

## The Wednesday Word, March 27 2024: The Wonderful Meaning of Easter

Acts 2:32-36 ... *“This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.”*

A few years ago, a petition was raised to force the closure of a noisy and exuberant group of Christians who met in a certain neighbourhood. A Jewish man, who lived nearby, refused to sign the petition saying, ‘If I believed what they believe about the Messiah being crucified and risen from the dead I’d make more noise about it than all of them put together.’

Because of what happened 2000 years ago in the Christ event we believers have so much to make a noise about.

By the way, the day we call Easter has nothing whatsoever to do with Bunnies and Painted Eggs. The Bible knows nothing of such man-made things. Easter is the day when we celebrate the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus. In addition, the name Easter comes from pagan origins so why don’t we just call Easter Sunday “Resurrection Day”? However, let’s see if we can Christianise this word ‘EASTER’.

Here we go:

E...is for the **Empty** Tomb (see Matthew 28:1-8).

The women came to the tomb and discovered that the stone had been rolled away. The angels had rolled it away not to release Christ but to reveal that He wasn’t there. Jesus was risen. He had even passed through His grave clothes leaving them like a cocoon.

Jesus had been laid in the tomb after a titanic battle during which he died. The man Christ Jesus lay there for 3 days during which He made not a single movement. He was dead. Outside the tomb there was activity when they changed the guards etc but inside the tomb there was stillness and silence. Then at the right time, suddenly our Saviour energised Himself and He arose passing through the solid rock of the grave leaving nothing behind but the linens in which they had rapped Him.

In Christianity we unashamedly teach the resurrection. Because of the Empty Tomb we proclaim that Jesus is alive. And because He is alive none of His family will be left in the grave. It is worth noting that Christ’s tomb is eternally empty. (see Romans 6:9). Jesus holds the keys of life and death. (Revelation 1:17-18). He will never die again.

A is for Ascension into heaven.

“And no man has ascended into heaven but he that came down from heaven even the son of man which is in heaven.” (John 3:13).

Jesus was the only man to ever ascend. Moses and Elijah were taken up to Heaven but Christ ascended. Christ went up by His own power and volition.

Psalm 24 is written about the ascension. It asks, "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord"... and then answers ..."he that hath clean hands and a pure heart."(see verse 3 and 4). This psalm is written about the Lord Jesus. Jesus is the only one with absolutely clean hands and a pure heart. He died, rose again and ascended as the representative of His people. As He ascended, I can imagine that chained to His heavenly chariot are His defeated enemies, Sin, Satan, Death and Hell.

What a glorious champion He is. He is the heavenly hero. He went single handedly and defeated His and our foes. He took the place of an obedient servant and became **a Lamb** at His death, **a Lion** at His resurrection and **an Eagle** at His ascension.

Can you use your sanctified imagination with me and see Him drawing near to the Heavenly city. Suddenly a voice rings out crying "Lift up your heads oh ye gates and be ye lifted up ye everlasting doors and the King of Glory shall come in."

A clear and concise challenge is heard crying out, "Who is this King of Glory." And the reply comes, "The LORD (*Yahweh*) strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle." This is your saviour. He is the General in charge of the armies of heaven. He is the ruler of the universe, the Lord of all the earth. He is the Head of the Church. **HE IS THE KING OF GLORY.** He is the Lord Jesus.

Unfortunately, I see we have run out of space but perhaps I will be able to finish this message another time. In the meantime, here is the outline.

**E** is for Empty tomb,  
**A** is for Ascension,  
**S** is for the Shedding forth of the Spirit. The  
**T** is for the throne on which He sits. The **E** is His  
**E**xpecting and finally the **R** is His  
**R**eturning  
And that's the Gospel Truth!