

Easter

Why Is It So Important?

For Christians, Easter is the most important time of year. Easter is about remembering what happened to Jesus when he died and then came back to life. Jesus paid the penalty for our sin, and then He took victory over the power of sin so that we can be free from the key result of sin, which is death.

What Happened?

Read through each verse and make a note.

Matthew 26:1-4 (NIV)

- (1) When Jesus had finished saying all these things, he said to his disciples,
- (2) “As you know, the Passover is two days away—and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified.”
- (3) Then the chief priests and the elders of the people assembled in the palace of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas,
- (4) and they schemed to arrest Jesus secretly and kill him.

Matthew 26:55-56 (NIV)

- (55) In that hour Jesus said to the crowd, “Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me? Every day I sat in the temple courts teaching, and you did not arrest me.
- (56) But this has all taken place that the writings of the prophets might be fulfilled.” Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.

Matthew 26:59-65 (NIV)

- (59) The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for false evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death.
- (60) But they did not find any, though many false witnesses came forward. Finally two came forward
- (61) and declared, “This fellow said, ‘I am able to destroy the temple of God and rebuild it in three days.’ ”
- (62) Then the high priest stood up and said to Jesus, “Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?”
- (63) But Jesus remained silent. The high priest said to him, “I charge you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God.”
- (64) “You have said so,” Jesus replied. “But I say to all of you: From now on you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.”
- (65) Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, “He has spoken blasphemy! Why do we need any more witnesses? Look, now you have heard the blasphemy.

Matthew 27:1-2 (NIV)

- (1) Early in the morning, all the chief priests and the elders of the people made their plans how to have Jesus executed.
- (2) So they bound him, led him away and handed him over to Pilate the governor.

Matthew 27:11-14 (NIV)

- (11) Meanwhile Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, “Are you the king of the Jews?” “You have said so,” Jesus replied.
- (12) When he was accused by the chief priests and the elders, he gave no answer.
- (13) Then Pilate asked him, “Don’t you hear the testimony they are bringing against you?”
- (14) But Jesus made no reply, not even to a single charge—to the great amazement of the governor.

Matthew 27:22-26 (NIV)

- (22) “What shall I do, then, with Jesus who is called the Messiah?” Pilate asked. They all answered, “Crucify him!”
- (23) “Why? What crime has he committed?” asked Pilate. But they shouted all the louder, “Crucify him!”
- (24) When Pilate saw that he was getting nowhere, but that instead an uproar was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd. “I am innocent of this man’s blood,” he said. “It is your responsibility!”
- (25) All the people answered, “His blood is on us and on our children!”
- (26) Then he released Barabbas to them. But he had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified.

Matthew 27:33-40 (NIV)

- (33) They came to a place called Golgotha (which means “the place of the skull”).
- (34) There they offered Jesus wine to drink, mixed with gall; but after tasting it, he refused to drink it.

- (35) When they had crucified him, they divided up his clothes by casting lots.
- (36) And sitting down, they kept watch over him there.
- (37) Above his head they placed the written charge against him: this is Jesus, the king of the Jews .
- (38) Two rebels were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left.
- (39) Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads
- (40) and saying, "You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God!"

Matthew 27:45-55 (NIV)

- (45) From noon until three in the afternoon darkness came over all the land.
- (46) About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" (which means "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?").
- (47) When some of those standing there heard this, they said, "He's calling Elijah."
- (48) Immediately one of them ran and got a sponge. He filled it with wine vinegar, put it on a staff, and offered it to Jesus to drink.
- (49) The rest said, "Now leave him alone. Let's see if Elijah comes to save him."
- (50) And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit.
- (51) At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook, the rocks split
- (52) and the tombs broke open. The bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life.
- (53) They came out of the tombs after Jesus' resurrection and went into the holy city and appeared to many people.
- (54) When the centurion and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and all that had happened, they were terrified, and exclaimed, "Surely he was the Son of God!"
- (55) Many women were there, watching from a distance. They had followed Jesus from Galilee to care for his needs.

Why Did Jesus Die?

Jesus' death was part of God's plan to save everyone who will believe in Him. Prophecies in the Old Testament describe Jesus' death (e.g. Isaiah 53)

Isaiah 53 (NIV)

- (1) Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?
- (2) He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.
- (3) He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem.
- (4) Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted.
- (5) But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.
- (6) We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.
- (7) He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.
- (8) By oppression and judgment he was taken away. Yet who of his generation protested? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was punished.
- (9) He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth.
- (10) Yet it was the Lord's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the Lord makes his life an offering for sin, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the Lord will prosper in his hand.
- (11) After he has suffered, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities.
- (12) Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

1 Timothy 2:3-6 (NIV)

- (3) This is good, and pleases God our Savior,
- (4) who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.
- (5) For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus,
- (6) who gave himself as a ransom for all people. This has now been witnessed to at the proper time.

Why did Jesus give His life?

Romans 5:8 (NIV)

- (8) But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Why did God send Jesus to die?

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NIV)

- (21) God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

In what way was Jesus made a substitute for us?

Why Did Jesus Come Back to Life?

Matthew 28:1-10 (NIV)

- (1) After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.
- (2) There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it.
- (3) His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow.
- (4) The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.
- (5) The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified.
- (6) He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay.
- (7) Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you."
- (8) So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples.
- (9) Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him.
- (10) Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

What happened three days after Jesus was buried?

Acts 2:23-24 (NIV)

- (23) This man was handed over to you by God's deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross.
- (24) But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.

How did Jesus come back to life?

Colossians 2:13-15 (NIV)

- (13) When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins,
- (14) having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross.
- (15) And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

What did Jesus achieve through His death and resurrection?

1 Corinthians 6:14 (NIV)

- (14) By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also.

Why can Christians be confident that they will live forever?

Ask a Friend

What does Easter mean to you?

What is your response to the Easter message?

What other questions do you have about Easter?

Application

Why is the message of Easter so important?

What does this message mean for your life?

How should we respond to it?

Prayer Model

Lord Jesus, please forgive me for the wrong things that I have done. Thank You for dying so that I don't have to die. Please help me to have freedom from sin every day.

Key Verse

Romans 5:8 (NIV)

"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."