENT				OLD TESTAMENT PROMISE	THE FINAL DAYS OF JESUS (TFDJ)
		Matthew	Mark	Luke	John		
Thursday							
9	Jesus instructs his disciples Peter and John to secure a large upper room in a house in Jerusalem and to prepare for the Passover meal.	26:17-19	14:12-16	22:7-13		Passover: <i>Exodus 12-13</i> <i>Lev. 23:4, 8</i> <i>Num. 9:1-14</i> <i>Deut. 16:1-8</i>	pp. 51-54
10	In the evening Jesus eats the Passover meal with the Twelve, tells them of the coming betrayal, and institutes the Lord's Supper.	26:20-29	14:17-25	22:14-30		New Covenant: <i>Isa. 52:13-55:5</i> <i>Jer. 31:31-34; 32:40;</i> <i>33:14-26</i> <i>Ezek. 36:22-38</i> <i>Joel 2:28-32</i>	pp. 55-62
11-15	During supper Jesus washes the disciples' feet, interacts with them, and delivers the Upper Room Discourse (Farewell Discourse).				13:1-17:26		[1] pp. 62-64, 67-70 [2] pp. 64-67, 70-72 [3] pp. 72-74, 78-80 [4] pp. 74-76, 80-81 [5] pp. 76-78, 81-84
16	Jesus and the disciples sing a hymn together, then depart to the Mount of Olives.	26:30	14:26	22:39		Hallel Psalms: <i>Psalms 113-118</i>	pp. 67, 72 and <i>Psalms 118</i>
17	Jesus predicts Peter's denials.	26:31-35	14:27-31	22:31-34		<i>Zech. 13:7</i>	pp. 84-86
	Jesus issues final practical commands about supplies and provisions.			22:35-38		<i>Isa. 53:12</i>	pp. 87-88
18	Jesus and the disciples go to Gethsemane, where he struggles in prayer and they struggle to stay awake late into the night.	26:36-46	14:32-42	22:40-46		<i>Ps. 40:6-8; 42:5, 11;</i> <i>43:5; 116:4; 143:10</i> <i>Isa. 51:21-23</i>	pp. 89-93
Friday							
19-20	Jesus is betrayed by Judas and arrested by the authorities (perhaps after midnight, early Friday morning).	26:47-56	14:43-52	22:47-53	18:2-12	<i>Ps. 41:9</i>	[1] pp. 95-97, 99-100 [2] pp. 97-98, 101-2 and <i>Psalms 41</i>
21	Jesus has an informal hearing before Annas (former high priest and Caiaphas's father-in-law).				18:13-14, 19-24	<i>Ps. 44:17-22</i>	pp. 103-5

DAY	EVENT	NEW TESTAMENT FULFILLMENT				OLD TESTAMENT PROMISE	THE FINAL DAYS OF JESUS (TFDJ)
		Matthew	Mark	Luke	John		
22	Jesus stands trial before Caiaphas and part of the Sanhedrin.	26:57, 59-68	14:53, 55-65	22:63-71		<i>Ps. 44:17-22</i>	pp. 105-11
23-24	As predicted, Peter denies Jesus and the rooster crows.	26:58, 69-75	14:54, 66-72	22:54b-62	18:15-18, 25-27	<i>Zech. 13:7-9</i>	[1] pp. 112-13, 115-17 [2] 113-15, 117-19 and <i>Zech. 13:7-9</i>
25	After sunrise on Friday the final consultation of the full Sanhedrin condemns Jesus to death and sends him to Pontius Pilate.	27:1-2	15:1			<i>Zechariah 9-14</i>	pp. 119-20
	Judas changes his mind, returns the silver, and hangs himself.	27:3-10				<i>Zech. 11:3</i>	pp. 121-23
26	Pilate questions Jesus and sends him to Herod Antipas.	27:11-14	15:2-5	23:1-7	18:28-38	Crucifixion Prefigured and Prophesied: <i>Genesis 22</i> <i>Leviticus 16</i> <i>Psalms 22</i> <i>Isaiah 53</i> <i>Zech. 12:1-13:1</i>	pp. 123-29
	Herod questions Jesus and sends him back to Pilate.			23:8-12			pp. 130-31
27-28	Jesus appears before Pilate a second time and is condemned to die.	27:15-26	15:6-15	23:13-25	18:38b-19:16		[1] pp. 132-34, 137-40 [2] pp. 134-37, 140-43 and <i>Psalms 22</i>
29	Jesus is mocked and marched to Golgotha.	27:27-34	15:16-23	23:26-31	19:16b-17		pp. 143-48
30	Jesus is crucified between two thieves.	27:35-44	15:24-32	23:33-43	19:18-27	pp. 148-56	
31	Jesus breathes his last.	27:45-56	15:33-41	23:44-49	19:28-37	<i>Ps. 31:5</i> <i>Ex. 12:46</i> <i>Num. 9:12</i> <i>Zech. 12:10</i>	pp. 156-64
32	Joseph of Arimathea buries Jesus in a new tomb.	27:57-61	15:42-47	23:50-56	19:38-42	<i>Isa. 53:9</i>	pp. 164-67

DAY	EVENT	NEW TESTAMENT FULFILLMENT				OLD TESTAMENT PROMISE	THE FINAL DAYS OF JESUS (TFDJ)
		Matthew	Mark	Luke	John		
Saturday							
33-34	The chief priests and Pharisees place guards at the tomb with Pilate's permission.	27:62-66				Psalms of Exile: [1] <i>Psalms 74; 80; 85</i> [2] <i>Psalms 88; 89; 106</i>	pp. 169-71 and <i>Psalms of Exile</i>
Sunday							
35	Some women discover the empty tomb and are instructed by angels.	28:1-7	16:1-7	24:1-7	20:1	Resurrection Foretold: <i>Job 19:25-26</i> <i>Ps. 16:9-11</i> <i>Isa. 25:1-12; 26:19</i> <i>Ezekiel 37</i> <i>Dan. 12:1-3</i> <i>Hos. 6:1-2</i>	pp. 173-80
	The women, fearful and joyful, leave the garden and tell the disciples.	28:8-10	16:8	24:8-11	20:2		pp. 180-82
36	Peter and John rush to the tomb based upon Mary Magdalene's report and discover it empty.			24:12	20:3-10		pp. 182-84
	Mary returns to the tomb and encounters Jesus.				20:11-18		pp. 184-86
37	Jesus appears to Cleopas and a friend on the road to Emmaus.			24:13-35			pp. 186-90
38	That evening Jesus appears to the Eleven (minus Thomas) in a house in Jerusalem.			24:36-43	20:19-23		pp. 190-93
Later Appearances of Jesus and the Ascension							
39	Jesus appears to the Eleven (including Thomas).				20:24-31	See Resurrection Foretold above	pp. 195-99
	Jesus appears to some at the Sea of Galilee.				21:1-25		
40	The Great Commission	28:16-20		24:45-59 Acts 1:8	20:21-23	<i>2 Chron. 36:22-23</i> <i>Jer. 16:16</i> <i>Joel 2:28-32</i>	pp. 199-204
	The ascension			24:50-53 Acts 1:9-11		<i>Ps. 110:1</i> <i>Dan. 7:13-14</i>	