

"A *Jesus Easter* will help your family understand the story of Easter, from its first hint in the book of Genesis right through to the spread of the gospel in the early church. Buy a copy of this excellent book and start a tradition of taking your family through an Easter devotional every year."

MARTY MACHOWSKI, family pastor and author of *Long Story Short*

"This is such a good Easter devotional! It's richly packed with amazing truths, full of helpful questions and notes, and adaptable for a range of ages. I love the way it doesn't just show God's rescue plan but also introduces the lies of Satan in all their different forms and the promises of Jesus that combat them and help us rest in him. I'm certain it will help families focus on our Saviour and also generate further discussions about everyday faith."

TAMAR POLLARD, Director for Families, Children, and Youth Ministry, Grace Community Church, Bedford, UK

"I really enjoyed showing this to my boys! The timing was short, the process was simple, and it pointed us to the Saviour, King Jesus. I loved how it showed us God's grand design—how the Easter story is really the Jesus story and how we see the themes from the beginning of Scripture continue all the way through. Barbara reveals the lies of Satan, the truth of Jesus, and the hope of Easter."

PHIL HOWE, Scripture Union Northern Ireland

"Barbara Reaoch takes us on a fascinating journey through the Old Testament and Jesus' ministry, showing us with clarity and joy that all the Scriptures point to Jesus. A helpful guide for those wanting to understand how the Bible fits together."

THOMAS SCHREINER, Associate Dean for Scripture and Interpretation, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

"An engaging, Christ-exalting, gospel-centered resource for family discipleship. This devotional will introduce children to the Savior promised in Genesis and how he rescues us from sin. Celebrate Easter this year with your children by reading *A Jesus Easter* together!"

CHRISTINA FOX, author of *Tell God How You Feel*

“Celebrate the resurrection of Jesus as a family with this wonderful new 30-day devotional by best-selling author and master teacher Barbara Reaoch. Using kid-friendly language, interactive questions, and space to draw, *A Jesus Easter* explores the Bible to show how King Jesus has triumphed over the devil, sin, and death. It’s the perfect addition to any Easter basket!”

CHAMP THORNTON, pastor and author of *The Radical Book for Kids*

“As a father of five, I’m grateful to have this reliable, clear, and engaging Easter devotional to help me lead my family in exploring God’s amazing rescue plan in Christ alone. If you too want your family and others to treasure the truth of Jesus this Easter, pick up this book and read it together!”

BRIAN J. WRIGHT, pastor and author of *God’s Daring Dozen*

“Another example of a great family devotional, which allows all ages to explore the Easter story together. With space to read, reflect, journal, and discuss together, it allows for different learning styles as well as different ages, helping you to look as a family at the greatest story of all time.”

RUTH BROMLEY, Children’s Development Officer, Presbyterian Church in Ireland

“*A Jesus Easter* is an interactive discipleship guide for families—one that helps adults to communicate and apply powerful gospel truths in kid-friendly language. If you’re looking to cultivate meaningful conversations about Easter and its implications for everyday life, this creative resource is for you.”

CHRISTINE CHAPPELL, Outreach Director and Hope + Help Podcast Host, Institute for Biblical Counseling and Discipleship

“A very effective teaching tool to help children learn about who Jesus is. It has a consistent lesson format and the journaling sections allow for individual creativity, which will leave a mental image in the mind of the child.”

CAROL MCCARTY, illustrator and former educator

BARBARA REAOCH

A
JESUS
EASTER

EXPLORE GOD'S AMAZING

RESCUE PLAN

the goodbook
COMPANY

*This book is lovingly dedicated to Benjamin, Stacy, Jonathan,
Elizabeth, Chris, and our family's next generation.*

Psalm 145:4

A Jesus Easter

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BEFORE YOU BEGIN

These devotions are ideal for all ages. They are about faith—trusting Jesus, not your own goodness. They are about repentance—living for Jesus, not yourself. They are for children who already believe and for those who do not yet believe in Jesus. We all need encouragement all the time to believe Jesus’s truth.

Prepare your own heart before you lead your family or others in *A Jesus Easter*. Ask your heavenly Father to guide you. Ask for insight about what questions to ask and how to promote discussion. Pray for God to give you a daily desire to make Jesus the focus of the run-up to Easter.

THE DAILY PATTERN

Each day has four parts: Explore, Explain, Engage, and Enter in. These are followed by a wonderful true statement about Jesus and some family journaling space.

EXPLORE

Reading the Bible passage together is the key activity. Why did Jesus come? The first 10 days explore true stories in the Old Testament which show us something about God’s plan for sending Jesus. We start in the Garden of Eden, where God’s family was perfect. Satan (the devil) was seen in the garden as a snake. Adam and Eve listened to the serpent’s lie. Their sin broke everything. But God had a plan to make a family for himself again.

Days 11-30 explore passages in the Gospel accounts of Jesus’s life, starting with his baptism and telling the whole story of Easter. We walk alongside Jesus and see how he made God’s plans come true. We look forward to the day when we will be with Jesus in heaven forever as God’s perfect family.

EXPLAIN

Each day three things are highlighted: God's plan for Easter, the serpent's lies, and Jesus's truth. Try to answer your child's questions but don't get bogged down in details. Assure everyone that as they learn more about Jesus, the truths will start to connect.

ENGAGE

There are two Engage questions for older children. They are designed to help children discover how each truth intersects with their lives and to stimulate deeper discussion. There are also two simpler questions ideal for younger children or those with less Bible knowledge. The older and younger questions are marked as shown below:



For older children



For younger children

Be prepared to get the conversation going. Ask God for willingness to talk about times when you are tempted to sin. Pray that you will respond to your kids with understanding and not in a judgmental tone. As your family responds honestly to God's word and Spirit, they will begin to treasure the truth of Jesus.

ENTER IN

This short prayer is a springboard for your response to whatever God shows you about himself, Jesus, and yourself.

JESUS IS...

These "Jesus is..." statements will help your family to remember each day's key truth about Jesus. Some have been decorated for you, though your child may want to add more pictures or patterns. Others have letter outlines for your child to color in.

FAMILY JOURNALING SPACE

This is a place to respond to what God has shown you. You might want to write down what you have learned, draw a picture, list things to thank God for, draw how your face looks when you think about Jesus, or use this space for any other way you want to respond to God. There is some extra journaling space at the back of the book for any days when you have an idea that needs more room.

ANSWERS

If you would find it helpful, you can download an answer sheet to all of the Explore and Engage questions from www.thegoodbook.com/ajeaster-answers.pdf

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Be brief. Be real. Be consistent.

SOME USEFUL BIBLE WORDS



AMEN: This Hebrew word means "I agree." It is a way of joining in with someone's prayer.

BIBLE / SCRIPTURE / GOD'S WORD: Although the Bible was written by about 40 people, God made sure that they wrote exactly what he wanted them to write. God speaks to us through the Bible, and what he says in the Bible is always true.

DEBT: Another way of saying that you owe someone something is to say you owe them a debt. The Bible sometimes uses this word to talk about sin. We should act the way God wants. When we don't, we owe him something to make up for what we've done wrong. We can't pay this debt on our own! But when Jesus came, he paid it for us.

DISCIPLES / APOSTLES: Anyone who is Jesus's friend and follower is his disciple. The twelve men who were Jesus's closest friends are sometimes called his disciples, but they are also called his "apostles".

EASTER: God planned some important days that would change the world: the day when Jesus died (Good Friday), and the day when he came alive again (Easter Sunday). We call these days (and the lead-up to them) "Easter."

GOSPEL: The Greek word "gospel" means "good news." The gospel of Jesus is the good news that Jesus came to save us from the problem of sin.

HOSANNA: This Hebrew word is a way of saying, "You are amazing, God!"

JUDGE / JUDGMENT: A judge decides whether someone should be punished. God is the best judge because he is always right and fair. When we talk about his judgment, we either mean the decision he makes about whether someone should be punished, or the punishment itself.

KINGDOM OF GOD: This isn't a physical place. It is God's people living under his rule as their King.

MERCY: Mercy is when God doesn't treat us in the way we deserve. Instead God

shows us grace, which is his huge kindness to people who don't deserve it.

PENALTY: When you do something wrong, you have to pay a penalty. It's a kind of punishment. For example, when you park in the wrong place, you might have to pay money. Or when you break the rules in a game, you might have points taken away from you. When a penalty has been paid, it means you have made up for the wrong thing you did.

PRIEST: A priest is a person who represents people to God, and God to people. In Bible times priests worked in the temple and helped people know God better.

PROPHET: A prophet is a messenger from God. They speak God's words to other people.

REPENT / REPENTANT: When you repent, you say sorry for what you have done wrong and turn away in a new direction. A repentant person is someone who has repented!

RESURRECTION: Jesus died on the first Good Friday. But he didn't stay dead! On the first Easter Sunday God raised Jesus back to life.

RIGHTEOUS / RIGHTEOUSNESS: To be righteous means to be "right with God."

SACRIFICE: When we give up something we love for the sake of someone else, we are making a sacrifice. In Bible times, people used to bring sacrifices of animals to God to show him that they loved him or that they were sorry for doing wrong. Jesus made the best-ever sacrifice: he gave up his life for our sake!

SIN / SINFUL: When we sin, we do what we want instead of what God wants. Jesus came to rescue us from the problem of sin.

SPIRIT / HOLY SPIRIT: There is only one God, but he is three persons: God the Father, God the Son (Jesus), and God the Holy Spirit. The Spirit points us to the truth about Jesus, and helps us to live the way God's word (the Bible) tells us to.

TEMPLE: In Bible times, this was a building that reminded the people that God was with them. People went there to pray and to make sacrifices.

THE CROSS: Jesus's enemies killed him by nailing him to a cross and leaving him there to die. But it was God who had already planned that Jesus would die. As Jesus died on the cross, he took all the punishment for our sin, so that everyone who trusts in Jesus can be forgiven.

WITNESS: At the most simple level, this word means somebody who sees something happen. But it also means somebody who tells other people about what they've seen or what they know. We haven't seen Jesus with our eyes, but we can still be witnesses by telling people what we know about him.

WRATH: This means God's right anger against sin.



DAY 1

GOD'S FIRST PROMISE

EXPLORE

Read Genesis 3:1-5, 14-15

Who lied to Adam and Eve? (verses 3-4)

What did God promise about the serpent? (verses 14-15)

EXPLAIN

Even before God made the world, he had a plan for Easter. God planned to make a beautiful family. He started with his first children, Adam and Eve. God built a lush garden to be their home. He talked with them like best friends talk and gave them lots of delicious fruit to eat. God loved Adam and Eve so much that he warned them not to eat the fruit of one tree. They would die if they ate that fruit.

But a serpent in the garden (who was really Satan) told them God had lied. When Adam and Eve believed Satan's lie and ate the fruit, sin broke God's perfect world. Now earthquakes and floods happen. People get sick and die. Could anything be worse? Yes! Sin infects our hearts. Now people everywhere believe the serpent's terrible lie.

Adam and Eve were so sad and afraid. But God made the best-ever promise. God would send a Rescuer so his family could know him as their own dear Father. The serpent would hurt the Rescuer. But the Rescuer would crush the serpent and free our hearts from the serpent's lie! **Jesus is the Rescuer God promised.**

ENGAGE

Obedying God brings us true happiness. But the serpent tempts us to think that God's way isn't best. When we try to find happiness without God we sin. God made us. He loves us. And God's way is always best.

 Adam and Eve were probably sad and afraid after they sinned. How do you feel after you sin?

 What is sin?

 When you feel you can't beat sin, how does God's promise of Jesus help you?

 Why is God's promise to send Jesus the best-ever promise?

ENTER IN

Heavenly Father, thank you for making us and loving us. Please help us to love you more this Easter and always. Amen.

JESUS IS THE RESCUER



FAMILY
JOURNALING
SPACE

IDEAS: Draw Jesus crushing the serpent;
or write your own prayer; or something else...



DAY 2



SAFE FOREVER



EXPLORE

Read Genesis 6:9-13 and 9:13-16

Describe the world at the time God spoke to Noah. (6:11-13)

God flooded the whole earth with water. Afterwards, what promise did God make to Noah—and to us all? (9:15)

EXPLAIN

Was God’s plan for Easter hopeless? No! Adam and Eve had turned away from God but God would never turn away from them. They did not die right away. But sin had ruined their hearts and their children’s hearts and their children’s children’s hearts. By the time of Noah, everyone loved sin best. Not even the warning of a worldwide flood would stop people from listening to the serpent.

“Is God’s judgment fair?” questions the serpent. The truth is, no one’s heart hates pain and death more than God’s does. God’s anger against evil is right and fair. Our hearts want justice when a bully does wrong. And we can expect God to act justly when we hurt others.

A JESUS EASTER

The ark was God's rescue plan for Noah, his family, and all the animals. As God judged the world's evil, he kept Noah's family safe in the ark. But Noah needed a greater rescue than from the flood. Noah loved God but sin still infected his heart. Jesus is the only Rescuer from sin. On the cross, Jesus took God's right anger against evil on himself (Romans 6:23). **Jesus keeps us safe with God forever.**

ENGAGE

God's rescue plan for Noah looked forward to God's greater rescue of us through Jesus. Jesus took all our punishment. God's children can know they will never face God's judgment (Romans 8:1). God always keeps his promises.



How is the flood a rescue plan that both comforts and warns us?



Does God let evil go on forever?



What truths about God do you see in this story?



How is God the real hero of this story?

ENTER IN

Our Father, thank you for giving us a way of safety in Jesus. Help us want to be your close friend. Show our family how to help our neighbors know you and love you so that they will be safe with Jesus too. Amen.



JESUS KEEPS US SAFE



FAMILY
JOURNALING
SPACE

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin border, intended for family journaling.



IDEAS: Draw Noah's ark; or list other things that keep people safe; or something else...



DAY 3



GOD PLANS HIS FAMILY



EXPLORE

Read Genesis 12:1-7

What did God tell Abram to do? (verse 1)

What did God promise Abram? (verses 2-3 and 7)

EXPLAIN

The long wait for Easter makes us wonder, *“What happened to God’s plan for his beautiful family?”* After the flood, more and more people believed the serpent’s lies. God said to Abram (later called Abraham), *“Leave your home and follow me.”* Abram didn’t have any children. But God promised Abram a big family! And one of Abram’s children would bless the whole world. Abram trusted God.

The serpent argues, *“How can you trust a God who is so unfair? His family is just a few lucky people.”* Here’s the truth: God’s family is bigger than we can imagine (Genesis 15:5)! If we could count the stars, we’d know the number of people in God’s family. From the very beginning God planned his big, beautiful family to hold many children from every corner of the world (Revelation 7:9).

How many children are in God's family? Better to ask, "Am I God's child?" All who trust in Jesus as their Rescuer are God's children. Abram's son's son's son's ... son, Jesus Christ, is God's promised blessing (Galatians 3:7-9, 14). **God makes all who trust in Jesus his child.**

ENGAGE

God's promise to Abram to bless all nations never ended. It is still real today! All who believe the truth about Jesus receive the promised blessing. They become God's child in his forever family.

 Do you think Abram was afraid to follow God? What fears keep some people from trusting God?

 Why do you think Abram was not afraid to follow God?

 What promise is God calling you to believe, by faith?

 Many people will be in God's family. Would you like to be?

ENTER IN

Father God, we want to believe your promises. We admit that we feel afraid when we don't have all the answers. Please give us faith to trust you. Amen.

JESUS MAKES US GOD'S CHILDREN



FAMILY
JOURNALING
SPACE



IDEAS: Draw Abram looking at the stars; or list as many nations as you can;
or something else...