

Chocolate the Comforter

David McCaw-Aldworth, Spain Command

Preparations: Bring a large chocolate cake, or something a little healthier - the makings for a chocolate fondue with fresh strawberries, to share with a cup of tea!

Chuckle: Three boys all bragging about their dads. The first said, "When my dad writes something called a poem he gets \$100.00 for it." "That's nothing," said the second boy. "When my dad writes something called a song he gets \$200.00 for it." "Wow," came the response from the first. "That is nothing," said the third boy. "When my dad writes something called a sermon it takes eight men five minutes to collect all the money for it".

Chuckle: Two friends met up after a long time apart. "How's your husband, Fred?" said the first, "Oh you know he's an angel," came the reply. "You're lucky," said the second lady. "Mine is still living."

Song: SASB 43/TB 333 *Come Let Us All Unite To Sing*

Prayer

Chuckle: A little boy opened the big, old, family Bible and started looking through its pages. As he turned one page, something fell out of the Bible onto the floor. It was a leaf from a tree that had been pressed between the pages. The boy picked it up, looked at it closely, and then called to his mother. "Come quickly, see what I have found". "What is it?" asked his mother. "It's Adam's suit," the boy replied.

Creative story based on Luke 15

For this story you will need the following chocolate bars on a tray*



**If these bars are not available where you live, let your creation show, and re-write the story to include chocolate bars that are available and can be bought locally.*

Trio, chocolate Coins, Twix, Galaxy, Celebrations, Dime, Drifter, Chomp, Starburst, Picnic, Boost, Breakaway, Timeout, Fuse, Kinder Surprise, Cadbury's Fingers, Topic, Roses Chocolates, and a Rocky bar

Ask for volunteers, when you call the name of a chocolate bar the ladies hold up the bar mentioned.

Chocolate is useful for so many things, it can even help in reading the Bible.

One day Jesus was talking to the people when some Pharisees and scribes started to murmur, saying this man "welcomes sinners and eats with them."

Then Jesus told a **TRIO** of stories to answer them, which was very **TOPICAL** for the time.

The first was about the lost sheep, and the second about the lost **COIN**. The third tale went something vaguely like this.

There was a man who had two sons. But the younger one said to his father, "Dad, give me my share of the estate." The father thought about this problem and decided to **TWIX** it by dividing his property into two.

Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant **GALAXY**, or at least another country. While he was there he squandered his **COINS** and wealth in wild living and **CELEBRATIONS**. Soon he was broke without a **DIME** to his name. To make matters worse there was a famine in that whole country and the boy **DRIFTERed** into hunger and need.

So he went and got a job feeding pigs. All he could hear while his tummy rumbled was **CHOMP, CHOMP**, as the pigs ate. The boy got so hungry that he thought of eating the pig's food. In fact things didn't look like **ROSES** anymore.

Then it happened. The **STAR BURST** in the boys head with an idea. He thought, "this is no **PICNIC**, all my friends have left me. I need a **BOOST**, I will have to **BREAK-AWAY** and take some **TIMEOUT** from this land and go home, not as my father's son but as one of his servants".



While he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. Which really **conFUSEd** the boy. In fact he was **KINDER SURPRISEd** with his dad's reaction.

The boy tried to apologize, and said that he was no longer worthy to be called his father's son. But his dad was so pleased to have him home he would not hear of it. In fact he said to one of his

servants "put a ring on his **FINGER** and sandals on his feet". Bring the fattened calf and let's have a **CELEBRATION**. My son who was lost is now found and so the party began.

Meanwhile, the older son was out in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing and **CELEBRATION**. He called one of the servants to ask him what was going on. "Your brother is home and your father is having a party. We are dining on the fattened calf because of it!"

The older brother became angry and **reFUSEd** to go in. His father went out and pleaded with him to join the celebration. The older brother said, "Dad, all these years I've been slaving for you working in the **ROCKY** fields never disobeying your orders. Yet you never even gave me so much as a **PICNIC** or a young goat so I could have a **CELEBRATION** with my friends. Then this son of yours who has spent all your **COINS**, and hasn't a **DIME** left, comes home and you kill the fattened calf for him!" "My son you are always with me and everything I have is yours. We have to have a **CELEBRATION** and be thankful, because your brother was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found."

Song SASB 821/TB 661, *We're an Army* to the tune *Happy Song*

Chuckle: The minister's daughter asked her Mom, "Why does Daddy pray to God before he preaches." "That's so God will help him", came the response. The little girl just looked and again asked her mother, "why doesn't He help him then".

Chuckle: In the maternity ward of a local hospital there was a man awaiting the arrival of his baby when the minister entered to take a service. The minister asked if anyone had a favourite hymn, choosing one that he thought everyone would know: What a friend we have in Jesus. There was a good deal of chuckling among the expectant mothers as they sang: Are we weak and heavy-laden, cumbered with a load of care.

Chocolate quiz: This quiz is a one to whet the ladies appetites. Here are ten questions about different chocolate bars. The winner of the question wins that particular bar (so you will need to purchase them), then is excluded from another question. So everyone has opportunity to win!

1. When was the Cadbury Creme Egg first available to buy? (1923 - but the Creme Egg as we know it was not made until 1971.)
2. What Chocolate Bar is named after a planet and 'battered' is a delicacy in chip shops in Scotland? (Mars Bars)
3. What chocolate bar launched in 1929 gives you that 'Friday feeling?' (Crunchy Bar)
4. What chocolate bar is full of eastern promise? (Turkish Delight)
5. For which chocolate advertisement are you asked 'do you love them enough to give them your last....?' (Rolo)
6. What chocolate bar was discovered by accident in 1920? (Cadbury's Flaky bar. An employee who filled the chocolate moulds discovered this concept. He saw that once the moulds were full, the excess chocolate used to spill over the edge and fold down in a stream of chocolate. Once this stream cooled, the Flake product was created as the texture had many thin layers of chocolate and was very crumbly and flakey!)
7. What chocolate candies are not for dummies? (Smarties)
8. What chocolates have the slogan "all because the lady loves...?" (Cadbury's Milk Tray)
9. What chocolate according to the advertising campaign launched in 2001 is not for girls? (Yorkie bar)
10. What chocolate launched in September 1935 are you meant to 'have a break' with? (Kit Kat)

Thought: Chocolate or to give it its true Aztec name "Chocolat" is originally a product of Central America where it was discovered by the Mayan Indians as long ago as 600 AD.



In an area we now know as Southern Mexico, the cocoa trees grew wild. The local Indians soon realized the importance of this crop and harvested cocoa beans from the trees in the rain forest, eventually clearing areas of lowland forest to grow their own cocoa trees, in the first known cocoa plantations.

This bean was then roasted and had surprising value being also used as a currency. An early explorer visiting Central America found that 4 cocoa beans could buy a pumpkin, 10 could buy a rabbit, with a 100 you could purchase a slave.

This delicious bean has been described as 'food for the gods.' What we have today in our humble chocolate bar is far removed from the beans that Columbus discovered and brought back to Spain. Also far removed is the later knowledge of cocoa preparation that Cortez the conqueror of Mexico brought to Europe in the early 16th century, after which Spain had the monopoly and the secret of chocolate preparation for nearly 100 years.

Surprisingly chocolate was first a drink, but with an unusual additive of chilies; however the westerners refined this and thankfully dropped the chilies and also warmed the drink. This innovation led to chocolate houses around the major cities of Europe.

In Victorian times we see the transformation to the solid chocolate that we can relate to today with manufacturers like John Cadbury from Birmingham, Fry's of Bristol, Terry's of York and also Rowntree's of York all playing their part.

Today chocolate is an every day part of life, people use chocolate for many different reasons. We still have a chocolate drink in the form of a hot chocolate, and also chocolate spreads for sandwiches. We see chocolate being used as snack food eaten between meals, sprinkled on top of a coffee or an ice cream, and also used to cover cookies, or fruit and nuts (in the bar form).



Without chocolate this world would be a very different place, people would be grumpier, less happy — perhaps a little slimmer, but would be without their comforter.

We have the promise of another comforter within Scripture, in fact Jesus said:

I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever (John 14:16 KJV). Also that the *Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you* (John 14:26 KJV).

While this “comforter” that Christ talks about is of course different from chocolate, I would like to draw three parallels.

Firstly, partaking of chocolate brings about a chemical change and can help a person's mood. It can relieve stress and anxiety. The Holy Spirit brings about a spiritual change that can bring relief from stress and anxiety. Christ said, “*Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not*

as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” (John 14:26 KJV).

Secondly chocolate can be taken anywhere and eaten anywhere. The advertising slogan says, “*A Mars a day helps you work, rest and play*”. Chocolate is found at home, at work, at play and even in a war zone in ration packs for the soldiers to eat. The Holy Spirit knows no physical or geographical boundaries. We can pray in the Spirit at home, at work, in our leisure time and even in a war zone.

Thirdly, chocolate according to the manufacturers and advertisers is the perfect gift. ‘All because the lady loves Milk Tray’, ‘do you love anyone enough to give them your last Rolo’, ‘say thank you with Roses.’ Giving the gift of Christ to the one you love, sharing the knowledge of the Comforter, the Holy Spirit surely is the best gift you can leave with someone. Chocolate the heavenly delight, is a moment on the lips and an eternity on the hips, as they say. So a different comforter, the one that Christ told us about, is a moment to say yes and the possibility of an eternity not with a heavenly delight, but in Heaven under His light — the light and love of God.

In the basket are some small chocolate bars. Please take two, the first is for you and is to remind you of this afternoon and also the comforter that Christ talked about, the Holy Spirit. The second is to give to someone, perhaps to build bridges with a distant neighbour, or friend. After giving this small bar, relate the comparisons that we have shared today. It could be an opportunity to run a conversation toward spiritual matters.

Closing Thot: The comforter is a promise from God, one of His many so let us stand upon all these promises as we sing our closing song.

Song: SASB 757/TB 797 *Standing On The Promises*

Benediction