

## Lesson 5

# The Resurrection

## Introduction

Sin brings separation from God, Isaiah 59.2. God is holy, Isaiah 57.15 and *dwells in His holy mountain*, Isaiah 56.7; 57.13. He is set apart from all sin, 1 John 1.5-7. In a split second, everything changed when Adam and Eve transgressed the commandment in the garden. Direct and personal fellowship with God was no more. They were naked and ashamed. Their first instinct was to cover themselves and hide, Genesis 3.7-8. From this point forward, the Biblical narrative shifts in emphasis, giving us details on God's great rescue operation: the redemption of mankind from sin. What a glorious thing to consider: rather than turning His back or annihilating us because of our sin, God went to the farthest extreme to bring us back.

And, through the cross, God has us back. The main purpose for our redemption is to be transformed, having been made holy and blameless before God, Ephesians 1.4; 4.24b. This is so we can worship, praise, and glorify God throughout eternity. But, for that to happen, our sins had to be removed. So, *God put Jesus forward as a propitiation by His blood*, Romans 3.25. Jesus paid the penalty for the sins of mankind. God's holiness demanded a sacrifice - a payment for the violation of law. At the cross, God's justice was satisfied. *He was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon Him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with His wounds we are healed*, Isaiah 53.5.

But the story does not end there. Jesus did not only die. He was raised to life three days later. In this lesson we will explore what the Old Testament writers foretold in regard to what would happen after the cross. And we will see why the resurrection of Jesus of such vital importance.

## Three Old Testament Passages that Point to the Resurrection

### *Psalm 16*

At its most basic level, this Psalm is a confession of faith. Here, David moves with a quiet, inner confidence that understands the reality of God's protection and deliverance. He completely depends on God for everything. *I have no good apart from you*, 16.2. In 16.5-6, David uses these terms to describe His spiritual inheritance: *portion, cup, lot, and boundary lines*. There was much more than the physical. It has been said that "a goodly heritage moves beyond land, place, and temple to grace and the presence of God. ***The foundation of faithful optimism is a life lived in communion with God.***" David viewed God's blessings as far superior to the best inheritance a person could receive. God has blessed him with a wonderfully full life.

Next, David acknowledges the blessings of His relationship. These include *counsel, instruction*, and stability, 16.7-8. David always kept God before Him and responded with every part of his being, 16.9. It

is clear from 16.10-11 that the Psalmist understood life goes beyond this world. David's foremost desire was to be in the presence of God where there is *joy and pleasures forevermore*, 16.11.

Psalm 16.8-11 is quoted by Peter in Acts 2.25-28. Paul cited 16.10 in his sermon at Antioch, Acts 13.33-35. Both passages are applied to Jesus' victory over death. David's words transcended his own experience and became historically true in Christ. Whereas David was *delivered from death*, Jesus overcame via a *resurrection* from death.

### ***Psalm 2.6-12***

It is thought this Psalm was an "enthronement" hymn used in the ordination of a new king over Israel. It is connected to the promises communicated in the Davidic covenant, 2 Samuel 7.11-16. These promises proved to be true for those kings who chose to serve Yahweh during the time of physical Israel. God stood behind and protected His people. The Hebrews viewed the king as having been adopted by God, with authority and power. The thought here is more *theological* than *historical*. The psalm is rooted in faith that God, seated above all in heaven, is the ultimate power.

2.7 is quoted directly by Paul in Acts 13.33 and is directly applied to Jesus. To what does *today* refer? In the context of Acts 13, Paul made the application that it referred to the day of Jesus' resurrection.

Through the resurrection, Jesus was exalted to God's right hand, enthroned as the Son of God, and recognized as such by people of faith. This passage is also used in Hebrews 1.5 and 5.5 to describe Jesus' divine sonship and exaltation. Some view Psalm 2.8 as a foretelling of the work of the great commission, Matthew 28.19-20; Acts 1.8.

Psalm 2.10 is also quoted by Paul in Acts 13.35. Paul argues that David could not have been applying this to himself since he died and his body did see corruption, 13.36. Only through the resurrection of Jesus did the promises to David find their ultimate fulfillment. **Jesus is God's holy one whose body did not experience decay.** Jesus is the Son of God whose throne is forever. Through Him comes forgiveness of sin and *by Him everyone who believes is freed from everything from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses*, Acts 13.38-39.

### ***Isaiah 55.3, 5***

If Isaiah 53 speaks about Jesus' death, Isaiah 55 speaks of Jesus' inheritance that would be received through His resurrection. When God resurrected Jesus from the dead, He directly fulfilled the Davidic covenant, 2 Samuel 7.4-17. The *holy and sure* blessings to David, Acts 13.34, involved the promise by God to establish one of his descendants to an eternal throne, *a kingdom that would last forever*, 2 Samuel 7.13, 16. This eternal King would be a *witness, leader, and commander for the peoples*, Isaiah 55.4. He will have worldwide dominion. 55.5 has direct fulfillment in the gospel being received by the Gentiles. "The significance of the nation's coming to Israel lies in Israel's *Holy One*, not in Israel's political domination." See also Isaiah 2.1-5.

## **Why the Resurrection is of Vital Importance**

**The resurrection proves the validity of the Biblical record.** In the previous section we looked at three Old Testament references. If Psalm 16, 2, and Isaiah 55 are wrong, then on what basis can we believe the rest of the Bible? The entire collection of Scripture is at stake. If the resurrection did not take place, then what is the point of Christianity? See 1 Corinthians 15.17.

Notice carefully Paul's statement in Acts 26.22-23: *To this day I have had help from God, and so I stand here, testifying to both small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would take place: **that the Messiah must suffer, and that, by being the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to our people and to the Gentiles.*** Going as far back as Moses' writings and the words of the prophets, the Biblical message has been that the Christ would die and then be resurrected. When Jesus came out of the grave, all these sayings were fulfilled, and God's word was proven to be true.

**The resurrection proves the validity of Jesus' teaching.** Jesus clearly affirmed the fact that though He would be killed, He would be resurrected from the dead:

- Matthew 17.9: *And as they were coming down the mountain, Jesus commanded them, "Tell no one the vision, until the Son of Man is raised from the dead."*
- John 2.19: *Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."*
- Luke 9.22: *saying, "The Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised."*
- Luke 24.7: *that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise."*

Was Jesus a liar? Did He not rise? His promise to be resurrected was fulfilled, Matthew 28.1-6; Luke 24.1-7.

Later in Luke, two disciples walked along the road to Emmaus sad and dejected. *We had hoped that He was the one to redeem Israel,* 24.21a. They believed Jesus was gone for good. There was no more hope. To this Jesus said, *"O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself,* Luke 24.25-27.

Because of the fact of His resurrection, all claims made by Jesus on earth are credible. *I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he dies, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die,* John 11.25-26.

**The resurrection confirms that Jesus is the Son of God.** There is no greater proof of Jesus' deity. Paul said Jesus was *declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord,* Romans 1.4. This is the greatest proof of who Jesus is, for only God can give life and only God can conquer death.

*I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me,* John 14.6. **This is what separates Christianity from every other religion!** Muhammad (Islam) is dead. Joseph Smith

(Mormons) is dead. Sun Myung Moon (Unification Church - "Moonies") is dead. Charles Taze Russell (Jehovah's Witnesses) is dead. When Jesus rose from the dead, He was physical, visible, tangible, and touchable.

**The resurrection confirms that forgiveness is possible.** The resurrection **completes our salvation**, Romans 4.25. Notice that Jesus was *delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification*. Jesus' death accomplished its intended purpose. It satisfied God's holy justice. *The resurrection provided proof that God had accepted the sacrifice of His Son and would be able to be just and yet justify the ungodly.*<sup>3</sup> He was raised in order that in the sight of God we might be made righteous, having had our sins dismissed and forgiven.

Not only were our sins forgiven when we *called on the name of the Lord*, Romans 10.9-10, but Christ continues to live in order to make intercession for us, 2 John 1.9, 2.1-2; He **always lives to make intercession** for us, Hebrews 7.25.

**The resurrection confirms that physical death is not the end.** There is more to life than what we see. How hopeless would it be if this life is all there is? *If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied*, 1 Corinthians 15.19. The resurrection helps us overcome the sting of death. *"O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ*, 1 Corinthians 15.55-57. Because Jesus lives, the hope of life sustains us as we face the prospect of death. **Christians need not fear death. For them, death is the end of difficulty and the beginning of rest and bliss**, 1 Corinthians 15.20, 23.

**The resurrection confirms Jesus' victory over all enemies.** In the book of Revelation, Jesus is depicted as a lamb that had been slain, but was standing again, 5.6. This same Lord was *the lion of the tribe of Judah* that had overcome his foes, 5.5. Christians too will overcome as a result of the Lamb's sacrifice and victory over death, Revelation 12.11.<sup>4</sup>

## For Thought and Reflection

1. What is the result of sin and what action did God take as a result?
2. How does Psalm 16 apply to David's physical life?
3. How does Psalm 16 apply to Jesus? Explain.

4. How did Psalm 2 apply to physical Israel?
  
5. How does Psalm 2 apply to Jesus? Explain.
  
6. What is the significance of Isaiah 55 in regard to Jesus' reign as eternal King?
  
7. Why is the resurrection important to the veracity of the Biblical record?
  
8. If the resurrection is not true, what happens to the credibility of Jesus' teaching?
  
9. How does the resurrection prove the deity of Christ?
  
10. How is forgiveness made possible through the resurrection?
  
11. How does the resurrection provide hope in death?
  
12. How does the resurrection provide hope with Jesus' total victory over His enemies?