

EASTER – WHAT IS IT ALL ABOUT?

Easter is a religious festival that started **THOUSANDS** of years ago. The Jewish people, at this time of year, observed this festival, what they still call “The Passover Festival”. Basically – it was to remind them of when their people were **slaves** to the Egyptians, and how God performed a **miracle** to set them free.

Read Exodus 12:21-23. Only the shedding of the blood would save the firstborn. But, the ones that did not have the blood – the Angel of Death took the first-born sons, and all of the first born of their animals. **ALL of the Egyptian first born sons died that night!** Then, the Egyptians let the Jewish people go free. That is why they celebrate...to remember what God had done for them.

[If you wish to learn more about the Passover rituals, go to: Exodus 12; Numbers 9, 28; Dueteronomy 16; Ezekiel 45; Leviticus 23]

On “**Lamb Selection Day**”, what we now call “**Palm Sunday**”, the people chose the **PERFECT LAMB** to **SACRIFICE** for Passover. That “**sacrificial lamb**” was to die the following Friday, at 3pm exactly! Palm Sunday was the beginning of their Passover Season, which was considered to be their “Season of Freedom”. Palm branches were used as the Israelite national symbol of **Freedom**. They were even put on their money, before they lost their freedom. The word “Hosanna” means – “**deliver me, give me my Freedom**”.

Read Zechariah 9:9 This was foretold of the Messiah.

Read John 12: 12-15 When Jesus rode into Jerusalem on “**Palm Sunday**” they threw down the palm branches for Him and shouted “**Hosanna, to the King**”.

What do you think they were thinking?

Do you think they thought Jesus had come to set them free from their sins, or to set them free from the Romans?

The people who hailed Jesus as the King, on “**Palm Sunday**” – were looking for a “**quick fix to a temporary problem**”. They were not looking at Him as their **Savior**, who would give them freedom from their sins and Eternal Life with Him in Heaven!

Read Luke 23:44-46. Jesus died on the same Friday that the sacrificial lamb was to die, at the same time the lamb was supposed to die! That is why He is called the “Lamb of God”. God gave us His Son as the Perfect Sacrifice for our sins.

Read “Why the Cross?” on page 1140

JESUS is the fulfillment of that first Passover. When He **ALLOWED** them to beat Him and put Him on that cross – **He became God’s sacrificial lamb – for US!!! His blood will save us from the bondage of sin.** It will cleanse us and make us whole, **if** we will only allow it to. **All we have to do is open the door of our heart and let Jesus in to our lives.**

Read “Why did Jesus have to die?” on page 1090

Read Luke 24: 1-7 Then, **Read “The Resurrection”** on page 1096.

Read ROMANS 10: 9-13

The Apostles, who were with Jesus before He died, were from every walk of life; doctor, tax collector, fishermen, etc. Prior to Jesus' death and resurrection they were "all talk and no go"! On the eve of the most difficult moment in Jesus' life they couldn't even stay awake to pray. When Jesus is taken into custody they all scatter, fearing for their lives. They aren't necessarily the picture of courage! This is where it gets good. Jesus dies, three days later is resurrected, and then He shows up in the upper room where the disciples are hiding out in fear. They see His nail scars and feel the wound in his side. Something changed that day! Their **fear turned to faith**. Their **doubt** turned into **decision**. Instead of huddling in fear they marched out of that room on a mission to share this good news with the world. Not only did they commit their lives to sharing this good news; all but one, John, willingly died a brutal death for their faith in Jesus. They willingly sacrificed their lives for the One who had sacrificed His life on their behalf. Worth it! After being brutally persecuted for his faith, beaten to near death several times, Paul says, "I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us." (Romans 8:18)

So, what do you think? Can you believe that all these men died for a lie?

What are you going to do with Jesus?

More questions about "Easter"? Check out:

Page 1092 – Jesus' Trial map
Page 1093 - Jesus' Route to Golgotha
Page 1095 - Evidence that Jesus actually died and arose.
Page 1175 – Jesus' Appearances after His Resurrection.

Do you have other questions? Well, take a look at the back of your Bibles and check out:

Life Choices Reference Index on page 1423
Index to the "**Choices**" notes on page 1459
Index to "**I Wonder**..." on page 1459
Index to "**Ultimate Issues**..." on page 1461
Index to the **charts** on page 1461
Index to the **Personality Profiles** on page 1462
Index to the **Maps** on page 1463
Index to "**My Story**" on page 1463
"**Where to find it**" Index on page 1465

Your Bibles are a great help with everyday situations.

If you are going through some tough times, check out what your Bibles can tell you about how to deal with them.