

Luke Chapter 23 v 32 - 43 (A)

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[0 : 00] pagan participant For one suffering, a great loss Gay Gibson Amen.

Amen. Amen.

That sounded good. Let's do it once more. Christ is risen. Excellent. Let's just read for a moment that very first Easter Sunday morning.

Listen to these words from Luke's account. On the very first day of the week, early in the morning, the women took spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb.

But when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them.

[2 : 36] In their fright, the women bowed down with their faces to the ground. But the men said to them, Why do you look for the living among the dead? He's not here. He has risen.

Let's sing our first Easter hymn together then. Number 266 in the book. Christ is risen. Hallelujah. Risen are victorious. Christ is risen.

Hallelujah. Christ is risen. Hallelujah. Prisc Lehigh.

Risen of Abagash. Amen. I now have arrived. Amen.

I have heaven answered them. So we are the man on earth yet Almighty Path. PRISON OF VICTORIOUS HEAD SING HIS PRAISES, HALLELUIA RISE HIS RISEN FROM THE DEAD STRAY TO THE ALL-ONSERED LORING AS HIS LIGHT CONSTORE AND PRIST CHOWING HIM IN JOYLY FOR HIM RISING UP FROM FREEDOM CHEERS CHRIST IS RISEN, HALLELUIA RISEN OF VICTORIOUS HEAD SING HIS PRAISES, HALLELUIA CHRIST IS RISEN FROM THE DEAD CHRIST IS RISEN FROM THE SADNESS ON HIS EARTHLY LIFE IS ALL

[4 : 27] THROUGH THE OPEN GATES OF LADNESS HE RESENTS TO LIGHT ONCE MORE DEAD UNHELL BEFORE HIM PENDING HE IS RISEN FROM THE DEAD HE IS RISEN FROM THE DEAD ANGELS ON HIS STRENGTH ATTENDING GLORY ROUND HIS WOOD AND CRY CHRIST IS RISEN, HALLELUIA RISEN OF VICTORIOUS HEAD SING HIS PRAISES, HALLELUIA CHRIST IS RISEN FROM THE DEAD CHRIST IS RISEN, HANDS OF LEAVEN CHRIST IS RISEN, HANDS OF LEAVEN DEAD OR HELL SHALL US INCALL WE ARE PRICING HIM FOREVER

WE ARE TRIUMPH OVER ALL ALL THE DOUBTING AND EJECTION OF OUR TRENT WE CAN'T SUCCEED HE IS RISEN, HALLELUIA THIS IS DAY OF RESURRENCTION LET US RISE AND KEEP THE PEACE CHRIST IS RISEN, HALLELUIA CHRIST IS RISEN, HALLELUIA CHRIST IS RISEN, HALLELUIA CHRIST IS RISEN, HALLELUIA CHRIST IS RISEN, HALLELUIA CHRIST IS RISEN, HALLELUIA AND AN EXTRA HALLELUIA AT THE END OF THAT, BECAUSE IT'S A GREAT, GREAT EASTER Hymn AGAIN, WELCOME TO ALL OF YOU ON THIS EASTER SUNDAY MORNING AND WE REJOICE IN THE FACT THAT WE ARE WORSHIPPING A LIVING GOD NOT ONE WHO IS DEAD NOT ONE WHO IS ANCIENT HISTORY

ANCIENT HISTORY BUT ONE WHO HAS CONQUERED DEATH AND IS ALIVE FOREVERMORE AND BECAUSE HE IS ALIVE FOREVERMORE WE CAN COME TO HIM SPEAK WITH HIM KNOW HIM AND LET'S PRAY EVEN NOW TO HIM LET US ALL PRAY OH LORD OUR GOD WE THANK YOU FOR THIS EASTER SUNDAY MORNING WE THANK YOU THAT FOR US WHO ARE CHRISTIANS WHO KNOW YOU KNOW YOUR LOVE WHO KNOW YOUR CARE WHO KNOW YOUR FORGIVENESS IT IS A WONDERFUL WONDERFUL DAY AS WE CELEBRATE THE FACT THE REALITY THE TRUTH THAT YOUR SON JESUS CHRIST WHO DIED IS RISEN TO LIFE FOREVERMORE NEVER TO DIE AGAIN BUT WE THANK YOU

THAT HE EVER LIVES TO RESCUE AND TO SAVE US HE EVER LIVES TO BE OUR FAITHFUL FRIEND HE EVER LIVES TO BE WITH US WHEREVER WE GO IN WHATEVER WE FACE IN WHATEVER COMES OUR WAY WE THANK YOU THAT WE HAVE ONE WHO STICKS CLOSER TO US THAN ANY BROTHER THAN ANY HUMAN FRIEND ANY EARTHLY FRIEND FOR WE THANK YOU THAT JESUS CHRIST YOU ARE THE ONE WHO IS AND ALWAYS WILL BE THE SAVIOR OF SINNERS WE COME THIS MORNING BECAUSE WE REMEMBER THAT THIS MORNING ONLY FOLLOWS ON FROM GOOD FRIDAY THAT RESURRECTION ONLY COMES FROM DEATH AND WE THANK YOU AGAIN FRIDAY A DAY WHICH IS GOOD FOR US BECAUSE WE KNOW IT WAS THERE ON THE CROSS THAT YOU SUFFERED AND DIED IN OUR PLACE IT WAS THERE ON THE CROSS YOU PAID OUR DEBTS YOU FORGAVE OUR SINS YOU DID FOR US WHAT WE CAN NEVER DO FOR OURSELVES YOU MADE US RIGHT WITH GOD AND REMOVED THE BARRIER OF OUR SIN AND OUR LAWBREAKING AND OUR CRIMES WE COME TO YOU THIS MORNING LORD JESUS BECAUSE WE KNOW THAT YOU ARE THE ONE THAT WANTS TO AND IS WILLING TO AND DESIRES TO GIVE TO US THE CONFIDENCE AND THE ASSURANCE THAT OUR SINS ARE FORGIVEN YOU WANT US TO KNOW YOUR LIFE IN US THAT RESURRECTION LIFE NOT THAT LIFE WHICH IS DRAB AND MEANINGLESS AND POINTLESS THAT GOES FROM ONE DAY TO ANOTHER ONE WEEK TO ANOTHER ONE YEAR TO ANOTHER BUT THAT LIFE WHICH IS FULL FOR YOU PROMISED AND SAID I'VE COME THAT THEY MIGHT HAVE LIFE AND HAVE IT ABUNDANTLY AND SO WE PRAY THAT THIS MORNING THIS EASTER SUNDAY MORNING EACH OF US MAY KNOW IN REALITY THAT JESUS IS ALIVE AND RECEIVE FROM YOU THE FULLNESS OF LIFE THAT YOU LONG TO GIVE HELP US IN THIS DAY WE CANNOT HELP BUT THINK AS WE REJOICE OF THOSE WHO MOURN WE THINK PARTICULARLY LORD THAT IN THIS WORLD WHERE YOU HAVE COME TO LIFE AND CONQUERED SIN WE SEE SO MUCH WICKEDNESS AND EVIL AND WE REMEMBER THOSE WHO WOMEN'S OF THE BUSES IN NALEPO WE ASK O LORD FOR THOSE WHO ARE INJURED THAT YOU WOULD HEAL RESTORE AND PROVIDE FOR THEM THE CARE THEY NEED WE PRAY THAT O LORD YOU WOULD CONQUER AND REMOVE WICKEDNESS FROM THAT LAND AND BRING PEACE TO THAT COUNTRY ONCE MORE WE PRAY AND WE ASK ALL THESE THINGS AS WE BRING TO YOU OUR PRAISES

[9 : 35] O LORD OUR GOD IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST AMEN NOW RICHARD IS HERE SOMEWHERE IF I CAN SEE HIS THERE HE IS HE'S JUST COMING AT THE BACK HE HAS BEEN HERE FOR A WHILE BUT HE'S OBVIOUSLY BUSY THERE IS THAT ALL RIGHT BECAUSE WE HAVEN'T GOT ANY OTHER ONE AT THE MOMENT THANK YOU THERE IS A CRASH BUT NO SUNDAY SCHOOL THAT'S WHERE THE FAMILY

WOULD BE BEEN TAKEN THIS COMING SATURDAY IS THE GOth WEEKEND WE'RE DOING A TRAP DISTRIBUTION AS WE USUALLY DO AND THE ARRANGEMENTS THERE ARE SATURDAY MEET AT CHURCH 2 O'CLOCK IF YOU'RE GOING TO TAKE PART THEN NEXT SUNDAY SERVICE TIME 1045 IN THE MORNING 6 IN THE EVENING PETER AND FAMILY WILL HOPEFULLY BE ON HOLIDAY BY NEXT SUNDAY AND SO DAVID WILLIAMS OF WILLIAMS WILL BE COMING TO PREACH AND HE WILL BE COMING TO US FROM MIDDLESBROKE ONE OF OUR BELOVERS SHE WASN'T A MEMBER BUT VERY MUCH ONE OF US WENT TO BE WITH THE LORD A FEW DAYS AGO AND HER FUNERAL IS ON MONDAY THE 24TH HERE IN CHURCH AT 10 O'CLOCK AND THEN THERE WILL BE A GREEN BURIAL IN WESTERDALE YESTERDAY SOME OF US WERE TAKING PART IN A GIDEON DISTRIBUTION GIDEON IS UP AND DOWN THE LAND WE'RE HAVING SPECIAL LEAVE TO PROMOTION AND SOME OF US WERE JUST OUT THERE IN SKILLER STREET AND 120 OF THESE TESTS

WERE GIVEN OUT AND THAT'S ONE THING WE NEED TO PRAY DON'T WE DO OR OPEN THE WORLD TO THOSE WHO RECEIVED IT AND THEN WE DO HAVE A LOOK FOR THE WIT THE GOSPEL MUSIC CONVENTION LEAPLOOKS THAT'S IN MAY VISITERS AND THEN AFTER THAT WE HAVE OUR SPECIAL MISSION AGAIN YOU'LL SEE LEAPLOOKS AROUND THE CHURCH DO HAVE A LOOK AT THAT AND THEN THERE'S SOME NEW LIGHTS LIGHT FITTINES OVER THERE ANYBODY WANTS AND FINALLY THE MEAN BEAN CHALLENGE THOSE OF US WHO SPONSOR THE MEAN BEAN CHALLENGE THAT THEY NEED THEIR SPONSOR MONEY SO COULD YOU PLEASE SEE FELIXITIVE OR USING THOSE ARE ALL

INVITED OKAY THERE'S SOME MORE OF THOSE GIDEON NEW TESTIMENTS DOWNSTAIRS
CAN WE TAKE SOME THOSE WHO WOULD LIKE ONE YES I THINK SO OKAY THAT'S GREAT
THANK YOU AS FAR AS CRESH IS CONCERNED THIS IS AN ALL-AGE SERVICE SO
CHILDREN YOU'RE GOING TO STAY UP HERE
BUT IF MUMS YOU WANT TO TAKE LITTLE ONES DOWN AND USE THE CRESH PLEASE DO
ANYTIME SO THERE'S NO RESTRICTION BUT THE MEETING IS PARTICULARLY SO THAT
ALL OF US CAN ENGAGE IN IT AS WELL AND WE'RE GOING TO SING TOGETHER NOW BY
SINGING A SONG WHICH IS GOING TO COME UP ON THE SCREEN AND I THINK I'VE
PROBABLY FORGOTTEN SOMETHING SO THAT'S ALL RIGHT THANK YOU JESUS THANK
YOU JESUS LET'S STAND TOGETHER AND SING THANK YOU CNN THANK YOU

Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Lord, for loving me.

[14:03] You went to Calvary, where there you died for me. Thank you, Lord, for loving me.

You went to Calvary, where there you died for me. Thank you, Lord, for loving me.

Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Lord, for loving me.

Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Lord, for loving me.

He rose up from the grave to be new life you gave. Thank you, Lord, for loving me.

[15:15] He rose up from the grave to be new life you gave. Thank you, Lord, for loving me.

Please be seated. Don't worry if you're thinking I've forgotten the offering. As many of you are thinking he's forgotten the offering. Don't worry, we're going to do that a bit later on. Right. Let's have a look what we've got coming up now.

Eggs. Who has had an Easter egg this morning? You can put your hand up if you had an Easter egg this morning. Easter egg this morning. Any of the children had Easter eggs this morning?

Okay. The trouble with Easter eggs is, the trouble with Easter eggs is, apart from them being fattening, of course, is actually they get in the way of the meaning of Easter.

Okay. As you've probably seen on TV all the way through the week, well, for the last month, of course, whenever Easter has been spoken about, it's all about chocolates and bunnies and chicks and eggs.

[16:17] And that is not what Easter is about. Many people think it is. In fact, I heard on the radio this week that most young children think that Easter is the celebration of the Easter bunny's birthday.

Not what Easter is about. So these Easter eggs have to go, and we're going to get rid of them in a minute, because behind them is the real meaning for Easter and what Easter is all about. And to help us remove the eggs, I'm going to ask you boys and girls particularly some questions.

Okay. They're not too difficult. They're just true or false questions. Okay. So this is the first one.

Okay. It's about eggs. All the questions are about eggs.

Okay. Not chocolate eggs, but ordinary eggs. Okay. So listen to the question, and I'm going to ask if it's true or false. And you put your hand up according to what I say. Most eggs, or most chickens, lay their eggs between 4 o'clock in the morning and 7 o'clock in the morning.

Who thinks that's true? Who thinks that's true? Between 4 o'clock in the morning and 7 o'clock in the morning. Boys and girls. Put your hand away if you think that's true. Caitlin thinks it's true. Iggle Piggle thinks it's true.

[17:22] Okay. Anybody else? Kyle? Okay. A few others. Okay. False. Who thinks they don't lay most of their eggs between 4 o'clock and 7 o'clock?

Me? Well done, Jack. Well, you're right. Actually, actually, chickens lay their eggs between 7 o'clock in the morning and 11 o'clock in the morning. So most of you were right. So that means I can take away some eggs.

Okay. That's part of our memory verse, part of the verse from the Bible. It's going to help us to understand what Easter is all about. If you. Hmm. Okay. Next one.

A chicken can lay about 250 eggs in one year. 250 eggs in one year. That's a lot of laying of eggs. Who thinks that's true? Who thinks that's true?

Freddie? Or Adam? Lots of hands going up now. Lots of hands going up. Jude? Okay. Who thinks it's false? Who thinks it's false? Not me?

[18:18] Oh, one. One, two. It's actually true. True. Okay. So the trues have it. More trues than there are falses. So we'll take away another load of eggs. Okay.

So we're getting there. Something in your mouth. Lord. Okay. Next one. America. That's the United States of America. Produces the most chicken eggs in the world.

The United States of America produces the most chicken eggs in the world. Who thinks that's true? Who thinks that's true? One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, all. There's quite a few.

Who thinks it's false? Who thinks it's another country? Who thinks it's another country? Oh, there's... Oh, more hands. Good. Phew. That's good. It's false. China.

China produces the most eggs. Okay. The most eggs. So let's take away some more. Those in the middle. Oh, we've got quite a lot of our verse here. So we've got three more lots of eggs to take away to finish it off.

[19 : 15] An ostrich egg. Okay. Would have to be boiled for two hours. Okay. Two hours before it was hard. Who thinks that's true?

An ostrich egg would have to be boiled for two hours before it was a hard boiled egg. Who thinks it's true? Okay. A few. A few. True. Who thinks it's false? Who thinks it's longer or shorter?

Oh, dear. You're all wrong. It's true. It's not false. It's true. Two hours. I'm going to take away some eggs anyway, because otherwise I'll run out of questions. So, okay.

We'll take some from there. Okay. This is a really hard one now. Oology is the study of eggs. That's O-O-L-O-G-Y.

Oology is the study of eggs. Who thinks that's true? If somebody's an oologist, they study eggs.

Who thinks that's true? One, two, three, four, six, seven, eight. Okay.

[20 : 11] Who thinks that's false? Who thinks it's false? Two. It's true! It's true, you see? You were laughing. You thought I'd made it up, and I hadn't.

I'm not that imaginative. I think there's enough trues there. Enough trues. Last one. Last one. Okay. Boys and girls. Only boys and girls this time. You can cook an egg with its shell on in the microwave, boys and girls.

Who thinks that's true, that you can cook an egg with its shell on in the microwave? Jude, Josh, Freddie. Who thinks it's false? Who thinks it's false that you can't cook a...

Yeah, it's false. You mustn't. You mustn't cook an egg with its shell on in the microwave, because it'll explode. And there'll be egg on your face. And a few other places as well.

Okay. So there's our memory verse for this morning. This is going to help us think about what Easter is all about. So we're going to read it together. Okay? We're going to read it all together, including the passage it's from at the bottom.

[21 : 14] So let's read together. Romans 10, verse 10.

Okay? Let's read it once more together. Romans 10, verse 10.

What's all that about, you're wondering? Well, we're going to find out. And we're going to find out by looking at what happened a little bit before Easter Sunday, what happened on Good Friday. We're going to read about some particular men, three men, two in particular, and then one other as well. And it comes from Luke and chapter 23. And if you have a Bible, you can turn there, but you don't need to, because we're not going to read it so much as we're going to follow it, and we're going to find out all about Easter, about two men.

Two men in particular are going to teach us about the meaning of Easter, what happened over Easter the weekend. Good Friday right through to Easter Sunday. And we start in Luke and chapter 23 and verse 32.

[22 : 33] And it tells us two other men, both criminals, were also led out to be executed. Executed. Executed is a horrible thing.

It means put to death. And so on Good Friday, what we call Good Friday, there were two men who were taken out and they were put upon a cross.

They were executed. They were killed by the Roman authorities, the Roman government of the day. But why? What had they done? What had they done that they needed to be crucified?

Well, they had been arrested, naturally, by the law, by the police, if you want to put it that way, the Roman authorities. What had they done? Stealing. They had stolen things.

In other words, they were thieves. In fact, they were more than just ordinary thieves. They weren't people who just went and burgled people's houses or stole money from a bank. They were people who used to lie in wait and like highwaymen.

[23 : 32] They would jump on people who were passing by, beat them up, perhaps even kill them, rob them of their money, their clothes and all sorts of things and leave them there dead or dying.

They were nasty people. They were unpleasant people. And so they were receiving this punishment. Only the very worst people received the punishment of being executed on a cross, crucified, with nails driven through their hands and their feet and left up to die in the sun. And it could take up to two days, maybe even longer for somebody to die as they bled and as they dehydrated. They were thieves who had, of course, expected to get away with it. Like all robbers, like all thieves, they thought that nobody would ever catch them, that they would get away with their crimes and that they'd be able to enjoy their loot, the money that they'd won. But, but, of course, we're told they expected to get away with it, but who had received judgment instead. These two men had been caught and they had been tried and they had been found guilty and they were being now punished for their crimes.

[24 : 48] So, that's two men that we read about at the beginning of that Good Friday day. What else do we learn? Well, they teach us about ourselves. We may think we've got nothing in common with those men who were hung on those crosses to die and be executed.

But, actually, these two men teach us a great deal about ourselves, about human nature, about what we are like as well, because the Bible tells us that we are exactly the same.

In Romans in chapter 3, that's part of the Bible, there's a verse that says that we're exactly the same, that we are, all of us, the Bible says, have sinned.

All of us have sinned. We like to think that we're good people. We like to think, actually, we haven't done that many bad things. We certainly haven't laid in wait and robbed people and beaten them up or killed them, unless, of course, you have, and then, I'm sorry that this is pointed particularly at you.

But the rest of us, we haven't done those things, have we? But the Bible says clearly that actually we have sinned against God. And we've sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. That's God's standard.

[25 : 57] God is good. Everything about Him is good. Everything that He does is good. Everything He says is good. And His standard is that we, too, must also be as good as Him. But the reality is that none of us are.

All of us have sinned. The Bible means by sin, all of us have done what we wanted. All of us have pleased ourselves. All of us have said things which are not good, and thought things which are definitely not good, and done things which are not good.

In fact, God's standards are found in the commandments in the Bible, the Ten Commandments. So if we've ever said, oh my God, then we've broken one of those commandments, because one of the commandments is you shall not misuse God's name, and God will not hold anybody innocent who does it.

If we've ever taken anything, unused something which wasn't ours, then actually we've broken the commandment that these men did. We've stolen, do not steal. And if we've been envious of what other people had and wanted it for ourselves and jealous of them, then we've broken the last and tenth commandment, do not covet, which means do not be envious and want something which doesn't belong to you.

But in fact, we've broken more serious commandments than that, because the Bible tells us that we're to love the Lord our God with all our heart and mind, soul and strength. But we haven't loved God, have we?

[27 : 15] If we're honest, we've ignored God or rejected God, forgotten about God. We've not really wanted God as part of our lives at all. And we could go on and on and on about the commandments that God has laid before us.

And every one of us, you and me as well, have broken those commandments. So in lots of ways, we're very similar to those men who were executed. Except at the moment, it seems that we've got away with it.

These thieves are like us, all have sinned. Therefore, the truth is each of us will be judged by God. They were judged by the Roman authorities, the rulers of their day.

But the Bible says there's a day coming when we will be judged. In fact, God looks at us and he sees us just as we are with our sins and our law-breaking. And the Bible says that we too will receive what our sins deserve.

So God sees your heart and mine, my life and yours. And he says, I will judge that. I can't ignore the things that you've done. I can't just brush them under the carpet or turn a blind eye to those things, those thoughts, those words, those actions.

[28 : 21] And God has set a day that we shall be judged by him and receive justice. So let me assure you, you will not be punished for something you haven't done.

But the Bible says we will be punished for what we have done. God is just. And so these two men remind us that there is judgment and there is punishment for sin.

That's not the end. That's just the beginning of what they teach us about Easter. Now we're going to sing a song together. And we're going to take up the offering as we sing this song together. So we'll remain seated.

It's going to come up on the screen. Lord, I lift your name on high. Lord, I love to sing your praises. Remain seated. Then we'll take up the offering as we sing. Thank you.

Thank you.

[29 : 36] Thank you.

Thank you.