

THE FINAL WEEK

Matthew 21 - 27

Introduction: If we already know the outcome, we usually are not interested. The final week of Jesus' life is well known, yet remains interesting. Let us take a look at some events of that last week.

I. THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY (21:1-10)

1. People shouted, tossed palms and clothing before Jesus as He rode into town.
2. People from all over the area made up the crowd.
3. They shouted "*Hosana..*" and later would shout "*Crucify Him..*"
4. Jesus didn't appear to be much of a king, He even cried at times.
5. A rag-tag bunch made up this procession (His disciples).

II. THE LAST SUPPER (26:17-20)

1. A night of surprises for the disciples.
2. Jesus washed their feet, such strange behavior for one at the "top."
3. Jesus gave them a Kingdom and they were to baptize, remember, and wash feet.
4. The disciples argued over who was the greatest among themselves.

III. THE BETRAYAL (26:21)

1. Jesus dropped a "bombshell" - one of them would betray Him.
2. Nobody suspected anybody.
3. Judas wasn't the first nor the last, but just the most famous to betray.
4. Judas failed to receive what Jesus came to offer.
5. All the other disciples became the foundation of Jesus' Church.

IV. THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE (26:36-40)

1. Full of wine and food the disciples went to sleep.
2. Jesus wanted them with Him at this crucial time. It was human nature.
3. Jesus was hurt that they couldn't stay awake with Him.
4. Jesus struggled greatly. Pain and death was a new experience.
5. What would have happened if God had granted Jesus' first request?

V. THE TRIALS (26:57-59)

1. T.V. shows have the bad guys getting off by the cleverness of their lawyers.
2. Jesus faced six (6) trials in 24 hours with the Romans and the Jews.
3. Jesus had no defense, no one to speak for Him, not even God!
4. Jesus had refused to be called "Messiah" but now He accepts it.
5. A poor Messiah, weak, rejected, alone, doomed - some King!

VI. CALVARY (27:26-31)

1. Nobody can grasp the indignity Jesus suffered by the soldiers: Naked, flogged, spat on, slapped, shoved, mocked, joked about.
2. From the cross it continued... "*...you saved others...*"
3. What restraint God the Father showed.
4. The closest thing to a complaint from Jesus' swollen lips was a request for something to drink.
5. Jesus always thought of others and He forgave everyone there, arranged for His mother's care, welcomed a thief into His Kingdom.

CONCLUSION:

1. Despite all the shame and sadness of it all, what took place at Calvary changed the history of mankind.
2. The two thieves beside Jesus showed the only two possible responses to the Cross of Jesus for even today:
 - One mocked Jesus' powerlessness.
 - One recognized something different about Jesus and took a leap of faith and cried out "*...Remember me...*"
 - This single person, a thief, was the **ONLY** person who did not speak to Jesus in mockery.
3. How do you look at the Cross?
 - Do you see it as an example of God's impotence?
 - Do you see it as proof of God's love?
4. Either you turn away from Jesus' offer of eternal life - or you accept it! Which is it for you?