

Resurrection Sunday

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Today is Resurrection Sunday:

- We commemorate the death, burial & resurrection of Jesus Christ
- In Judaism, they call this time of the year the “Passover” (Pesach)
- In the world, this time of the year is called “Easter”

1 Cor. 5:7 (NLT) ... *Christ, our Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed for us.*

- For the last 2000 years, the Gospel of Jesus Christ has been preached around the world, proclaiming the Good News of His sacrificial death, His burial and His glorious resurrection.

Mark 16:1-2, 4–7 (NLT) *Saturday evening, when the Sabbath ended, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome went out and purchased burial spices so they could anoint Jesus’ body. 2 Very early on Sunday morning, just at sunrise, they went to the tomb. ... 4 But as they arrived, they looked up and saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled aside. 5 When they entered the tomb, they saw a young man clothed in a white robe sitting on the right side. The women were shocked, 6 but the angel said, “Don’t be alarmed. **You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He isn’t here! He is risen from the dead! Look, this is where they laid his body. 7 Now go and tell his disciples, including Peter, that Jesus is going ahead of you to Galilee. You will see him there, just as he told you before he died.”***

- Three days after His death on the Cross, Jesus rose from the dead
- Three women went to the tomb with burial spices to embalm His body
- They found the tomb empty & an angel told them that Christ had risen
- In verse 7, the angel said: Now go and tell ...

1. Jesus Christ dialogues with a religious Leader called Nicodemus

John 3:10–17 (NKJV) *Jesus answered and said to him, “Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things? 11 Most assuredly, I say to you, We speak what We know and testify what We have seen, and you do not receive Our witness. 12 If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? 13 No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven. 14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even*

so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15 that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. 16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. 17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

- Nicodemus was a leader of a religious sect called “Pharisees”
- He came to Jesus by night that presumably, his friends wouldn’t see him
- Jesus explained to him that the only way he, or anyone could get into heaven was if they are “born again”
- Although Nicodemus was a religious teacher, he did not understand the truth about being born again
- Then Jesus made reference to an event some 1,500 years earlier where God told Moses to lift up a bronze serpent in the Sinai wilderness during the Exodus of the Jewish people
- He said: In the same way as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man must be “lifted up”
- In the New Testament, the term “Lifted up” means “Crucified”

John 12:32–33 (NKJV) (Jesus said) And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself.” 33 This He said, **signifying by what death He would die.**

2. God tells Moses to make a bronze snake & lift it up on a long pole

Numbers 21:4–9 (NKJV) Then they journeyed from Mount Hor by the Way of the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; and the soul of the people became very discouraged on the way. 5 And the people spoke against God and against Moses: “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and our soul loathes this worthless bread.” 6 So the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and many of the people of Israel died. 7 Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, “We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord and against you; pray to the Lord that He take away the serpents from us.” So Moses prayed for the people. 8 Then the Lord said to Moses, “Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live.” 9 So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived.

- This event happened during the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt

- As a result of the people's complaints, deadly snakes came into the camp and began to bite the people
- After many people died, the people acknowledged & repented of their sin of complaining against God & against Moses
- They asked Moses to pray to God that He would take the snakes away
- God instructed Moses to make a "fiery (bronze) serpent", fasten it on a long flag pole & lift it up so everyone in the camp could see it
- If anyone was bitten by a snake, provided they looked at the bronze serpent, instead of dying they would live

3. What is so special about a snake on a pole that people could survive deadly snakebites?

- This serpent on the pole represented Jesus Christ who would be "lifted up" through crucifixion some 1,500 years later
- The pole represented the cross on which Jesus Christ would die
- When people would look at the snake on the pole, the supernatural power of God would be released into their lives, and they would be healed from their deadly snake bite & be saved from certain death
- (There was no natural cure for these deadly snake bites)

Numbers 21:8 (GNB) ... the Lord told Moses to make a metal snake and put it on a pole, *so that anyone who was bitten could look at it and be healed.*

- Look at – to see, consider & perceive, to regard & respect, look at intently & give attention to
- A casual glance at the serpent on the pole might not have been sufficient to receive healing from their deadly snake bite
- It had to be an intentional look, with respect for what they were looking at
- And this is what is most peculiar (and almost outrageous):
 - They were told to be healed from a snake bite by looking at a snake
 - In the natural, this made no sense
- But the snake they were looking at was no ordinary snake:
 - It was a representation of Jesus Christ who would die on the cross

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV) For He (God) made Him (Jesus) who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

- In Numbers 21:8, snakes came into the camp as a consequence & judgment of their sins

- But when the people looked at the snake on the pole, the judgment of death due to their sin was lifted off of them, and they were healed
- Not only did God lay all the sins of mankind on Jesus Christ, but He made Him to be sin for us (on our behalf) so we could be saved from the consequences of our sins
- Jesus never committed any sin, yet He became sin personified

Isaiah 53:6 (NKJV) *All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; & **the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.***

Hebrews 9:28 (GW) *Likewise, **Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of humanity**, and after that he will appear a second time. This time he will not deal with sin, but he will save those who eagerly wait for him.*

4. Biblical truths about sin & comparison to a snake bite

- Every human being has been bitten by a snake called “sin”
- And because of that sin, death is inevitable

Romans 3:23 (NKJV) *..for **all have sinned** and fall short of the glory of God,*

Romans 6:23 (NKJV) *For **the wages of sin is death**, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

- Death – eternal separation from God in a place called “hell”
- But the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord
- Only through Jesus Christ can the poison of sin be cancelled, and its judgment avoided

Romans 14:9 (NCV) *The reason **Christ died and rose from the dead to live again** was **so He would be Lord over both the dead and the living.***

Salvation Prayer:

“Heavenly Father, I thank You that You sent Your Son Jesus Christ into the world to save me. I recognise that I have broken Your commandments, and that I cannot save myself by my own good deeds. Lord Jesus, I thank You that You took the punishment for my sins by dying on the cross. I believe you rose from the dead, and I make a decision now to surrender my whole life to You. I receive You as my personal Lord and Saviour. I thank You that I am now forgiven, and that I am now born again. Please lead me and guide me and show me Your plan for my life. Help me to be strong so that I can live according to Your plan and Your purpose for my life. In Jesus’ Name, amen.”