

Date : 19 April 2020

Theme : Power of the Resurrection

Topic : Living in the Power of Resurrection (Part 2)

Key verse : *He (God) has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade – kept in heaven for you...
1 Peter 1:3,4*

Introduction

Last Sunday we saw how Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son foreshadowed God's sacrifice of His only begotten Son for our sin. Easter is more than just a day of remembering Jesus; we need God's resurrection power daily to overcome our current fears over health and wealth. Our goal today is understand and how to attain to this resurrection power for us who believe.

How did Abraham, at that moment of losing his personal dream as a father, find the courage to release his cherished and only son Isaac into the hand of God? The bible gives a glimpse into his thoughts that day *...he considered (God) faithful who had made the promise...Hebrews 11:11.*

The result? Victory and unimaginable gain! God exchanged Abraham's private ambition with His own limitless potential and entrusted him to carry that divine seed to bless the whole earth for all time. *And so from this one man... came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore... Hebrews 11:12.*

So also, this resurrection season, we can change our perspective on life, suffering and loss when we know the power of the Resurrection.

1 What kind of body is the resurrected body?

- Material vs immaterial, glorious, powerful *1 Corinthians 15:43*
- Visible vs invisible, yet recognisable *John 20:20*
- Defying gravity *Acts 1:9*

Jesus' Resurrection has been declared as the *first fruits* of the dead
1 Corinthians 15:20. How shall we live in the light of our Resurrection body today?
Firstly, desire to attain it by trusting in Him until He comes. Then, be able to
explain clearly the evidences of His Resurrection.

2 What are the convincing proofs that Jesus rose from the dead?

... after His suffering, He...gave many convincing proofs that He was alive ...Acts 1:3

a) The empty tomb, despite...

- A large stone rolled in front of the tomb
- The Roman seal, a sign of authentication that the tomb was occupied and penalty for unauthorised breaking *Matthew 27:66*
- The Roman guard, a 16-men unit in 4-hour shifts of 4 soldiers each, governed by very strict rules. Entire 16-men guard could be executed if one of them fell asleep while on duty.
- Temple guards, the Pharisees' own men.

b) The empty linen (wrapped like a cocoon) around Jesus' body was intact

...Simon Peter saw the strips of linen lying there, as well as the burial cloth that had been around Jesus' head. The cloth was folded up by itself, separate from the linen...Finally (John)...also went inside. He saw and believed... John 20:6-8

- How was the body prepared for burial that day?
Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea wrapped a long wide cloth around Jesus' body, beginning at the feet and ending at the head; interspersing every layer with spices (45 kgs was used) *John 19:39-40*. All these liquid spices would soon harden and cause the cloth wrapping, which followed the contours of the body, to become an encrusted cocoon wrapped around the body of Jesus. (It would be a tight solid covering which prevented removal of the body by any human means, without cutting the cloth).
- John saw these *strips of linen lying there... John 20:5* (intact and undisturbed), but there was no body, the linen clothes were empty!
... (John) went inside. He saw (with understanding) and believed... John 20:8.
It convinced him that the body had been resurrected.

c) Appearances of Jesus after His Resurrection *John 20:30*

Jesus appeared to His disciples for 40 days after His Resurrection.

The gospels record up to 10 or more appearances:

- Mary Magdalene *John 20:16,17*
- Other women *Matthew 28:8-10*
- 2 disciples on Emmaus Road *Luke 24:13-31*
- Peter (first time) *Luke 24:34*
- Disciples (without Thomas) *John 20:19-25*
- Disciples (with Thomas) *John 20:26-29*
- 7 disciples *John 21:1-2*
- Peter and then 12 *1 Corinthians 15:5*
- 500 disciples *1 Corinthians 15:6*
- James and then all the Apostles *1 Corinthians 15:7*
- Saul of Tarsus (later named Paul) *1 Corinthians 15:8*
- Disciples (before Ascension) *Luke 24:36-51*

3) Why did God raise Jesus from the dead?

- To demonstrate His divine power to create and give life
- Give foundation to our hope
- Enable us to pursue this resurrection power and to attain to it
...His comparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of His mighty strength, which He exerted in Christ when He raised Him from the dead... Ephesians 1:19,20.

Application: How do we tap into this resurrection power?

- a) Learn the convincing proofs of the resurrection (see 2 a,b,c above)
 - receive this message of hope by faith; how do we respond to crisis?
 (do we grieve like those who have no hope? *1 Thessalonians 4:13-14,18*)
- b) Pursue the power of the resurrection in our daily life
 - ask God that we live daily from the perspective of resurrection power
 (example, Peter, without Resurrection power, returned to catching fish but, after being empowered, preached powerfully and 3,000 saved)
- c) Live for eternity.
 - we will meet Jesus when He returns; so pursue a life of pleasing Him.
 - use these weeks of StayAtHome to renew our perspective on God. END

