

# HAPPY EASTER

## Why Mary Magdalene?

Louis A. Palivos



Do you have a friend that is willing to die for you? Do you have a relative that is willing to die for you? Do you have any human being that is willing to die for you? Mary Magdalene of Holy Scriptures manifests qualities of faith to death and a pure, loving heart. Yet, she is depicted as a repented prostitute, a priestess, a lustful woman, a bloodline carrier, a pagan, a deviant, not as an Apostle to the Apostles.

Holy Scripture

“Among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee’s sons.” Mt 27:56

“And Mary Magdalene was there, and the other Mary, sitting opposite the tomb.” Mt. 27:61

“Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb.” Mt. 28:1 There were also women looking on from afar, among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the Less and of Joses, and Salome.” Mk. 15:40 “And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses observed where He was laid.” Mk. 15:47 when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, that they might come and anoint Him.” Mk. 16:1 “And certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities—Mary called Magdalene, out of whom had come seven demons.” Lk. 8:2 “It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them, who told these things to the apostles.” Lk. 24:10 “Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His her’ssister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.” Jn. 19:25 “Now the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it

*(continue p. 2)*



Από την ειδική εκδήλωση για την αναβάθμιση του Παναρκαδικού Νοσοκομείου στην προσπάθεια της οποίας οι Ελληνικές ώρες του Σικάγου έπαιξαν σημαντικό ρόλο με το τρίωρο ΡΑΔΙΘΩΝ όπου συγκεντρώθηκαν 42,000 δολάρια, αποτέλεσμα προσφορών του ακροατηρίου μας και προηγούμενης προετοιμασίας. Στις δύο αυτές φωτογραφίες τιμήθηκε ο Περιφερειάρχης Πελοποννήσου Πέτρος Τατούλης



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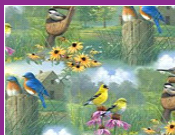
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# Why Mary Magdalene?

**Louis A. Palivos**

*(from p. 1)*

was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb." Jn. 20:1 "Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things to her." Jn. 20:18

Holy Fathers

Patriarch of Jerusalem, St. Modesto, c. 631, wrote that Mary Magdalene, "was a virgin from whom seven demons were expelled so as to be as clean as crystal."

St. Theophilus of Bulgaria, c. 717, also touched upon the seven spirits of virtue which correspond to the seven spirits of evil. Therefore, the seven demons were expelled so as to be replaced with the seven spirits of virtue; wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord. Is. 11:2-3. A reasonable inference is that Mary Magdalene was demonized, but a virtuous woman!

St. Luke touches upon the seven demons expelled by the Lord Jesus Christ. St. Luke also alludes that Mary Magdalene provided out of her means support to both the Lord Jesus Christ and His followers. Therefore, its reasonable to infer she was a woman of wealth.

Mary Magdalene implies that she was not married; because, if she was married she would be called, "Mary the Wife of X".

Mary Magdalene was from the commercial city of Magdala (Tarichaea) on the west bank of the Sea of Galilee. Another reasonable inference is she was a widow and provided for the Lord Jesus Christ, the Apostles and His women followers.

Magdalene has been confused with the women who poured myrrh onto the head or feet of the Lord Jesus Christ. Also, confused with the women caught in the act of adultery.

St. John in his Gospel, clearly presents Magdalene as the first to witness the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, the most monumental event in all of history.

Modern conservative scholars agree on at least four major points regarding Magdalene; first, she was a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ; second, she witnessed the Crucifixion; third, she saw the Resurrected Lord Jesus Christ; and fourth, she was a leader in the early church.

Notions found in the Gnostic writing, such as the *Gospel of Mary* and the *Gospel of Philip*, that she was married to Jesus Christ or that she had children with Jesus Christ, are at odds with Holy Scripture and Holy Tradition.

As St. Peter appears to be the first among the Apostles, Mary Magdalene appears to be the first among the women who followed the Lord Jesus Christ. However, while the Apostles scattered during the Crucifixion, except St. John, Magdalene was faithfully present at the Crucifixion, with the Theotokos. Moreover, Magdalene would visit the tomb to anoint the wounds of the Lord Jesus Christ, with probably costly spices, herbs and myrrh. What resolve not to fear visiting the unknown tomb! Magdalene is mentioned first among the myrrh ladies by all four Gospel writers, no small oversight!

"Now when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, that they might come and anoint Him. Very early in the morning, on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen." Mk. 16:1-2

The number of women to have visited Jesus Christ's tomb prior to the Resurrection were Mary Magdalene, Mary the Mother of James, Salome and Joanna. Does "others" in Lk. 24:10 imply that the Theotokos was also among the women who went to do the anointing at the tomb? Why is St. Luke the only Gospel writer to write about the "other women"? Given the various women a reasonable inference is that there may have been several trips made to the Tomb, but early in the morning. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ may have happened the instant of the "violent earthquake", Mt. 28:2.

How can one grasp the moment that Magdalene said, "Sir, if you have carried Him away tell me where you have put Him, and I will get Him." Jesus said to her, "Mary". She turned toward Him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means Teacher). What went through her mind and heart at this realization? Awe, shock, tears, joy, a million thoughts and love. Perhaps Mary Magdalene instantly also realized that Jesus Christ's words that He would be Resurrected were fulfilled in front of her. Further, being a pious woman she must have known the Old Testament prophecies regarding the Messiah's Resurrection, and again instantly realized their fulfillment!

St. Gregory Palamas wrote that the *Theotokos* was the first female to visit the Lord Jesus Christ's tomb and was the first to witness the Resurrection. However, this is an unreasonable inference from Holy Scripture.

Having visited Mt. Athos, the Monastery of Simonos Petras, there is a relic of the hand of Magdalene.

So why did the Lord Jesus Christ appear first to Mary Magdalene? The most reasonable inference is that she was the most loyal follower and the Lord Jesus Christ honored her with both her faith to death in Him and pure love for Him.

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# 10 Ways to Stop Childhood Entitlement before it Goes Too Far

“There are many graduates today who expect the corner office with a view, flexible work time, and birthdays off.” The placement counselor was describing some senior students and their expectations upon graduation from the university to the parents of the incoming freshman. She went on to implore parents to stop being their child’s alarm clock, to never call the professors, and




quit being the child’s homework proofer (or doer). Entitlement has gone too far when college graduates are unable to take ownership of their life and work for those office perks. Are we raising a generation of kids who have unrealistic life expectations? Do they believe they should have what their parents have when they graduate? In our desire to keep our kids happy, perhaps we have shielded them from struggle only to create more problems for them when future difficulties come their way. We overstep and take over, inhibiting the development of our kids’ perseverance and patience. Many young people leave college unprepared for the adult world. The unbridled, unearned, and insincere positive reinforcement given so freely does more harm than good. It can produce young adults who believe the world revolves around them and think the world owes them.

Here are 10 ways to stop childhood entitlement before it goes too far.

**1. Teach your child how to converse.**

Don’t allow your child to dominate conversation. Conversation happens when all participate. Talking and listening are exchanging roles, a give and take. The spotlight moves from one to another. Let him have his moment in the sun but teach him that the sun shines on others as well. Show him how to honor others with good conversational and listening skills: Focus on others, make eye contact, ask questions, and use the other person’s name. Some parents have found success in using a conversation stick. A stick is passed around the group. The person holding the stick is the one to speak while the others listen and ask questions. After a designated amount of time has passed, the next person is the speaker. This is a good way for a child to learn the skill of conversation.

**2. Provide opportunities for delayed gratification.**



Avoid giving into every want or desire. Instead give your child the gift of learned patience and perseverance. Entitled kids have little endurance when they want to possess or achieve something. Allow for opportunities that build a child’s work ethic. Let him persevere through a tough assignment or work for a desired item. This will increase his ability to wait for the payoff. Gratefulness will have a chance to grow along with the knowledge that hard work pays off. Once he finally achieves his goal, he will be more appreciative of the item’s value and proud of his accomplishment.

**3. Evaluate your family values.**

Examine how you talk. Notice what captures your interest. Do you focus on power, popularity, presentation (looks), prestige, position, or possessions? If so, does that line up with the values you hope your children embrace? For example, if you value wisdom over knowledge, talk more about how someone made a smart decision over a person’s grade point average. Consider encouraging desirable characteristics over accomplishment or appearance. “You are thoughtful. I noticed how you held the door for the woman with the baby.” Instead of saying, “You are so beautiful.” There is nothing wrong with complimenting exterior appearance; just be sure you give equal time to the characteristics you hope your child will develop.

Take it a step further and challenge yourself. Write a list of qualities you hope will describe your child. Line that list up against the type of conversation you have with your friends or spouse. If the topics don’t reflect the things you really value, make an effort to begin noticing and talking about qualities you really care about.

**4. Train kids to clean up after themselves.**

Entitled people casually drop litter and carelessly leave garbage for others to collect. They act as if they are king and queen of the environment and can be as thoughtless as they want to be. They have no regard for the mess they create and no consideration for those who deal with it. Train kids to bus their dishes, pick up their toys, and to pitch in as a part of the family by lending family members a hand. Learning to be respectful of property and people makes a person a good friend and a good citizen.

An ungrateful gift receiver is a major indicator of entitled and selfish behavior. Entitled kids have no appreciation for another’s feelings. Gratefulness and appreciation need to be taught. This is a skill to be learned. Before a birthday party, train your child how to focus on the giver instead of the gift. Help your children appreciate the thought that went into the gift rather than expect the perfect present. Say something like, “Jackson went to the store and picked this out just for you. He took time to find something he thought you would enjoy. He’s a good friend.”

**5. Focus on the giver not the gift.**

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**6. Encourage ownership.**

Entitled kids are passive and blame others when things don’t go their way. Ownership and responsibility are the cures. Let the homework, the grades, and the results of a test be the child’s. Resist the urge to say, “We should have studied harder.” Or, “I should have spent more time on this with you.” Instead ask, “How will you do this differently the next time?” The child needs to know he can influence the outcome by his own hard work. Parental support, encouragement, and availability are critical when a child is struggling. But... avoid the urge to fix or rescue if increased personal responsibility and motivation are the goals. It helps the rescuer type parent to remember the fruit that comes from a struggle or even a failure. Creative thinking, perseverance, humility, empathy, and compassion are five positive characteristics that grow when hardship is experienced.

**7. Define wants and needs.**

Help you children understand the difference between wants and needs. An entitled person thinks his wants are even more important than another’s needs. He prefers not to wait in line but the person in front was there first. While driving, he may want to respond to that text but safety for all trumps personal texting. When served a meal at another’s home, something else may be preferred but good manners tell us to say thank you and eat what is served. Entitled people have difficulty when they don’t get what they want or they are inconvenienced. Stop this me first, all about me attitude by focusing on the needs and feelings of the other people. Provide the child a perspective that is larger than their own personal world. Even if our kids get everything they want, they will never be satisfied. The wants create more wants. It is a black hole craving to be filled. It is good for our children to experience the word “no” as it relates to wants.

**8. Model and practice consideration.**

Life gives us lots of moments to practice consideration. Actions like giving up a seat on public transportation for a pregnant woman or elderly person, allowing a shopper with two items in her cart to go ahead of you in line, opening the door for someone, walking with rather than walking ahead of companions, offering the last piece of desert to another person, or bussing a family member’s dinner plate are all small acts of kindness where the value of serving over being served is demonstrated. Model these types of acts for your children. Discuss why you gave up your seat or opened the door. Kindness and consideration don’t come naturally. These qualities need to be taught so they can be caught.

**9. Develop intrinsic motivation.**

Often parents give rewards for behavior or grades in the hopes of affecting behavior. A mom or dad may say, “If you can cooperate while we are doing our errands, I will buy you an ice cream cone.” If this approach is used too much, kids will begin asking, “What do I get for doing this?” Behavior modification is a Band-Aid solution. We want our kids to do the right thing because it’s right, not because they get something for it. To encourage internal drive, our kids need to have some skin in the game and care about the outcome. Asking, “What did you learn? What was enjoyable? How did you feel after you put forth all that effort? Knowing what you now know, how will you approach a similar situation?” These types of conversations kick start intrinsic motivation.

**10. Understand we are all equal at the foot of the cross.**

Entitled people believe they are more special and more deserving than anyone else. Without realizing it, parents add fuel to the fire by saying things like, “You deserve to get that part.” “He (she) doesn’t deserve you.” “You deserve be waited on.” “You don’t deserve this treatment.” We are worthy because God created each one of us—on purpose and Jesus shows us our value—we are all worth dying for.



## Erdogan's Turkey turning its back on the West

It is becoming increasingly obvious that Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has made up his mind. His rhetoric changes – at times confrontational and conciliatory at others – but the overall direction is clear: Turkey is drifting away from the West. And this is not because there are those in the West who don't want Turkey, but because Turkey doesn't want the West.

Whether justified or not, Erdogan blames specific countries for the botched attempt to topple him from power in July 2016. In combination with his innate megalomania, but also his personal preference for certain leaders and countries, he is carving a new path for Turkey.

There are those in Washington, Brussels and other major European capitals who need to come to terms with this fact and act accordingly. While there is absolutely no reason for Turkey to be viewed as an "enemy," it certainly cannot be treated as a close friend and ally in the traditional sense of the term. Therefore, they need to plan an effective way to deal with this development, accordingly.

Major changes are under way and the situation will not revert back to the way it was even when Erdogan leaves the scene, either politically or by nature.

Anti-American, anti-European and anti-Israeli – for many anti-Semitic – sentiment has grown considerably in Turkey over the past 20 years, making cooperation with the West that much harder in the framework of defense alliances, political and economic institutions, and even on a bilateral level.

I remember a few years ago I had visited the offices of the country's biggest newspaper in terms of circulation, Zaman, since closed down by Erdogan. I met with its editor in chief who told me that the only foreign leader the Turkish president really respected was Russian President Vladimir Putin, because he leads a nuclear power that has its roots in a major empire and speaks the language of raw force. That is also how Erdogan likes to see himself.

The Europeans are all about upholding values and principles; Erdogan is not interested. Some in Washington fear Turkey developing into a new Iran or Pakistan. Either way, Turkey is on the path of a gradual break from the West, if not a confrontation, and this is the reality, like it or not.

In this fluid environment, Greece has opted, across party lines, to maintain good-neighborly relations with Turkey, and since 1999 it has chosen to actively champion close Turkish-European ties. In the meantime, though, it is also vigilant and ready to defend itself against challenges and violations of its sovereign rights, as well as verbal threats. It has its own considerable military power and a network of effective regional cooperations, neither of which can be overlooked by anyone.

## Elections will hamper progress of online real estate auctions



The upcoming local, regional, European and national parliamentary elections, all in the next few months, are set to put the brakes on online auctions and efforts to identify strategic defaulters, raising concerns among bank officials.

That is because the forced measures will be suspended for a week before and a week after each election process, with a number of debtors looking forward to this suspension, seeing it as a chance to avert the auction of their property.

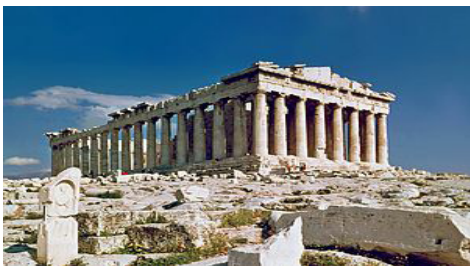
Whether the parliamentary election takes place before or after August, it will constitute the third suspension, after the two rounds of local and regional elections on May 28 and June 2 and the European election on May 26, as well as the August break when auctions will halt.

All this is set to weigh on the momentum of auctions, that otherwise would have exceeded 15,000 in total during 2019. This is making bankers worried that this year could be wasted in the effort to bring the pace of auctions back up to normal rates after the long delays of previous years.

Strategic defaulters make the most of every possible opportunity to postpone forced measures, including disputing the starting price of their property at auction; this is a practice that is responsible for more than 30 percent of auction postponements, according to estimates by competent officials.

Bank of Greece data showed that 14,900 auctions were conducted through the e-auction online platform last year, with a combined value of some 4 billion euros. However, only a third of them were fruitful (4,770 auctions), and the value of the assets that changed hands via auctions amounted to 1 billion euros; in 85 percent of cases it was the banks that won those auctions, acquiring about 4,050 properties.

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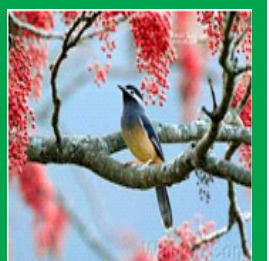
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# THE FORM OF APOLLO HELIOS THE LIGHT BEARER AND THE STATUE OF LIBERTY

An important topic that has started becoming increasingly popular in the last few years is the discovery made by Classics Professor and Historian Antonios A. Antonakos, which concerns the facial form



of the Statue of Liberty, located in the USA.

Professor Antonakos highlighted the issue for the first time after he announced it at an international conference, as well as in an article, published in the historic magazine ELLINORAMA in September 2006. In said article, indisputable evidence on the typical depiction of that form being the one of Apollo Helios was presented. And because a picture is worth a thousand words, he also presented this



specific form, which is depicted on a triptych slab, and can be found in the Archaeological Museum of Corinth.

Back then, this discovery travelled around the world through hundreds of thousands of e-mails. The news was also republished in many newspapers in Greece and abroad, as well as online in many web pages. A few years ago, it was broadcast on Greek television, plus it was published on New York newspaper "The National Herald", and in many Greek magazines. Recently, this piece of information has also been included in the textbook by Irini Vallera-Rickerson, professor of Art History and Architecture in Orange Coast College, entitled *A Concise Architectural Journey from the 18th century to the present*.

However, such an important issue could not leave a Greek man

with an immense cultural contribution history, like Mr. Markos Arvanitis, indifferent. Thus he reached out to professor Antonios A. Antonakos for finding out ways to highlight such an important piece of information. He also decided to include this information of great value in his street nameplate project, both in their street and collectible versions. So he published a sign for Apollo Street, where on the front side, the form of Apollo Helios the Light bearer and the Statue of Liberty are presented next to each other, while on the back side of the collectible sign is the article of Mr. Antonakos, which reveals the issue.

How is it proved though that this form belongs to the Greek god Apollo? We already know the history of the Statue of Liberty, as well as its formal name, "Liberty enlightening the World" ("La Liberté éclairant le Monde" in French).



Therefore, Liberty enlightens the world. However, global and cultural enlightenment cannot happen with just a torch, held by Liberty, no matter what symbolic meaning we give to it, as it can only light up the surrounding area. Global enlightenment can happen only with the rays of the Sun (Helios), which as a symbol enlightens both the world and Apollo (who represents the Sun) as well as the Statue of Liberty.

Besides, the sun has seven rays and, in any case, the seven ray sun is always a symbol of Apollo, both as "Sun/Helios - Light" (because Apollo, as it is known, is the god of light) and thanks to its trait of having seven rays (because the Greek number for seven, «επτὰ» (eptá), comes from the word «σεπτὰ» (septá), which means "sacred", and is thus the "sacred number" of Apollo).

The most important point though, which proves the truth of Professor Antonios A. Antonakos' claim, aside from Liberty's global enlightenment (something that seems to be ignored by not only the USA, but also the rest of the world), which is the sacred number seven on Helios' rays etc., is Apollo's facial form itself, which has been evidently copied, as it is proved by the photo!

This discovery is very important and the world must know about it, so that everyone knows that Liberty, for which the Greeks and the other people of Earth fought, has one more Greek symbolism, through the depiction of the Greek god Apollo Helios, which everyone can see and admire when they visit the Archaeological Museum of Corinth.

Translation by Adrianos A. Antonakos

**Χριστός Ανέστη!**



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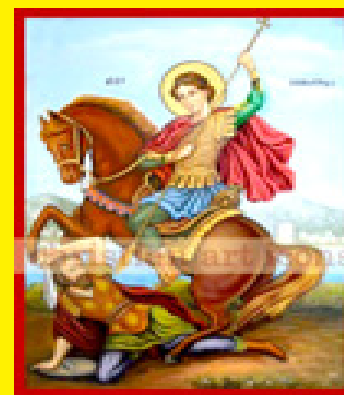
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ALEXIS PAPACHELAS

## Greece needs the new generation of its diaspora



Greece grew and won important battles when it counted on the support not only of its citizens, but also of Hellenism as a whole. The diaspora is a power multiplier. The important leaders of this country understood its role and cultivated it carefully.

Our country today needs its

diaspora more than ever – especially Greek Americans. But on this topic there is good news and bad news. The bad news is the great vacuum in leadership. Historically, the leadership was always assumed by the archbishop of the time and some prominent figures who enjoyed wide acceptance. The Greek prime minister almost always knew who to call if he wanted to send a message to the White House.

In the old days, it was the now late Archbishop Iakovos; later it was some businessmen who worked closely with former president Bill Clinton. Today, some people claim to call the shots in the White House but those who are in the know understand their influence is limited to outdated fiestas like that held to mark Greek Independence Day.

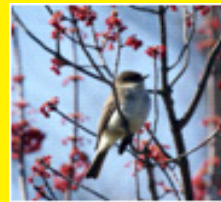
If we're honest enough to call a spade a spade, we should be willing to admit that the old status quo is in decline. The diaspora organizations exchange awards and praise at social events. Meanwhile, the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America is essentially rudderless, burdened with a huge debt as a result of financial mismanagement. The Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox National Shrine stands like a stain and provocation opposite the 9/11 Memorial.

The good news is that a new generation of diaspora leaders have emerged who know how to play the power game and who have forged strong alliances in Congress and other centers of power. They have also strengthened ties with the pro-Israel lobby, a fact which obviously gives them more power and influence. This was evident in the efforts to block the sale of Lockheed Martin-made F-35 fighter jets to Turkey.

At the same time, young Greek-American businesspeople are looking for ways to bring the next generation closer to Greece. For example, they are sending students to Athens to work or attend academic programs over the summer. Others provide help as mentors or investors to young Greeks in the startup community.

We need to break with the old habits, and break with those who think that they can show up as the rich uncle from abroad so they can buy up anything at half price. This country needs to embrace and promote the next generation of diaspora leaders.

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The 10 Coolest Buildings from Around the World

Residential, commercial, or industrial, we love it when architects go to town with an original design. Whether they build something quirky, unique, or just plain funky, witnessing their creative vision brought to life is one of the reasons we love to travel. Here are our picks for the ten coolest buildings from around the world.



Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao

Spain's grittiest northern industrial town upped the glam factor when it welcomed the Guggenheim to the banks of the Nervion River. This Frank Gehry classic was inaugurated in 1997 and has been a favorite with locals and visitors ever since. Inside you'll discover modern and contemporary art, but it's the external design that stuns visitors. Its random, titanium-clad curves catch the light, leading the New York Times Magazine to praise its "mercurial brilliance".



Dancing House, Prague

The distinctive shape of the Dancing House makes it one of the Czech Republic's (and Europe's) most recognizable buildings. First nicknamed Fred and Ginger after the famous dancing duo, it polarized opinion in the city. The then-president Havel loved it, but some of Prague's residents felt it was incongruous against the city's many Baroque and Gothic structures. Love it or hate it, you have to agree the Dancing House makes quite a statement and that in itself is pretty cool.



Bird's Nest Stadium, Beijing

Officially called the National Stadium, the latticework of this Beijing sporting venue gave it the nickname "Bird's Nest." Designed by Herzog & de Meuron, it employed Chinese artist Ai Weiwei as artistic consultant, bringing to life a grand vision. The sta-



Catedral Metropolitana Nossa Senhora Aparecida, Brasilia

You don't have to look far in Brazil's capital city to stumble upon an example of acclaimed architect Oscar Niemeyer's work. When it comes to achingly good design, the hyperboloid shape of his white cathedral sets the building apart and it's been featured in lists since it topped out in 1970.

The Chapel of the Holy Cross, Sedona



Striking in its simplicity and making use of its gorgeous natural setting, this church in Sedona is a staple of the American West. The Catholic church rises out of the red rock face, its stained-glass windows glittering in northern Arizona's near-constant sunshine. Completed in 1956, the church has become a growing attraction in an area already characterized by gorgeous scenery.

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# DNA Tourism - The Next Big Trend in Travel



We all come from somewhere and the lands that our ancestors called home are hardwired into our genes. Do you ever wonder what life was like for your distant relatives? How they lived, ate and worked has shaped and influenced who you are today. Shows like *Finding Your Roots* and *Who Do You Think You Are* have sparked a global interest in DNA testing, and with easier and cheaper access to test kits, it's not surprising that the number of people wanting to trace their family roots in person is trending off the charts.

Heritage travel is the new rage, and, according to Lonely Planet, a top travel trend for 2019. Read on to find out how you can connect to your homeland and discover the territory of your ancient past.

## Discovering Your Roots

To start your journey of discovery you first have to answer this question: "Where is my family from?" The homeland of your ancestors is encoded in your DNA and there is no shortage of easy testing services that can analyze your DNA and give you detailed ancestry reports of your ethnicity and where your family likely came from.

The two most popular services are AncestryDNA (\$99) and 23andMe (\$199). They both received the highest marks in a recent PC Magazine review of DNA testing services and offer comparable ancestry matching tools like maps showing where your ancestors lived, along with information about those particular countries and regions. In fact, a recent poll showed that four out of five Americans said they were interested in learning about their roots, and thanks to efforts of teams of genealogists and web-based companies like Ancestry.com, you now have access to an extensive collection of digitized records that can retrace immigration journeys to help you pinpoint the origins of your family tree. Armed with this vital data, you are now all set to rediscover your homeland and reconnect with long-lost relatives through heritage travel.

## Heritage Travel

It may seem that knowing where your family came from is the end of the story, but it's really just the beginning.

Travel based on your DNA is popularly known as heritage travel or heritage tourism and brings together the excitement, relaxation and connection of a vacation with the added bonus of a history lesson. So, why not let your family tree inspire your next trip? It's a chance to experience the places, memorials, artifacts and local people that make up the story of your ancestors. You can retrace the difficult journey of your family from its beginnings to the present day and discover the roots of your cultural identity. This type of cultural immersion will bring your family's past to life in ways you could have never imagined.

## Making Connections

DNA testing and heritage mapping is far from flawless, and for many people it's difficult pinpointing exact cities or stories. But even just visiting the country of your ancestry can help you make connections you didn't know were possible.

Maybe it's tasting a local dish with authentic ingredients. Maybe it's exploring a museum detailing the history of the region. Maybe it's just walking the streets your ancestors walked, imagining their lives. Even if you don't have the specific origins of your family roots, you can still feel a connection with your past like never before.

## Go the Extra Mile

If you are not content with just scratching the surface of your roots, there are even more resources out there that can fulfill your deep desire to make that personal connection with your past. In response to this travel trend, several companies have begun offering Ancestry tours for travelers looking to connect with their heritage. Classic Journeys is a company that does just that. They handcraft each itinerary to bring you in close, personal contact with an area's people and culture. You will have access to full-time local guides who know the lay of the land and the people who make up the fabric of the traditions, cultures and history of the region. You will also gain a fascinating insight into events that prompted people to leave that region and settle in distant lands and have the chance to reconnect with those who stayed. Who knows, you may even eat a local dish that is just like the one that your grandmother used to serve or hear a local relate a story that your uncle used to tell at every family gathering.

## Do Some Personal Research

Once you're on the ground, you will also be able to dig further for clues to your past. Visit local archives or churches to search for original documents that may reveal a direct connection. Wander the local cemetery and search for familiar names. You never know what you may discover when you connect the history and culture of the past with the present and finally piece together the puzzle of your cultural identity.



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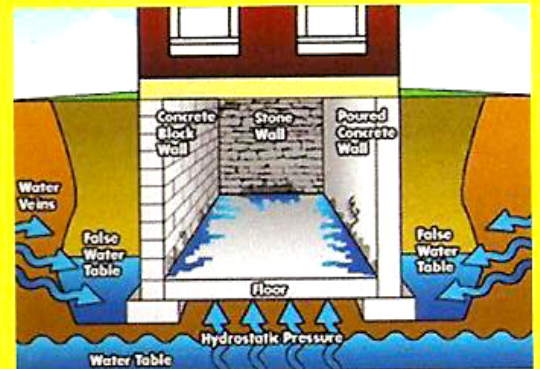
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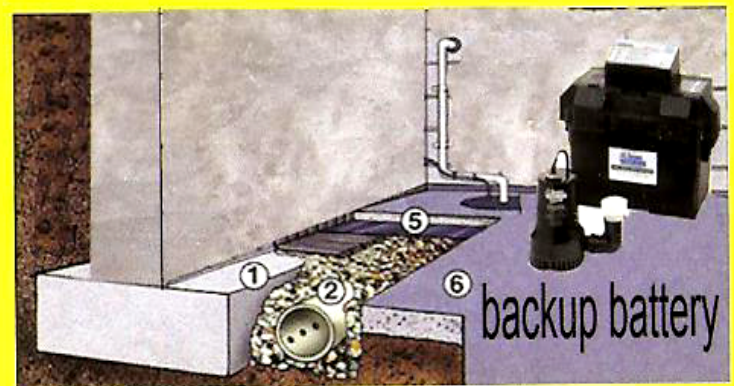
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# What is Easter: Understanding the History and Symbols



## What is Easter?

Easter is the celebration of the resurrection of Jesus from the tomb on the third day after his crucifixion. Easter is the fulfilled prophecy of the Messiah who would be persecuted, die for our sins, and rise on the third day. (Isaiah 53). Remembering the resurrection of Jesus is a way to renew daily hope that we have victory over sin. According to the New Testament, Easter is three days after the death of Jesus on the cross.

Easter follows a period of fasting called Lent, in which many churches set aside time for repentance and remembrance. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Good Friday, the day of Jesus' crucifixion. The 40 day period was established by Pope Gregory 1 using the 40-day pattern of Israel, Moses, Elijah and Jesus' time in the wilderness.

The week leading up to Easter is called The Holy Week, or "Passion Week", and includes Palm Sunday (the day Jesus entered Jerusalem and was celebrated), Maundy Thursday (the "Last Supper" where Jesus met with his disciples to observe Passover), and Good Friday (when Jesus would be crucified on the cross).

Easter is a very significant date within Christianity and is the foundation of the Christian faith. Jesus, the Son of God, fulfilled prophecy and through his death, has given the gift of eternal life in heaven to those who believe in his death and resurrection. Read the entire Biblical account of Resurrection Day in Matthew 28, Mark 16, and Luke 24 and more Easter Bible verses at BibleStudyTools.com.

## When did Easter start?

The earliest Christians celebrated the resurrection on the fourteenth of Nisan (our March-April), the date of the Jewish Passover. Jewish days were reckoned from evening to evening, so Jesus had celebrated His Last Supper the evening of the Passover and was crucified the day of the Passover. Early Christians celebrating the Passover worshiped Jesus as the Paschal Lamb and Redeemer.

Some of the Gentile Christians began celebrating Easter in the nearest Sunday to the Passover since Jesus actually arose on a Sunday. This especially became the case in the western part of the Roman Empire. In Rome itself, different congregations celebrated Easter on different days!

Many felt that the date should continue to be based on the timing of the Resurrection during Passover. Once Jewish leaders determined the date of Passover each year, Christian leaders could set the date for Easter by figuring three days after Passover. Following this schedule would have meant that Easter would be a different day of the week each year, only falling on a Sunday once in a while.

Others believed since the Lord rose on a Sunday and this day had been set aside as the Lord's Day, this was the only possible day to celebrate His resurrection. As Christianity drew away from Judaism, some were reluctant to base the Christian celebration on the Jewish calendar.

Constantine wanted Christianity to be totally separated from Judaism and did not want Easter to be celebrated on the Jewish Passover. The Council of Nicea accordingly required the feast of the resurrection to be celebrated on a Sunday and never on the Jewish Passover. Easter was to be the Sunday after the first full moon after the spring equinox. Since the date of the vernal equinox changed from year to year, calculating the proper date can be difficult. This is still the method used to determine Easter today, which is why some years we have Easter earlier than other years.

## What does Easter mean?

The origin of the word easter isn't certain. The Venerable Bede, an eighth-century monk, and scholar, suggested that the word may have come from the Anglo-Saxon Eostre or Eastre – a Teutonic goddess of spring and fertility. Recent scholars haven't been able to find any reference to the goddess Bede mentioned and consider the theory discredited.

Another possibility is the Norse eostur, eastur, or ostara, which meant "the season of the growing sun" or "the season of new birth." The word east comes from the same roots. In this case, easter would be linked to the changing of the season.

A more recent and complex explanation comes from the Christian background of Easter rather than the pagan. The early Latin name for the week

of Easter was hebdomada alba or "white week," while the Sunday after Easter day was called dominica in albis from the white robes of those who had been newly baptized. The word alba is Latin both for white and dawn. People speaking Old High German made a mistake in their translation and used a plural word for dawn, ostarun, instead of a plural for white. From ostarun we get the German Ostern and the English Easter.

## Connection to Passover

The day before his crucifixion, Jesus observed Passover with his disciples. This event is known as the Last Supper. Passover is the time that Jews remembered their freedom and exodus from Egypt. During this Passover feast, Jesus told his disciples that the bread symbolizes his body that would be broken and the wine, his blood, which would be poured out for the forgiveness of sins. (Matthew 26:17-30) The Last Supper is remembered today in churches and religious services through the act of taking Communion and sharing bread and wine to remember the sacrifice of Jesus.

Jesus was arrested after the Passover meal while he was praying in the Garden of Gethsemane. He was then taken before the Roman Governor, Pontius Pilate, for trial.

## Christian and Pagan Traditions

There are many traditions that surround the entire Lent season, Holy Week, and Easter Sunday. Generally observed traditions across the globe include the Easter bunny, colored eggs, gift baskets, and flowers. We will dive into specific traditions below in more detail, but here are a few more interesting traditions from around the world:

In Australia, bunnies are considered pests that ruin crops and land. Aussies celebrate with their native marsupial, the Bibby, which has large ears and a more pointy nose.

In Poland on Easter Monday, boys try to soak people with buckets or water. This tradition has its roots in the baptism of Polish Prince Mieszko on Easter Monday in 966.

In Greece, the morning of Holy Saturday is known as the annual "pot throwing" where residents throw pots out of windows. It is a tradition used to mark the beginning of spring and new crops being gathered in new pots.

In Europe, there are large bonfires called Easter Fires that are lit on Easter Sunday into Monday. The Saxon origin is that the fires will chase away winter and Easter will bring spring.

## THE ORIGIN OF THE EASTER EGG

Next to the Easter bunny, the most familiar symbol is the Easter egg. Like others, the egg has a long pre-Christian history. Again there's no certainty as to why it became associated with Easter.

Many Ancient cultures viewed eggs as a symbol of life. Hindus, Egyptians, Persians, and Phoenicians believed the world began with an enormous egg. The Persians, Greeks, and Chinese gave gifts of eggs during spring festivals in celebration of new life all around them. Other sources say people ate dyed eggs at spring festivals in Egypt, Persia, Greece, and Rome. In ancient Druid lore, the eggs of serpents were sacred and stood for life.



Early Christians looked at the connection eggs had to life and decided eggs could be a part of their celebration of Christ's resurrection. In addition, in some areas, eggs were forbidden during Lent; therefore, they were a delicacy at Easter. Since many of the earlier customs were Eastern in origin,

some speculate that early missionaries or knights of the Crusade may have been responsible for bringing the tradition to the West.

In the fourth century, people presented eggs in church to be blessed and sprinkled with holy water. By the twelfth century, the Benedictio Ovorum had been introduced authorizing the special use of eggs on the holy days of Easter. The timing of this blessing would uphold the idea that Crusaders may have brought the tradition back. Even though eggs had been used previously, the Crusaders may have made the custom more popular and widespread.

In 1290, Edward I of England recorded a purchase of 450 eggs to be colored or covered with gold leaf. He then gave the eggs to members of the royal household.

Once the custom became accepted, new traditions began to grow up around it. Eggs were dyed red for joy and in memory of Christ's blood. Egg rolling contests came to America from England, possibly as a reminder of the stone being rolled away. What about the familiar Easter Egg hunt? One source suggested that it grew out of the tradition of German children searching for hidden pretzels during the Easter season. Since children were hiding nests for the Easter Bunny to fill with eggs at the same time they were hunting pretzels, it was only a small leap to begin hiding eggs instead.

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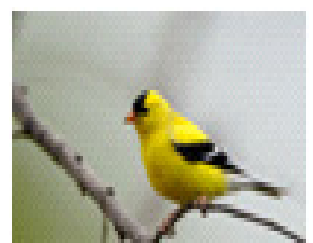


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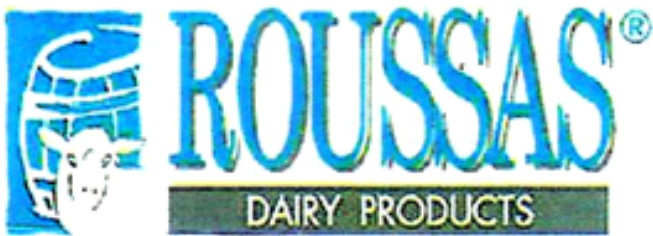
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