

# Easter: From Death to Life

7-10

EAHs04

Age 7-10

Easter

**Bible Verses:** Matthew 28, Mark 16, Luke 24, John 20

**The aim of this session is to look at the Easter story and understand why Jesus died, and the significance of Him rising again.**

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## Leader's notes

Easter! It is a time of hope for all of us. The end of winter and the beginning of spring; blossom on the trees; flowers in the garden; lambs in the field. At the time of writing, in 2020, I'm reminded even more how much we need hope. The UK is currently in lockdown due to Coronavirus. It's at times like this that we need to put our trust in Jesus even more, and know that He can defeat even death.

Easter has largely been taken over as a festival of spring, of new life and of new hope. For Christians, Easter is about Jesus' resurrection. He died a horrible death on a cross, taking the punishment for sin as He did so, and then rose from the dead. This act proved that He had conquered death and Satan's power.

No Easter session would be complete without an Easter Egg hunt and Easter hats, so we start the session with two warming up activities. We then look at a clip from the film 'The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch And The Wardrobe'. Normally, groups would only have time to watch a short clip, but feel free to watch the whole film and stop it at the appropriate point to discuss the questions. A second Getting Started activity has been included in case this film isn't available. This item looks at the sacrifice that Jesus made for us - you and me - and challenges the children to think about what they're prepared to sacrifice for others.

The Digging In activity looks at the Easter story - the empty tomb and appearance of Jesus to His disciples after His death. In the current situation, when we're in isolation with our doors closed, it's nice to remember that a locked door can't keep Jesus out.

After making the Easter card, encourage the children to think of someone who is maybe alone at this time that they can post it to as an encouragement.

Remember that Easter is a time of rejoicing! I hope that your family has fun this Easter. Praise the Lord!

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## Egg Hunt

Warming Up

10 mins

 Game

Before the session, hide the wrapped eggs around your venue, ready for your young people to find when you begin.

Reserve some eggs so you can ensure that everyone gets at least one.

As your young people begin, set them off on an Easter egg hunt, ready to find all the eggs that you

have hidden.

You may want to set a limit, and for the children to hand in the eggs they find, to be given back at hometime.

There are several different ways that you can create an 'eggtreme' egg hunt, depending upon your venue and the young people that you have present.

For instance, you could:

Hide the eggs over a large area, perhaps even outside!

Set a very short time limit in which your young people can find the eggs, (e.g. how many eggs can you find in one minute).

Set up an obstacle course for your young people to travel around, in between finding the eggs.

Pair your young people up, and set them the challenge of finding the eggs, whilst tied together at the ankles.

NB Be aware of food allergies!

**The Point:** A light-hearted game which introduces the themes of Easter and the idea of giving eggs away, which will be further explored within the session.

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## ***Equipment***

Small individually wrapped chocolate eggs

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## **Easter Hats**

Warming Up

15 mins

 Craft Ideas

Give each child a circle of card. This needs to be made into a cone shape that will fit the head by taking the edges of the card at each side of the cut and sliding one part under the other. When the child has the hat in the shape that they want it, a leader can staple the hat.

Now let the children decorate their hats in any way that they want. They can draw things to stick on, or just use the coloured paper to make flowers.

Say that the theme is Easter and there will be a prize for the best hat at the end of the session.

When the hats are finished, one of the leaders can judge them during the next activity. Award a prize at the end of the session.

**The Point:** Just for fun.

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## Equipment

A large circle of card for each child, cut along the radius. A stapler, pens, tissue and crepe paper, old wrapping paper, plain paper, scissors and glue, and anything else you can find to decorate hats; small prize.

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## Aslan Rises

Getting Started

10 mins



Visual And Audio Clips

This item looks at two separate scenes from *The Lion, The Witch And The Wardrobe*.

First, give the children some background information: This story takes place in the fantasy world of Narnia. The White Witch has taken over the country, and holds it in her power. However, Aslan, a lion who created Narnia in the beginning, has returned to it and given the people who live there hope. But, in the part that we'll now watch, the White Witch (who made it always winter but never Christmas!) and her followers have just killed Aslan. Susan and Lucy saw the murder, and are not sure what to do next.

Play the clip (2 mins): Start – 1:38:41 (Lucy and Susan are approaching Aslan, who has just been killed)

End – 1:40:43 (Lucy and Susan have untied Aslan and Lucy rests her cheek on Aslan's)

Discuss these questions:

How are Lucy and Susan feeling?

Are they sure that Aslan is dead?

Play the next clip (2 mins 15): Start – 1:48:03 (Lucy and Susan wake in the morning)

End – 1:50:18 (Aslan roars).

Now discuss these points:

What do Susan and Lucy think has happened when the stone table cracks in half?

How do they feel when Aslan comes alive again?

How easy do they find it to believe that he is alive now? Why?

How do you think others would react if Lucy and Susan told them that Aslan had come alive again?

Talk about the fact that the Bible tells us that Jesus died and rose again, and is similar to this story in the following ways:

It was clear that Jesus died on the cross – Roman guards checked this.

Jesus' friends were very sad when he died, and some lost hope.

Jesus' body wasn't in the tomb when his followers went there on the third day, and his followers were confused as to what could have happened.

People saw and talked to Jesus after he rose from the dead.

It's easier for people who saw Jesus alive again after his death to believe that he is alive, but Jesus says: "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed".

**The Point:** To relate the story in the film to the death and resurrection of Jesus.

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## ***Equipment***

A copy of the film "The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch And The Wardrobe" (2005) and the means to play it.

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## **Sacrificing**

Getting Started

10 mins

 Discussion

This activity looks at the idea of giving up something for someone else. It asks how sacrificial we are prepared to be, and that will help the children to realise in part how great Jesus' sacrifice was.

Tell the group about a real or imagined situation in which people need help. If you support a group financially – such as a Child sponsorship – you could use this example. If not, pick something topical from the news. An example might be:

“In a town in Africa, there are 100 children who have become orphans because their parents have died from a disease. Some of the children also have the disease. There are no orphanages and the children live on the streets and beg to get food. They need help badly.”

Ask all the children to stand at one end of the room with their eyes closed.

Say you are going to read some ways that the people you have just spoken about can be helped. Ask the children to take a step forward if they would be prepared to do the thing that you suggest. If they are not willing to do that thing, they should stay put.

Put 10p in a collecting tin.

Give £1 every month.

Give £1 every week.

Give £5 every week.

Arrange a sponsored walk to raise money for them.

Take part in a sponsored fast (not eating anything for 1 day) to raise money for them.

Spend all day Saturday helping people pack their shopping in a supermarket to raise money for them.

Give all of your birthday money to them.

Instead of going on holiday, go to the village to help build an orphanage.

Ask your parents to adopt one of the children.

Go and live in the village to look after the children when you are grown up.

Ask the children to open their eyes.

Sit them down. Comment on the things that the group was happy to do. Say that it is hard to sacrifice things for other people – especially people we don't know very well. We like to be comfortable and sometimes we can be quite selfish in our attitudes to other people.

Say that, when Jesus came to earth, he left behind everything – He came from Heaven where He was with God, He had all the power and all the importance. He lived in an amazingly wonderful, beautiful place and he left it all behind to live with a poor family in a poor area of a poor country. As a child he was even a refugee for a few years.

And then he sacrificed his life and died a horrible death.

Compare Jesus' sacrifice with what we would be prepared to give up! (Raise this as a comment – don't make the children feel bad. We are thinking about God's generosity here, not our selfishness!)

Ask the children to consider more fully in the week ahead whether they will commit to doing the things that could help others, and to put it into action. (For those who are Believers or Followers, say that they can pray about this and be guided by God.)

**The Point:** Jesus sacrificed his life for us. The Easter story could not have happened without this sacrifice.

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## ***Equipment***

None.

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## **Where's The Body?**

Digging In

20 mins

 Story

Give each child a piece of paper and some pens/pencils. Also have some round pieces of paper/card ready to give each child at the appropriate point. Alternatively, you could bring in some suitably sized clean stones, one per child. Also have some small pieces of material if possible, or pieces of toilet tissue, to represent the cloth.

As you tell the story of Jesus' resurrection (see below; based on [Matthew 28](#), [Mark 16](#), [Luke 24](#) and [John 20](#)), ask the children to draw various items as indicated:

**Early in the morning of the first day of the week, some women who had been Jesus' close friends went to the tomb where he had been buried. The tomb was cut in stone in a garden near to where Jesus was crucified on the cross.**

*(Ask the children to draw a garden with a hill at the back, with a hole cut into the stone in the hill. The cross could be drawn nearby)*

**On the way to the tomb, the women were worried about how they were going to move the stone in front of the tomb. It was big and heavy, and it had been sealed shut by the government in case someone tried to steal Jesus' body.**

*(Give each child the circle of paper/card or stone and ask them to put this over the hole they've drawn)*

**But when they got to the tomb, they saw that the stone had been rolled away and they could see into the tomb.**

*(Roll the stone away from the hole)*

**But Jesus wasn't there. They couldn't see him at all. Instead, an angel appeared and spoke to them, saying, "Jesus isn't here. He has come alive again, like He told you He would. Don't be afraid, but go and tell His disciples."**

*(Draw an angel next to the tomb)*

**The women ran to the place where the disciples were staying. They told them that Jesus' body was gone and that the angel had told them that Jesus was alive. The disciples didn't know what to think. Peter and John rushed to the tomb. John got there first and waited outside, but Peter ran straight in when he arrived, and John followed. Jesus was gone. The cloth that He had been wrapped in was there, though. It was folded up neatly on the stone bench that Jesus' body had been left lying on.**

*(Give each child a piece of material/tissue and ask them to fold it and put it in the tomb)*

**Peter and John went home, confused. But Mary, who had followed them back to the tomb, stayed behind. She was terribly upset. She didn't really understand what the angel had told her, and she loved Jesus. All she wanted was to know where His body was. While she was crying, someone came to her and asked why she was crying. She thought he was a gardener, so she said, "They have taken away the body of my Lord and I don't know what they've done with it! Please, tell me where it is."**

**The man said one word, "Mary," and she instantly recognised his voice and realised that Jesus was talking to her. She looked up and saw Jesus, alive and well, but still with the hole in his hands where the nails had been.**

**"Teacher!" she exclaimed.**

*(Draw Jesus and Mary in the garden)*

**Jesus told her to go and tell the disciples that He was alive.**

**Mary ran back to the room where the disciples were and told them that she had seen Jesus. They were happy, but still a bit confused. Mary might be telling the truth – but she might have imagined it. Then they remembered that Jesus had said that He would come alive again after 3 days, only they hadn't understood what He meant at the time.**

**Suddenly, they looked up and Jesus had come into the room even though the doors were locked. He told them not to worry and ate with them. The disciples were glad.**

**Jesus is alive!**

Ask the group the following questions:

**How do you think Jesus' friends felt when His body was put in the tomb?**

**What thoughts might they have had when they saw that the stone wasn't covering the tomb?**

**Do you think they found it easy to believe that Jesus was alive again?**

**How do you think they felt when Jesus appeared to them?**

**Why was it important that Jesus rose from the dead?** *(If Jesus didn't defeat death, how can we? Jesus was who He said He was. The resurrection shows that the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross was accepted and our sins are forgiven) (also see [1 Corinthians 15:17](#); [Romans 10:9](#); [Isaiah 53:10-12](#); [Romans 6:23](#))*

**If the disciples hadn't seen Jesus alive, what do you think would have happened?** *(They were to go and make disciples of all nations based on the fact that Jesus is risen; if they hadn't seen him, would they have been able to preach the gospel with certainty? Would Christianity exist today?)*

Explain to the group what the resurrection meant: that Jesus had taken the punishment for sin and had conquered death. And now, because Jesus has been raised from the dead, He promises that those who believe in Him will equally one day enjoy life after death with Him for all eternity.

**The Point:** To tell the story of the resurrection and what it means.

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### ***Equipment***

Piece of paper for each child, as well as something to lean on if necessary; pencils/pens; circles of paper/card or stones; pieces of material or toilet tissue; questions (see main description/PowerPoint).

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## **Easter Cards**

Response

15 mins

 Craft Ideas

Give each child a piece of card and access to the pencils/pens. Say that a lot of the things we see on Easter cards don't really have much to do with the real meaning of Easter.

Ask the children if they can think of any things that they might see on cards, but be prepared to suggest things yourself – bunches of flowers, chicks, rabbits, and daffodils.

Ask the children to design a symbol/picture that really shows what Easter is all about, and to draw this on their Easter card.

**The Point:** To think about the real meaning of Easter while designing the card.

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### ***Equipment***

A5 card, coloured pencils and felt tips.

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## **He is Risen Takeaway**

Give the children one of the following to take home and complete:

- 1) Colour in the open tomb (PDF). Remind the children that the tomb was empty because Jesus is risen!
  - 2) Picture of the cross (PDF). Over the coming week, encourage the children to write anything that is on their mind on the picture of the cross, such as any worries or problems. Remind children that Jesus died to set us free, and all of our troubles can be nailed to the cross.
  - 3) Explain to the children that Jesus sacrificed everything for us, even His life. Challenge them to sacrifice something for Jesus this week – maybe reading the Bible for 10 minutes a day rather than watching TV.
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### ***Equipment***

Printed out worksheets/question

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