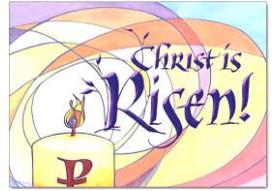


Sunday 12th April 2020

Easter Day

White or Gold



Collect

Lord of all life and power, who through the mighty resurrection of your Son overcame the old order of sin and death to make all things new in him: grant that we, being dead to sin and alive to you in Jesus Christ, may reign with him in glory; to whom with you and the Holy Spirit be praise and honour, glory and might, now and in all eternity. **Amen**

Acts 10:34-43 English Standard Version (ESV)

Gentiles Hear the Good News

10³⁴ So Peter opened his mouth and said: “Truly I understand that God shows no partiality,³⁵ but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.³⁶ As for the word that he sent to Israel, preaching good news of peace through Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all),³⁷ you yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed:³⁸ how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.³⁹ And we are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree,⁴⁰ but God raised him on the third day and made him to appear,⁴¹ not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.⁴² And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead.⁴³ To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

COMMENT: Peter’s sermon to the household of Cornelius, the Roman centurion in Caesarea, may seem a strange lesson to be read instead of an Old Testament selection. The thrust of Peter’s message, however, is the central theme of Easter. The resurrection of Jesus confirmed for all people (and not restricted to the Jews) and all time, that Jesus is Lord, not Caesar, whom the centurion would have called by the title; Lord. The setting; the people to whom this Good News was proclaimed, and the linking of gospel and prophecy underline the universality of Peter’s message. Luke (author of Acts) throughout his Gospel, it can be noted, accords Jesus the title of Lord following another Centurion’s award of that title in Luke 7:6 – replacing the name of Jesus with ‘Lord’ in Luke 7:13.

John 20:1-18 English Standard Version (ESV)

The Resurrection

20¹ Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb.² So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.”³ So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb.⁴ Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first.⁵ And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in.⁶ Then

Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, 7 and the face cloth, which had been on Jesus^[a] head, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself. 8 Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; 9 for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead. 10 Then the disciples went back to their homes.

Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene

¹¹ But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept she stooped to look into the tomb. ¹² And she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet. ¹³ They said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.” ¹⁴ Having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵ Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?” Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.” ¹⁶ Jesus said to her, “Mary.” She turned and said to him in Aramaic,^[b] “Rabboni!” (which means Teacher). ¹⁷ Jesus said to her, “Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’” ¹⁸ Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord”—and that he had said these things to her.

Footnotes: a. Greek *his* b. or *Hebrew*

COMMENT: In the passage in John, although Mary turns around and sees Jesus and accounts him to be the gardener – was his back to Mary? Mary is certainly not expecting to see a man who was crucified walking around! From the text, we know that Mary was not looking straight at this man she accounted as the gardener, because in order to answer his question as to whom she was seeking, having recognised his voice the text states; “*She turned and said to him in Aramaic, ‘Rabboni!’ (which means Teacher)*”. It is not that Jesus could not be recognised. He was recognised, but not straight away in circumstances that are not abnormal for any similar encounter. The inclusion of ‘*the gardener*’ is probably theological. In verse 15 ‘δοκουσα’ ‘dokousa’ carries the meaning of ‘suppose’ or even ‘be accounted as’. This is not just *a* gardener but ‘The Gardener’ ‘ὁ κηπουρός’ ‘ho képourós’. In Genesis 2:15, the first Adam is appointed as a gardener. The last Adam, who is the Gardener, restores what was lost.

Psalm 118 *Confitemini Domino* Grail Psalter

✠ This day was made by the Lord: we rejoice and are glad.

¹ Alleluia!

Give thanks to the Lord for he is good,
for his love endures for ever. ✠

² Let the sons of Israel say:

“His love endures for ever.”

³ Let the sons of Aaron say:

“His love endures for ever.”

⁴ Let those who fear the Lord say:

“His love endures for ever.” ✠

⁵ I called to the Lord in my distress;
he answered and freed me.

⁶ The Lord is at my side; I do not fear.
what can man do against me?

⁷ The Lord is at my side as my helper;
I shall look down on my foes.

✠ This day was made by the Lord: we rejoice and are glad.

⁸ It is better to take refuge in the Lord
than to trust in men;

⁹ it is better to take refuge in the Lord
than to trust in princes.

¹⁰ The nations all encompassed me;
in the Lord's name I crushed them.

¹¹ They compassed me, compassed me about;
in the Lord's name I crushed them.

¹² They compassed me about like bees;
they blazed like a fire among thorns.
In the Lord's name I crushed them. ✠

¹³ I was thrust down, thrust down and falling,
but the Lord was my helper.

¹⁴ The Lord is my strength and my song;
he was my saviour.

¹⁵ There are shouts of joy and victory
in the tents of the just. ✠

The Lord's right hand has triumphed;
¹⁶ his right hand raised me.

The Lord's right hand has triumphed;
¹⁷ I shall not die, I shall live
and recount his deeds.

¹⁸ I was punished, I was punished by the Lord,
but not doomed to die. ✠

¹⁹ Open to me the gates of holiness:
I will enter and give thanks.

²⁰ This is the Lord's own gate
where the just may enter.

²¹ I will thank you for you have answered
and you are my saviour. ✠

²² The stone which the builders rejected
has become the corner stone.

²³ This is the work of the Lord,
a marvel in our eyes.

²⁴ This day was made by the Lord;
we rejoice and are glad. ✠

COMMENT: This song of victory may have been composed to celebrate some unknown military triumph. It has been suggested that it referred to the lifting of the siege of Jerusalem by Sennacherib of Assyria in 701 BC during the reign of Hezekiah. (2 Kings 18-19) Vss. 17-18 any also refer to Hezekiah's illness as told in 2 Kings 20. In later Jewish rituals it served as a special litany on festive occasions. According to the Mishnah, this psalm was especially appropriate for Succoth, the harvest thanksgiving festival. Verses 19-24 are a prayer for the temple. The psalm ends with a striking benediction reiterating the praise of verse 1. All these prior uses make it appropriate as a hymn of Easter thanksgiving. Obviously the apostolic church found in it plenty to remind them of the joy they felt on realising that Christ had indeed been raised from the dead. Martin Luther, the great German Reformer of the 16th Century, said it had frequently helped him out of grave distress.

Short Preface

But chiefly are we bound to praise you because you raised him gloriously from the dead. For he is the true paschal lamb who was offered for us, and has taken away the sin of the world. By his death he has destroyed death, and by his rising to life again he has restored to us everlasting life.

Post Communion

God of Life, who for our redemption gave your only-begotten Son to the death of the cross, and by his glorious resurrection have delivered us from the power of our enemy: grant us so to die daily to sin, that we may evermore live with him in the joy of his risen life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Blessing

The God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the eternal covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Solemn Blessing

God the Father, by whose love Christ was raised from the dead, open to you who believe the gates of everlasting life. **Amen.**

God the Son, who in bursting from the grave has won a glorious victory, give you joy as you share the Easter faith. **Amen.**

God the Holy Spirit, who filled the disciples with the life of the risen Lord, empower you and fill you with Christ's peace. **Amen.**

And the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. **Amen.**