

Were You There?
A Narrative of Jesus' Last Week

Open with "Were You There?"

WERE YOU THERE ?

Somewhat freely

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(1) Were you there when they cru - ci - fled to my Lord? (Were you
 (2) Were you there when they nailed Him to the Cross? (Were you
 (3) Were you there when they laid Him in the tomb? (Were you

(1) there?) Were you there when they cru - ci - fled to my
 (2) there?) Were you there when they nailed Him to the
 (3) there?) Were you there when they laid Him in the

(1) Lord? (Were you there?) Some - times _____ it
 (2) Cross? (Were you there?) Some - times _____ it
 (3) tomb? (Were you there?) Some - times _____ it

(1) caus - es me to trem - ble, trem - ble, trem - ble.
 (2) caus - es me to trem - ble, trem - ble, trem - ble.
 (3) caus - es me to trem - ble, trem - ble, trem - ble.

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1. 2. (1) Lord? (Were you there?) Were you
 (2) Cross? (Were you there?) Were you
 3. (3) tomb? (Were you there?)

You have all read the accounts of Jesus' last week on earth as a man, His crucifixion, and His resurrection. But have you just read the account, or, Were You There? In reading the accounts, can you enter into the experiences of our Lord, the emotions of those involved, do you get a concept of the time involved

Do you remember when Jesus turned thirty years old, He was baptized by his cousin, John the Baptist. He received the Holy Spirit, then went into the wilderness for forty days of trial. Soon afterward, He chose His twelve Disciples and started His ministry. Were you there? Do you remember what season of the year it was? Do you recall how the Disciples left what they were doing and followed him immediately?

He taught among the Jewish nation exclusively for three and one half years - bringing us up to the time of his last week.

Jesus received word that his friend Lazarus, brother of Mary and Martha, was ill. Yet He and His Disciples remained where they were for two more days. His disciples asked Jesus about Lazarus, Jesus replied that he was sleeping, then told them straightforward that Lazarus was dead. They then traveled back to Bethany. Remember the scene at Lazarus' tomb? Were you there? Martha did not want to remove the stone seal of the tomb because Lazarus had been dead four days and had started to smell from decay. Many people had gone to the tomb with Mary, thinking that she went there to mourn. In front of this crowd, Jesus prayed aloud, and Lazarus came forth - alive! Look around - what do you see? What are the expressions on the faces? What is being said?

Now follow some of the crowd back to the Pharisees. What is their reaction? They were concerned for their own teachings, and for the established Roman government. Caiaphas, the High priest, said "*You know nothing at all! You do not realize that it is better for you that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish.*" (John 11:50) Now this was not the first time that the priests had actively sought Jesus' death, but it was now the time for it to be accomplished. Were you there? Did you feel the hardness of their hearts, their anger and insecurity? What did you tell them - or were you afraid?

It is now Saturday. Jesus and His Disciples are having supper at the house of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. [We have seen paintings of "The Last

Supper” in which Jesus and His Disciples are seated at a modern table and chairs; but in Roman times, chairs were not used for dining as much as inclined benches on which the diners laid.] Jesus was in this position when Mary broke open an alabaster box of very expensive spikenard. Oh - can you smell it? Mary poured it on Jesus’ head and feet, and wiped His feet with her hair. The smell permeated the whole house. Look around - what is the reaction of the guests? Among the reactions is that of Judas - he is indignant! Of all the waste! Unlike us, Jesus looks at the heart and sees, not concern for the poor, but greed. Is this, perhaps, a turning point in Judas’ life?

Look outside. There is a crowd out there. People have come to catch a glimpse of Jesus who performs miracles. They have also come to see Lazarus who was raised from the dead. In the background are some of the chief priests - conspiring. They now not only want to kill Jesus, but also Lazarus. It is because of Lazarus that now many more people believe in Jesus. Look at them huddled together, speaking low, looking from the corners of their eyes. They act scared.

It is now Sunday. Do you remember what season of the year? It is Passover – that is why Jesus and His Disciples are going to Jerusalem. The people hear that He is coming and they go forth to greet Him. Jesus sends two of His Disciples ahead to find the donkey colt for Him to ride - a colt that had never been ridden before. [Would you like to be the first to ride an unbroken donkey colt in a noisy crowd?] The Disciples laid their garments on the donkey for Jesus to sit on; and the crowd put their garments and branches on the ground for the donkey to walk on. The people waved palm fronds as a sign of welcome to one very important. Listen! What are the people saying? *“Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted, “Hosanna! ” “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” “Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!” “Hosanna in the highest!” (Mark 11:9,10 NIV) “Blessed is the **king** who comes in the name of the Lord!” “Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!” (Luke 19:38 NIV)*

The Pharisees are here too. They tell Jesus to make his followers be quiet. Jesus answers that if the crowd was quiet, the very stones would cry out.

What are you feeling? You are with Jesus and this crowd approaching Jerusalem. Everyone is proclaiming Jesus as King, as the Messiah. Are you elated? Are you joyful? If you were being proclaimed King would you be

happy? Are you feeling what Jesus is feeling? Were you there? Why is Jesus crying?

“As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, “If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace-- but now it is hidden from your eyes. The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you.” (Luke 19:41-44 NIV)

Jesus, His Disciples, and the people have entered Jerusalem. Jesus enters the Temple. It is a magnificent structure. Were you there? Jesus looks around. What does He see? Does He look at this beautiful structure made by men? The polished stones, the brazen alter and all the utensils? Look with Him at God’s Temple. There are people everywhere, come to celebrate the Passover. Many of these people have come long distances for this occasion. When they get there, they are to offer sacrifices and pay the Temple tax. It is difficult to bring sacrifices a long way, and the Temple tax must be paid with a certain coin - so there are vending booths here is the Temple for the convenience of the people. We think of a Temple as a place of awe, of respect, of quiet, of reverence. What we see is a grand flea market with animals being bought and sold, and currency being exchanged. Look at Jesus’ face and tell me what you see.

Jesus and the twelve return to Bethany for the evening. Go with them.

It is Monday morning and they are hungry. They come upon a fig tree, but it has no fruit, only leaves. [Does that remind you of the Pharisees, the leaders of Israel? No fruit of love, but leaves of profession only?] Jesus proclaims that it will have no more fruit, and they watch as the tree withers away. What is this? In the past, all of Jesus’ acts have been for good! Now here He condemns a tree for having no fruit. Is this out of character? Now listen. Jesus is telling the Disciples that they will be able to cast mountains into the sea. What strange words. He is hard to understand most times. Do His Disciples understand Him?

We have come back to the Temple. Jesus is angry. He is overturning the money tables, He is releasing the birds, He is driving out the animals. Is this

right? Can He do this? Listen as He teaches them *“Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves.”* (Mark 11:17 KJV)

Jesus turns from this activity and heals the sick and the lame. This is what should be happening in the Temple. But again the religious leaders are displeased - and they fear Him, because all the people are astonished at His doctrine. (Mark 11:18)

Jesus is teaching again. Telling those who will listen about the seed which dies in the ground only to spring up to produce much fruit. He is foretelling of His own death and resurrection but the people do not understand.

At evening, they again return to Bethany.

Tuesday morning has come and they are returning to Jerusalem. They pass the same fig tree which they passed the former morning. It is dried up from its roots. Listen as Jesus reminds them of the power of prayer and of forgiveness. *“For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.”* (Mark 11:23-26 KJV)

Again they go to the Temple in Jerusalem where Jesus teaches the people, when He is interrupted by the religious leaders asking Him by what authority he can preach, because Jesus is of the line of Judah, not the line of Levi from which the priests may come. Jesus does not answer them directly, knowing that they ask not from interest but from the attempt to trap Him in His words. He returns the question to them, asking by what authority John baptized. They reasoned among themselves that if they said from Heaven that Jesus would ask why they did not believe John, and if they said from men that the people would stone them because the people thought John a prophet. Therefore, Jesus would not answer their question. Instead, Jesus again begins to teach. As He frequently did, Jesus taught in stories. But these stories had more than one depth of meaning. His stories talked about

those things that the people could directly relate to: sons and fathers, kings, servants, marriages, vineyards, wine making, preparing feasts. From these stories, the common people appreciated the morals; the priests understood at a higher level that in many of them Jesus was talking about their dishonesty or other characteristics. We, today, can see even higher levels in applying the parables to classes of people or systems. Were you there? What did you hear?

From one respect it is almost humorous how the various groups sent their representatives to try to trap Jesus. All of these groups had no real questions for Jesus that they truly wanted answered. The spies of Herod, the King, came and asked if it was right to pay taxes. Jesus asked whose face was on the currency and said to give to Caesar what belonged to Caesar, and give to God what belongs to God.

The Sadducces tried to trap Him with an interpretation of the Law concerning the marriage of a woman to seven brothers in succession, each brother dying. They wanted to know whose wife she would be in the resurrection. Remember that the Sadducces did not believe in the resurrection, which, according to Bro. Jim Parkinson, is why they are “sad, you see.” Jesus told them of their ignorance of the Scriptures, saying that there is no marriage in the resurrection, but each will be as the angels - not meaning an angelic spirit body, but that each will be complete within themselves as was Adam before Eve was taken from his rib.

Jesus put an end to the questioning by asking them all who Christ is - whose son he is. They answered, the son of David, then Jesus asked them how he could be David’s son when David called him Lord.

Jesus then turned to the people and told them to respect the office of the priests because the office was ordained by God as His representative; but not to respect the hypocritical individuals in that office. He then spelled out for the priests the ways in which they were hypocrites. He minced no words. All these things he said with **righteous** indignation. Look at Jesus. What do you see. Is this a man filled with anger and hate? Were you there? Look at how he says this with love for the people. Listen to His last, sad words. *“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall*

not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.” (Matthew 23:37-39 KJV)

Walk with Jesus and listen as He teaches. He stops at the Temple treasury and observes aloud how the rich give of their abundance, and the poor widow gives all she has. What did you give?

Jesus teaches that if you believe Him, you believe the Father which sent Him; and that Jesus says and does as His Father directs.

The Disciples ask Him privately, “When will all these things happen, and what will be the signs of your presence?” Jesus answers them with general details of false Christs, wars, famines, earthquakes, etc. in the earth; but more importantly He tells them what shall happen to the church: persecutions, betrayals, hardships, and death. But He assures all of us that throughout all of our trials that God shall be with us, give us words to speak, and give us strength. We are warned of Satan’s false system with its false Christs and other abominations, and warned to be not deceived. This is then related directly to the nation of Israel, the fig tree which they had seen wither, being told that it shall again put forth leaves and that the Kingdom would then be at hand. Jesus goes into many more details of this prophetic time. Were you there? What did all this mean to you then? What does all this mean to you now?

Jesus talks about a faithful and wise servant whom his Lord has made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season. Do we know him? Are we partaking of that which is provided?

Listen now as Jesus teaches again in parables. There are ten virgins who go forth to meet the bridegroom - five wise, five foolish. There is the parable of the talents, and who does what with them. The parable of the sheep and goats. Were you there? What was Jesus trying so hard to tell them? Why did he use stories instead of just telling them in plain words they could understand? Listen as Jesus explains why. *“I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.” (John 16:12 KJV)* “Ye cannot bear them now.” Out of love, Jesus hid many things in His stories which they would understand later. The whole Bible is written that way. Even when He told them in plain language, *“And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples, Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be*

crucified.” (Matthew 26:1,2 KJV) Did His Disciples understand or accept what He said in this plain language? Were you there? The Disciples were looking for an immediate setting up of a Kingdom on earth based in Jerusalem in which Jesus would be King and they would be important officials in that kingdom. What they were hearing did not coincide with their expectations. The Disciples did not yet have the Holy Spirit. Were you there? Did you discern spiritual things before receiving of the Holy Spirit?

It is Wednesday. The Scriptures are silent concerning this day; Bro. Russell suggests that Jesus spent this day quietly at Bethany, and that this day is probably when Judas made contact with the chief priests. Where were you that day? Were you there with Jesus in quiet meditation? Were you there watching as Judas let Satan into his heart to betray his teacher, his friend.

Thursday also was spent in seclusion from the people, and there was the preparation for the Passover Supper. Remember that in the Jewish reckoning, the day began in the evening and continued until the next evening. Jesus sent Peter and John into the city with instructions to find a place for them to partake of the Passover Supper. [Whenever I read this passage of Scripture, I hear it in the voice of our brother, Ed Lorenz.] *“And he sendeth forth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow him.” (Mark 14:13 KJV) I find another Scripture of interest in this context, Luke 22:7 “Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed.” (Luke 22:7 KJV) This defines not only the day, but the activity which must occur. Did they realize then and there who that Passover lamb really was? Were you there? That evening, Jesus and the twelve ate together the Passover supper. What did Jesus feel at that time? “And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer:” (Luke 22:15 KJV) His desire was to be with them, his friends whom he loved. “Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.” (John 13:1 KJV)*

Jesus proved His love for His Disciples, and set an example for all, when he got up from eating, and washed their feet. He told them to wash one another’s feet - this to demonstrate that none should try to be over the other,

and that all should be servants to the others. He treated them all the same, knowing full well who was to betray him.

When Jesus announced that one was to betray him, they looked at each other, not knowing of whom he spoke. Were you there? When you have been wronged, are your closest friends unaware of it? Even when Jesus told Judas to do quickly that which he was about to do, the rest of His Disciples did not know what Jesus was talking about.

After Judas had left, “And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.” (Matthew 26:26-29 KJV)

What a strange saying. To the Jews, especially, the eating of human flesh and the drinking of any blood was absolutely abhorrent to them. It was a violation of the Law! Were you there? Jesus was instituting the Memorial, but what was on the minds of his Disciples? *“And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.” (Luke 22:24 KJV)* We see this with our children, don't we - we are trying to teach them a great lesson and they are fighting over a toy. Notice: Jesus had just finished washing their feet and giving that lesson, and they are now arguing over who is the greatest. Jesus reprimands them, then tries again to tell them of future events with these words: *“Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you. A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.” (John 13:33-35 KJV)*

But again - the lesson on loving one another and serving one another is lost. Peter wants to know where Jesus is going and why he can't go with Him. Peter says he is ready to follow Jesus both to prison and to death. Jesus tells Peter that before the cock crows the next morning that Peter will deny Him three times.

Jesus told the twelve many other things that night. Were you there? Were you listening? Jesus assured them that a place for them was prepared in the Kingdom; He reinforced obedience to the Father; He assured them that they would receive a Comforter, the Holy Spirit.

After eating the Passover supper and partaking of the Memorial, they left to go to the garden of Gethsemane. On the way, Jesus repeated many of the things which He had been teaching them, especially love for one another. He related to them the example of the vine and branches. Jesus ended this conversation with a prayer for His followers. Here, they arrived at the Garden where Jesus left them for private prayer, taking with him part way Peter and James. When He returned, he found them asleep. This happened three times.

Judas had arrived with a band of officers from the chief priests and Pharisees. He betrayed Jesus with a kiss. Were you there? Did you see Peter draw the sword and cut off the servant's ear? Did you see Jesus heal it? Where were you when all the Disciples fled?

Did you go along with Peter as he followed Jesus to the first of His six trials? Did you hear Peter deny our Lord once, twice, three times. Look at Peter as the cock crowed. The realization of prophecy come true! The shame! Oh Peter!

Jesus had three religious trials and three civil trials. We are all very familiar with them. The Jewish religious leaders wanted Jesus dead, and used every means available - illegal and sinful to accomplish this. The civil leaders wanted nothing to do with Jesus' death but allowed it under pressure of the Jewish religious leaders. Were you there? Look and listen. They lied about Jesus using false witnesses; they accused Him of blasphemy; Jesus was spit on, slapped, hit, beaten with sticks and whips. A crown of thorns was placed on his head. He was mocked. What did you do - what could you do? This was all allowed by God. *Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;* (Hebrews 5:8 KJV) How else could He redeem the whole world of mankind?

Were you there when they crucified my Lord? At the insistence of the religious leaders and their incited crowd, Jesus was sentenced to death - the ignominious death of crucifixion. Were you there as He bore his cross along the street in front of the people. Would you help him carry his cross?

Were you there when they nailed Him to the cross? We have read or heard of the horrid details of crucifixion. How each wound was made for maximum pain; the positioning to achieve shortness of breath and agony at every movement. Is this the cross you have taken up? Are you willing to suffer on this cross until death? You said you were at consecration. Once you have taken up your cross to follow Jesus, there is no return. Your life is no longer your own.

Listen to what was said to Jesus: **IF** you are the Son of God, save yourself. Doesn't this remind you of the same phrase Jesus heard after his forty days in the wilderness following consecration? **IF** you are the Son of God . . .

Jesus suffered on that cruel cross from 9:00AM until 3:00PM. He suffered the physical agonies of dying; He suffered the mental and emotional agonies of humiliation and the cruel words of the crowd. Jesus died. Jesus died loving the world of mankind. Can you do the same?

Were you there when they laid Him in the tomb? Jesus' body was taken down from the cross and wrapped in linen cloth and with spices according to Jewish custom. He was placed in a new tomb which was sealed. It was sealed at the insistence of the religious leaders to prevent the Disciples from removing Jesus' body to make it look like Jesus was resurrected.

Sunday morning. The two Marys came to anoint the body of Jesus with spices. Were you there? The tomb was open. *And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments: And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. And they remembered his words, (Luke 24:4-8 KJV)*

*__And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, **Mary**. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. (John 20:14-16 KJV)* Were you there?

__And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word. (Matthew 28:8 KJV) Oh, were you there?

Two of Jesus' followers were on the road to Emmaus. While they were walking and talking, Jesus joined them, and asked why they were sad. They related all that had happened ending with *But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done. (Luke 24:21 KJV)*

*And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he {Jesus} expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further. But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them. And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight. And they said one to another, **Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?** (Luke 24:27-32 KJV) Were you there? Don't your hearts burn within you when the Scriptures are opened up to you?*

One of the times that Jesus appeared to the Disciples, to prove to them that it was He, *"he showed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: **as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.** (John 20:20,21 KJV)*

Jesus appeared more times to various ones before He ascended unto His Father.

And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. (Luke 24:51 KJV)

And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from

you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. (Acts 1:11 KJV)

Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey. (Acts 1:12 KJV)

Were you there?

Close with the singing of "So Send I You"

So Send I You — 501

Based on John 20:21
E. MARGARET CLARKSON

JOHN W. PETERSON

1. So send I you— to la - bor un - re - ward - ed, To serve un -
 2. So send I you— to bind the bruised and bro - ken, O'er wan-d'ring
 - 3. So send I you— to lone - li - ness and long - ing, With heart a -
 4. So send I you— to leave your life's am - bi - tion, To die to
 5. So send I you— to hearts made hard by ha - tred, To eyes made

paid, un - loved, un-sought, un - known, To bear re - buke, to suf - fer
 souls to work, to weep, to wake, To bear the bur - dens of a
 - hun - g'ring for the loved and known, For-sak - ing home and kin-dred,
 dear de - sire, self - will re - sign, To la - bor long, and love where
 blind be - cause they will not see, To spend, tho it be blood, to

scorn and scoff - ing— So send I you, to toil for Me a - lone.
 world a - wea - ry— So send I you, to suf - fer for My sake.
 - friend and dear one— So send I you, to know My love a - lone.
 men re - vile you— So send I you, to lose your life in Mine.
 spend and spare not— So send I you, to taste of Cal - va -

ry. "As the Fa - ther hath sent Me, So send I you."

Tune: SO SEND I YOU
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SERVICE AND MISSION