

Scriptural Truths

E-Mail Meditations

The Lord Will Come . . . Perhaps Today . . . Behold, I Come Quickly . . . Rev. 22:7

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The Resurrection

Introduction

For many years it has been determined that Easter is on the first Sunday after the full moon on or after March 21st. As a date it has nothing to do with the Jewish Feast of Firstfruits (Lev. 23:10-14). Furthermore, Easter was never a Christian celebration. It's origins are unknown. The only mention of Easter was when Bede wrote, "Eosturmonath has a name which is now translated as 'Paschal month' and which was once called after a goddess named Eostre, in whose honor feasts were celebrated in that month. Now they designate the Paschal season by her name, calling the joys of the new rite by the time honoured name of the old observance" (De Temporum Ratione). When it became a "Christian" ritual is unknown, but in today's world and for many possible centuries, it is and has been the time of the year for recalling the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Accepting that an individual believes Jesus did rise from the dead, several questions may come to their minds. Questions such as:

- a) What makes the resurrection of Jesus so memorable?
- b) Why is there a universal remembrance of this event but of no other "spiritual" leader?
- c) What makes the resurrection of Jesus different from all other resurrections?
- d) What does the resurrection of Christ have to do with me today?

What makes the resurrection of Jesus so memorable?

There are a multiplicity of reasons why the resurrection of Jesus is memorable, among them being:

- a) It alone signified the holiness of God in His resurrection.
 - i) Everything God does is holy. "The LORD is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works" (Psa. 145:17). This therefore means that nothing God does is shady, half hearted or unrighteously done. It could never be said, concerning God, that He is unrighteous. Rather, when dealing with the matter of sin and the securing of salvation it is stated, "To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just (*in His character*) and the justifier (*in His doings*) of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:26). Consequently, when the Holy Spirit caused Paul to write concerning the resurrection of the Lord, "And (*Christ was*) declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom. 1:4), it meant that the resurrection of Jesus Christ was a holy activity done by God who raised Him from the dead (Acts 5:30; 13:30; Gal. 1:1; Col. 2:12; 1 Pet. 1:21).
- b) He was the first one to rise from the dead never to die again.
 - i) There had been three persons raised in the Old Testament, the widow's son (1 Kgs. 17:21-22); the Shunammite woman's son (2 Kgs. 4:32-37); and the man thrown in Elisha's tomb (2 Kgs. 13:20-21). Another three were raised when our Lord was on earth, the widow of Nain's son (Lk. 7:11-17); Jairus's

daughter (Lk. 8:49-56) and Lazarus (Jn. 11:1-44). These six individuals all died again but when Jesus Christ rose from the dead, it was “after the power of an endless life” (Heb. 7:16). Because Christ is the “Firstfruits” it is evident His resurrection was uniquely different from all others. He alone could say, “I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death” (Rev. 1:18).

- c) Christ was the only One to declare the duration of his being dead and how many days it would be after His death before He would rise again.
 - i) “For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth” (Matt. 12:40).
 - ii) “Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again” (Matt. 27:63).
 - iii) “And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again” (Mk. 8:31).
- d) He foretold how they would destroy this temple, His Body, and He would rise again.
 - i) When in the temple the Lord said to those so gathered, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up” (Jn. 2:19).

[Why is it there is a universal remembrance of this event but of no other “spiritual” leader?](#)

There is the universal yearly remembrance of the resurrection of Jesus Christ because no other “spiritual” leader has ever risen from the dead.

- a) We often speak of the “empty tomb” but I see two matters of importance. First, it was empty of the body which had lain there, but it was not truly empty because the grave clothes were still there with the napkin, “And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself” (Jn. 20:7). It was a vacated tomb for the Lord rose from the dead and moved out of it.
 - i) No one saw Him rise from the dead and no one needed to because they saw Him after having risen from the dead. This seeing Him cancelled all doubts of His resurrection. It is said that Mohammed’s body is still untouched in his tomb. The only problem is one can only visit the site without actually seeing him, and no one is allowed to come close to his tomb. Those who believe in Buddhism believe that Buddha was cremated and parts of him are in a golden box in the masonry of the Shwe Dagon Temple. Those parts are some finger bones, teeth and other parts of Buddha. The burial place of Confucius is in China. All these died and their bodies went to dust or are cremated. Not so with Christ. His tomb was open for visitation. Individuals were able to go into His tomb and examine what was inside (Matt. 28:6; Lk. 24:3). No other spiritual leader has ever risen from the dead, but like all the rest of us, there is coming a day when, as the Lord said, “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation” (Jn. 5:28, 29), and this includes all other “spiritual leaders”.

[What makes the resurrection of Jesus different from all other resurrections?](#)

The resurrection of the Lord had a spiritual dimension to it that no other resurrection had. The Lord told a parable which is an earthly story with a spiritual significance. It was about a man having a very secure house. However, there came a mightier man who not only went into the strong man’s house but bound him and spoilt his house, that is, took that which he had. It was a parable indicating that which the Lord would do to Satan and His power. Satan was pictured as the strong man whose house was the citadel called death. Christ, the mightier man, entered that citadel and broke the power of Satan and took that which Satan had, the power of death, those who feared death and those who were and are under the condemnation of death.

- a) The death of the Lord was unique for death had no claims on Him. Of His own volition He entered that realm. There can never be a medical or physical explanation for the death of the Lord. He said:
 - i) “No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father” (Jn. 10:18)
 - ii) On the cross when He had given Himself to be a sacrifice for sin and had finished that work it is recorded: “When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost” (Jn. 19:30).

It was a deliberate activity when He entered death.

- b) By His resurrection He broke the power of death. Satan was vanquished and his house (Mk. 3:27), “Death” was destroyed (Heb. 2:14). Because the Lord was seen eating, heard talking, and being held, these were evidences

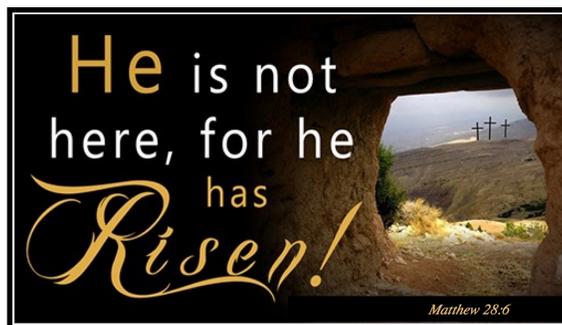
that the body of the Lord was not a spirit entity but a real physical body. He showed His followers His hands, feet and side with the wounds of the nails and spear. For forty days He lived amongst men and those who were the most hesitant to believe, fluctuating in that which they had heard became the most vocal in its proclamation.

[What does the resurrection of Christ have to do with me today?](#)

In breaking the power of death, the thought to be impregnable gates of death were demolished. Therefore, there is not an individual who has lived, is living or ever will live can escape that which results from death's brokenness. The Lord said, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (Jn. 5:28, 29). It is irrelevant if the body is burnt, buried, cast into the sea, or any other way disposed of, the individual will rise again. They have no alternative for the Voice which sounds like thunder or mighty waters will sound into the depths of the unseen world and ALL will rise again. There will be no hiding, no escaping. Every individual will rise and then comes the judgment. Lazarus heard that voice, the widow of Nain's son heard it and Jairus's daughter heard it. I finish this paper with this quotation from Revelation, "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:11-15).

The only way to escape that fearful falling into the hands of the Living God is by the acceptance of Jesus Christ, the resurrected Lord alone, for salvation. All the good works done by the most zealous of individuals will never set them free from the rising from the dead and the judgment that will follow. Wise is the individual who listens and responds to the open invitation, "Come unto me" and the injunction, "O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!" (Deut. 32:29). It's heaven or Hell for all eternity.

. . . Rowan Jennings



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