

The Story of Holy Week

The Bible tells us that Jesus had many friends. He liked to be with them. He taught them many things. Yet the time came for His “Passion.” That meant it was time for Him to suffer and die to pay for the sins of the whole world. That’s what Holy Week is all about.



On Sunday of Holy Week Jesus entered Jerusalem. He rode on a donkey. Many people were there. They took branches and waved them. Some took off their coats and laid them on the road.

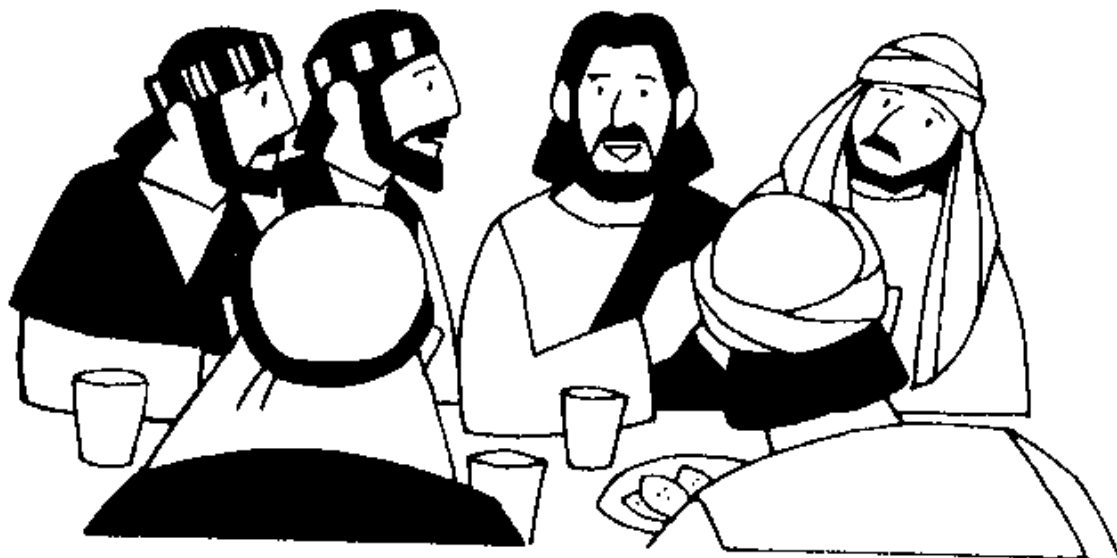
The people shouted, “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!” [Matthew 21:9b – *GOD’S WORD*].



Then Jesus went to the temple. When He got there, He threw out the people who exchanged money and sold animals for use in the temple. He said, “Scripture says, ‘My house will be called a house of prayer,’ but you’re turning it into a gathering place for thieves” [Matthew 21:13 – *GOD’S WORD*].



The next few days Jesus continued to teach both His friends and the crowds who came to listen. He continued to speak against the wrong people did. Many of the religious leaders didn’t like what Jesus said since they thought He was talking about them. They decided to find a way to kill Jesus.



Since Jesus knew He would soon die, Thursday evening He shared a special meal with His friends. Christians call this meal *The Lord's Supper*.

This is what the Bible said happened at the meal. "While they were eating, Jesus took bread and blessed it. He broke the bread, gave it to His disciples, and said, 'Take this, and eat it. This is My body.'



"Then He took a cup and spoke a prayer of thanksgiving. He gave it to them and said, 'Drink from it, all of you. This is My blood, the

blood of the promise. It is poured out for many people so that sins are forgiven'” [Matthew 26:26-28 – *GOD’S WORD*].

Then Jesus went with His friends and followers to the Garden of Gethsemane.

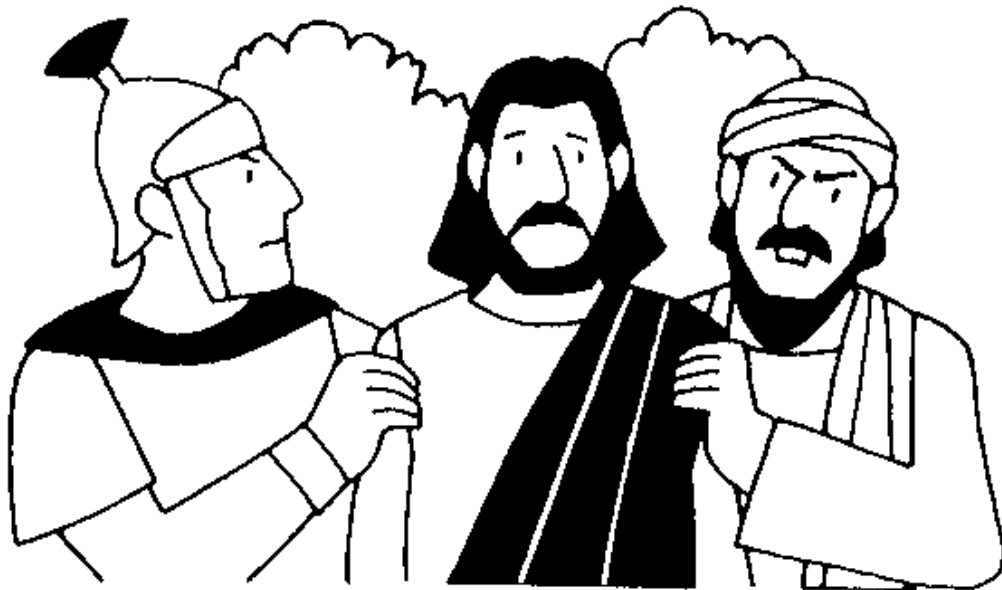


He asked His disciples to stay awake and pray for Him. He prayed to God the Father, asking the Father if there was another way to save us besides dying on the cross. Yet Jesus ended this prayer with, “... let Your will be done rather than Mine” [Matthew 26:39 – *GOD’S WORD*].

He prayed this prayer three times. Each time when He went back to see His friends they had fallen asleep! He came back the third time and told them to wake up. “The one who is betraying Me is near,” He said [Matthew 26:45 – *GOD’S WORD*].



Just then Judas, one of Jesus' followers, came with a large crowd. He came and kissed Jesus on the cheek. This was a sign to tell the guards who they were to arrest. They came and arrested Jesus. All Jesus' followers ran away.

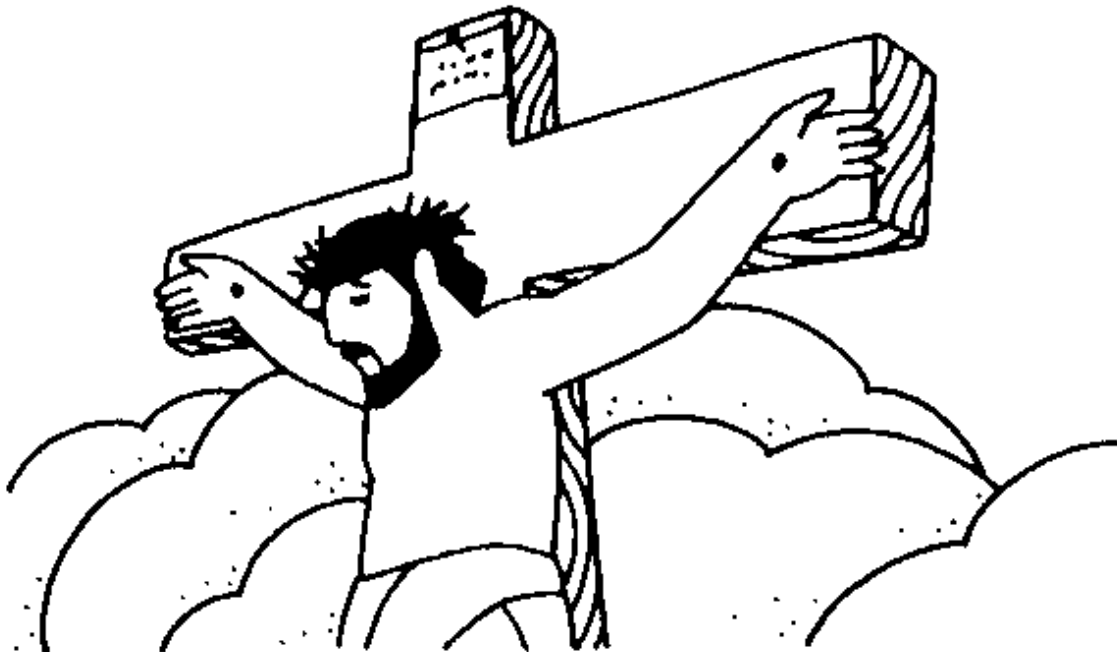


The crowd took Jesus to a trial held by the Jewish religious leaders. Many people told lies about Jesus. They finally said He

should die because He claimed to be “the Messiah, the Son of God” [Matthew 26:63 – *GOD’S WORD*].

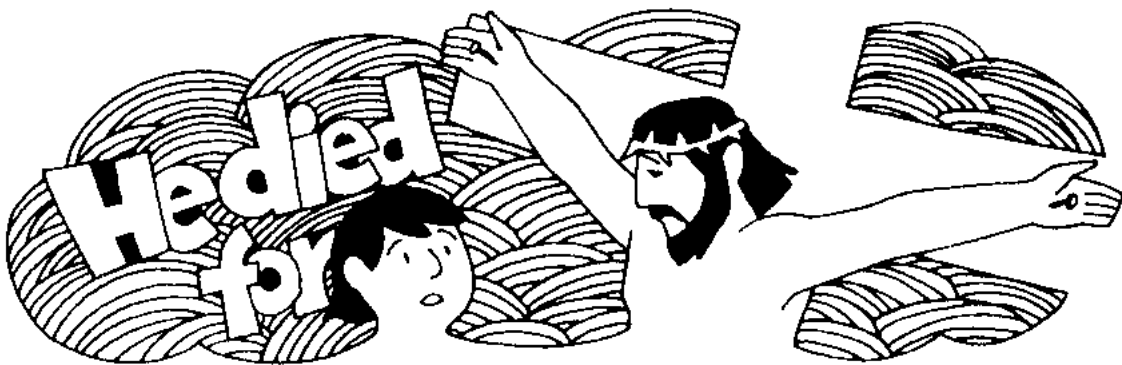


The next day they took Jesus to the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate. They told Pilate that Jesus should die. Pilate finally agreed to it. After the soldiers made fun of Jesus, they led Him to Golgotha. That’s where they crucified Him.



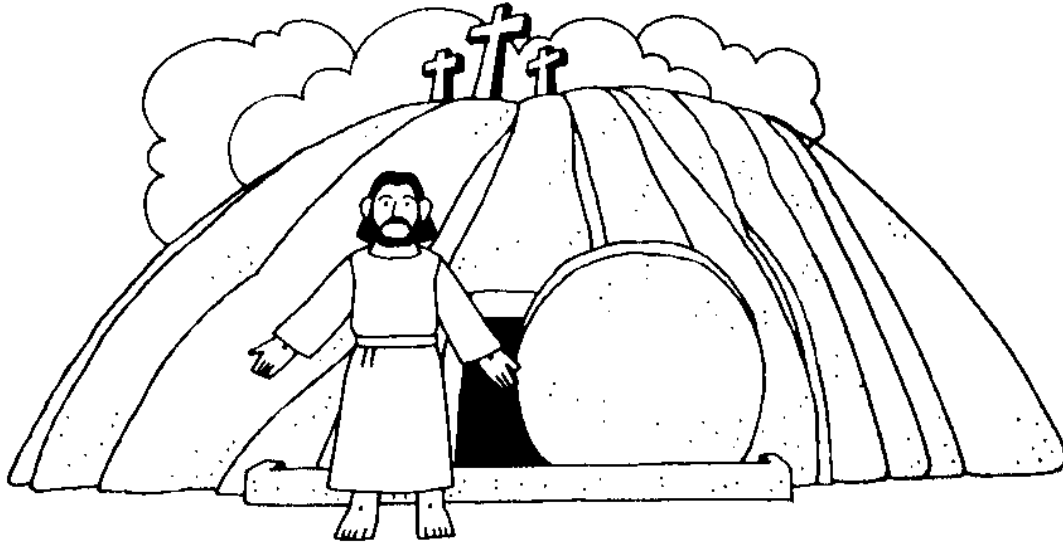
They hung Jesus on the cross with nails pounded through His hands and feet. A criminal hung on each side of Him. Jesus suffered terribly for over three hours on the cross. Many people made fun of Him.

Finally Jesus cried out, “It is finished!” You might think that meant He was about to die. But it meant more than that. It meant that right then Jesus had paid off the debt of all our sin. That’s why He had to die on the cross—to pay for all our sins. You see, we are responsible for His death. Jesus allowed Himself to be captured, tried, and crucified so He could suffer the punishment that should be ours. After paying for our sins He died.



They took Jesus down from the cross. Two of Jesus’ friends took Him to a tomb one of them had. They buried Him there. His friends were very sad since their Friend was dead.

That’s because they didn’t know what was going to happen next!



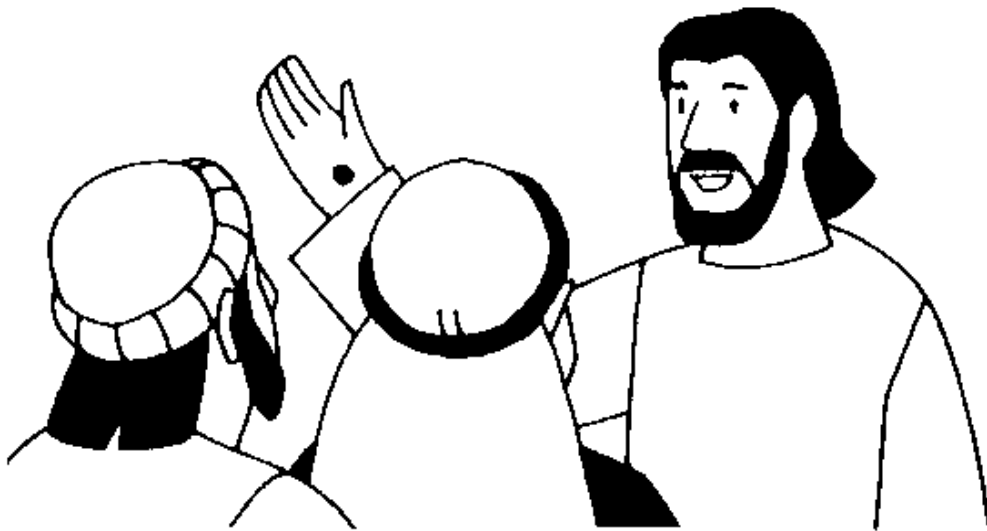
Early on Easter Sunday morning some of Jesus' women friends went to the tomb. Since He had died late Friday afternoon, they hadn't finished all the burial preparations. They had to wait until after the Sabbath to complete them according to their customs.



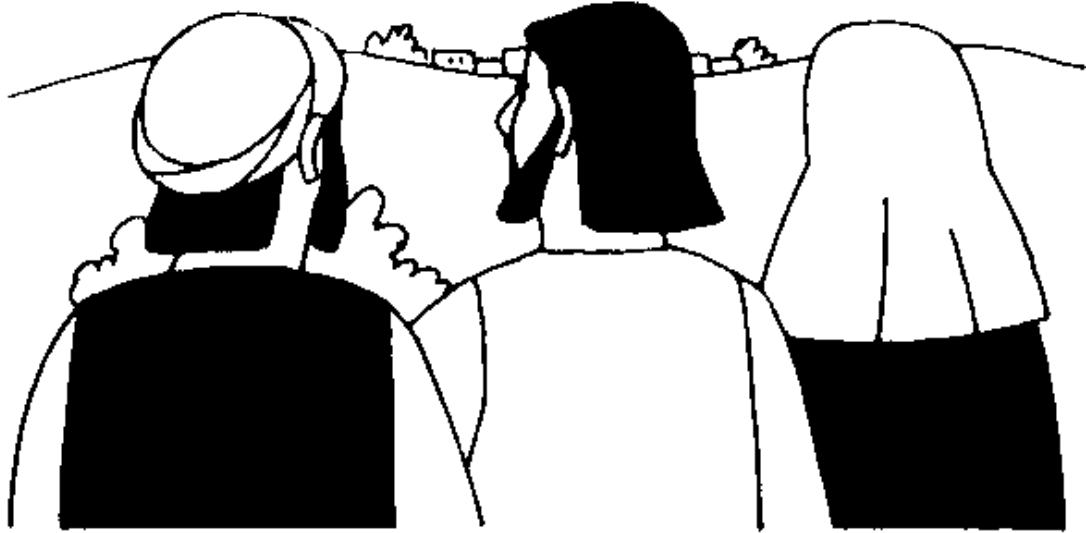
When the women got to the tomb they found the guards Pilate had placed there were gone. Even the big stone covering the tomb's entrance was moved.

Then Jesus' women friends saw an angel who told them the good news: "Don't be afraid! I know you're looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He's not here. He has been brought back to life as He said. Come, see the place where He was lying. Then go quickly, and tell His disciples that He has been brought back to life"

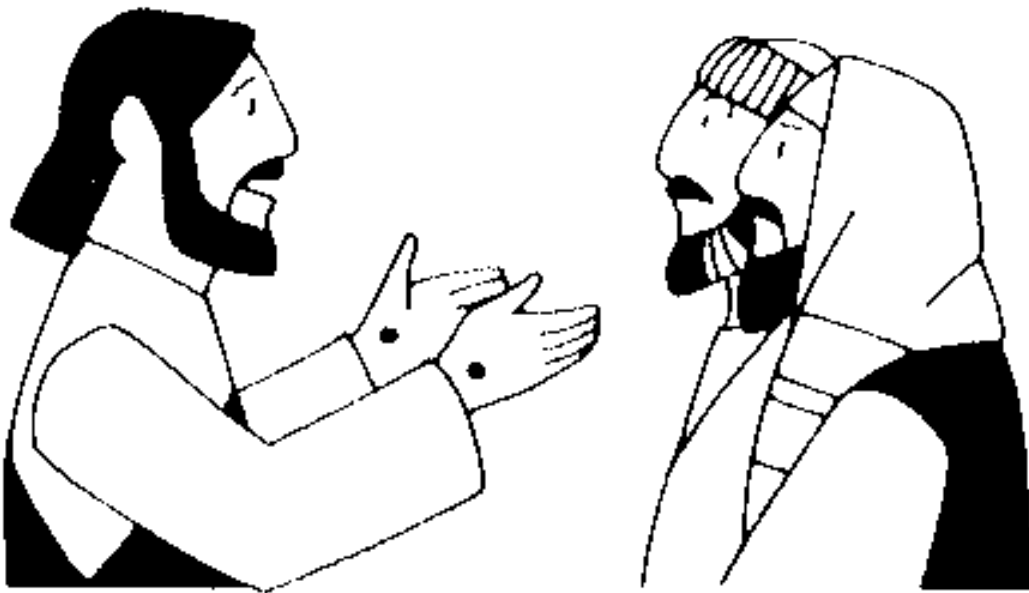
[Matthew 28:5-7 – *GOD'S WORD*].



As they started to go and tell Jesus' other friends they saw Jesus Himself. They fell down to worship Him. Jesus told the women to go tell His other friends the good news.



Jesus' friends didn't believe the women at first. Yet that same day Jesus appeared to more of His friends. Then they, too, came to believe the best news ever: *Jesus is alive*.



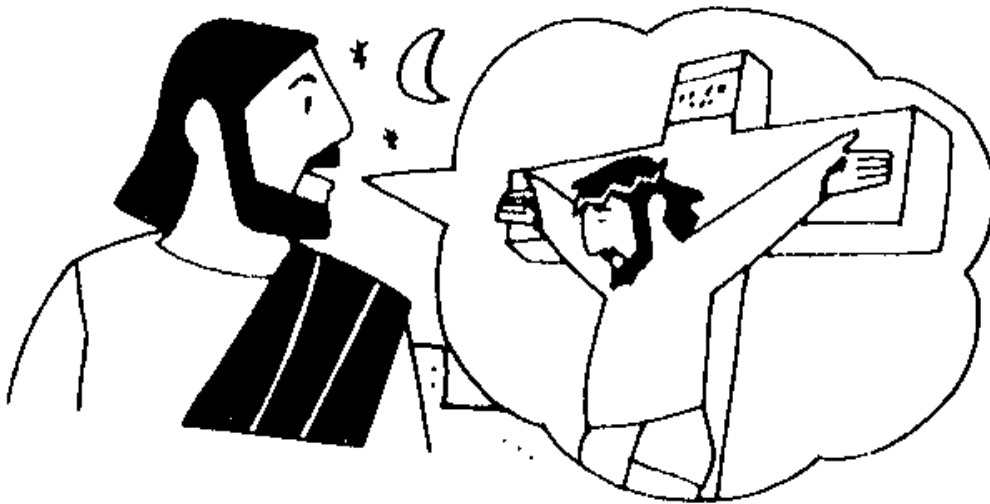
That's why Easter is so important. Because Jesus is alive, we know that all our sins were forgiven because of Jesus' death for us. That means we can live with God now and forever. What great news! That's the story of Holy Week.



You can read the whole story in the Bible. It's in four different places. Be sure to have your parents help you check it out so you can read the whole story.

- Matthew 21:1 – 28:20
- Mark 11:1 – 16:8
- Luke 19:28 – 24:53
- John 12:12 – 21:25

So that's the story of Holy Week!



It's a story that tells you that Jesus loves you! He died for you! He wants you to be His friend, too.



You can be His friend by believing in Him as your Savior and Lord – the one who died for you so you could live forever with God. How happy that would make Jesus! Won't you become His friend today?

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