

# He Is Risen!

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[ 0 : 00 ] This morning, we celebrate one of the single greatest events in human history, the resurrection of our Lord Jesus from the dead.

And I'm excited to celebrate together with those of you who are watching or listening at home. But before we get to that moment in the story, we want to take some time to go back and remember what has brought us up to this moment in the story of Jesus.

So I want to invite you to enter into the story of Jesus with me this morning. A week ago today, Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a donkey to shouts of Hosanna to the Son of David.

Blessed is the King of Israel. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. And the people were taking off their cloaks and throwing them down on the road in front of him and laying palm branches down.

It was a great kind of a royal procession. Up until this moment, anticipation had been building in the nation.

[ 1 : 30 ] For the past three years, the crowds had been going out to Jesus and following him. No one had ever spoken or taught like Jesus did.

He was doing amazing signs and miracles such as no one could do. People were being healed of their sicknesses and diseases.

He was even commanding evil spirits and the spirits would obey him. And so the attention on Jesus has been increasing right up to this moment as he rides into the city of Jerusalem.

And in this moment, the big question on people's minds is simply this. Who is this man?

Matthew writes in his gospel, when Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, who is this?

[ 2 : 46 ] Is he just a mere man? Or is he more? Is he a prophet? Is he the Messiah?

The people want to know. And so begins this week leading up to the Passover in Jerusalem.

And it's a week full of intrigue and excitement. I should mention that in these three years leading up to this moment, it hasn't all been smooth sailing for Jesus.

There has been tension rising between him and the religious leaders all through this time. And now as we come to this week leading up to the Passover in Jerusalem, those tensions begin to rise even more.

Jesus goes to the temple there in Jerusalem each day and he teaches the people. And again and again, the religious leaders, they challenge Jesus.

[ 4 : 00 ] They try to ask him questions that will discredit him or humiliate him in front of the people. But as hard as they try, they cannot stump or trip Jesus up in his words.

He answers everything perfectly. Displaying such an amazing wisdom and understanding. He even asks a few questions of his own which put the Pharisees on their guard.

They're not able to answer his questions. And they're the so-called experts when it comes to the law. This makes the religious leaders mad.

In fact, they become furious and they are plotting and scheming as to how they can get rid of Jesus. As the week draws to a close, Jesus, who is staying outside the city in a small town called Bethany, he sends some of his disciples into the city to make preparations for the Passover.

[ 5 : 22 ] And while they're making preparations, one of Jesus' inner twelve, a man named Judas, is making preparations of his own.

Preparations to betray Jesus and hand him over to the religious leaders for a sum of money.

Finally, that evening comes when Jesus sits down in the upper room with his disciples to celebrate the Passover meal.

They eat and they drink together. Jesus says many things to them. And that night, he leads them out to Gethsemane, an olive grove.

It is there in Gethsemane that Jesus is arrested. Under the cover of darkness, Judas leads a crowd of armed men out to meet Jesus there in the olive grove.

And Jesus surrenders himself to them and allows them to arrest him. His disciples desert him and flee in that moment.

[ 6 : 42 ] A couple of them follow along from a distance to see where they will take Jesus and what they will do with him. And so begins this dark night in the story of Jesus.

From there, they take him to the chief priests in Jerusalem. And he is put on trial. If you could even call it a trial.

It was more of a sham trial than anything. In that moment, it was almost as if they were just rehearsing.

What could we possibly say? What accusations could we possibly make that would secure for us the result that we want to get?

Which is to see him executed. From there, they take him to the Roman governor, Pilate. Pilate sends Jesus to stand trial before Herod.

[ 7 : 48 ] Herod mocks Jesus and sends him back to Pilate. Pilate questions Jesus and finds him innocent.

He makes his verdict known publicly in front of all the people. But the religious leaders stir up the people to demand that Jesus be executed, that he be crucified.

And so, even though Jesus is innocent, Pilate, after having him severely flogged, hands him over to be crucified.

From there, Jesus is made to carry his own cross to Golgotha, the place of the skull. There, the soldiers nail Jesus' body to a wooden cross and then lift him up on that cross.

where he hangs for all to watch as he dies. A horrific death of suffocation and blood loss.

[ 9 : 15 ] The charge above his head reads on a sign that was posted there, this is the king of the Jews.

It was an awful day, a dark day, a bloody day. But it was a day that God had planned long ago.

The religious leaders thought that they had triumphed over Jesus that day. We got him. Little did they know, little did they realize, all of this was part of God's plan from long ago.

All of this had deep significance. Jesus' suffering and death, it had a distinct and clear purpose from God.

God had given an explanation to these events, to what Jesus went through hundreds of years before it had even happened.

[ 10 : 34 ] And I'm going to read some of that for us this morning. I encourage you to think about those moments before and on the cross as Jesus suffered while I read from Isaiah 53.

God said this through the prophet Isaiah, he was despised and rejected by mankind. A man of suffering and familiar with pain.

Like one from whom people hide their faces, he was despised. And we held him in low esteem.

Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering.

Yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions.

He was crushed for our iniquities. the punishment that brought us peace was upon him and by his wounds we are healed.

[ 11 : 51 ] We all like sheep have gone astray. Each of us has turned to our own way and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed and afflicted yet he did not open his mouth. He was led like a lamb to the slaughter and as a sheep before its shearers is silent so he did not open his mouth.

By oppression and judgment he was taken away yet who of his generation protested for he was cut off from the land of the living for the transgression of my people he was punished.

He was assigned a grave with the wicked and with the rich in his death though he had done no violence nor was any deceit in his mouth.

Yet it was the Lord's will to crush him and cause him to suffer. The Lord makes his life an offering for sin.

[ 13 : 06 ] By his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many and he will bear their iniquities. Long ago before any of this had taken place God had made known that there would be a specific purpose for the suffering of this servant of his.

He was to bear the punishment of his people so that they might be healed. Like a sin offering being offered for their atonement.

John the baptizer three years before this moment at the cross pointed to the same thing. He pointed to Jesus and said behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

Jesus himself spoke of this moment. In his conversation with Nicodemus he said this he said just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness referring to how he had lifted it up on a wooden pole so the son of man must be lifted up that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life in order for people who believe in him to have eternal life something must happen the son of man must be lifted up the lamb of God must be sacrificed in the words of Jesus the ransom must be paid the death of Jesus was absolutely necessary to secure this gift that

God desires to give to his people eternal life and to secure their just pardon for their sins against him and we have all sinned against God we all deserve to receive from him the punishment that he has prescribed death hell there was no other way for us to be forgiven for us to escape this punishment and be saved Jesus had to come and die on that cross and suffer as he did the innocent for the guilty to make that possible for us Jesus said so himself that night that he was betrayed he told

[ 16 : 13 ] Peter to put his sword away he said do you think I cannot call on my father and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels but how then would the scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way it must happen in this way and so the death of Jesus was absolutely necessary but it's not the end of the story we're here listening watching on Easter Sunday morning and the story goes on if the death of Jesus was the darkest day in human history this morning we celebrate the brightest day in human history so let's read the story together from Luke chapter 24 verse 1 on the first day of the week very early in the morning the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb they found the stone rolled away from the tomb but when they entered they did not find the body of the

Lord Jesus while they were wondering about this suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them in their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground but the men said to them why do you look for the living among the dead he is not here he has risen remember remember how he told you while he was still with you in Galilee the son of man must be delivered over to the hands of sinners be crucified and on the third day be raised again then then they remembered his words would have been a wonderful moment I would have loved to have seen it he is risen he is not here this is just as he said this must happen it must happen in this way but he's not here he's alive the big surprise would come later that evening as almost all of Jesus disciples and many others with them were gathered together in Jerusalem I'm reading from verse 36 there they are gathered while they were still talking Jesus himself stood among them and said to them peace be with you they were startled and frightened thinking they saw a ghost he said to them why are you troubled and why do doubts rise in your minds look at my hands and my feet it is I myself touch me and see a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see I have when he had said this he showed them his hands and feet and while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement he asked them do you have anything here to eat they gave him a piece of broiled fish and he took it and ate it in their presence oh what a moment that must have been I love the reaction of the disciples their first reaction is that of unbelief but not the bad kind of unbelief kind of the kind of unbelief that wow this can't be I can't believe what my eyes are seeing I can't believe what my hands are feeling you're here you're alive he is risen this is amazing it can't be we saw you die you're alive here you are with the human body flesh and blood and scars to prove it Luke tells us that they had joy and amazement what a wonderful and glorious moment that must have been and even this moment too Jesus had told them about on the eve of his betrayal do you remember those words that he spoke to his disciples he said very truly

I tell you you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices you will grieve but your grief will turn to joy it's like a woman giving birth a woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come but when her baby is born she forgets the anguish because of the joy that a child is born into the world so with you now is your time of grief he told them on the night of his betrayal but I will see you again and you will rejoice and no one will take away your joy the resurrection of Jesus is cause

for great joy the resurrection of

[ 22 : 20 ] Jesus is everything that that God raised Jesus from the dead is is heaven's declaration that yes he is the son of God he is my son whom I love yes he is the Messiah the king that I promised long ago the shoot from the stump of Jesse the son of David the one who will reign over the never ending kingdom of heaven which is coming in its fullness Jesus being raised from the dead by God is is is is God's proclamation that yes the ransom payment has been accepted you can be made right with me through him by believing in his name Jesus being raised from the dead is is

God's declaration that there is nothing that can stand in the way of him giving to his people all that he has promised the greatest of promises eternal life not even death can stand in the way the resurrection of Jesus is everything it's it's God's ultimate sign his ultimate certificate of authenticity on Jesus his son and on every word that Jesus spoke and so as we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord Jesus this morning I hope that you just feel ready to praise and to thank God for this amazing glorious reality it doesn't matter what you're going through there is nothing that can stand in the way of all that God has promised to give to you if you have believed if you have repented and believed in the name of his one and only son the coronavirus can't stand in the way your physical health and sickness or issues that you're going through with your body can't stand in the way death itself can't stand in the way hear these words of

Jesus again in this world you will have trouble but take heart I have overcome the world where oh death is your sting where oh death is your victory over me it's gone forever that's what the resurrection of Jesus declares thanks be to God he has given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ and this good gift of eternal life which guarantees in a solid and certain way all of the good things that God has promised to his people is available to all who will repent who will seek God's forgiveness and believe that he has provided the way and that the way is his son Jesus and so I wish you joy with your family or with or on your own if you're celebrating on your own this Easter Sunday morning Christ is risen he is risen indeed let's pray Lord Jesus thank you for offering your life for ours thank you for enduring the suffering of Calvary so that we might be forgiven and receive new life forever in you father thank you that nothing can stop your love from breaking through fill our hearts with joy and enable us to feel it today we ask this in Christ's name amen you