

# Reconsidering the Resurrection Through the Feast of Firstfruits

Resurrection Sunday April 17th 2022

## I. Introduction

- A. Biblical Feasts - God instructed His people to intentionally celebrate 7 annual feasts or memorial days. All of these feasts hold vast and beautiful implications to be considered, and beheld concerning the fulfillment of the promise of salvation through Him.
  - 1. Spring Feasts - Passover, Unleavened Bread, First Fruits, Pentecost
  - 2. Fall Feasts - Trumpets, Atonement, Tabernacles
- B. First Fruits - The feast of first fruits is the 3rd of the 7 annual feasts or remembrance days that God called His people to celebrate. The fuller implications of this feast have been revealed to us through the resurrection of Jesus on the feast of first fruits. The scripture clearly declares that the physical resurrection of our savior happened on the feast of first fruits specifically because His resurrection is the first fruits of the future resurrection of all believers to come. (1 Cor. 15:20-23)

## II. Foundational Resurrection Promises

- A. Central Promise to the Fathers - The promise given to the fathers of our faith was clearly understood by them as the restoration of blessing and goodness in the realities of the created order prior to the rebellion of humanity. In other words the expectation of the fulfillment of the promise of salvation and restoration was living forever in the body He fashioned for us, in the city of God He built for us, and dwelling upon the earth that He made for us. They awaited the promised Messiah (Savior, Seed) who would bring the promises of God to pass. (Heb. 10:32-11:40)
  - 1. It may surprise you to find that the belief in a physical resurrection was and is a belief that is absolutely unique to a Jewish/Christian faith. In other words one of the foundational beliefs that sets historic Christianity apart from all other religions is the belief in an eternal life in a physical body on the earth. However, in modern western Christianity the hope of resurrection has mostly morphed into the hope of going to heaven and living in some mode of spiritual form. This is a massive shift from the clear hope rooted in physical resurrection on the earth expressed in the scriptures. (Job 19:25-27; Ps. 16:9-11, 17:13-15, 71:20; Is. 26:19; Ez. 37:12-37; Dan. 12:1-3; Hos. 13:14; Jhn 5:28-29, 11:23-26; Acts 23:6-10, 24:10-16; 1 Cor. 15:20-25, 51-54; 1 Thes. 4:14; Heb. 11:13, 39)

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## III. First Fruits Implications

A. General Implications of First Fruits - When we understand what the feast of first fruits was, and what it meant, and then add the fact that Jesus was resurrected on firstfruits, merits great scrutiny and becomes increasingly beautiful to behold.

1. First Fruits - The appointed feast of First Fruits was to be celebrated 3 days after passover. The first portion of the spring harvest was to be brought before the presence of God in the tabernacle and waved before Him as a thankful, representative offering . When this took place God accepted and consecrated the entire harvest through the first fruits offering.
2. The significance of Jesus being raised from the dead in a resurrected glorified physical body on the feast of first fruits is absolutely profound and gives us total confidence not only in the surety of our resurrection but also the quality of it. (Acts 26:22-23; Rom. 8:18-25, 1 Cor. 15:12-23)

B. Specific Implications - Now that we understand the general implications of first fruits and the resurrection of Jesus fulfilling that feast we can now turn our eyes to the more specific implications of His resurrection. We do this in order to stir up hope in our resurrection and eternal existence through Him and with Him.

“Resurrection by definition, we must never cease to remind ourselves, did not mean going to heaven or escaping death or having a glorious and noble postmortem existence but rather coming to bodily life again after bodily death.” - NT Wright “Surprised by Hope”

1. Earthly Kind - The resurrected body of Jesus was like in kind to the bodies of the other humans around him. His body was so normal that unless you knew his face you could not tell it was a resurrected body. It did not put off an aura, He did not receive wings, He did not take on a transformed physical shape or appearance. (Lk 24:36; Acts 1:1-3)
2. Physical - Jesus' body did not lose its physical faculties, He walked, stood, sat, and knelt. He encouraged people to touch his hands and to feel his physical frame to prove He retained flesh and bones. He saw with His eyes, Heard with His ears, touched with His hands, and tasted and spoke with His mouth. Yet at the same time could vanish, move through walls, and ascend into heaven. (Lk: 24:36-43; Jhn. 20:24-27)

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3. Unique Features intact - Jesus's resurrected body was uniquely His own and He retained His scars, though the wounds were healed. His physical features were recognizable as the same as before He was resurrected. (Lk. 24:40; Jhn 20:27)
4. Relationally Preserved and Equipped - In His resurrection Jesus retained His unique relational history with His friends and family. He knew His mother and brothers and picked up their unique relationship together right where he left off. He knew of Peter's denial and worked through reconciliation with him. (Jhn 20:15-16; 21:15-19; 1 Thes. 4:13-18)
5. Enjoyed Food - Jesus asked for food to eat in order to prove that His resurrected body was really a body like ours in the fact that he received nourishment from food and he could distinguish its taste. There are very near 100 passages in the bible that speak of what life in the kingdom of God looks like in the age to come. In a large percentage of these passages food production and the enjoyment of it are heavily focused upon. (Lk. 24:41-43; Jhn. 21:9-15; Is. 25:6-9; Luke 12:37; Rev. 19:19; Amos 9:14; Is. 62:8-9; Eze. 34:27-29)

C. Actual Hope - The resurrection of Jesus is put forth as the surety of our own resurrection. God ordained a yearly celebration that is to be understood by all of his people that qualities and characteristics of the first fruits of the harvest consecrate and represent the qualities and characteristics of the rest of the harvest. Through God's extravagant mercy and kindness He has positioned us to have all boldness and confidence in our eternal existence with Him far beyond a vague picture, but rather a sure and steady confident hope through His promises and demonstration.

*But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming. (1 Cor. 15:20-23)*