

A Night to Remember - Easter Bunnies and Chocolate

There's this legend, a myth of sorts, one that started long ago about a long eared cotton tailed creature that hops from house to house to deliver baskets of treats, toys and candy to children, and even colorful eggs! So the Easter Bunny came to be associated with Easter as we know it – along with the cross on which Jesus dies and the empty tomb because He lives!

Of course, the bible makes no mention of this hare that delivers eggs. However, in ancient folklore, rabbits have often stood for fertility due to the number of babies they have – lots! It is said that the Easter Bunny made its way to America in the 1700s by the Germans who brought their tradition of Osterhase – the rabbit that lays colorful eggs for kids that were good. Over time, eggs expanded to chocolate and toys. Easter baskets have become more elaborate and full over the years!

Easter eggs can also represent Jesus' resurrection from the tomb. The history of decorating eggs may have started hundreds of years ago when eggs were forbidden to eat near the time of Lent. So at the end of the fasting period, eating and decorating them was a feast and a way to celebrate!

In Australia, there's an Easter Bilby – an endangered rabbit like marsupial, the Easter Cuckoo is in Switzerland, and in some parts of Germany the Easter Rooster!

So if you and yours are giving your littles chocolate bunnies and hiding eggs, do so with gusto and focus on the blessing of abundance and life as you do – abundant life that only comes from knowing Jesus.

Preparation: Hard boil some eggs to then dye or decorate. And purchase little chocolate bunnies for all to enjoy.

When you get the eggs: The hard shell represents the sealed tomb and the cracking of the egg represents Jesus' resurrection from the dead. Let the kids crack open an egg and give thanks that Jesus lives.

As you decorate and dye eggs: some say early Christians dyed eggs different colors to represent different aspects of the Easter story. Blue – love, red – the blood, yellow – the resurrection. Or scenes were painted on the eggs – scenes of life and hope. Let the kids color and paint and relate their creations to bible truths.

It is said that early Christian missionaries hid eggs for kids to find, so they could then tell the story of Jesus. During the time of Martin Luther, men hid eggs for women and children to find. They focused on the joy the women felt when they found the tomb empty on that first Easter morning. Hide the eggs, and anticipate the joy of the hunt.

Did you know there's an Easter egg roll at the white house at Easter? Invite your own kids to roll their eggs across the grass, to be reminded of the stone being rolled away from the tomb. Jesus isn't dead – he's alive – in us!

Those chocolate bunnies: Bunnies almost always make us smile when we see them hopping long, because hopping is like skipping, and skipping is so joyful. Bunnies have lots of babies which remind us that life is always present and happening and ongoing. Enjoy your chocolate bunnies and give thanks for the joy that comes from knowing Jesus.

Family prayer: *Thank you Jesus for dying on the cross for our sins, in our place, so we don't have to die. Thank you for defeating the power of death over us, and offering us eternal life with you. And thank you for the joy we have in knowing you, so that we can celebrate your death and resurrection outside, with eggs and bunnies, as we give praise to Jesus – the one and only Savior of the world.*