



EASTER

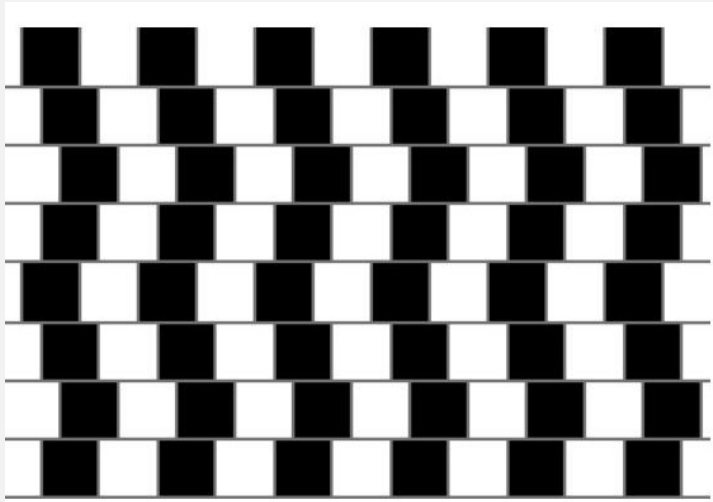


*How do you think these images connect to Easter?*

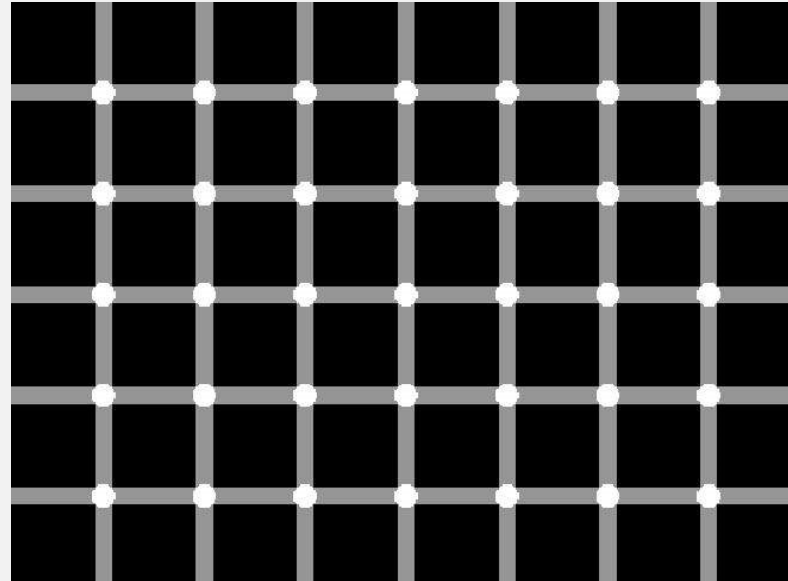
*Is Easter important to you and your family?*



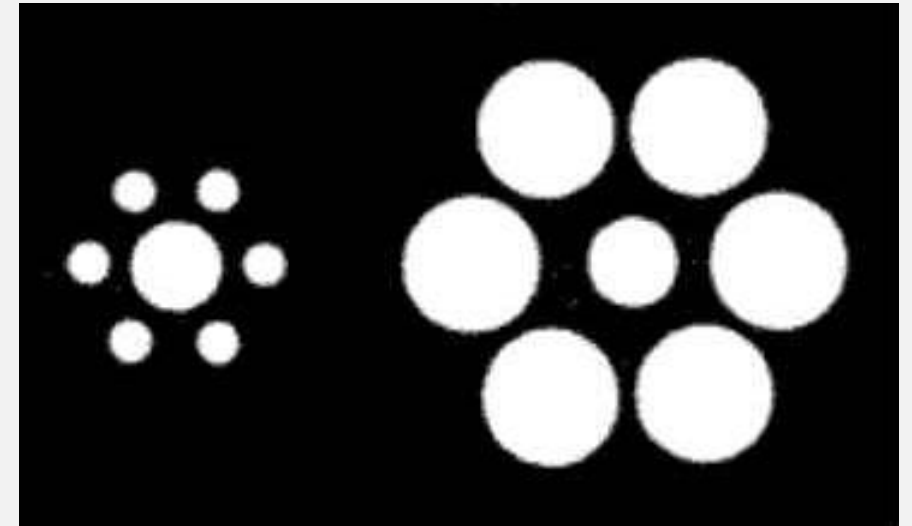
# THINGS ARE NOT ALWAYS WHAT THEY SEEM



Are the lines straight or curved?



How many black dots are there?




Is the centre of the left flower bigger?

These are all optical illusions: **not what they first seem.** The lines are straight, the flower centres are the same size and all the dots are white.

## THINGS ARE NOT ALWAYS WHAT THEY SEEM

On Good Friday, the disciples believed Jesus to be dead. He had been given over to the authorities and crucified. Imagine how they might have been feeling. All their hopes about Jesus coming to rescue God's people seemed to be at an end.

The thing about Easter is **things weren't what they first seemed**. Despite looking like the end of the line for the followers of Jesus, it was actually a new beginning – because Jesus rose from the dead. This forms the centre of the Christian faith.



He was betrayed into the hands  
of wicked men and crucified.

The following video from Igniter Media might help us to think about the shock Jesus' followers felt at his Crucifixion.

<https://youtu.be/XbS-34SIHCA>

## THINGS ARE NOT ALWAYS WHAT THEY SEEM

You can read the story of the crucifixion and resurrection in Matthew's gospel (Matthew 27:32-28:20). If you don't have a Bible at home, you could use the BibleGateway website:

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew%2027%3A32-28%3A20&version=NIV>

*What does this part of the story reveal about what Jesus' followers thought after the crucifixion?*

*Why is an empty tomb **good news**?*

After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.

There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.

The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you."

**Matthew 28:1-7**

“He is not here; he has risen, just as he said.”

*Matthew 28:6*



Christians believe that Jesus' death on the cross showed how much he loves us and gives us the opportunity to have a new start with God.

Father God

Thank you for the death and resurrection of Jesus. Thank you that you loved us so much that whilst we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

We are often not the Easter People that we should be, living in the certain knowledge of your great mercy and love. We are distracted by the world around us and we fail to hear your voice, or hide when faith is challenged or wander away from you.

Forgive us for ignoring you. Teach us to love you. This Easter, remind us of how much you love us.

Amen

## MORE RESOURCES

Speak Life produce some excellent video resources exploring the Easter story. The Divine Comedy and 'A Funny thing Happened' videos are really good for different ages.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJjwJMzkkVyXg3BNGUMcT0g>

Alpha is a course exploring the claims of the Bible about Jesus. The people who have written the course have produced a booklet called '*Why Easter?*'

You can download a free copy of this booklet here: <https://australia.alpha.org/why-easter>

The Bible Project have produced excellent resources covering lots of different aspects of the Bible. The series on Luke's gospel ends with a video explaining the significance of the resurrection

<https://bibleproject.com/explore/gospel-series/>. In their Messiah video they trace how Jesus is the promised one, mentioned in the first pages of the Bible who will defeat evil <https://bibleproject.com/explore/the-messiah/>.