

Message and Promise of Easter

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Genesis 2:17 *You must not eat from the tree*
Isaiah 53:6 *We all, like sheep, have gone*
2 Chronicles 16:9 *For the eyes of the LORD*
Isaiah 53:6 *The Lord has laid on Him the*
John 1:29 *Look, the Lamb of God, who takes*

- 1 What an amazing week this must have been 2000 years ago!
- 2 It would be a week of huge emotional swings—going from a great celebration with the Messiah coming into Jerusalem and with palm branches waving—along with everyone shouting *Hosanna to the Son of David!*
- 3 Then the Lord overturning the money changers table; chasing the animals out of the temple court—saying **AV Matthew 21:13** *“It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.”*
- 4 After all that, the unbelievable sadness of hearing *“Crucify Him”* and seeing our Savior on the Cross; to suffer so agonizingly for six long hours for us!
- 5 Then placing His body a tomb—and to the joy of seeing Him *“ALIVE”!*
- 6 It was a week like no other—and never to be again—a week that has had greatest effect on mankind in the history of the world!

7 The *message* Easter therefore, is the atoning sacrifice of Christ for us; and the *promise* of His paying a debt He did *not owe* for us who could *not pay*.

8 All past celebrations of Passover and Feasts just pointed to Calvary. Jesus is the *center* of the holiday, because no life can be *fixed* nor soul *redeemed* without Him.

9 What happened on the cross looks back to the Old Covenant, symbolized in Jewish Festivals, proclaimed to the world, and now reaching out to anyone lost in sin.

10 It is not right to treat Easter as just a holiday, a spring break, recess from school, new clothes, and family dinners. Those things are pleasant, of course, but if Easter only includes those things—it would be a serious mistake indeed!

11 From the beginning, God formed a plan that would save a lost world. The plan began with one person and if he would remain faithful, a Promised Land would be given to him and his children forever.

12 **NIV Genesis 12:1** *“The LORD had said to Abram, “Leave your country, your people and your father’s household and go to the land I will show you.”*

13 God then selected a group called the Israelites or Hebrews from Abraham’s descendants. God *loved* them and He *taught* them how to live, but many of them chose to rebel and went their own way.

14 We all inherit this sin nature from Adam and Eve. By Israel adding sin to sin and rebelling again and again, God did not allow them to enter the Promised Land and were held in slavery in Egypt.

15 **NIV Isaiah 53:6** *“We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way.”*

16 Israel cried out to God for mercy, and in mercy He sent Moses to lead them out of Egypt.

When Pharaoh refused to release the Israelites, the first-born of every Egyptian household died.

17 God instructed the Jews to paint lamb’s blood on the doorposts of their house and to stay inside. The destroying angel then *passed over* each house that was under the blood. The Jews who *obeyed* His Word were spared.

18 This judgment caused Pharaoh to allow over a million Jews to leave Egypt and to head toward the Promised Land.

19 They were never to forget this, so God told them to observe the Passover every year—followed by a Feast of Unleavened Bread.

20 The birth of Christ began our calendar, but thirty-three years later and three days in Jerusalem, marked the most important *event* in the history of the world.

21 What took place on the Cross and our response to it, will determine our destiny. It is a huge responsibility and a critical decision, but everyone on earth will decide one way or the other.

22 To first century Jews, it was treated as just another Passover—most of them missed its importance—but the celebration applies to every person on earth.

23 It became known as *Easter* and is the fulfillment of God’s plan to redeem a world doomed to destruction.

24 With the return of Christ at the door, it is time to fully understand the *message* and *promise* of Easter. What it *should* mean to us and how God *wants* us to respond to that message—is of paramount importance.

25 God *loves us* and He just wants us to *love Him*—but love to *be* love, a choice had to be given—and the first couple had that responsibility. **Genesis 2:17**, *“You must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.”*

26 The story is well known—they *listened* to Satan’s lie; *doubted* God’s Word; *ate* from the tree, and brought sin, guilt, and death to everyone ever after.

27 They tried to *cover* their sin with leaves—and the world now tries to cover their guilt with good deeds or kind acts—but divine justice cannot be appeased by actions of *self* any more than we can be righteous by deeds of the *flesh*.

28 NLT **Ephesians 2:8-9** “*God saved you by his special favor when you believed. And you can’t take credit for this; it is a gift from God.*”

29 *Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it.*”

30 God gave them animal skins whose blood covered their guilt temporarily. An animal had to die and its blood had to be shed.

31 From the beginning, God was revealing what His Son would do in the future for the world.

32 NLT **2 Corinthians 5:19**, “*For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people’s sins against them.*”

33 This atonement for our sins is the *message* and the *promise* of Easter.

34 We are descendants of Abraham; all born in sin; everyone separated from God; and all doomed to eternal flames—if our sentence is not commuted.

35 From the moment sin entered into the world, God was forming a plan to save a doomed race—a plan that included Himself as the only One who could redeem a fallen race.

36 All through the Old Testament, God is caring for His creation, even though they showed only rebellion, wickedness, and unbelief. God still kept searching for anyone who would *believe* Him and be *faithful* to *trust* Him.

37 AV **2 Chronicles 16:9** “*For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart*

is perfect toward Him [NKJV loyal to Him; NLT fully committed to Him].”

38 God just wanted to *encourage* His creation to have faith in Him. He just wanted them to *believe* in Him and to *trust* what He told them.

39 He wanted them to know there was still hope—He would provide a *solution* and offer a *plan* that would save them from destruction.

40 Abraham’s walk with God enabled many *prophecies* to be fulfilled. God promised that his descendants would be numerous.

41 NIV **Genesis 15:5** “*Look up at the heavens and count the stars—if indeed you can count them—So shall your offspring be.*”

42 The plan for God to take care of the sin problem was already in place.

43 NIV **Galatians 3:6** “*Consider Abraham: He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.*”

44 Abraham was counted as righteous because he *trusted* God and he acted in *faith* on His Word. NIV **Romans 4:3** “*Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.*”

45 Lest we forget—from Abraham’s descendants came the Messiah—our Lord and Savior.

46 The *blessings* and *promises* given to Abraham, are the *blessings* and *promises* given to all who believe in the *One God sent John 6:29*—and He *sent* His Son to take our place and to pay a debt we could not pay. It is the pure grace of God in action.

47 AV **Romans 4:16** “*Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed;*

48 “*not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all.*”

49 The *message* of this holiday and the *promise* of God’s Word are blessings for all who *believe* and *trust* the One on the middle cross.

50 NIV **Galatians 3:26** “*You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.*”

51 The promise is *sure* and the inheritance *cleared*—**29** *If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.*”

52 Jesus said NIV **John 6:51** “*I am the living bread that came down from heaven [the blessing]. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever [the promise]*” of Easter.

53 Jesus *did* what He *did* for us because of His love for us. He came to do what He *had* to do for a world heading for the flames. He would not gain *anything* from what He did—He already *had* everything or could *create* anything.

54 He *did* what He *did* because **no one** would enter Heaven without Him taking our place on the Cross!

55 All He *did* and all He *endured* was never about *Him*, but always about **us**—**those He loves!**

56 The *message* and the *promise* of this holiday and every day beyond, is that even though we go our own way *all too often* and His way *not often enough*—still...

57 NKJV **Isaiah 53:6** “*The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.*”

58 Now we **choose** to show we know, and that we appreciate what He did.

59 It is why John said of Jesus NIV **John 1:29** “*Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!*”

60 That is the *message* and the *promise* of Easter!



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