

and when He hung on that cross, He was enduring the anger that a holy God poured out on Him as our substitute—taking the place of the sinner. “Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed” (1 Cor. 5:7 ESV). When we accept what God says, that this all was “for me—for my sin!” receiving Christ as Lord and Savior, we become His own—purchased and redeemed by His blood. No longer are we enslaved to sin, but God puts a new heart within, and His Holy Spirit takes up residence within us. He gives us a new song, a new life, a new destiny. The sinful world, typified by Egypt, is now behind us, and heaven’s joys are before us. We are God’s special people, and Christ’s purchased bride. Israel was under a covenant of works, but Christians are freed from the bondage of the law and brought into fellowship with God by grace. How much transpires in that moment of faith!

***So now do you understand why that day is special to Christians?***

***But more importantly, is the Redeemer, the Lord Jesus, special to you?***

## Irony of Insults

*Quotations from Mark 15:29-32 NASB*

*Those passing by were hurling abuse at Him, wagging their heads, and saying, “Ha! You who are going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save Yourself, and come down from the cross!”*

What these cruel men didn’t realize was that *they* were destroying the temple (of Jesus’ body) and He would indeed raise it up in three days! (John 2:19-22)

*In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes, were mocking Him among themselves and saying, “He saved others; He cannot save Himself.”*

Oh how the Lord Jesus would have loved to save *them*. And He was dying in order to be able to save *others*. Myriads of angels were at His command, but nothing could deter Him from His purpose to provide means of salvation for a world (yes, you and me) at enmity with God.

*“Let this Christ, the King of Israel, now come down from the cross, so that we may see and believe!”*

If He would have come down from the cross, that would have been reason to *not* believe in Him. It would have been contrary to the Scriptures that most accurately and graphically foretold His sufferings and death. “Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed” (John 20:29).

*Those who were crucified with Him were also insulting Him.*

He was numbered with the transgressors. His friends forsook Him. His enemies insulted Him. Even those who were enduring physical sufferings like His would not sympathize with Him. Finally, even His God forsook Him.

*Behold, what manner of Love, that He would stoop down so low to bring His enemies into the fold of God’s family—and so near to His heart. Respond to His love today.*

God’s love is timeless: without beginning (Eph. 1:4) and without end (Jeremiah 31:3). It is personified in His eternal Son (Gal. 2:20; John 17:23-26).

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Winter/Spring 2012



## Easter—bunnies and eggs?

Even though the actual term *Easter* is not a biblical term, the day remembered as *Easter* today is certainly a very important day in the Bible. It is the day of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

*“And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb.... And he [an angel] said to them, ‘Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him.’” (Mark 16:2, 6 ESV)*

Death could not detain the body of the Author of Life (Acts 3:15). By His own power He rose out from the tomb, and appeared, alive, to over five hundred people at one time (1 Cor. 15:6). His disciples didn’t believe it until they actually saw Him. But the truth of the resurrection changed fearful, feeble followers into fearless, powerful witnesses and martyrs for Christ.

## He is risen!

### *Why would this be so important to believers in Christ?*

Paul tells us about the significance of the resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15. If Christ had not been raised, we would yet be lost in our sins. There would be no salvation to proclaim, no victory over death. Christ's resurrection proves that He is conqueror over the power of death, and therefore He is able to save us out of death as well.

Again, His resurrection proves that God the Father is satisfied with the price His Son paid for our redemption, because the Father has placed Him at His right hand in glory, the place of greatest honor (Rom. 8:34). What the Father gave Him to do, He finished to perfection. We have a perfect Savior who accomplished a perfect work to God's complete satisfaction, and all who place their faith in Him find peace with God.

### **Carpenter – King**

*Inspired by "My boss is a Jewish carpenter"*

My Lord was a Jewish carpenter,  
But now He is the King.  
Provider for a family here,  
Yet He made everything.

Yes, King He is, with right to reign,  
For He became so poor,  
And Priest He is, always the same,  
His grace and love is sure.

He's building now the church, His bride.  
Soon she will be complete;  
We'll worship Him who lives, who died,  
Our crowns lay at His feet.

—Nathan Bruley

## “Good” Friday?

### *So what is “Good Friday,” and why do people call it “good”?*

According to the Oxford dictionary, the word “good” is used to indicate “a day or season observed as holy by the church.” So this day marks an event that is special to Christians. There may be other reasons for the term, but its origin is uncertain.

### *And what makes it special?*

It is the day set aside to remember when the Lord Jesus was crucified.

### *And why would this day be special? Wasn't it horrible?*

Certainly it was horrible—the Son of God, hanging upon a cross, dying an agonizing death at the hands of His own creation! There is nothing wonderful about that. What is special is not simply a day, nor that a man was crucified, but that through the death of this Savior a means of Redemption was brought to mankind (that's you and me).

### *Redemption? What is that?*

To answer this question we should really first consider another special day—a day celebrated by the Jewish people. In fact, they were observing this event at the very time the Lord Jesus was being crucified. It is called the *Passover*. The Passover is a special day to Jews, because it marks the day when they were delivered from bondage and slavery in Egypt long ago. At that time, God instructed them to kill a lamb and put the blood of that lamb around the door posts of their



houses. The lamb died in the place of the firstborn within that house, and shielded him from the judgment God brought because of sin. God **passed-over** and guarded the houses where there was blood, and didn't bring judgment upon the inhabitants. In short, the lamb's blood—its life—was the **price that had to be paid** because of sin. This is the idea of Redemption: it involves a purchase.

But there is more. God not only saved His people from death, but He also delivered them from the slavery they were experiencing in Egypt. He brought them out of Egypt and into a new land of great blessing and abundance. So Redemption (in this aspect) involves a *purchase* out of slavery, and a *setting free*.

Yet there is more. God not only saved them from death, brought them out of Egypt, and brought them into a new land, but He also made them into a nation: Israel. He made them His own people. Redemption made it possible for God to call them His own special people. (See Exodus 6:3-8, 19:4-5.)

So Redemption in the Bible involves a price (or ransom) that is paid to bring deliverance from bondage, resulting in blessing.

### *So how does the Redemption of Israel relate to Good Friday?*

Well, just as Israel needed to be delivered from the bondage of Egypt, mankind needs to be delivered from the bondage of sin. The only way God could righteously deliver us from the penalty that our sins deserved (eternal separation from God), was for another to die in our place. Another person had to purchase our freedom. That person is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the only one who could do it—He is perfect. He is divine. But He had to become a man to do it. And He had to go to a place called Calvary to fulfill it. He was God's Lamb for our Redemption,