

Holy Week Devotionals 2026

Parents of 1-6th grade kids: We encourage you to use these devotionals for your own growth first, and then to help your kids grow—just like the safety instructions on an airline flight: “secure your own oxygen mask before assisting others.” We suggest you use the main devotionals for your own study, and the “**For Families**” sections to guide your kids in a simpler look at the Holy Week story.

Thursday

Bread and a Cup

A lot happened on Thursday. It was the day for the Passover meal, and Jesus had his disciples get the meal ready. Passover was a celebration and memory of the night that God rescued his people, Israel, from the tenth plague in Egypt. Because the Pharaoh wouldn't let Israel go free, God passed through Egypt and sent a destroyer to kill the firstborn of every family, even from the livestock, all through the land. But God's people were to pick out a year old spotless lamb and prepare it for a meal. Some of the lamb's blood was to be brushed on the door of every Israelite house, to show that they were sharing in the meal that God had instructed, and they were to be protected from the destroyer. (Read more about this in Exodus 11 and 12.)

When Jesus ate the Passover with the disciples, he came to the end of the meal, and took some of the unleavened bread, and tore it into pieces for them to eat. He told them that whenever they ate this bread, it would remind them of his own body that would be broken for them. He took a cup of wine and shared it with them, and said that it was his blood of the covenant, poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

After dinner, Jesus and his disciples went to a garden called Gethsemane to pray, and Jesus knew that this was where

Judas would find him and hand him over. This was the moment of Jesus' greatest distress: he saw that he was about to start the last leg of the journey to his death, and he was about to go through the darkest part of his mission. He called the suffering he was about to undergo a “cup” that he had to drink. He prayed and asked his Father, “if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not as I will, but as you will.” (Matthew 26:39). The rest of the disciples dozed off, and he urged them to pray too. He knew that they would eventually have to drink the same cup as him (Matthew 20:23). But tonight, they would all abandon him and run away when Judas showed up with soldiers to arrest him.

Read: Matthew 26:17-69

1. What is the cost of following Jesus and sharing in his body and blood?
2. How does it affect you to know that Jesus prayed that the cup could pass from him, but that he still chose to follow the Father's will?

For Families:

Read together: Matthew 26: 17-69

1. What meal did Jesus and His disciples just finish?
2. What does Jesus tell the disciples that the bread and wine represent?
3. What was Jesus doing in the garden of Gethsemane?
4. When Jesus was arrested, did He fight the guards, or did He willingly go with them? Why is this important?