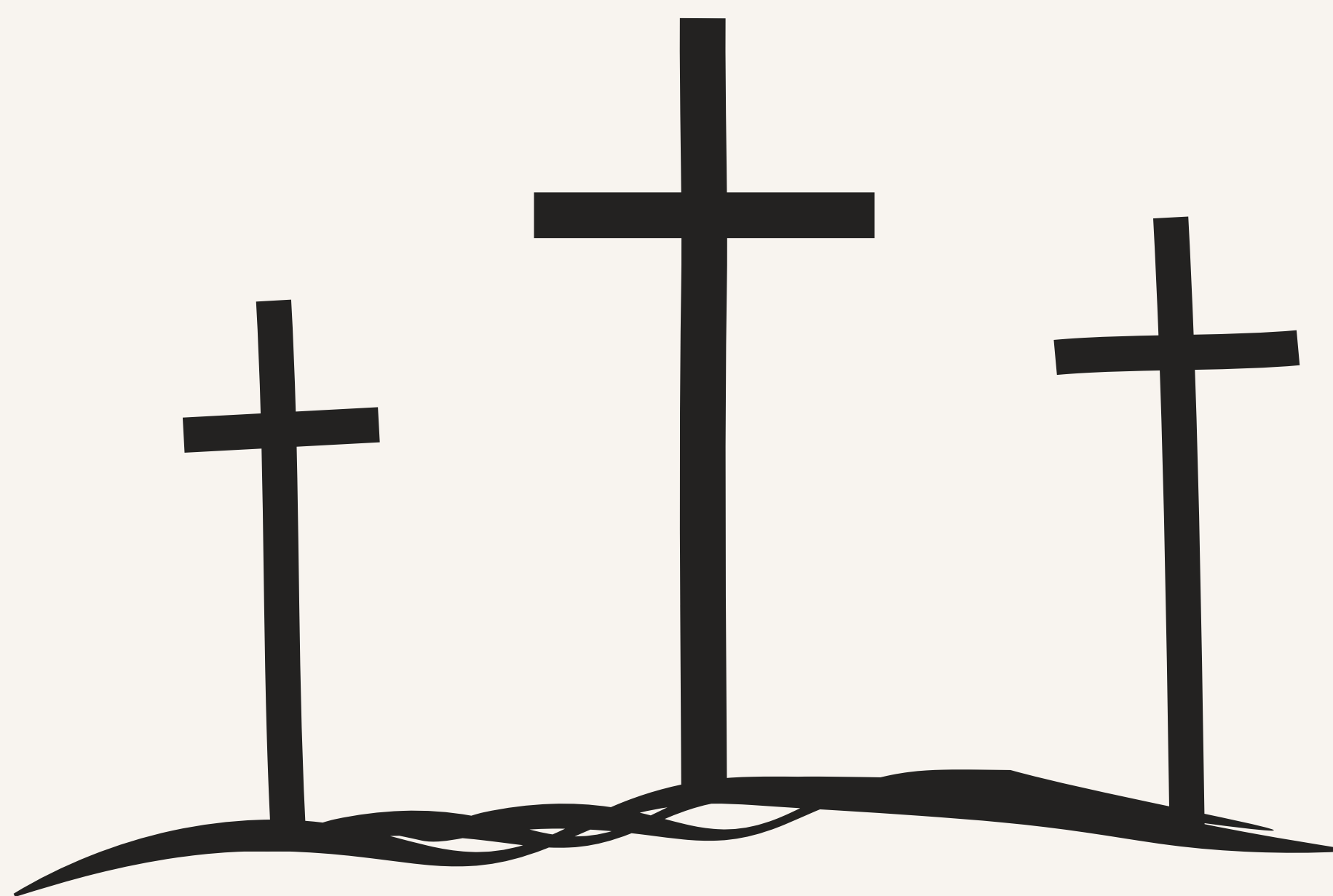


A BIBLE READING
GUIDE FOR
FAMILIES TO

grow together

THIS HOLY WEEK

BY: JENNIFER WADDLE



DAY ONE: PALM SUNDAY

PALM SUNDAY IS A JOYOUS DAY ON THE CHRISTIAN CALENDAR THAT MARKS THE BEGINNING OF HOLY WEEK. IT SYMBOLIZES JESUS' TRIUMPHANT ENTRY AS HE RODE INTO JERUSALEM ON A DONKEY. THAT DAY, CROWDS OF PEOPLE LINED THE STREETS WAVING PALM BRANCHES, SHOUTING, "HOSANNA! BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!"

LET PALM SUNDAY BRING YOUR FAMILY TOGETHER AS A REMINDER THAT JESUS IS THE KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 21:1-11; MARK 11:1-11; LUKE 19:28-38

JOHN 12:12-13 SUMS IT UP BY SAYING, *"THE NEXT DAY THE GREAT CROWD THAT HAD COME FOR THE FESTIVAL HEARD THAT JESUS WAS ON HIS WAY TO JERUSALEM. THEY TOOK PALM BRANCHES AND WENT OUT TO MEET HIM, SHOUTING, "HOSANNA! BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD! BLESSED IS THE KING OF ISRAEL!"*

FAMILY PRAYER:

LORD JESUS, THANK YOU FOR THE BEAUTIFUL WORD PICTURE OF PALM SUNDAY IN THE BIBLE. AS WE ENVISION THE PEOPLE LINING THE STREETS WITH PALM BRANCHES SHOUTING "HOSANNA!" WE FIND OURSELVES PROCLAIMING "HOSANNA" IN OUR OWN HEARTS. TRULY, YOU ARE THE KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS, AND WE REMEMBER YOU ON THIS PALM SUNDAY, THE FIRST DAY OF THE HOLY WEEK. IN YOUR NAME, WE PRAY, AMEN.

FAMILY ACTIVITY:

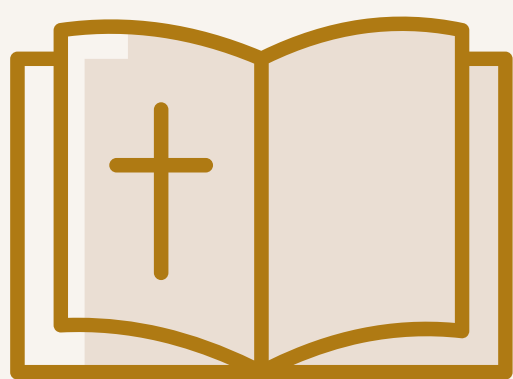
CREATE AN ACROSTIC POEM OF THE WORD H-O-S-A-N-N-A BY WRITING WORDS OR PHRASES FOR EACH LETTER. BE CREATIVE AND INCLUDE SCRIPTURES SUCH AS, "HE IS WORTHY OF OUR PRAISE!" AND "OH, GIVE THANKS TO THE LORD FOR HE IS GOOD; HIS LOVE ENDURES FOREVER!"

DAY TWO: HOLY MONDAY

HOLY MONDAY MARKS THE SECOND DAY OF HOLY WEEK AND CENTERS AROUND ONE MAIN EVENT: *THE CLEARING OF THE TEMPLE*. ON THIS DAY, JESUS TURNED THE TABLES ON THE MONEY CHANGERS BECAUSE THEY WERE USING HIS FATHER'S HOUSE FOR SELFISH GAIN.

LET THIS HOLY DAY ENCOURAGE YOUR FAMILY TO DISCUSS THE IMPORTANCE OF GATHERING IN GOD'S HOUSE WITH THE RIGHT INTENTIONS. TALK ABOUT HOW YOUR CHURCH HONORS GOD THROUGH WORSHIP, PRAYER, AND PREACHING THE WORD.

SCRIPTURE:



MATTHEW 21:12-13 DESCRIBES HOLY MONDAY BY SAYING, "JESUS ENTERED THE TEMPLE COURTS AND DROVE OUT ALL WHO WERE BUYING AND SELLING THERE. HE OVERTURNED THE TABLES OF THE MONEY CHANGERS AND THE BENCHES OF THOSE SELLING DOVES. 'IT IS WRITTEN,' HE SAID TO THEM, 'MY HOUSE WILL BE CALLED A HOUSE OF PRAYER,' BUT YOU ARE MAKING IT 'A DEN OF ROBBERS.'"



FAMILY PRAYER:

LORD JESUS, ON THIS HOLY MONDAY, PLEASE HELP US REMEMBER TO HONOR YOU IN OUR PLACE OF WORSHIP AND LET YOU BE OUR CENTRAL FOCUS. ENCOURAGE US TO FELLOWSHIP WITH ONE ANOTHER AND GROW CLOSER TO YOU AS WE WORSHIP YOU IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH. IN YOUR NAME, WE PRAY, AMEN.

FAMILY CHALLENGE:

PUT YOUR FAITH INTO ACTION AND BLESS SOMEONE ELSE TODAY. THIS COULD INCLUDE:

GIVING JOHN 3:16 BAGS TO THE HOMELESS (WITH A WATER BOTTLE, GRANOLA BAR, & BIBLE)

DELIVERING A MEAL TO SOMEONE IN NEED

READING THE EASTER STORY TO YOUR YOUNGER SIBLING

MAKING AN EASTER CARD FOR A NEIGHBOR

DOING CHORES FOR YOUR MOM OR DAD





DAY THREE: HOLY TUESDAY

HOLY TUESDAY IS THE DAY WHEN JESUS ENCOUNTERED CHALLENGES FROM THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES REGARDING VARIOUS TOPICS SUCH AS MARRIAGE IN HEAVEN, PAYING TAXES TO CAESAR, AND THE SOURCE OF HIS AUTHORITY. IT IS ALSO THE DAY THAT JESUS SHARED THE TWO GREATEST COMMANDMENTS.

LET THIS HOLY TUESDAY REMIND YOUR FAMILY THAT LOVING THE LORD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, MIND, SOUL, AND STRENGTH AND LOVING YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF ARE THE TWO MOST IMPORTANT THINGS IN LIFE. SHARE EXAMPLES OF WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE IN ACTION AND EMPHASIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF LETTING YOUR LOVE FOR GOD AND OTHERS SHOW.

SCRIPTURE:

MATTHEW 22:34-40 SAYS, "HEARING THAT JESUS HAD SILENCED THE SADDUCEES, THE PHARISEES GOT TOGETHER. ONE OF THEM, AN EXPERT IN THE LAW, TESTED HIM WITH THIS QUESTION: 'TEACHER, WHICH IS THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT IN THE LAW?' JESUS REPLIED: 'LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.' THIS IS THE FIRST AND GREATEST COMMANDMENT. AND THE SECOND IS LIKE IT: 'LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' ALL THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS HANG ON THESE TWO COMMANDMENTS."

FAMILY PRAYER:

LORD JESUS, PLEASE HELP US LIVE OUT THE GREATEST COMMANDMENTS BY LOVING YOU FIRST AND OTHERS SECOND. REMIND OUR FAMILY OF WHAT IT MEANS TO SERVE EACH OTHER WITH JOY AND GLADNESS AND RESTORE PEACE TO OUR HOUSEHOLD THIS HOLY WEEK. IN YOUR NAME, WE PRAY, AMEN.



FAMILY CHALLENGE:

FILL A LARGE JAR OR BOWL WITH LOVE NOTES FOR GOD AND EACH OTHER. PULL ONE NOTE FROM THE JAR EACH NIGHT AND READ IT ALOUD AS A FAMILY. RECITE THE TWO GREATEST COMMANDMENTS AND LET THEM BECOME YOUR FAMILY'S MISSION STATEMENT.



DAY FOUR: HOLY WEDNESDAY

HOLY WEDNESDAY, ALSO KNOWN AS SPY WEDNESDAY, ENCOURAGES US TO PAUSE AND REFLECT ON WHAT JESUS WENT THROUGH WHEN ONE OF HIS DISCIPLES, JUDAS, BETRAYED HIM.

THE INTERESTING NAME, "SPY WEDNESDAY," COMES FROM JUDAS ISCARIOT, WHO SPIED ON JESUS AND MADE AN AGREEMENT WITH THE CHIEF PRIESTS TO BETRAY HIM. IN EXCHANGE FOR THIRTY PIECES OF SILVER, JUDAS LED THE GUARDS TO JESUS ON THE NIGHT OF HIS ARREST.

SCRIPTURE: 

MATTHEW 26:14-16 SAYS, "THEN ONE OF THE TWELVE—THE ONE CALLED JUDAS ISCARIOT—WENT TO THE CHIEF PRIESTS AND ASKED, 'WHAT ARE YOU WILLING TO GIVE ME IF I DELIVER [JESUS] OVER TO YOU?' SO THEY COUNTED OUT FOR HIM THIRTY PIECES OF SILVER. FROM THEN ON JUDAS WATCHED FOR AN OPPORTUNITY TO HAND HIM OVER."

FAMILY PRAYER:

LORD JESUS, TODAY WE REMEMBER HOW YOU WERE BETRAYED BY ONE OF YOUR DISCIPLES. BECAUSE YOU KNOW WHAT IT FEELS LIKE TO BE HURT BY A FRIEND, YOU KNOW HOW TO HELP US WHEN OTHERS HURT US. WE LOOK TO YOU TODAY, TRUSTING YOU TO HELP US FORGIVE AS YOU FORGIVE US. IN YOUR NAME, WE PRAY, AMEN.

FAMILY CHALLENGE:

TAKE TURNS SHARING HOW SOMEONE HAS HURT YOUR FEELINGS OR CAUSED YOU TO FEEL BETRAYED. DISCUSS THE IMPORTANCE OF FORGIVENESS AND PRAY FOR THOSE WHO'VE OFFENDED YOU.



FINISH THE CONVERSATION BY TAKING A FAMILY WALK AS A SYMBOL OF STRENGTH AND SUPPORT FOR ONE ANOTHER.

DAY FIVE: MAUNDY THURSDAY

MAUNDY THURSDAY IS A SIGNIFICANT DAY DURING HOLY WEEK FOR FAMILIES TO CELEBRATE JESUS'S LAST SUPPER WITH HIS DISCIPLES. THE WORD "MAUNDY" COMES FROM THE LATIN WORD MANDATUM, MEANING "COMMANDMENT." AS JESUS WASHED HIS DISCIPLES' FEET THAT EVENING, HE LEFT THEM WITH THE IMPORTANT COMMAND TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER AS HE LOVED THEM.

CELEBRATE MAUNDY THURSDAY BY ENJOYING A LEISURELY DINNER, BREAKING BREAD TOGETHER, AND REMEMBERING THE EVENTS OF THE LAST SUPPER. LET IT BE A SPECIAL MOMENT OF REFLECTION AS YOU PURPOSE TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER AS JESUS LOVES YOU.

SCRIPTURE:

JOHN 13:1-5 DESCRIBES THE PASSEOVER MEAL AND THE WASHING OF THE DISCIPLE'S FEET. LATER IN THE SAME CHAPTER, JESUS SAID, *"A NEW COMMAND I GIVE YOU: LOVE ONE ANOTHER. AS I HAVE LOVED YOU, SO YOU MUST LOVE ONE ANOTHER. BY THIS EVERYONE WILL KNOW THAT YOU ARE MY DISCIPLES, IF YOU LOVE ONE ANOTHER."*





FAMILY PRAYER:

LORD JESUS, AS WE GATHER TOGETHER AS A FAMILY THIS MAUNDY THURSDAY, PLEASE REMIND US OF THE HUMBLE WAY YOU SERVED YOUR DISCIPLES BY WASHING THEIR FEET. HELP US LOVE ONE ANOTHER AS YOU HAVE LOVED US, AND GIVE US HUMBLE HEARTS TO SERVE ONE ANOTHER WITH ACTS OF KINDNESS. IN YOUR HOLY NAME, WE PRAY, AMEN.

FAMILY ACTIVITY:

HAVE A SPECIAL FOOT-WASHING CEREMONY IN REMEMBRANCE OF JESUS' HUMILITY AND LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER. TALK ABOUT THE WAYS YOU CAN SERVE EACH OTHER BETTER IN THE DAYS AHEAD. *IF YOU ARE LED, INVITE YOUR NEIGHBORS TO PARTICIPATE, USING MAUNDY THURSDAY AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE THE BIBLICAL ACCOUNT OF EASTER WITH THEM.

DAY SIX: GOOD FRIDAY

GOOD FRIDAY IS THE HOLY DAY WHERE PEOPLE GATHER TO REMEMBER JESUS' DEATH ON THE CROSS. THIS SOLEMN DAY INVITES FAMILIES TO COME TOGETHER IN QUIET REFLECTION AND REMEMBRANCE OF HIS SACRIFICE.

LET THIS DAY INCLUDE AN OPEN TIME OF FAMILY DISCUSSION ABOUT THE PAIN AND SUFFERING JESUS WENT THROUGH ON OUR BEHALF. DISCUSS WHY THE DAY IS CALLED "GOOD" WHEN IT SEEMS LIKE SOMETHING BAD HAPPENED. ASSURE YOUNGER CHILDREN THAT JESUS' DEATH ON THE CROSS WAS THE ONLY WAY FOR THE WORLD TO BE SAVED AND THAT IT WAS A VERY GOOD DAY INDEED.

SCRIPTURE:

READ THE ACCOUNT OF JESUS' DEATH FROM EACH OF THE FOUR GOSPELS. COMPARE THE DETAILS MENTIONED IN EACH AND ENCOURAGE OPEN DISCUSSION ABOUT THE EVENTS THAT TOOK PLACE.

MATTHEW 27:32-56; MARK 15:21-41; LUKE 23:26-49; JOHN 19:16-37

FAMILY PRAYER:

LORD JESUS, EVEN THOUGH TODAY IS CALLED "GOOD FRIDAY," WE REMEMBER THE PAIN AND SUFFERING YOU ENDURED ON THE CROSS. WE CANNOT THANK YOU ENOUGH FOR TAKING ALL OUR SIN AND SHAME AND CARRYING IT ON YOUR SHOULDERS. THANK YOU FOR DYING IN OUR PLACE AND SAVING US FROM OUR SINS. WE REMEMBER YOU TODAY, IN YOUR MIGHTY NAME, AMEN.



FAMILY ENCOURAGEMENT:

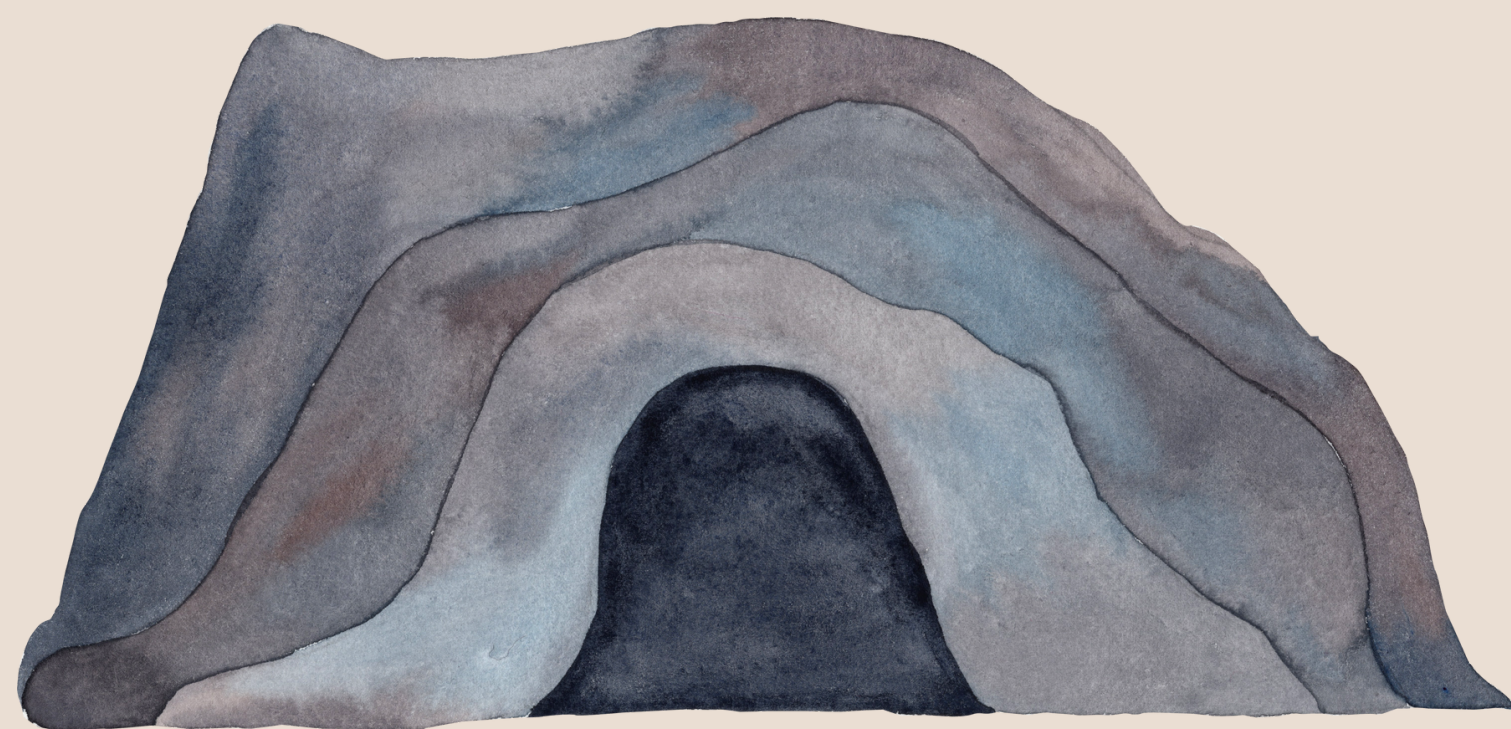
CHOOSE A MOVIE SUCH AS THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST AND WATCH IT TOGETHER AS A FAMILY. BE PREPARED TO PAUSE THE SHOW TO DISCUSS SOME OF THE GRAPHIC EVENTS DETAILING JESUS' CRUCIFIXION. ASSURE YOUNGER CHILDREN THAT EVEN THOUGH JESUS EXPERIENCED PAIN ON THE CROSS, HE DIED WILLINGLY FOR THEIR SINS AND THE SINS OF THE WHOLE WORLD. EMPHASIZE HIS LOVE FOR THEM AS YOU CLOSE THIS EVENING WITH A TIME OF PRAYER AND WORSHIP.

OTHER EASTER MOVIES TO WATCH:



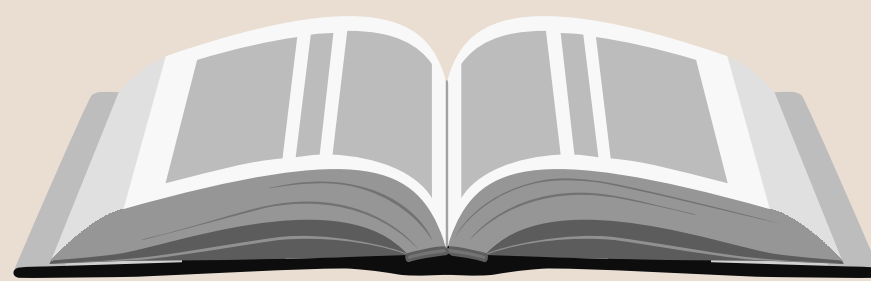
- *Risen*
- *VeggieTales: An Easter Carol*
- *Son of God*
- *The Greatest Story Ever Told*
- *Ben-Hur*
- *It's the Easter Beagle, Charlie Brown*
- *The Gospel of John*
- *The Robe*

DAY SEVEN: HOLY SATURDAY




HOLY SATURDAY IS A DAY OF REFLECTION THAT SYMBOLIZES THE TIME PERIOD WHEN CHRIST WAS IN THE TOMB. IT IS ALSO A DAY OF HOLY PREPARATION FOR THE COMING CELEBRATION OF EASTER. AS YOUR FAMILY PREPARES FOR RESURRECTION SUNDAY, PAUSE TO REFLECT ON HOW THE DISCIPLES MUST HAVE FELT AS THEY GRIEVED THE LOSS OF JESUS. TALK ABOUT GRIEF AS A FAMILY, AND BE PREPARED TO ANSWER DIFFICULT QUESTIONS AS THEY ARISE.

SCRIPTURE:



MATTHEW 27:57-61 RECORDS JESUS'S BURIAL BY SAYING, "AS EVENING APPROACHED, THERE CAME A RICH MAN FROM ARIMATHEA, NAMED JOSEPH, WHO HAD HIMSELF BECOME A DISCIPLE OF JESUS. GOING TO PILATE, HE ASKED FOR JESUS' BODY AND PILATE ORDERED THAT IT BE GIVEN TO HIM. JOSEPH TOOK THE BODY, WRAPPED IT IN A CLEAN LINEN CLOTH, AND PLACED IT IN HIS OWN NEW TOMB THAT HE HAD CUT OUT OF THE ROCK. HE ROLLED A BIG STONE IN FRONT OF THE ENTRANCE TO THE TOMB AND WENT AWAY. MARY MAGDALENE AND THE OTHER MARY WERE SITTING THERE OPPOSITE THE TOMB."

FAMILY PRAYER:



LORD JESUS, AS WE WAIT WITH EAGER ANTICIPATION FOR RESURRECTION SUNDAY, WE THANK YOU FOR BEING WITH US EVERY MOMENT. WE TRUST YOUR TIMING IN ALL THINGS AND KNOW THAT YOU ALWAYS ANSWER WHEN WE PRAY. PLEASE BLESS OUR FAMILY THIS DAY BEFORE EASTER AND FILL OUR HEARTS WITH GRATITUDE FOR WHO YOU ARE AND WHAT YOU'VE DONE. IN YOUR PRECIOUS NAME, WE PRAY, AMEN.

FAMILY CHALLENGE:

CARVE OUT A TIME WHEN EVERYONE OBSERVES A MOMENT OF SILENCE, ENCOURAGING EACH FAMILY MEMBER TO REFLECT ON WHAT THE TRUE EASTER STORY MEANS TO THEM. CONCLUDE THE MOMENT OF SILENCE BY SHARING YOUR THOUGHTS AND LISTENING TO A MEANINGFUL WORSHIP SONG SUCH AS "BECAUSE HE LIVES" BY MATT MAHER.

EASTER SUNDAY



EASTER SUNDAY IS THE FINAL, TRIUMPHANT, AND JOYOUS DAY OF HOLY WEEK. FAMILIES WORLDWIDE COME TOGETHER TO CELEBRATE THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST, REJOICING IN HIS VICTORY OVER DEATH. LET YOUR FAMILY CELEBRATION BE CENTERED AROUND JESUS TODAY, EVEN AS YOU PARTICIPATE IN EASTER EGG HUNTS, CANDY BASKETS, AND OTHER FUN ACTIVITIES. **OUR LORD IS RISEN; HE IS RISEN INDEED!**

SCRIPTURE:

MATTHEW 28:1-10 TELLS THE STORY OF JESUS' RESURRECTION WHEN THE ANGEL SAID, *"HE IS NOT HERE; HE HAS RISEN, JUST AS HE SAID. COME AND SEE THE PLACE WHERE HE LAY."* (VS. 6)

THE CHAPTER ENDS WITH THE GREAT COMMISSION WHEN JESUS SAID, *"ALL AUTHORITY IN HEAVEN AND ON EARTH HAS BEEN GIVEN TO ME. THEREFORE GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS, BAPTIZING THEM IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND OF THE SON AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, AND TEACHING THEM TO OBEY EVERYTHING I HAVE COMMANDED YOU. AND SURELY I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS, TO THE VERY END OF THE AGE."* (MATTHEW 28:18-20)

FAMILY PRAYER:

LORD JESUS, WE ARE SO HAPPY TO CELEBRATE YOU AS A FAMILY TODAY. PLEASE HELP US REMEMBER YOU ALL DAY LONG AND REJOICE THAT WE SERVE A RISEN SAVIOR. WE LOVE, PRAISE, AND THANK YOU THIS GLORIOUS EASTER SUNDAY. IN YOUR HOLY NAME, WE PRAY, AMEN.

FAMILY CHALLENGE:

AS YOUR FAMILY CELEBRATES THIS EASTER SUNDAY, COME UP WITH A SPECIAL CODE WORD THAT, WHEN SPOKEN, CAUSES EVERYONE TO STOP AND SAY, "JESUS IS RISEN; HE IS RISEN INDEED!" BY THE END OF THE DAY, YOUR CHILDREN WILL BE ANXIOUSLY WAITING FOR THE CODE WORD TO BE CALLED OUT AGAIN. WRAP UP THE DAY BY TAKING TURNS SHARING YOUR FAVORITE PART OF HOLY WEEK.

HE IS
RISEN

