

## CREDITS

The production of these Passion Week Meditations were a collaborative effort of the Pastors, members and staff of the Metropolitan African-American Baptist Church.

*Our motto is:*

*“Things go better when we work together.”*

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2025

## *Passion Week Meditations: Following Jesus' Journey to the Cross Through the Lectionary*



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**Holy Week**, the last week of Lent, provides an opportunity for us as Christians to look at the last week of Jesus' earthly life. This week allows us to experience the intense-filled drama last days of Jesus' earthly ministry---Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem, Jesus' overturning of the money tables in the Temple, the woman's anointing of Jesus, Jesus' last meal with his disciples, Judas' betrayal of Jesus, Peter's denial of Jesus, Jesus' arraignment, Jesus' crucifixion, and Jesus' resurrection.

Under the aegis of the Holy Spirit, members of our church family were asked to remember the events of Jesus' last week of ministry. They also sought to interpret what God is sharing with us in these events of Jesus' last week of ministry and to discern how God wants us to engage in the continuing work of Jesus.

For each meditation, members considered the following questions:

What do you hear God saying to you?

Why is God saying this to you?

How does God want us to respond?

How will you respond to what God is saying to you?



*Special thanks go to the following for allowing God to use them:*

*Pastors Cooper, Ingram and Walker who sought the guidance of the Lord for the this meditation guide to be done and published.*

*Contributors who reflected on the meaning of the Lectionary Scriptures for Passion Week and dared to share their reflections with their brothers and sisters.*

*Pastor Barbara Ingram, Rev. Vickie Copeland, Deaconess LaFran Wooten and Deaconess Ashley Walton who shared in editing tasks.*

*Sister Alexis Cooper who shared her gifts and skills in the final production of this guide.*

The Seven Last Words of Jesus will be delivered on Friday, April 18, 2025, 7:00 p.m. The messages will be shared by members of the congregation.

### **The Seven Last Words of Jesus**

#### **The First Word: Brother Paul Anderson**

*"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."*

*Luke 23:34*

#### **The Second Word: Rev. Vickie Copeland**

*"Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise."*

*Luke 23:43*

#### **The Third Word: Deacon Melvin Gaddy**

*"Women, behold your son. Son, behold your mother."*

*John 19:26-27*

#### **The Fourth Word: Deaconess Sharonda Ragland**

*"My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?"*

*Matthew 27:46 & Mark 15:34*

#### **The Fifth Word: Rev. Albert "Chuckie" Brown**

*"I thirst." John 19:28*

#### **The Sixth Word: Deaconess Ashley Walton**

*"It is finished." Matthew 27:46 & Mark 15:34*

#### **The Seventh Word: Pastor Darryl Walker**

*"Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." Luke 23:46*

The responses to these questions should take into account who we are as African American Christians--our situations, conditions and aspirations. Also the use of the pronouns, **you** and **us**, should take into account corporate responses rather than personal responses.

It is our prayer that through the reading of the Scriptures, the reflection shared by the members, and the sharing of your thoughts God through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit will enable us to re-enact the passion of Jesus, i.e., to deny ourselves, take up our crosses, and follow our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

#### **Pastors:**

Roscoe D. Cooper, Jr.,  
Barbara E. Ingram, Darryl E. Walker



# Holy Week

## Lectionary Readings

### **Holy Saturday**

**Reading: Job 14:1-14, Psalm 31:1-4, 15-16, 1 Peter 4:1-8, John 19:38-42**

John says Nicodemus brought about seventy-five pounds of myrrh and aloe oils to anoint Jesus' body.

### **GOD ANSWERS QUESTIONS**

As I meditate on these writings and visualize the events, knowing what I now know, God answered each of the writer's concerns. As I reflect on the activities of this day, some two thousand years ago, it is the burial of God's Son, Jesus. It's the day before his resurrection. On this day, Saturday, many had questions. Just hold on one more day! The answers are about to be revealed.

Yes, Dear God, you recognized the human condition of mere mortals. In your great love, you addressed the sin issue through salvation and forgiveness and the mortality issue with the gift of eternal life. All of this has been made available by providing a Savior, your son, Jesus Christ, to bring restoration of a right relationship between you, humanity, and creation to all who will receive Jesus as your son and their Lord and Savior.

### Palm Sunday

April 13, 2025

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29

Luke 19:28-40

### Monday of Holy Week

April 14, 2025

Isaiah 42:1-9

Psalm 36:5-11

Hebrews 9:11-15

John 12:1-11

### Tuesday of Holy Week

April 15, 2025

Isaiah 49:1-7

Psalm 71:1-14

1 Corinthians 1:18-31

John 12:20-36

### Wednesday of Holy Week

April 16, 2025

Isaiah 50:4-9a

Psalm 70

Hebrews 12:1-3

John 13:21-32

### ***Deaconess Wayland H. Clark***

*Deaconess Clark is a founding member of the Metropolitan African American Baptist Church family. She serves as Pastoral Leader of the Diaconate Ministry, a facilitator for Faith Talks, a volunteer for Kingdom Village Amazing Grace Before and After School Ministry and member of the Benevolence Ministry and serves one the Diaconate Team of CDG E. She is the widow of Trustee Walter Clark, the mother of Deborah, Mildred (deceased), Genean, and Walter, Jr., and the grandmother of Emmanuel and Kennedy.*

## **Holy Saturday**

**Reading: Job 14:1-14, Psalm 31:1-4, 15-16, 1 Peter 4:1-8, John 19:38-42**

### QUESTIONS???

#### **Job 14: 1-14**

Job, amid his tremendous suffering and great loss, when God allows Satan to test his faithfulness to God, raises questions with God. Questions about God's regard for the human existence as mortals and about judgement. He compares the extent of human life with that of creation, particularly flowers. They bloom then wither and disappear like a shadow. He asks if mortals will live again. Even trees have hope. While they may be cut down and the trunk dies in the ground, the roots grow old, buried in the earth, but even at the "scent" of water, the stump begins to bud, and branches come forth again.

#### **Psalm 31:1-4, 15-16**

David, in the Psalm passage appeals to God for deliverance from enemies. He identifies God as his rock and as his fortress.

#### **1 Peter 4:1-8**

1 Peter extends this challenge to his readers -- that since Christ suffered in the flesh for them, his readers should turn from living in the flesh to living lives according to the will of God.

#### **John 19: 38-42**

Finally, in John, we have the burial of Jesus by Joseph of Arimathea, an undercover disciple, and Nicodemus, who once visited Jesus under the cover of darkness to avoid being seen by his fellow Jews. I count this as an act of love; to come forth and ask Pilate for Jesus's body and take it down from the cross in broad daylight. John says Nicodemus brought about seventy-five pounds of myrrh



## **Holy Week**

### Lectionary Readings

#### Maundy Thursday

April 17, 2025

Exodus 12:1-4, (5-10), 11-14

Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

John 13:1-17, 31b-35

#### Good Friday

April 18, 2025

Isaiah 52:13-53:12

Psalm 22

Hebrews 10:16-25 or

Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9

John 18:1-19:42

#### Holy Saturday

April 19, 2025

Job 14:1-14 or

Psalm 31:1-4, 15-16

1 Peter 4:1-8

John 19:38-42

***Palm Sunday, April 13, 2025***

***Reading: Psalm 118:1-2, Luke 19:28-40***

### **THE COLT!**

I can only imagine someone going to untie a colt not belonging to them! A colt never ridden! Well, what happens as the owner of the colt comes out and asks, why are you untying MY colt?

Their reply was “The Lord Needs it! I am almost certain that the two bringing the colt to Jesus must be close followers of Jesus! However, I can also see the owner of the colt as perhaps a listener of Jesus!

Luke doesn't say that the owner objects at any time!

This season of Lent I must pray and listen for answers! I do have many questions during this season of Lent!

There is something special about the Mount of Olives. As Jesus moves closer to the Mount of Olives, the PHARISEES in the crowd say to Jesus, “Teacher, rebuke your disciples!”

If they keep QUIET, the stones will cry out, Jesus answers!

***Good Friday***

***Reading: Isaiah 52:13-53:12, Psalm 22, Hebrews 10:16-25 or Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:79-, John 18:1-19:42***

1. Holding fast to our confession
2. Being honest about our weakness
3. Approaching God with Boldness
4. Receiving grace in every need

And finally, the Gospel of John 18:1-19:42 “After Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with the disciples across the Kidron valley to a place where there was a garden...”it gives us an account of Jesus' arrest, trial, crucifixion, death, and burial. The story opens in the garden, where Jesus willingly gives Himself up to the authorities. Though betrayed and falsely accused, Jesus remains composed, fully aware of what is to come. Jesus carries His cross”. In His final moment, He ensures the care of His mother and declares, “It is finished.” He dies, and His side is pierced. As it is finished God is calling us to respond by...

1. Responding with Awe and Reverence.
2. Being honest about our own denial and fear.
3. Embracing the humility of Jesus.
4. Trusting in the finished work of the cross.
5. Caring for others during suffering.

As we engage with these scriptures may we not only witness the weight of this day, but also allow it to transform us awakening awe, repentance, gratitude, and hope.

***Sister Janae' Cooper***

*Janae' is the daughter of Alexis Cooper and the granddaughter of Pastor Cooper and First Lady Cooper. Janae' serves apart of the Dance Ministry and Sings with the 5th Sunday Choir, Associate Pastoral Leader of Digital Arts Ministry, works in Kindom Village and a vital part of ministry operations. She is a member of CDG AB.*

## **Good Friday**

**Reading: Isaiah 52:13-53:12, Psalm 22, Hebrews 10:16-25 or Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:79-, John 18:1-19:42**

Psalm 22 begins with a raw cry of abandonment. "(My God My God why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me in my groaning?) His words are anguished and honest: ("I cry by day, but you do not answer; and by night but find no rest". Surrounded by enemies, mocked and scorned, he feels both physically and spiritually broken. It's a psalm of suffering, yes—but also of resurrection hope. I believe that God is calling us to respond in many different ways.

1. Be honest in our pain
2. Remember God's faithfulness
3. Cling to hope even in the silence
4. Share your testimony
5. See Christ in the midst of it all

This Hebrew passage reminds us of who Jesus is ("Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin.") He is not distant or disconnected from our struggle. Instead, he understands fully and personally what it means to be tested, tempted, and weak. He has walked in our shoes and remains without sin. We know to draw near not with fear, but with boldness. But we also know that the throne of God is not a place of condemnation for those who belong to Christ. It is a throne of grace. Mercy is offered and help is given, and we are met in our need, not rejected for it. As we hear what God is calling us to respond by...

## **Palm Sunday, April 13, 2025**

**Reading: Psalm 118:1—2, Luke 19:28-40**

### **THE COLT! (cont')**

Lord, I thank you for allowing and helping me to focus on this season of Lent during our studies and praying times!

Amen!!

*Sister Ann Wiggleton Reynolds*

*Ann serves the Co-Pastoral Leader of the Dance Ministry, is in the Lector's Ministry, Christian Women with a Vision fellowship group, and CDG I. Ann is the proud mother of one daughter and has two granddaughters. Ann's parents and six siblings are still alive and praising God.*

***Monday of Holy Week, April 14, 2024***

***Readings: Isaiah 42:1-9, Psalm 36:5-11  
Hebrews 9:11-15, John 12:”1-11***

The common theme that ties these scriptures together is God's steadfast love and the promise of salvation through Christ.

***Isaiah 42:1-9*** – This passage introduces the Servant of the Lord, and is often interpreted as a prophecy about Jesus Christ. It speaks of God's chosen servant who will bring justice to the nations, serve as a light for the Gentiles, and establish a new covenant with God's people. It emphasizes God's faithfulness to bring salvation and deliverance to the world, which aligns with the overarching theme of God's love and redemption.

***Psalm 36:5-11*** – This psalm speaks of God's unfailing love, righteousness, and faithfulness. It contrasts God's boundless love and justice with the wickedness of humanity. The psalmist expresses trust in God's protection and seeks His guidance, symbolizing the safety and provision found in God's love. The love of God here reflects the foundation of salvation that will ultimately be revealed through Christ.

***Good Friday***

***Reading: Isaiah 52:13-53:12, Psalm 22, Hebrews 10:16-25 or Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:79-, John 18:1-19:42***

On Good Friday, we gather in remembrance of the suffering and death of Jesus Christ. This day invites us into the mystery of sacrificial love, divine justice, and profound mercy. Through the Scriptures, we walk alongside Christ on His passion journey. We witness the fulfillment of prophecy, and we are drawn deeper into the truth of His redemptive work.

As I read from Isaiah 52:13 - 53:12, This passage, one of the most profound in all of Scripture, describes the "Suffering Servant" a figure who is both deeply afflicted and ultimately exalted. It opens with a promise: "See, my servant shall prosper; he shall be exalted and lifted up" (Isaiah 52:13). Yet what follows is a startling image of one who is "despised and rejected," "a man of suffering," and "acquainted with infirmity" (53:3). As I pondered on this scripture it left me with several ways to respond.

1. Receive this love with humility
2. Live a life shaped by compassion
3. Walk in the way of the cross
4. Trust God's redemptive plan

Isaiah gives us more than a description of the Suffering Servant. It offers us an invitation to be healed, to be changed, and to live differently. Let us live as those who have been healed humbly, gratefully and with hearts wide open to love.

### ***Maundy Thursday***

***Reading: Exodus 12:1-4, (5-10), 11-14, Psalm 116:1-2, 12-119, 1 Corinthians 11:23-26, John 13:1-17, 31b-35***

Jesus didn't wash the feet of some of His disciples, he washed all of them, including the man he knew would betray him and washed the feet of the man who would deny him. If we are going to follow Jesus' example, we have to follow his whole example and not just the part that is easy.

That's the challenge. Jesus loved and served everyone regardless of how they were seen by others, or how they treated him. No one was unworthy of his love and service, and he commanded us to do the same. That's how others will know who his disciples are, because as his disciples we will do what he instructed them to do to follow His example. I believe the breaking of the bread and the drinking of the cup were not only for us to remember the sacrifices Jesus made, but for us to remember what he commanded us to do for one another even when, it calls for us to sacrifice ourselves just as he sacrificed for us. Humbling ourselves washing even the feet of those who we deem unattractive and unworthy. As with the disciples, Jesus sees us all as worthy of having our feet washed.

### ***Sister Sabrina Ramkirpaul***

*Sabrina is the wife of Ron Ramkirpaul and the mother of Janelle, Jasyn, and Jordan. Sabrina serves apart of the Dance Ministry and Sings with the 5th Sunday Choir. She is a member of CDG "J Tribe".*

### ***Monday of Holy Week, April 14, 2024***

***Readings: Isaiah 42:1-9, Psalm 36:5-11  
Hebrews 9:11-15, John 12:1-11***

***Hebrews 9:11-15*** – This passage emphasizes the new covenant established through the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. Jesus, the High Priest, enters the heavenly sanctuary to offer His own blood for the forgiveness of sins, securing eternal redemption for humanity. This fulfills the promise of salvation, showing that God's love is demonstrated through Christ's ultimate sacrifice, which cleanses and reconciles believers to God.

***John 12:1-11*** – In this passage, Mary anoints Jesus' feet with expensive perfume, symbolizing a profound act of devotion and foreshadowing Jesus' coming death and burial. Jesus speaks of His impending sacrifice, illustrating how His death will bring about the salvation of many. The love and sacrifice in this story connect to the theme of God's love leading to salvation through painful, sacrificial means.

### ***Connecting the Theme:***

Together, these scriptures convey the idea that God's love and faithfulness are central to His plan of salvation. From Isaiah's prophecy of the coming Messiah to the sacrificial act of Jesus on the cross, the theme of God's redeeming love is clearly evident. These passages highlight how God, in His mercy, reaches out to a broken world to restore it through the person and work of Jesus Christ, who offers salvation to all who believe.

## ***Monday of Holy Week, April 14, 2024***

***Readings: Isaiah 42:1-9, Psalm 36:5-11  
Hebrews 9:11-15, John 12:”1-11***

### ***In Summary, God is calling us to:***

1. Trust in His faithfulness and the completion of His salvation plan (Isaiah).
2. Live in His love, finding refuge and satisfaction in His goodness (Psalm).
3. Embrace the new covenant of grace, living in the freedom Christ bought for us (Hebrews).
4. Worship Him with sacrificial devotion, giving Him our best in response to His love (John).

These responses are intertwined with each other—trust, love, grace, and sacrifice. Together, they form a picture of a life devoted to God, shaped by His love and sacrifice, and lived out in faith, gratitude, and worship.

### ***Trustee Denise Jones***

*Denise is the Pastoral Leader of the Trustees and the Curriculum Specialist for Kindom Village, lead church decorator, a member of CDG E and she loves reading the word of God. She is the mother of two daughters, RaShawyn Jones and Jessica Jones-Tucker (Richard Tucker) and the grandmother of two grandsons, Daijon Jones and Sir Richard Tucker.*

## ***Maundy Thursday***

***Readings: Exodus 12:1-4, (5-10), 11-14, Psalm 116:1-2, 12-119, 1 Corinthians 11:23-26, John 13:1-17, 31b-35***

By Jesus washing the feet of His disciples He showed by example, that even though He was the teacher and Lord, He was able to humble himself and wash their feet to demonstrate how they needed to treat each other. Feet are not the most attractive things in the world. Some may even find them unappealing. We don't want to touch our own feet, let alone someone else's. Those who do touch other people's feet, are most likely being paid. Just to get where feet are, you have to get low, bend, kneel, squat and even crouch, which after a while can become a bit uncomfortable. My take is some people are like feet, seen as unattractive and unappealing. Not in a physical sense but in relation to things we dislike about them. We try to avoid them and only deal with them if we have to, but that's not what Jesus calls to do. I believe when Jesus told his disciples to wash each other's feet. He did not mean just to wash feet amongst themselves, but to also wash the feet of others. I am sure they would encounter some of those unattractive ones. That's the hard part.

Mathew 5: 47-48 says "If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? " How can people see us as Jesus's disciples if we are doing what everyone else is doing? What separates us from the rest? Being his disciple may call for us to bend, crouch and kneel to reach and love even on the most unattractive feet, and it may cause a little discomfort, but that is the assignment.

### ***Wednesday of Holy Week***

***Readings: Isaiah 50:4-9a, Psalm 70, Hebrews 12:1-3, John 13:21-32***

It also tells of Jesus witnessing the first action by Judas that put in motion the things that needed to be done which led to Jesus' persecution, death and resurrection. Jesus knew who the devil was going to use to betray him. As Judas leaves, Jesus does not appear to be upset. In fact Jesus declares that he HAS been glorified, and God is being glorified, as well. It is Jesus acknowledging that what has been set in motion will glorify God and himself, simultaneously.

### **How God Wants us to Respond**

In these scriptures, I believe the connection is that we must accept that there are times we will have to be the "suffering servant". We will all face persecution and trials, if we haven't already. In those times, having faith that the Lord will be our defender and help is what will allow us to "go through". There is a Diane Reeves song that says, "You can't get to no better days unless you make it through the night." God wants us to remember that "joy comes in the morning". He also wants us to recognize He is our help in times of trouble. We should not grow weary or hide from the insults that we will experience, because He is with us to help us. I believe that God wants us to seek and love Him, and to tell of his greatness!

***Lafonda B. Greene***

*Lafonda is the widow of Deacon John S. Greene, who was Artist in Residence and the mother of Alexis and Tiffany. Lafonda serves as Pastoral Leader of our Music and Fine Arts Ministry and Associate Pastoral Leader of Christian Women with a Vision. She is a member of CDG G.*

### ***Tuesday of Holy Week***

***Readings: Isaiah 49:1-7, Psalm 71:1-14, 1 Corinthians 1:18-31, John 12:20-36***

### ***God is Our Refuge***

Where do you run when the storms of life hit? Is there a place or person in your life that makes you feel completely protected and at peace? Refuge can be a place or thing that provides shelter, protection, and safety from danger, difficulty or harm. It can also refer to a person or thing that gives shelter, help or comfort – a place or person of refuge? As we read the scriptures for Tuesday of Holy Week, we see where and how refuge may be found.

In **Isaiah 49:1-7**, we read about a servant who was chosen from birth to serve God and to lead the people of Israel. God also wanted the servant to be a light for other nations, taking God's saving power to everyone on Earth. The servant acknowledges who he is and that he could do nothing without God's helping hand. *"He made my mouth like a sharp sword. In the shadow of his hand, he hid me. He made me a polished arrow. In his quiver he hid me away."* This is poetry at its best. You have his mouth representing a sword. You have a polished arrow representing the servant. In addition to that, you have the word quiver, which is defined as a container in which you carry arrows. The verse concludes with "he hid me away." This allows us to see that God provides a refuge for his servants, a place of shelter, protection and safety. God is our refuge!

The Psalm passage, **Psalm 71:1-14**, depicts refuge in many ways. Psalm 71:1 states *"In you, O LORD, I take refuge". Let me never be put to shame.*" The word 'refuge' in the psalm clearly points out that God is where we find shelter, rest, hope, and comfort.

Reading the psalm further, it emphasizes other forms of refuge: a rock of refuge, a strong fortress, my protector. These lead us to know who we should follow and what we must put into practice as we do life. God is our refuge.

**1 Corinthians 1:18-31** highlights the fact that to us who are being saved, the message of the cross is the power of God and that is where refuge is found. *"In contrast, God is why you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption."* (1 Corinthians 1:30). God, through Jesus, is our hiding place and our refuge. God is our refuge.

The Gospel passage, **John 12:20-36**, takes us to the point of expectation, the grand finale, the purpose of the one and only, Jesus Christ. Several significant examples of refuge are expressed here. In John 12:27-28, we find Jesus in a very sorrowful moment. *"Now my soul is troubled, and what should I say: 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name."* Then a voice came from heaven, *"I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again."* This lets me know that Jesus himself needed refuge. He needed someone to comfort him, someone to love him, someone to hold him. He needed someone bigger than him. He needed his Father. God is his Father and his refuge -- a place where he can find peace. In God we find shelter, comfort, hope, peace, and love that will sustain us in this life. Trust in him. God is our refuge. God is our refuge!

*Brother Maurice Wooten, Sr.*

*Maurice Wooten, Sr. the husband of Deaconess LaFan Wooten and the father of 5 adult children, Laurica, Maurice Jr., LaMar, Dayquion, and Daymar. He is the proud Papa to Amaria. Here at MAABC, Maurice serves as Pastoral Leader of the Transportation Ministry, a member of the Men's Fellowship and a member of CDG E*

### **Wednesday of Holy Week**

**Readings: Isaiah 50:4-9a, Psalm 70, Hebrews 12:1-3, John 13:21-32**

**Isaiah 50:4-9a** – This scripture can be summarized by stating that the Lord helps us so that when our enemies come against us, we can withstand it. It lets us know that we will be alright because of who the Lord is. It is the Lord who helps us to prevail against our opponents. We can boldly face those adversaries and know that in the end we will be just fine, because "It is the Lord God who helps me/us."

**Psalm 70** – In reading this scripture, it is relayed that the Lord is our help and our deliverer. Although we may not be affluent or influential, we don't have to be, because the Lord can be trusted to deliver us from those who would seek to destroy us.

**Hebrews 12:1-3** – This scripture points us to Jesus. Jesus is the example of one who was persecuted by men on earth, but God, our heavenly Father, chose to exalt him. These passages instruct us to cast off the things that would prevent us from doing God's will for our lives. It lets us know that we should ignore the opinion of others who may consider our actions crazy. It lets us know if others become hostile against us for doing the will of God -- not to grow weary. In this scripture, it is Jesus who is our example and our inspiration to continue forward in doing whatever our assignment is, because Jesus did, and it allowed Him to sit at the right hand of God.

**John 13:21-32** – These Gospel passages are labeled: "Jesus foretelling his betrayal". It tell of Satan entering Judas and his leaving to betray Jesus.