

Resurrection Faith

Key Verse: *“He saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him.”*
—Mark 16:6

Selected Scripture:
Mark 16:1-8

with these women in their loving mission. (vs. 4) Second, the angel directed their attention to the vacant tomb and folded graveclothes, together with the statement, “he is risen.” (vss. 5,6) Third, the risen Lord himself appeared and spoke first to Mary Magdalene outside the tomb, then to his disciples, and to others, as described by the Apostle Paul.—John 20:11-20; I Cor. 15:1-8

We point out these facts pertaining to Jesus’ resurrection because it is an essential doctrine of Christian belief. So important is this teaching that the Apostle Paul said, “If the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.” (I Cor. 15:16-18) Other Scriptures point out that faith in the resurrection is tied directly to

THE TRUTH OF JESUS’ resurrection on the “third day” was attested in three ways to his followers. First, an “angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door” of the sepulchre. (Matt. 28:2) The stone was removed because it was a hindrance to the faithful women who had come with sweet spices to embalm the body of their Lord, and the soldiers were paralyzed with fear so as not to interfere

faith in the ransom, and in the Abrahamic promises.—vss. 21,22; I Tim. 2:3-6; Gen. 22:17,18

The resurrection of Jesus provides a surety that God will fulfill his promise to bless all the families of the earth. It was in view of this that Jesus declared his Father as a God “of the living,” not “of the dead.” (Luke 20:37,38) The resurrection also defines Adamic death—not as eternal extinction, but as unconscious sleep. “There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave.” (Eccles. 9:10) Hence, Jesus spoke of the future resurrection of the dead, saying, “An hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, and will come forth.”—John 5:28,29, *New American Standard Bible*

In connection with this doctrine, many in the Christian world celebrate “Easter Sunday” in remembrance of Jesus’ resurrection. The word “Easter” appears only one time in the *King James Version* of the Bible, where it should be properly rendered “Passover.” (Acts 12:4) It is believed that the Roman and Greek Catholic churches introduced the term “Easter” as a reference to an annual remembrance of Jesus’ resurrection in order to displace a pagan festival of the same name. Though no scriptural authority exists for an “Easter” celebration, or the many customs that have subsequently been attached to it, it is quite proper for Christians to reverently and joyfully call to mind the Lord’s resurrection, especially at this season of the year.

Paul explains that it was necessary that the twelve Apostles bear witness to his resurrection. There could have been no Gospel message of hope of Divine favor to mankind through a dead Savior. The resurrection of Jesus is proof that he faithfully accomplished the work he came into the world to do. His exaltation to the right hand of God allows us to say with confidence, “now is Christ risen,” and makes certain that our faith is not “in vain,” but sure and steadfast.—I Cor. 15:3-22 ■