



Easter 2022

Very soon it will be Easter.

I am here to tell you about this great event that Christians around the world celebrate.

In this country many people think of Easter as a time for **EGGS** particularly the chocolate ones, maybe you have been given one – and you don't mind because you like chocolate!

Why an egg at Easter? Today I will explain.

Firstly there are two parts to Easter, there is Easter **SUNDAY** but there is also **GOOD FRIDAY**. \

At Christmas Christians celebrate the time when Jesus, who the Bible speaks of as God becoming a man, entered this world. Many people saw the amazing life he lived, a life of love to others, how he helped everyone and even healed people who were sick, the deaf could hear, the blind could see, the mute could speak, he even calmed huge storms and helped those who were afraid.

“Who are you – that you do all of this?” they asked him. “I am the one promised for many years” Jesus said, “and what I am doing shows that I am someone you can trust, someone you can believe in”.

For example when he feed 10-15 thousand people at one time with just five small loaves of bread and two small fish he then went on to say “**I am the bread of life**, if you have me x2 you will never be hungry again.”

At that time all had not being going well for the people. There had been riots in the city and some bad characters had murdered people, they were like terrorists. The authorities had rounded them up. In those days the punishment for this was death. In the prison were three of these violent men and everything was ready for their execution. We know the name of one of them their ring-leader, he was the worst one of all, his name was Barabbas, Barabbas. The plan was to put them to death in the most painful way possible.

That weekend was a special weekend. People were celebrating a great victory that had taken place years ago in the history of the country. It was like a VE day when the last WW was finally won.

The nation had all been slaves – they were rescued and set free to be a free nation. They wanted to thank God for they knew that He had done it for them.

Yet as I have just said there were still many bad things happening, would they be free from that?

God had promised to send someone into the world who had to power to change people. All through the years they waited - and waited - and waited for this special person to come and change people.

When Jesus came he called people to stop hating each other and to start loving each other. He even said that if they came to Him, - to Him - he would give them the power to change, to have a new heart, a heart with love in it for others, even their enemies.

Some proud people jeered “we don't need help from anyone!” They stirred up a crowd and arrested Jesus to try and get rid of him. They didn't like the good message he brought, they didn't want to change, they liked the way they were.

These proud men plotted to put him to death even though they could not find anything wrong with what he did - or anything wrong with what he said, not even one thing!

The local judge was a man called Pontius Pilate. These religious leaders turned up at his house bringing Jesus with them. “We want Jesus to be put to death” they said, “we believe he should die.”

It is early on Friday morning and those three violent men are about to be taken to their execution.

But a crowd had gathered shouting. “Put Jesus to death”

Pontius Pilate replies: I can find nothing wrong with him, I will let him go.

“No they say we want him to die”

“I can’t kill someone who is innocent” say Pilate, and he feels their hatred. But he thinks maybe the crowd will see sense. So he says to himself ‘I will offer to release one prisoner as a sign of good will after all we all want to have a good weekend of celebrating.’

So he says to them “I will release Jesus and punish the three bad men.”

The crowd shout even more loudly “No, No release Barabbas, we want Barabbas”

What then shall I do with Jesus? “Crucify him, kill him” comes the reply

Pilate, who was not a good judge was frightened and gave in to the crowd.

He then allowed the soldiers to take out the two criminals to die - and instead of putting Barabbas in the middle – **THREE CROSSES** they put Jesus in the middle.

Jesus took his place - Barabbas was set free to go.

It was on Friday that he was taken to a cruel death on a cross. That day is the day we remember as Good Friday, Good Friday. How can a death be good? It was a terrible death how can that be good?

Because that is exactly why God sent Jesus into this world, that Jesus should die the **GOOD** for the **BAD**

Someone might give up their life for someone good – but who would die for someone bad?

The Bible says that everyone has done wrong, everyone has lied, cheated, stolen, disobeyed parents or teachers, been greedy and not forgiven others. This is to break God’s good laws.

God who made men and women boys and girls to be like him in love - knows that one day there will have to be a judgment, a punishment for all who go their own way.

The Bible says that God in Jesus, God in his love, suffered himself - gave up His life - so others would not have to suffer judgment.

That is what happened when Jesus died on the cross. He died in my place, - in my place - so I don’t have to be punished. He who was good - died for me who is bad and has done wrong, much wrong.

Yes – so for me and many others – it really was a Good Friday.

After he died those around saw him buried and that he was placed in a tomb cut into the rock. In front of the tomb was a large stone rolled in front of the entrance.

This was on Friday evening, on Saturday they prepared for the celebrations.

Some of the women who had followed Jesus said to each other “let’s go and anoint his body with perfume.” They came to the tomb early on Sunday morning just as the sun was rising.

When they arrived they found the stone **ROLLED** away and the tomb empty, he had gone.

Then suddenly they saw him alive - standing next to them.

They rushed off to tell the others that he was alive. They did not believe at first – but then, suddenly, he appeared to them all.

That is why we have an egg at Easter – When it looks like nothing is happening suddenly a little chick appears and comes out. The egg is a picture of new life. So also when for months in winter all the trees look dead – and then almost suddenly they start to blossom into new life.

So Jesus is **ALIVE FOREVER** x2

Jesus never died again. He continued to appear to people before he then went back to heaven.

You could say this was the “The day death died!” Can you say that with me “The day death died!”

Many people since that time and across the world have meet him. How is that possible?

It is because he is alive today and comes to live in anyone who turn to him and says sorry for what they have done and ask him to change them. He has done that for me - and he can do it for anyone.

Now I know I will never have to face God’s anger at what I have done. Now I know his love and I will be with God forever in a perfect heaven which the Apostle Paul describes as ‘better by far.’

That is something well worth telling others about.

Tell them song

Prayer