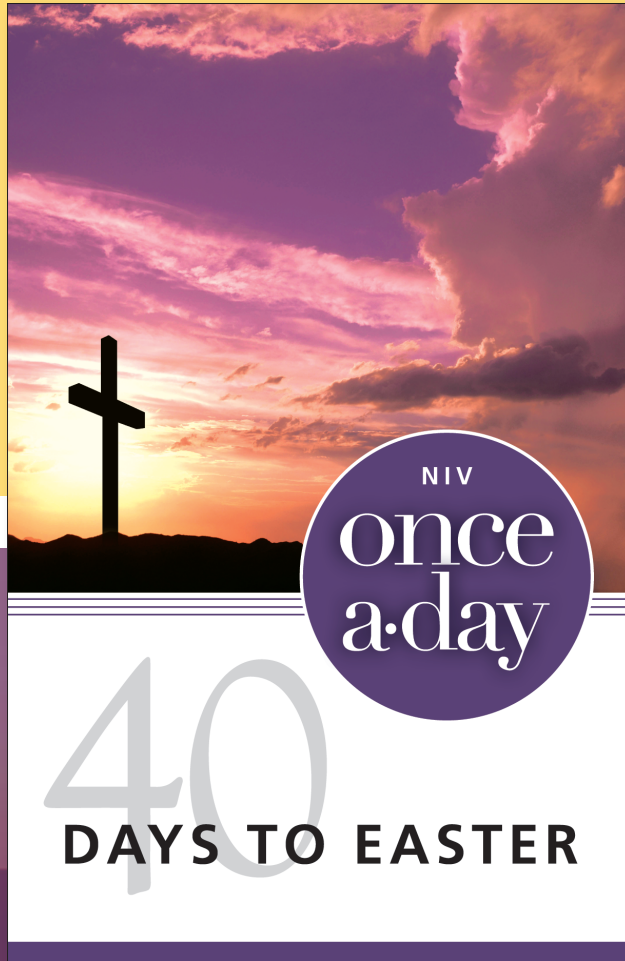




He is Risen! Celebrating Easter

7-Day Reading Plan



He is Risen!

Celebrating Easter

7-Day Reading Plan

- Day 1: Intimacy with Him
- Day 2: Crucifixion
- Day 3: The Third Day
- Day 4: Yielded Up His Spirit
- Day 5: It is Finished
- Day 6: The Resurrection
- Day 7: How Do We Help Our Children Understand the Meaning Behind Good Friday and Easter?

Day 1

“Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which is translated, “God with us.” —Matthew 1:23

Intimacy with Him

I am Immanuel—God with you. Your pursuit of Me is actually a response to My ardent pursuit of you. You don’t have to batter down doors between us. Rather, as you open the door of your heart to Me, you find Me gloriously present—*having already thrown open My door to you!*

My death on the cross for your sins was sufficient to open up My door to you permanently. Ever since you trusted Me as Savior, your standing with Me has been eternally secure. So you need not fear that on a day when your performance is below par I might shut the door in your face. With My help you can break out of that narrow enclosure of performance anxiety. I designed you to flourish in the *wide open spaces of My grace and glory*, where you are free to celebrate My Presence exuberantly. *Stand tall and shout praises* to Me, remembering you are royalty in My kingdom of never-ending Life.

I want you to realize how utterly safe you are—in My perfect, persistent Love. You understand that the strength of your love is insufficient to keep you connected with Me. You know you cannot rely on your own faithfulness. That’s why you must depend on My unfailing provision. *Love and faithfulness meet together* in Me; moreover, through the sacrifice of My blood, *righteousness and peace kiss each other.*

Drawn from Jesus Calling Devotional Bible.

Day 2

Crucifixion

At the time of Jesus' death, crucifixion was considered the most painful and degrading form of capital punishment in the Roman Empire. It was considered so horrible that it was used by the Romans only for slaves, those from the provinces under their control, and the lowest types of criminals. It was not to be used for a Roman citizen. This is in accord with the biblical account of Christ's death and with church tradition, which asserts that Peter was also crucified, but Paul, a Roman citizen, was beheaded.

Crucifixion as a means of execution probably grew out of the practice of displaying the heads of captured enemies or criminals on a wooden stake like those used to build a wall or erect fortifications. Later, entire bodies were impaled. By Jesus' time, crucifixion was a common sight.

Although methods of crucifixion seem to have varied throughout the Roman Empire, through biblical and historical accounts the basic pattern is known. The condemned person was first scourged with a flagellum, a whip of leather thongs with bits of metal or bone attached. This whipping greatly weakened the victim, who then had to carry the crossbeam to the place of execution. A sign specifying the crime was often placed around the criminal's neck or on the cross.

The person was stripped naked, laid on the ground with the crossbeam under his shoulders, and tied or nailed to it. Nailing made the victim die quicker, as it did Jesus, whom the Jewish

There were also two others, criminals, led with Him to be put to death. And when they had come to the place called Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left. Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do."

—Luke 23:32-33

officials wanted dead before the Sabbath. The crossbeam was lifted and secured to a post so that the person's feet were hanging just off the ground. Some archaeologists think a pin or wooden block was placed halfway up the post to provide a seat for the body so that the nails would not tear open the wounds, causing the body to fall. The feet also could be nailed or tied to the post.

Although the pain was excruciating, some victims survived on the cross for days. As in the case of the two criminals crucified with Jesus, the legs of a crucified person were sometimes broken to make the sufferer die. This caused massive shock, followed by loss of circulation and heart failure.

Although completely innocent of all sin, Jesus suffered the most horrible, disgraceful punishment known. But His agonizing death was not an ordinary death, for it was not the final chapter. Jesus turned this apparent defeat into the most glorious victory the world has ever known. At the Cross, He suffered for the sins of the world. Then after His resurrection from the dead three days later, Jesus empowered His disciples with a new message, the Good News that He had finally defeated the power of sin and death. Through the Cross, Jesus offers salvation to all who will believe in Him.

Drawn from the NKJV Study Bible.

Day 3

And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit.

—**Matthew 27:50**

Yielded Up His spirit

Christ's death was voluntary to the very end, for even on the Cross, His life could not be taken from Him against His will. Christ accepts death on the Cross neither to receive the Father's punishment on our behalf, nor to satisfy the Father's need for blood-justice (as if God would demand such things), but so that by entering death as the divine Son of God, He can destroy this last enemy, which is death itself (1 Corinthians 15:20–28).

Drawn from [The Orthodox Study Bible](#).

Day 4

Then, as they were afraid and bowed their faces to the earth, they said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen! Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee, saying, 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.'" —Luke 24:5-7

The Third Day

In order to dispel any doubt, the angel confirms his message by recalling Christ's own words. In calculating the third day, the first day is Friday, the day on which Christ died before sundown. The second is Saturday, the Sabbath on which Christ rested in the tomb. The third day, which begins after sundown on Saturday, is the day of Resurrection, Sunday.

Drawn from [The Orthodox Study Bible](#).

Day 5

*So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!"
And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit. —John 19:30*

It is Finished

Finished is better translated "accomplished" or "fulfilled"—not meaning Christ's life is ended, but showing His divine plan of salvation has now been completed. **Bowing His head**, He gave up His spirit: St. John Chrysostom writes that Christ did not die first, with His head falling as a result of death. Instead, as Lord even of His own death, Jesus first bowed His head, and then willingly gave up His spirit.

Drawn from [The Orthodox Study Bible](#).

Day 6

Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, "Peace to you." But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit. And He said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have."

*When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. But while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled, He said to them, "Have you any food here?" So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb. And He took it and ate in their presence. —**Luke 24:36-43***

The Resurrection

The **Resurrection of Jesus Christ** was a physical reality. When He "stood in the midst of them," the disciples were shocked, "terrified, and frightened" (verse 37). They thought Jesus was a ghost. Jesus read their hearts, and to prove Himself physically alive, He showed them His pierced hands and feet and invited them to "handle" and "see" Him (verse 39). Then He went one step further to dispel their unbelief by asking for and eating food—something no disembodied spirit could do.

Drawn from [The Woman's Study Bible](#).

Day 7

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.

—Ephesians 2:8-9

How Do We Help Our Children Understand the Meaning Behind Good Friday and Easter?

Children and Easter—new life and new beginnings. What better time to share the gospel with your children? Here are the basics:

1. Teach your children who God is and how He loves them. They need to know what sets Him apart from humans:

- God is holy and perfect. People, however, are not perfect.
- God is just and always fair. We are not just in all our decisions.
- God is love and desires a relationship with us. We are not always motivated out of love for another.

2. Instruct your children that their sins must be forgiven (see Romans 6:23). Many parents feel uncomfortable talking about hell. While God is patient, He is not tolerant. His justice calls for an atonement (a payment, a penalty) for human sin. Our children must have some understanding that their sins can keep them out of heaven. Their sins must be paid for, and that is what Jesus Christ did for us on the cross.

3. Train your children to receive God's forgiveness through faith in Jesus Christ (see Ephesians 2:8, 9). Faith involves repenting from sin, turning to God in faith, and trusting Jesus Christ to be Savior and Lord.

Taken from FamilyLife Marriage Bible.