

Date : 20 April 2025 (Resurrection Sunday)
Topic : The Power of God at Jesus' Death and Resurrection
Key Passage : 1 Corinthians 15
Key Verse : *For I delivered to you first of all ...that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures... 1 Corinthians 15:3-4*

Introduction

The Bible declares that the Gospel is the power of God to save us.
This power was manifested at the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Why is Christ's death, burial and resurrection the world's most important event?

- *...of first importance 1 Corinthians 15:3.* It is the essential core upon which faith in Jesus is built. It is important for determining where we spend eternity.
- *...according to the Scriptures 1 Corinthians 15:3,4.* Christ's sacrificial death and resurrection must take place in the form and timing in the finest detail to satisfy God's righteous demands to save mankind from eternal death.

1. Jesus' death and resurrection must be in accordance to that prophesied

a) The Old Testament points to Christ's death through types or patterns such as the slaying of the Passover Lamb (*...for Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed... 1 Corinthians 5:7*).

- It was prophesied in the Old Testament (OT)
 - *Psalms 22* *The scene of His crucifixion*
 - *Isaiah 52, 53* *His death*
 - *Psalms 16* *Resurrection. Jonah's sign of the 3rd day is about Jesus' death.*

b) Abraham offering up Isaac is a picture of Christ's death and resurrection

The story of Abraham offering up Isaac was a severe test of faith. Abraham was told to sacrifice his son but God stopped him at the last moment and provided a ram as a substitute.

- How did this story pan out on the day Jesus died?
 - The place: Mt. Moriah where Abraham offered up Isaac was where Jesus was crucified.
 - God's provision of a lamb: When Isaac asked, where is the sacrifice? Abraham said...*God Himself will provide the lamb (foreshadowing Jesus) for the sacrifice Genesis 22:8.*
 - The contrast: Whereas God spared Abraham's son, God did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all *Romans 8:32.*
Why did God do this? To show how much He loved us.

c) The Feast of the Passover

During this annual Feast, a lamb must be sacrificed. This lamb depicted Jesus as the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world.

- The death of Jesus took place according to the sacrifice exactly in terms of
 - Day
 - Time
 - Place

- The Passover lamb was sacrificed to deliver the Israelites from the judgement of death. Jesus is the ultimate Passover Lamb. Just as the lamb must be without blemish, so Jesus was without sin to be the Substitute to pay the penalty for the sins of mankind. His blood alone cleanses us from all sin.

d) The Veil in the temple

In the temple, there existed a part called the most Holy Place. This most Holy Place was out of bounds to all, except the High Priest, who came into God's presence only at appointed times. God's presence was in this place, separated by a veil. When Jesus died, this veil was torn from top to bottom.

2. How did the 4 supernatural events, which occurred at Jesus' crucifixion, demonstrate power?

What were these events?

- a) The sky darkened and total darkness eclipsed the earth from noon to 3pm. Darkness is a sign of sin. A sign of displeasure for Jesus was suffering the penalty of man's sin.

At 3pm, Jesus cried out *...My God, my God, why have You forsaken me... Psalm 22:1*

- b) Earthquakes

The place of the Hill of Skull was shaken violently, a sign of God presence.

A second earthquake took place on Sunday morning before dawn, 3 days after the crucifixion. The massive stone slab, which covered Jesus' tomb, was rolled away. The soldiers, who had guarded it round the clock, were terrified. It had been sealed with the Governor's seal to prevent any tampering.

Four women, who visited His tomb, saw two angels – one sitting on the stone slab and another inside the tomb. This second angel showed the ladies that the body of Jesus was gone. Only the burial linen shroud, which encased Jesus' body, was left. These women, the disciples and 500 others saw Jesus alive.

Jesus had risen! He had conquered death. Just as King David had written 1000 years earlier...*His body would not suffer decay... Psalm 16:10*

- c) The thick curtain in the temple was ripped from top to bottom, revealing the 'Ark of the Covenant' which represented God's holy presence. This curtain had protected the room called the most Holy Place. No one could enter except the High Priest, who entered only once a year at the appointed time and in the stipulated way. Failure to follow the stipulated way into God's presence always meant instant death.

The reason is simply this. God is a holy God. Sinful man cannot appear before Him without doing it God's way. Jesus' sacrifice for our sins is now accepted. The curtain (veil) was torn to allow us free access before God. The veil is a picture of Jesus.

We can safely come to God through Jesus, whose merit we rely on.

This is why Jesus had earlier declared *...I am the Way. No man comes to the Father, except through me...*

- d) Graves of godly servants of the past cracked opened and these resurrected saints entered the holy city and appeared to many. This happened after the resurrection of Jesus. The power that raised Jesus from the dead had affected nearby graves.

3. Where was God the Father through these events?

God was in Christ reconciling the world.

When Jesus cried out *...My God, why has Thou forsaken me...* what was happening?
The prophet Isaiah revealed that God the Father had to execute the death penalty.

How did God the Father feel?

The Father's feeling was revealed through Abraham when he was told to sacrifice his only son.

Why did the Heavenly Father feel so grieved?

- He had to sacrifice His Son because this was the only way to save us from hell, sin's penalty. His only Son alone qualified to die for the sins of mankind.
 - His plan was made before the world was created
 - His gift to the world which He so loved.
- He had to be separated from His Son for the first time.

When the Son became sin for us, God had to forsake Him because sin separated man from God.

God's holy law declared that the sinner must die, eternally separated from God in hell.
- He had to deliver the punishment because there was no one who could execute the penalty, Jesus was smitten by God as the prophet Isaiah wrote.

It is one thing to sit as Judge for sin but it is another to have to execute the penalty.

 - Jesus was forsaken so that we will not be forsaken by God.

How do we feel when we are forsaken?
(4yr old Megan Kung who was tortured to death).
We feel it because a defenceless child was grievously killed by her adult parents.
The feeling of abandonment creates a source of insecurity.
 - Why did Jesus not address the Father until the punishment was over?

He was bearing our sins.
After it was over, Jesus said *...Father, into Your hands, I commit my spirit...*