

Why is Easter important to Christians?

Learning Objective:

To find out about the events and emotions surrounding the crucifixion of Jesus.



What do you
already know
about the
events
surrounding
the
crucifixion?

The crucifixion of Jesus

The high priests had arrested Jesus and sent him to Pilate because they wanted him be sentenced to death. The soldiers pushed Jesus through the crowds towards the palace. They took off his clothes and covered him with a purple cloak because purple was the colour of kings.

"Give him a crown!" shouted the crowds. "A king should have a crown!" So they made a crown of thorns and forced it onto his head, making him bleed. Everyone was laughing at the 'King of the Jews'. The crowds were throwing sticks at him and hitting him.



The soldiers led Jesus to Pilate. Pilate tried to reason with the high priests and say that there was no reason to kill Jesus.

"He says he is the King of the Jews," they said. "He claims to be the Son of God. That is reason enough to put him to death. We have no king but the emperor."

"Crucify him! Crucify him!" shouted the crowds.

Pilate turned to Jesus. "Where do you come from?" he asked. Jesus did not reply. "Don't you know I have the power to set you free?"

Jesus looked at Pilate. "You have no power," he said. "Only God has power and it is He who is in control."

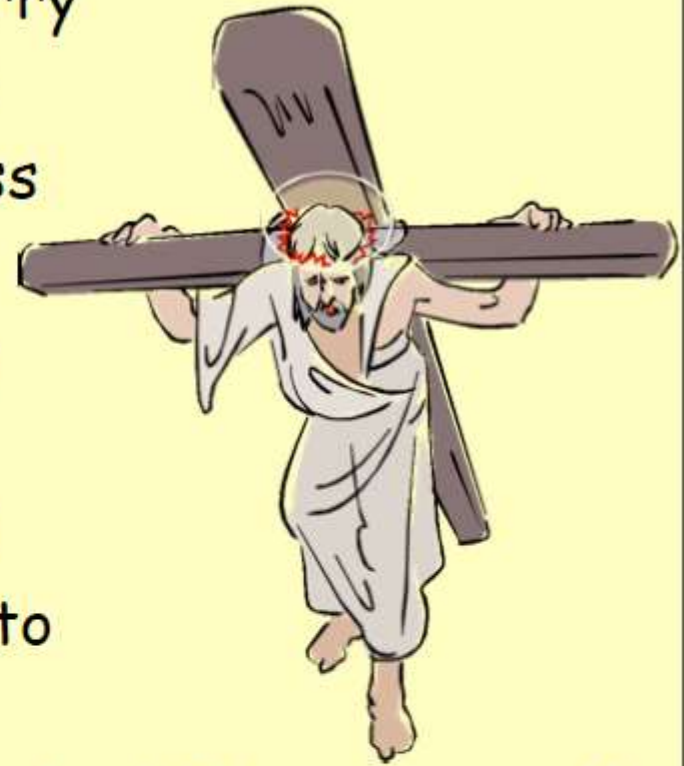
Pilate tried once more to set Jesus free but the crowd continued to scream, "Crucify him! Crucify him!"

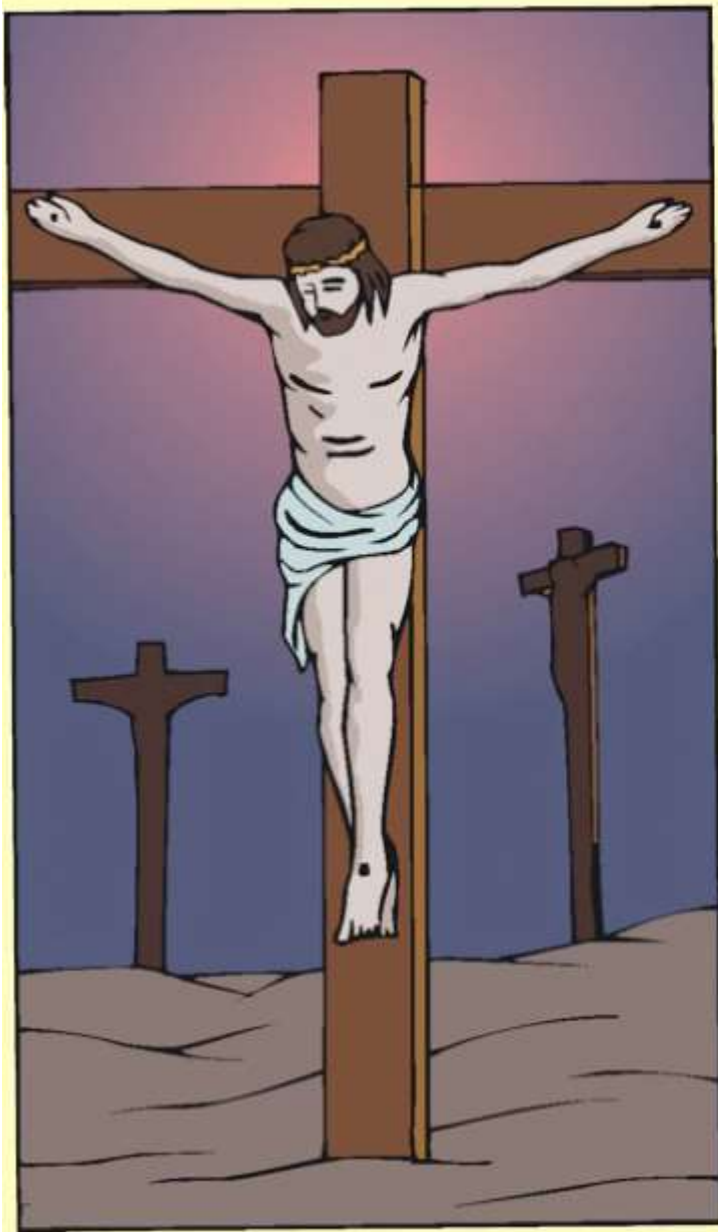
Pilate gave up. "I wash my hands of you," he said, and he gave Jesus to the soldiers to be taken away.

The soldiers whipped Jesus and made him carry a heavy cross to a hill called Golgotha. There they nailed Jesus' hands and feet to the cross and left him there to die. But Jesus said, "Forgive them, Father! They don't know what they are doing."

There were two other people being crucified with Jesus, both bandits. Some people came to laugh and jeer at Jesus. "He saved lots of other people but can't save himself!" they laughed. "Save yourself if you are the Son of God!" Even the bandits joined in.

At twelve o'clock the sun stopped shining and darkness covered the whole country for three hours. Jesus said, "Father! In your hands I place my spirit!" and with a loud cry he died.





The curtain hanging in the temple was torn from top to bottom and the earth shook when Jesus died. Many people realised then that he truly was the Son of God. The army officer who was standing at the foot of the cross saw how Jesus had died. "This man was really the Son of God!" he said.

Some women were there, looking from a distance including Mary Magdalene and other friends and family of Jesus. When they saw that Jesus was dead they cried and beat their breasts in sorrow.

How do you think the disciples felt at the crucifixion?

How do you think Jesus' family felt?



How do you think Jesus himself felt?