

Resurrection 2

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Preacher: Rev Roddy Macleod

[0 : 00] Now as we read there in John 19 and 20, it is recorded for us the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And the church, the Christian church in ancient times, appointed this time of year to be the time of year wherein the churches would lay special emphasis upon this particular and special aspect of our Lord's life and ministry in this world.

And as I have said to you on many occasions in the past, this word Esther comes to us from the Anglo-Saxon Esther.

And it was originally a festival in springtime held in honor of the Teutonic goddess of light known in Anglo-Saxon times as Esther.

About the 8th century, this name was transferred by the Anglo-Saxons to the Jewish festival which celebrated the death and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

[1 : 23] The word Esther occurs only once in the Bible, in Acts 12 and verse 4. But this authorised version translation of the Greek is a mis-translation.

The word ought to really be translated, transliterated, PASHA, which should be rendered Passover and translated as Passover.

And the modern translations have put that right. Joseph of Adam and Nicodemus have acted together, having agreed beforehand, because they came prepared to anoint the body of Jesus. Remember how there at the end of this chapter when Jesus gave up the ghost on the cross. Joseph of Adam and Nicodemus, he besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus. And this good man, this rich man, he sought Pilate to give him the body of Jesus, that he might honor Jesus by anointing his body.

[2 : 55] Anointing his body in respect of his death. Anointing his body with the rich, aromatic, fragrant spices, which acted as a kind of preservative, preventing Jesus' body seeing corruption.

As was prophesied of him by the psalmist. Thou would not leave my body in the veron of the grave. Thou would not let me see corruption.

So Jesus was miraculously, Jesus' body was miraculously preserved from becoming corrupt in the tomb. And then Nicodemus came forward to help Joseph of Adam and Isaiah to provide the linen wrappings within the blessed body of our glorious Savior.

While Nicodemus supplied the mure and the aloes amounting to no less than 100 pounds weight. Nearly a hundred weight of myrrh and aloes.

And those two names, Joseph of Adam and Isaiah and Nicodemus, have lived in the hearts of everyone who loved the Lord Jesus.

[4 : 43] Not written with a pen of steel and hearts of iron, but written with the ink of gratitude on heart, on land.

Now, with reference to Jesus' burial and to Joseph of Adam and Isaiah's tomb, we notice first of all that it was a new tomb.

So that we can say that the giver of new life was born in a new way. Jesus was born in a new way. No one was ever born in the same way in which Jesus was born. Remember the promise was that the Holy Ghost would overshadow the Virgin Mary and that thing that was conceived within her would be called the Son of God.

Jesus was born in the same way in which Jesus was born. He was miraculously conceived in the womb of the Virgin Mary. And therefore his birth was different from everyone else's birth.

[5 : 53] No one was ever born like this except Jesus. He was different in his birth. The giver of the new life was born in a new way.

[13 : 42] And so there was a continual smoke from these fires that burned constantly. Now a malefactor, such as those who were crucified with Jesus, deserved a malefactor's death.

And deserved a malefactor's burial. That's appropriate to them in their criminal state. Although he suffered a malefactor's death, Jesus was a sinner.

Savior of the world. His death was a shameful death. His death was a cruel death. His death was a death for you and for me.

Only twice in his lifetime was Jesus honored by the rich. At his birth, you remember, wise men came from the east. And they brought with them gold.

And at his death, Joseph, a rich man of Arimathea, buried him with the rich spices of the east.

[14 : 56] The rich Joseph at his sepulchre took the place of the poor Joseph at his cradle. And thirdly, this grave was a disciple's grave.

Joseph of Arimathea was a disciple. That is, one who loved Jesus in life and in death. Christ died for his people and he was buried for them.

And Joseph was one of them for whom Christ died. Jesus was on the cross for sinners. But he was buried in a tomb for his own people.

The tomb belonged to this believer. Belonged to Joseph. And Jesus robbed the death of his sin, which is sin.

And he robbed the grave of his power when he says, I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.

[16 : 09] So Jesus was with sinners and for sinners on the cross. And Jesus was with and for the disciples in the tomb.

The message of the cross is for all sinners everywhere. With his utter word, repent and believe the gospel and be saved.

But the message of the tomb is for all believers. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. When he says, I go and repaid a place for you. And as our catechism teaches us, The souls of believers are after death made perfect in holiness and do immediately pass into glory.

And their bodies being still united to Christ do rest in their graves until the resurrection. Now, firstly, notice that it was a sepulcher in a garden.

That's a very strange thing to ask. It was a sepulcher in a garden. It was a sepulcher in his own garden.

[17 : 24] At the bottom of his own garden. And that Joseph of Adamathaea could see his own sepulcher at the bottom of his own garden every day.

Joseph of Adamathaea got onto good terms with death. He was not only rich, but he was wise as well.

And not many of the rich of this world are wise. But Joseph of Adamathaea was not only rich in this world's good, but he was also wise.

He got onto good terms with death. And he built himself a tomb at the end of his garden so that every day he got up, he would say to himself, this might be my last day.

He could look at his tomb and say, that's where I'm going to lay my body one day. And therefore he got onto good terms with death.

[18 : 34] So there is no dark and other joys of this life, earthly joys, but there is a grave at the end of them.

Seen or unseen, fear or welcomed, near or far, it is there. We can make the world as beautiful and as sweet as we may.

We may make it as fragrant as we can. We can fill it with the choicest flowers, the sweetest and the frozen fruits of labor or rest, but it is there.

At the end of it all, it is there. We can shut out all our cares. We can banish all our sorrows. We can close our minds to all our problems.

We can do what we will in terms of ignoring it. And it is there. And Joseph came to terms with this path.

[19 : 37] That at the end of it all, there is in the garden, no matter how pleasant, how sweet, how fragrant, how beautiful, it is there, at the bottom of the garden.

At the end of life's treasures and joys, and sorrows and troubles and trials, at the end of it, there is the grave. And we may hide our eyes from it, and deny it if we will, but it is there.

And we ought to imitate Joseph of Adamathaea in his acknowledgement of it.

When the golden bowl is broken, and the silver cord is loose, and the fountain is broken, sister. Then, when this life has ended, at the end of life, there is a tomb. Well, there is suggested by this narrative of Jesus' death and resurrection, a garden, a sepulcher, a savior, a sepulcher in the garden, and the savior in the sepulcher.

[21 : 04] But are these things brought before us in this narrative of Jesus' death and resurrection. And both the garden and the sepulcher are overshadowed by the cross.

Before the garden and before the sepulcher, there is the cross. There is Jesus' sufferings and sorrows and death upon the cross before his burial in the garden and in the sepulcher in the garden.

And this is a picture of life and what sin has done to it. And what Christ has done for it.

We remind ourselves today that human life began in a garden without a sepulcher. because Eden, the earthly paradise, was a place where there was no death for body and soul.

The soul of Adam and Eve was made thinless and beautiful and their surroundings were beautiful and sweet and fragrant, a garden of peace and plenty.

[22 : 24] No darkness, no fear, no sin, no death, nothing to cast a shadow over the joys of the original glory and blessedness.

The first work sin did was the digging of a grave. The devil hoped to bury forever the hopes of the human race.

So now there is no garden without a grave, because there is no soul that is without sin. Now the world is what it never was before, a sinful, deadly, grave-filled wilderness.

A grave within and ever man laid was a place for Jesus to fill in there.

And against the dark death work of the devil is the bright, life-giving work of Jesus who says, I am the resurrection and the light, who says, I am the light of the world.

[23 : 45] He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life. The soul-destroying work of the devil is counseled by the soul-saving work of Jesus so that God has left us much of paradise be gained in our being filled with the spirit of God, that earnest of our expectations and hope.

We are much of life's present joys, sweet affections and tender emotions and sacred ties and treasured love.

God has given us back gleams of spiritual hope in the midst of this life's darkness. God has given us though we live under the shadow of death and the shadow of the tomb at the end of our garden.

Although the tomb is close at hand, nevertheless, Jesus' tomb is empty.

He is risen, said the angel. He is not here, for he is risen. And surely this is the great and the glorious doctrine of the Christian faith.

[25 : 13] That if Jesus be not risen, our faith is in vain. That because Jesus is risen, our faith is vindicated.

And we, when we lay ourselves down in that tomb, we too, another day, will rise in newness of spiritual life.

But in the meantime, the tomb is close at hand. The tomb is close at hand, and soon, very soon, eyes will be wet with weeping and hearts heavy with sorrow.

Whenever the silver cord is loosed and the golden bowl will be broken and the cistern is broken at the fountain. When this spirit, that is our life in this world, departs of death, then loving relations will commit us to the tomb at the end of our garden, the end of our earthly life.

The brightest part of the Gospel surely is the heavenly messenger's word. He is not here, for he is risen. A word of glorious victory and triumph of the Lord of life could not be held by the bands of death.

[26 : 47] Our whole concept of death is now changed. Instead of it being a darksome terror, keeping us in bondage and slavery and fear, death is now presented to us in the Gospel as a door, merely as a door that God opens for us and lets us through into a new life, into a new glory.

A door to this fullness of participation with thanks in the light of the world. In the light of the world, the light of the world shines in the darkness of the tomb for the Christians.

When Christ finished his work of redemption on the cross, you remember what he said? He said it is finished. The work of his sufferings for sin, it is finished.

And so too with regard to his going to the tomb, Jesus might say about it, what he said about his Sabbath day in creation, he rested from all his works. Wherefore he blessed the Sabbath day in

holiday.

And having finished all his work of redemption, having risen from the grave, he could say, with regard to his redemption work, that he blessed the tomb and hallowed it, made it a holy place for everyone who believes in him.

[28 : 33] Jesus was on the cross for sinners. He was on the throne of glory for the Christians' victory.

It is on the cross for sinners. He was on the throne of God for his people's victory.

As we look at Joseph's tomb, let us learn well today's lessons for ourselves. Let us look beyond it to another garden, not an earthly paradise, not an earthly garden, but a heavenly paradise, of which Christ spoke to the believing sinner beside him on the cross, when he said to him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.

That paradise of which he himself spoke, and of which he promised, to that believing sinner on the cross beside him. The Bible begins showing us man unfallen in his integrity, in his blessedness and happiness.

The Bible tells us about man's fall into sin, and darkness and ignorance. The Bible ends by showing us man redeemed and man restored.

[30 : 11] The Bible tells us about paradise being lost to our first parents. And the Bible ends by telling us about paradise redeemed.

The Bible opens with a vista of beauty, and shows the beauty marred and sullied. And then the Bible closes with vistas of beauty given back.

Not of an earthly paradise indeed, but of unheavenly glory yet to be. The Bible opens with man in an earthly garden, and closes showing man in a heavenly paradise.

Heaven is a paradise without a death. There shall be no more death, the Bible says, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away, and they shall see his face.

The spirit and the bride say, come, and let him that is athirst come, and let him that heareth say, come, and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

[31 : 53] But Thomas, one of the twelve called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord.

And he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and slapped my hand into the side, I will not believe. And after eight days again, his disciples were within, and Thomas with them.

Then came Jesus, the door being shut, and stood in the midst and said, Peace be unto you. Then said he to Thomas, Reach here to thy finger, and behold my hand, and reach here to thy hand, and thrust it into my hand, and be not faithless, and be not faithless, but believe me.

Be not faithless, but believe me. Amen.

We pray that it may please me, to grant unto us that faith that will enable us to receive the Lord Jesus, in all his fullness and ability to save unto the uttermost.

[33 : 11] And sometimes we have to say with another, Lord I believe, help thou mine unbelief. We pray that it may please thee, to grant us that confidence and assured faith, that thou art not here, that thou art risen from the dead, and that thou art exalted to the highest heaven, and seated at God's right hand, making continual intercession for us.

We let them receive our persons, and accept our worship in the Lord Jesus, for we are those sinners that are saved. Amen.