

“...EVEN SO, COME, LORD JESUS”

Two thousand years ago seems like a very long time. The world was a very, very different place. There were not any, I mean any, of the conveniences we have today. There were no televisions with hundreds of cable stations. There were no news stations that seem to be everywhere and from every country in the world. There were no radios which no one really has today except in some of today's cars, jeeps, trucks and four wheel vehicles because we have CD's MP3 players and every other music player available.

There are modern conveniences that are in the world today such as internet, computers, wifi, the “cloud,” hot spots, vehicles that drive themselves and tons of other things. There are so many advances in the medical field. There are tons and tons of medicines and vaccines and other things to take that will “prevent” a person from getting old or even getting sick. The list goes on and on and on...

Yes, two thousand years ago seems like a very long time ago. Yet, as we all know, something happened. Literally, someone entered this world, lived for thirty-three years and then was crucified. Why was He crucified? It was because He spoke of things that were, and still are not, of this world. All of the things mentioned previously, and by the way it was a very, very short list, seem to be running the world. Yes, there are people who are behind it all. However, the real “master mind” behind it all, is not even of this world. It is the same one, who we see, was the same from the beginning of time upon this earth.

We see, in today's world, the same tactics that were used from the very beginning to destroy man's relationship with God. They were the same tactics that were used to try to destroy the One who came two thousand years ago to set us straight and back on course. It is the same one who is in today's world trying to destroy and pervert everyone who is living upon this earth. It is the devil and his forces of darkness, who it seems, are doing a very, very good job.

The key thought are the words, “it seems.” Yes “it seems” as though the devil and His forces of darkness are destroying this earth and may even be winning. This devil has caused many of those, who say that they are the Savior's, to believe and live in some sort of fantasy land. He has done such a masterful job that he has produced many false religions and gods. The main one we see that seems to be rising to the top of the heap of false gods is the one referred to as Allah.

Although there are many, many other gods that are out there, Allah is the main one. It seems as if many, many people are accepting Allah and its believers, even if they do not necessarily believe in him, themselves. This is because it is only out of fear. They accept these false gods out of fear. It is not out of a true fear, a true reverence for this false god but it is out of fear of what the radical believers in these false gods will do. This fear is causing many to not necessarily believe in this false god but it is causing them to do nothing about the growth of this false god.

Two thousand years ago, when the true God came upon this earth and spoke of what true love was all about, the world and even His own people rejected Him. They rejected the truth. The true God taught that this world was simply a training ground for the true believers to grow in and prepare themselves for the true Kingdom which was not of this world but it would be in the “world” to come.

That “new world,” the “new earth” would be a place where true love and true worship of the one and only true living God would dwell and be among His people. That was what the One who - came to us, lived with us and then died for us - did two thousand years ago. He came to proclaim the Good News to all who would truly listen and believe what He was saying. He was calling all those who would listen, who would be willing to turn their lives to Him and be willing to wait for the fulfillment of that time that was declared to come, to simply wait for that time.

Until that time would come, those who believed in the Savior, should tell others – as many as they could. Even though they may be persecuted and even be put to death for it, they were and are still called to tell others about Him. That is what these last two thousand years have become. They have been the time of telling as many who would listen, that the one and only true God would return for His people.

Now, the time is growing ever so nearer for the return of the Savior of the world. However, He is not only coming as the Savior of the world, He is not only the Messiah for the Jewish people but He is also and most importantly, the King of all kings and the Lord over all. His name is – Jesus.

Every year it has been set aside to commemorate Jesus' first coming upon this earth and choosing to give His life on the cross so that many who believe on Him would come into a relationship with the one and only true and living God. However, it is most important to note that Jesus did not only die on the cross and take the punishment for man's sin. No, the greatest thing He did was that He rose from the dead and is now seated at the right hand of the Father - waiting to return.

As the Jewish people this week celebrate the Feast of Passover along with the Feast of Unleavened Bread and the Feast of First Fruits - "*Chag ha-Bikkurim*," let us remember that these "Feasts of the Lord" found within the Jewish scriptures (the Old Testament) all pointed to the day that Jesus would come into the world and give His life as the spotless (Passover) Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world (the Feast of Unleavened Bread). As believers in Jesus we not only remember His death and the shedding of His blood but most importantly, we celebrate His resurrection which is what truly gives the believer eternal life.

Jesus promised that He would rise from the grave on the "third day," which He most certainly did. That "third day" we refer to as "Resurrection Sunday." However, we must realize that "Resurrection Sunday" is also one of the Seven Feasts of the Lord. As mentioned previously, it was on the Feast of First Fruits, "*Chag ha-Bikkurim*," that Jesus actually rose from the grave with resurrection life and presented Himself to the Father.

This Feast of First Fruits, "*Chag ha-Bikkurim*," was the only "Feast of the Lord" that God was very specific in giving the actual, specific day of the week that it must be celebrated on – the first day of the week which we know as our Sunday. This can be found in Leviticus 23:11. It did not matter what the date would be in the month of Nisan but this "Feast Day" **must be** celebrated on a very specific day of the week - the "first day of the week" after the "Sabbath" of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which would always be the first Sunday following the 15th of Nisan. This day was set from the very beginning. Everything else must fall in line with this very specific date.

Jesus, obviously, was the fulfillment of this "Feast of First Fruits." He resurrected on the "*first day of the week*." (Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:2; Luke 24:1; John 20:1) He was the "first of the first fruits." Those who rose from the dead after Jesus went to the Father on that first day of the week on "*Chag ha-Bikkurim*," those in Abraham's Bosom who believed the Promise (Jesus), became the "first fruits" of all those who would rise from the dead if they believed in Jesus. Remember, however, that Jesus was the "first" of those "first fruits."

Jesus had fulfilled all the rituals/ aspects of the Feast of First Fruits. He fulfilled the "wave offering" raised and waved by the High Priest before Yahweh as the "first of the first fruits." This is implied when Jesus told Mary while they were at the tomb, not to touch Him. Jesus could not be touched or be defiled before He, as the "High Priest," would present Himself as the "wave offering" to God, the Father.

He also fulfilled the "meal offering of unleavened flour mixed with oil" (unleavened bread) as well as the "drink offering of wine" by pouring out His blood. This is the "remembrance" aspect that Jesus spoke of at the last supper and what we remember when we take the bread and wine of communion.

We commemorate all of these events which already took place, as we celebrate the Resurrection season each and every year – including this year. Knowing that Jesus fulfilled these first three feasts of the Lord, as well as, the fourth feast which is known as Pentecost, we can now look forward to Him fulfilling the final three “Feasts of the Lord” upon His soon return. We, as believers in the resurrected Jesus, can be absolutely certain and have total assurance that He will fulfill His promise to come again and fulfill the last three “Feasts of the Lord.”

This year, as we look forward to celebrating the resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, it is Trish’s and my desire that each one of you truly recognize what Jesus has done, is doing and will continue to do until He returns and takes His place upon His throne on the Temple Mount.

We pray that each one of you truly desires to seek Him more and more and that we all continue to change our lives to be ready for His return – His second coming. He is coming again - maybe sooner than we think. He may come on the clouds or He may come at our last breath upon this earth. Either way He will be coming. The question is - will each one of us be truly ready for Jesus when He does return?

From Trish and myself, we bless you all and may you all have a very blessed Resurrection Sunday.

HE IS RISEN - and HE WILL COME AGAIN - soon!!!

“...Even so, come, Lord Jesus.” – Revelation 22:20