

I. A Glorious Kingdom Hope

- A. Today, we celebrate Jesus' bodily resurrection from death. All Christians know this is a significant day, and they will more than likely be gathering for worship and fellowship with friends and family. It is my opinion that Resurrection Day should be the pinnacle celebration for the Christian faith. As Paul the apostle pointed out, if Jesus did not rise from the dead, our Christian faith is dead.
- B. Even though Easter Sunday is universally celebrated by Christians worldwide, the fullness of the theological implications of the resurrection are, in general, not realized. I believe the main reason for this is that we have become hyper-focused as a culture upon the substitutionary work of Jesus as the Lamb of God. Now, to be fair, one should never downplay the sacrificial work of Jesus, which qualifies us to participate in and receive the promises of redemption. But that's just it; the sacrificial work of Jesus is the qualifier for receiving eternal life, but not the substance of it. (Rom. 8:29-30; Col. 1:12; Titus 2:14)
- C. The Promise of Salvation - From the very onset of the first sin and the corresponding death that resulted in the separation of heaven and earth, a promise was given. It has been repeated over and over throughout the scriptures, a promise of a restoration of that original creation reality. The prophetic scriptures use different words or phrases throughout the biblical canon to declare this great promise.
1. Salvation, Restoration of All Things, Redemption, New Heavens and New Earth, All Things New, On Earth as it is in Heaven
- D. The Kingdom of God—God centered this promise on the coming of a very unique individual who would be both fully God and fully man at the same time, thus bridging the gap between God and man and heaven and earth forever. He was prophetically known by many names: Savior, Redeemer, and God's Servant, to name a few, but His most repeated title by far is, “The King.” These corresponding themes fall under the banner of His identity and role as the King.
1. Anointed One, Messiah, His Throne, Scepter of Righteousness, Just Ruler, Law Giver, Righteous Ruler, Scepter of Righteousness, Justice, etc.

The King and the establishment of His righteous kingdom is the prophesied vehicle through which the promise of salvation would become realized. It is for this reason that the message of Jesus and his disciples was the “gospel” or good news of the coming Kingdom of God.

The King had finally come, and He began to start the work of restoring that which had been lost (Mat. 11:22). However, just as soon as it seemed that the promise of salvation would come to pass, death, the great enemy of all of humanity and creation, reared its ugly head.

II. The Resurrection Doctrine

A. From the very onset of Jewish faith, God instilled a promise of resurrection to His people. Judaism is totally unique in this regard. There is no other religion in history that holds the doctrine of resurrection from the dead. Just to be clear, the doctrine of resurrection has nothing to do with souls going to heaven. The belief in resurrection, by definition, is physical bodily life on earth, then death, then physical bodily life on earth never to die again. For one to be resurrected is for one to die and then come back to life again in an eternally incorruptible physical body.

1. Reframing Resurrection - For most Christians today, the resurrection of Jesus is considered to be proof doctrine for why we are assured that we will live in heaven forever. This is actually by definition a wrong application of resurrection. In fact, the resurrection is what the current souls in heaven, along with us, are awaiting. (2 Cor. 5:1-8; 1 Thes. 4:13-18)

B. Resurrection was and is still the key to the great hope of inheriting all the promises of God, including worldwide justice and righteousness forever. Jesus told Mary that He was the possessor and initiator of the resurrection of the dead.

III. Resurrection Witnessed

A. Very early on Sunday morning, on the biblical holiday of first fruits, the women came to the tomb to find it empty. Angels appeared to them and told them that Jesus had risen. Mary Magdalene was the first person who Jesus appeared to in His resurrected body, and then to all the others, and showed them many proofs

that He was more than brought back to life. He was resurrected! (Acts 1:3; Lk 24:36-43)

- B. Many Scholars have rightly pointed out that a dramatic shift happened in regards to boldness and ministry action at the realization of the resurrection of Jesus. Why? Because the realization that Jesus had been resurrected now meant that the King and His Kingdom would continue and never end. Remember the promise of Salvation and Restoration? Death had been overthrown and now the King and his Kingdom, the vehicle through which the promises of God would come to pass was established and from here on out would only increase in the earth.

- C. So, with great boldness the disciples gave themselves to continuing the work of being witnesses of the Kingdom and bringing righteousness and justice to the earth through the authority and power of the King. The blind seeing, the lame walking, the poor being brought good news and justice. All of this because of the resurrection of Jesus and its implications.

- D. So we too, on this day of celebration, let us be filled with all boldness, confidence, peace, joy, and understanding of the resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus, the Messiah, in whom and to whom our eternal life is secured.
 - 1. Fear of death was gone, replaced by the firstfruits resurrection.
 - 2. The guarantee that our sins have been paid for and forgiven was proved.
 - 3. Our own resurrection was now realized and assured in His.
 - 4. Hopelessness gone, replaced with the confidence that goodness and justice was here and eventually coming to all.
 - 5. The confidence and faith in all the promises of God has been exponentially bolstered.
 - 6. Suffering of loss, and injustice, would only be a temporary reality and the righteousness and justice that we do produce now, through Him, will carry over into the resurrection age
 - 7. Overwhelming peace and joy that we will live forever with one another in physical bodily experience in God's creation.