

'EASTER DAY - RESURRECTION' # 1

Easter Day! Has there been a greater day for celebration for the whole of creation, and not just simply a special day within the Christian calendar? The resurrection of Jesus is the start point of a new world; God is doing the long promised new thing; nothing would be quite the same ever again.

**Read Matthew 28:1-10**

They had been at the foot of the cross witnessing the suffering and death of their Lord, but it had not been possible for the two Marys (Mary Magdalene and Mary sister of Jesus' mother) to visit the tomb any sooner following the crucifixion. There was no working or purchasing allowed on the Jewish

sabbath Saturday; Mark's gospel records that they had brought spices intent on anointing Jesus' body. Suddenly an earthquake, then a visitation and discussion with an angel of the Lord, who tells them, "Jesus is risen." This must have been a seismic weekend; one indelibly engraved in their memories. The God who was apparently absent on Good Friday was now very much present, and having the last word.

There are some major events in our lives, some good and some bad, which are forever imprinted in our memories. Can you name one?

The resurrection is a foundational doctrine of Christian faith, signifying Jesus Christ's victory over death and the promise of eternal life for believers. As Paul confirms, 'And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is our faith ... Where O death, is your victory? Where O death, is your sting? The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ' (1 Corinthians 15:14 & 55-57).

The resurrection confirms and proves several fundamentals. (1) It confirms the words of the Old Testament Prophets, fulfilling the ongoing loving plan of God for all of humanity. (See Isaiah 52:13-53:12 and Hebrews 11:40). (2) It affirms Jesus' identity as the Son of God and the truth of His message. (see 1 Peter 1:10-12) (3) It gives the assurance of salvation, 'He was delivered over to death for our sins and raised to life for our justification' (Romans 4:25). (4) It signposts new life in Christ for believers and followers of Jesus. 'We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may have new life' (Romans 6:4). (5) It provides the hope of future resurrection for all believers. (see above and read 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17).

Prayer: *Risen Lord, we adore you. Hallelujah for your rising. Fill us with the joy of the resurrection: make us strong in the certainty of faith, and bold to witness. Amen* (Jamie Wallace)