

# HOLY WEEK



## April 8, 2020 The Return of the King

### Prayer:

Dear Jesus, you tell us that you are going to come back at the end of the world and take us to be with you. You also tell us that many hard and painful things will come before you come back. Keep us safe in our faith until you come back. Amen.

Read: Mark 13:1-13

### Devotion:

Jesus talks about a lot of scary things in this section of the Bible. He tells us that people will come to us and tell lies about the Bible and tell lies about who Jesus is. He tells us that there will be wars and hatred. He tells us that there will be earthquakes and famines. He tells us that Christians will be persecuted and hated because they follow Jesus. We might get arrested. We might be put into jail. We certainly see all of these going on in the world right now, even today. Can you make a list of all the things that are happening right now in the world today? Jesus wasn't joking around when he told us about all of these signs.

But Jesus doesn't want us to be scared when these things happen. He wants us to be excited. He said, "These are the beginning of birth pains" (13:8). This might be a little bit scary or frightening to think about because it is just the beginning. That means there is more to come! It's just the beginning.

But Jesus doesn't want us to be scared. He calls it the beginning of birth pains. Ask any mother about what it was like when it came time to have the baby. Ask them. It hurt like crazy when the birth pains were coming. Those pains only increased when it got closer to the time for the baby to be born. The birth pains intensified and got worse and worse.

Even though the pains of birth began and only got worse, the mother wasn't scared. She knew that the pains wouldn't last. More than that, she knew that in just a little while, she would get to hold this little baby in her arms. Her excitement about the birth of her child overwhelmed her fear of the pains. She is so excited about her baby that she forgets all about the pain.

Jesus wants us to be excited for his coming. Yes, hard and painful things will come as we wait for Jesus to come. We are experiencing some of it right now. But when he comes, he will save us and bring us home to heaven just like a mother brings her child home from the hospital. I can't wait!

Additional Readings: *Matthew 24-25*

**Family Questions:**

1. Talk with your parents/children what it was like for them when one of you was born. Talk about both the pain and the joy of childbirth.
2. Make a list of the hard and painful things that are happening in the world right now.
3. What do those things tell us about the coming of Jesus?
4. Why can we be excited about the return of Jesus and not scared?

**Going Deeper:**

1. Jesus gives us many signs that will come before he returns. Why does he leave these signs for us?
2. Why do you think that Jesus spends all this time during Holy Week teaching these things to his disciples and us?
3. Mothers make preparations for the birth of their child. What preparations does Jesus teach us to make as we wait for his coming?

**Hymn:** Forever with the Lord

1 Forever with the Lord!  
Amen! So let it be.  
Life from the dead is in that word,  
My immortality.

2 While time on earth is spent,  
Absent from him I roam,  
Yet nightly pitch my moving tent  
A day's march nearer home.

3 My Father's house on high,  
Home of my soul, how near  
At times, to faith's foreseeing eye  
The golden gates appear!

4 Lord, be at my right hand,  
Then can I never fail.  
If you uphold me, I shall stand;  
With you I shall prevail.

5 So when my dying breath  
Shall rend the veil in two,  
By death I shall escape from death  
To endless life with you.

6 I'll know as I am known;  
How shall I love that word  
And oft repeat before the throne,  
"Forever with the Lord!"

**Prayer:**

**Lord Jesus, I see the signs of your coming all around me. Keep me safe from danger. Keep me strong in the faith until you come and rescue me. Keep me and your children believing in you until we all live with you forever in heaven. Amen.**