

the final days

The Lenten Journey DEVOTIONAL | WEEK 3 | MARCH 23

“He [Jesus] looks them in the eye knowing all of this—knowing what is going on and what is about to happen to Him—and urges them not to be disoriented. What will happen will not be the final word. Easter will be the final word.” – Scot McKnight

RECEIVE

As you read **John 13:18–38** and chapter **14**, take note of the verbs in this passage. Jesus is moving quickly through His final days and will soon encounter betrayal from His friend, Judas. Consider the pace and tempo of these closing chapters and notice the urgency as you read.

REFLECT

1. One central figure at the beginning of this section is Judas. John mentions Judas in 13:2 and 10, as well as in our passage for today. Describe Judas. What do you think he was like? What have you been told historically? What clues do you find as to his character?
2. Several times in this passage, we read that the disciples did not understand what was happening, they did not expect His death. Why do you think this is?

3. In the Old Testament book of 2 Samuel, King David suffers the betrayal of his friend Ahithophel (2 Samuel 15:31). Jesus' disciples would have known the story of Ahithophel. Jesus' betrayal by Judas is similar, including how Ahithophel and Judas end their lives. What parallels to these betrayals do you notice?
4. What do you think Judas was thinking and feeling as all of this took place?
5. In the great discomfort and confusion of Jesus predicting His betrayal and death, John pivots to chapter 14 and tells them not to be troubled (14:1). How do you think the disciples would have understood 14:1–4?
6. Throughout chapter 14, we can tell that Jesus is in an intense conversation with His disciples. What questions are they asking of Jesus? Why?
7. Jesus shares an important note with them in 14:25–26. Why do you think John calls the Holy Spirit the Advocate? How does this bring them comfort?
8. In 14:27, Jesus promises them peace. Why do you think that peace is another theme that He mentions here? Why does He mention it with the promise of the Holy Spirit?
9. Read 14:30–31. These are unsettling words—Jesus knows that darkness is coming. How do you feel when you read the final words from chapter 14? How does this connect with you during this season of Lent?

RESPOND

Sometimes reading the Bible can feel rote. Perhaps we've heard these seasonal or holy day stories many times before. We know how the life of Jesus ends, and we may even become somewhat numb to it all. But for the disciples, these are the final days with their beloved rabbi and friend. They sensed something is shifting, they were told one of their friends will betray Jesus, and they were gathered for significant moments of teaching.

Find a quiet moment this week and reread these passages. Make a list of what you would have felt or wondered about if you were there. Try to settle into the story, what would the words Jesus said have meant to you at that time (if you were a disciple who did not know what was about to happen to Jesus)?

BLESSING

Lord Jesus, Your friends were confused and betrayed You. The world You came to save turned on You, and those You love abandoned Your teachings. Forgive me, God, for all the times that I've betrayed You in my own way. Forgive me for when I abandon your lessons. Forgive me for when the actions of my life go against You. You are a God of forgiveness and grace. Thank You for Your grace and give me the peace and strength to follow Your ways. Help me trust the wisdom of Your Spirit and show me how to live fully into the abundance of You this Lenten season. Amen.

READ FOR NEXT WEEK



Reading Plan | The Final Days

Week 1 | March 9 | John 11

Week 2 | March 16 | John 13

Week 3 | March 23 | John 14

Week 4 | March 30 | John 15

Week 5 | April 6 | John 16

Week 6 | April 13 | John 12

Good Friday | April 18 | John 18 & 19

Easter | April 20 | TBD