

# Living Life!

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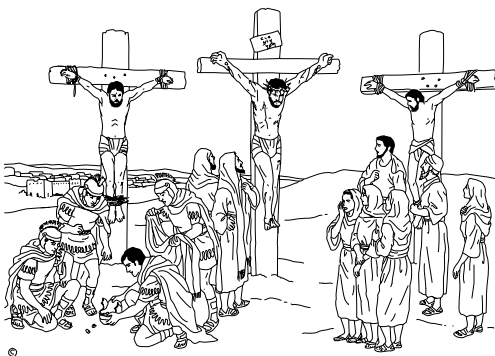
Easter is one of the biggest holidays in America. The federal government takes a day off from work, churches have special programs and drama/choral productions, and people get together with their families and friends for a celebration dinner.

Unfortunately, like Christmas, Easter has become commercialized, and many Americans don't really even know what the true meaning of Easter is. It's *not* about bunnies and eggs and candy and new clothes and shoes. It *is* about Jesus Christ, who is the Savior of the world.

Remember last month's story of how the prophet Moses saved the Jews from Pharaoh? When Moses and the Jews sacrificed lambs and put the lambs' blood on the doorposts of their houses, the Lord saw the blood and "passed over" their houses and didn't go in and kill their firstborn



sons. That's why it's called the "Passover". The lamb that was sacrificed (and eaten) by each Jewish family was called the Passover lamb.



John was a prophet and a baptizer. He introduced Jesus to the people as "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29)

Easter is the fulfillment of the Passover because Jesus – a perfect person who never sinned – became the Passover Lamb, the sacrifice for the whole world. You can read the true Easter story on page 3.

Why is Easter so important? It's important because Easter – the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus – is the core foundation that our Christian faith is built on. Why? Two reasons:

(1) If Jesus didn't die as the perfect sacrificial lamb for our sins, then we would still be doing animal sacrifices. The blood of bulls and sheep does *not* take away sin. But because God told the people to obey him by sacrificing animals, then because of their faith and obedience, God forgave their sins. However, the blood of a perfect sacrifice – that of a man who never sinned – *does* take away our sin if we accept his sacrifice instead of choosing to die for our own sins. That sinless man is Jesus.

(2) If Jesus wasn't resurrected after his death, then Christianity would be like all the other religions in the world whose great prophets are dead. But by the power of God, Jesus was raised to life on the third day and is alive. Now that's exciting!

Salvation from our sins is like a gift. If you give me a gift but I never open it and accept it, then what good does it do me? I'll never know what's inside and I'll never enjoy it. However, if I open and accept the gift that you give me, then it becomes mine. The same is true with this gift of God which is the salvation from our sins. He has given us the gift – through sacrificing Jesus as the perfect Passover Lamb on the cross. But until we accept the gift, it doesn't belong to us.

## Happy Easter!