



YOUTH

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What's It All About?

Sun warming up the day, snow melting away, parents budgeting for new spring clothes, and children filling the room with excitement! These are the positive memories I have of the days preceding the Easter season. Then, there are the negative memories of lambs screaming as they were being slain for a festive dinner, people acting crazy after overdrinking and overeating—and ambulance sirens sounding as people were rushed to hospitals.

Growing up in Romania, where the religious festivities turned secular due to the atheistic ideology adopted by the communist regime in power, I wasn't exposed to a Biblical reasoning as to why Easter was being celebrated. To me, it looked like people had simply invented another reason to celebrate, eat, drink, and be merry. Today, I understand better the commercial implications of this festivity and, more importantly, I can identify Satan's subtle plan to distort the symbolism of the Passover in the Old Testament and the deep meaning of the Lord's Supper in the New Testament.

Dear youth, I challenge you to look away from the secular, the regular, and the traditional you may have grown up with and, as you read the articles in this magazine, meditate on what Jesus did for you while on earth, especially in the days leading to His crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension.

"It would be well for us to spend a thoughtful hour each day in contemplation of the life of Christ. We should take it point by point, and let the imagination grasp each scene, especially the closing ones. As we thus dwell upon His great sacrifice for us, our confidence in Him will be more constant, our love will be quickened, and we shall be more deeply imbued with His spirit."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 83.

I hope and pray that you'll celebrate the Resurrection of YOUR Lord with daily newness of life, consecration to His service and with a harvest of redeemed souls for Christ.

At this time, we would like to introduce the new Editor of the *Youth Messenger* magazine, Brother Adrian Finaru. As a pastor with a keen interest in the youth, he was elected at the 23rd Delegation Session of the Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement to serve as leader of the SDARM General Conference Youth Department—and we trust that the Lord will utilize his talents and zeal for the young to benefit YOU! Please feel free to contact him anytime at afinaru@sdarm.org. He is here for you. We also would like to thank our previous Editor, Liliane Balbach, for the dedicated service she happily rendered to this magazine in 2018–2019. Remember, this is YOUR magazine! Please continue to send us your articles, experiences, poems, and puzzles to honor the Lord with your talents and bring a blessing to your fellow youth.

THE **Origin** OF **Easter**

BY BETHANY L. MURESAN

Easter bunnies and colorful eggs . . . what do these have to do with the death and resurrection of Jesus? What's your first response? You'd probably say, "They're not related." How about if we think really hard, logically we're likely to still say—"Nothing in common!" Well, guess what? You're right! In this article, we will trace how it came to be that a bunny (rabbit), which the Bible defines as an unclean animal, became associated with the innocence and purity of Jesus Christ. We will also explore whether Christians can in good conscience take part in the typical festivities including painting colorful eggs during the Easter season, a time claimed to celebrate the death and resurrection of our Lord.

ANCIENT PAGAN ORIGINS

Sun worship and pagan customs are ancient. Why did God tell His people to be separate from the other nations? One of the most important reasons was because those nations had rejected the one true God and had created their own false religions. Much of the rituals of primitive pagan religions revolved around the solar system.

What could Easter have to do with pagan customs? Well, for starters, let's look at the timing of the festival. It occurs shortly after the beginning of spring or vernal equinox (when there are equal periods of day and night). This represents the rebirth of the sun after winter has passed.

So instead of celebrating the resurrection of Christ, Easter also celebrates the "resurrection" of the sun. . .

Another question we should wonder is: What do eggs and bunnies have in common? Any good biologist should know that rabbits don't lay eggs. Rabbits and hares are classified as mammals.

So, where did the eggs come from to begin with? "All over the world, wherever eggs are laid, they represent life and fertility. . . . They have been used in magic spells and in foretelling the future . . . and have been thought effective in promoting healthy and fertile crops and animals. Among the southern Slavs, for instance, the egg was, and to some extent still is, used in magical practices at the start of ploughing and sowing. . . . And there is a subconscious belief that the egg is the bearer of strength and the seed of life." (Venetia Newall (1984) *Easter Eggs: Symbols of Life and Renewal*, *Folklore*, 95:1, 21-29, DOI: 10.1080/0015587X.1984.9716293).

With regard to Easter, the *Encyclopedia Britannica* published an article by Hans J. Hillerbrand which stated: "One view, expounded by the Venerable Bede in the 8th century, was that it derived from Eostre, or Eostrae, the Anglo-Saxon goddess of spring and fertility." *Eosturmonap* was the Anglo-Saxon name for the month of April, in honor of the goddess Eostre.

A newspaper article entitled "Easter a Relic of Pagan Days" from *The Times* (Richmond, VA) published on March 30, 1902, offers some insight into the history behind the festival: "Strange as it may seem, Eastertide, like

Christmas, is a relic of pagan days. In former days, when the dawn of civilization was just beginning to break, that time of the year when winter was passing away and summer approaching, was made a period of festivity. The people in their blind fashion thanked the unseen beings who ruled the world for the breaking up of the frost-time and prayed for plenteous harvests and fruitful flocks and herds. When Christianity pushed its way further and further into the then barbaric world the early missionaries, not wishing to antagonize their prospective converts, took this festival and consecrated its observance to the new form of faith. In England the festival became known as 'Easter' from the goddess Eostre."

The spring or vernal equinox helps mark Easter celebrations, though Easter is not placed exactly on that day. The vernal equinox is kept in several ancient customs. An ancient Persian celebration known as *Nowruz* dates back nearly 4,000 years, rooted in Zoroastrianism and Persian mythology. One of the supplementary items in the festivities included painted eggs to symbolize fertility. Shintoism, a religion based on the belief that every natural object had spiritual force, also observed this equinox since that is when plants tend

to flourish most. Perhaps most notable is the ancient pagan festival of the Anglo-Saxons, which is still celebrated by pagans today. According to *CNN Travel*, Stonehenge, England is home to a famous Neolithic structure where pagans and druids gather to watch the sunrise on equinox and solstices. According to an article by Padraic Flanagan published on March 20, 2014, in a British newspaper *The Telegraph*, “druids and pagans congregate at Stonehenge . . . to greet the dawn and watch the sun rise while performing fertility rites, . . . celebrating the ancient Saxon goddess Eostre, who symbolizes fertility and new beginnings. The goddess is symbolized by eggs, representing new life, and rabbits or hares, for fertility.”

INTRODUCED INTO CHRISTENDOM

The *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* defines **Easter** as coming “from the Anglo-Saxon Eastre or Estera, a Teutonic goddess to whom sacrifice was offered in April, so the name was transferred to the paschal feast.”

“The Council of Nice, ‘out of complaisance to Constantine the Great, ordered the solemnity of Easter to be kept everywhere on the same day, after the custom of Rome.’ [Bower’s *History of the Popes*, Vol. 1, pp. 18, 19.]”—*The Great Controversy* [1888 edition], p. 686.

Easter was set to be the first Sunday after the full moon

following the spring equinox. As previously mentioned, the spring or vernal equinox marks the beginning of spring in the northern hemisphere and signifies the rebirth of nature after a cold winter.

WHAT ABOUT PASSOVER?

One argument in favor of celebrating Easter might be its coincidence with the Passover. However, the Passover was replaced with the Communion Service. “On the fourteenth day of the month, at even, the Passover was celebrated, its solemn, impressive ceremonies commemorating the deliverance from bondage in Egypt, and pointing forward to the sacrifice that should deliver from the bondage of sin. When the Saviour yielded up His life on Calvary, **the significance of the Passover ceased**, and the ordinance of the Lord’s Supper was instituted as a memorial of the same event of which the Passover had been a type.” (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 539).

“In instituting the sacramental service to take the place of the Passover, Christ left for His church a memorial of His great sacrifice for man. ‘This do,’ He said, ‘in remembrance of Me.’ This was the point of transition between two economies and their two great festivals. The one was to close forever; the other, which He had just established, was to take its place, and to continue through all time as the memorial of His death.”—*Evangelism*, pp. 273, 274.

As we can see in these two quotes from the Spirit of Prophecy, there is no purpose in celebrating the Passover anymore. It was replaced with the ordinance of the Communion Service, which we are told to continue observing until Christ comes and we can celebrate it together with Him once more.

SO WHAT'S WRONG?

Some people might wonder what's wrong with painting some eggs and just going along with the festivities for the “fun” of it. Well, what does God say about “Christianized” paganism? “Hear ye the word which the Lord speaketh unto you, O house of Israel: Thus saith the Lord, **Learn not the way of the heathen**, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them” (Jeremiah 10:1, 2). [Emphasis supplied.] Sun worship and other pagan rites is no new thing. The Israelites were surrounded by heathen nations and then in captivity, they were immersed in idolatry and astrology. But, God reminded them to not learn the heathen ways—in other words, not to associate and adopt these pagan festivities. This verse in Jeremiah mentions the signs of heaven—clearly implying solar, lunar, or astrological phenomena. Wouldn't the vernal equinox be one such event—a way of the heathen? If so, then what does Paul tell us we should do? “Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of

darkness, but rather reprove them” (Ephesians 5:11).

INSTEAD, HOW ARE WE TO CELEBRATE JESUS' RESURRECTION?

The purpose of Jesus' death and resurrection was to save fallen mankind from their bondage to sin. We are made new creatures in Christ and are to live in Him. The ordinance by which we are to celebrate this transformation is baptism. Christ himself gave us an example that we should follow in His footsteps. Baptism represents death to self and the beginning of new life—that is, new life in Him. “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should **walk in newness of life**” (Romans 6:3, 4). [Emphasis supplied.]

So, if you want to honor Jesus' resurrection, make a solemn commitment to live for Him by publicly renouncing the world and pledging your allegiance to Christ—by baptism. As you rise from the watery grave, continue to celebrate the fact that He is risen by clinging to Him as your personal Saviour, living the life He guides you to live, and continuing in the faith until we all meet our resurrected Lord on the “sea of glass” and may sing the song of our redemption—the song of Moses and the Lamb. 🌸



Behold the Lamb of God!

BY KLARA FINARU

The Bible is like a treasure chest filled with the loveliest of names for Jesus.

Isaiah mentions a few: “And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6). But one of the most precious names of Jesus was spoken by John the Baptist when He saw Jesus coming towards him beside the Jordan River. He exclaimed, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29).

How, though, did John recognize Jesus as being the Lamb of God? The Jews had been waiting for a Messiah, the “Lion of Judah.” A mighty King who would deliver them from the oppression of the Romans—yet, here goes John, portraying Jesus through one of the meekest and gentlest

of symbols. What prompted him to call Jesus the Lamb of God?

In order to grasp the full meaning of what John the Baptist saw, we have to go back to Genesis 3:15, where God had made the promise of a Redeemer right after our first parents sinned. This promise would bring hope to the faithful throughout many generations.

One of the best illustrations of what a redeemer means is found in an event in the life of Abraham. Abraham would often talk to God, so much so that he was called the friend of God. One day, God spoke to Abraham saying, “Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of” (Genesis 22:2).

FAITH AND DIVINE PROVIDENCE

Without a question, Abraham woke up early in the morning, took a donkey, two servants, Isaac, and placed a bundle of wood on Isaac's back for the sacrifice. The four of them began their journey. On the third day, Abraham could finally see in the distance the place where God had instructed him to make the sacrifice. So he stopped walking and told the servants, "You stay and wait here while Isaac and I go to worship. When we finish, we will come back and meet you here." Nearing the place of sacrifice, the lad, noticing there was no lamb for the sacrifice asked his father, "Father, we have wood and fire for the sacrifice but we've forgotten the lamb!" With a pain any father would feel in his heart, Abraham replied, "My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering" (Genesis 22:8).

Soon they had arrived at their destination, but there still was no lamb. But without a word of complaint, Isaac submitted himself to Abraham his father, allowing himself to be bound to the altar as a sacrifice. Abraham lifted his knife, intending to do exactly as the Lord had commanded him, when a voice from Heaven broke the deafening silence. "Do not lay a hand on the lad," God said. "Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me



your son, your only son." (See Genesis 22:12.)

With a sigh of relief, Abraham put down his knife. All of a sudden, out of the corner of his eye, he noticed something moving in the bushes. He turned to see a ram with its head stuck in the thorns. A lamb had been provided! As Abraham, relieved and incredibly happy, walked down the mountain with Isaac, excited to meet with the clueless servants and tell them the entire story, he decides to call this place "Jehovahjireh," meaning "the Lord will provide" (Genesis 22:14).

Abraham had begun his journey believing that the Lord would provide. He came down the mountain having seen with his own eyes the provision made for his son. And with the eyes of faith he could now see the Lord making provision for the salvation of his offspring, who would be innumerable as the sand on the seashore.



This feast included choosing a male lamb without any spots or blemishes, having it stay with the family for four days and then being roasted with fire and eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. None of its bones were to be broken in the process. Every detail was

THE PASSOVER

The story of God's provision of a sacrifice was told over and over, first to Isaac's children, then to his grandchildren and so on. Especially after being delivered from the land of Egypt, the lamb took on a significant and personal meaning to the Israelites. As they traveled toward the Promised Land, God commanded Israel that they commemorate their deliverance with a yearly event called the "Passover." The name stood for the "passing-over" of the angel of death, as he had taken the lives of all the firstborn sons of those who did not have a lamb's blood on the doorpost of their houses. That final plague had freed Israel, and they were able to leave Egypt with their sons and travel back "home" to the Promised Land just as Abraham once did with his son Isaac. And every year after that, they would commemorate this salvation with this feast. The Lord commanded them in this way, "In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight is the Lord's Passover" (Leviticus 23:5, ESV).

important. And it was intended to be a reminder of their salvation from Egypt as well as a hope for the future salvation from sin. One day a Redeemer would come!

THE SYMBOL BECOMES REALITY

As a total of 41 generations passed from the time of Abraham, the nation of Israel was still waiting for the prophecies to be fulfilled. For a lot of the people, the Passover had become a mere ritual. Many had lost their focus on the promised Lamb; there were a few who still had this hope fresh in their minds. As mentioned earlier, among them was John the Baptist, whom Scripture had prophesied to be the one who paved the way for the Messiah to come.

But since so many of the people did not wholeheartedly behold the glory of the Lord and did not acquaint themselves with Him, their hearts were hardened and their eyes blinded. (2 Corinthians 3:18.) They were looking for the Lion of Judah, the son of David (Genesis 49:8-12). They had no eyes for a tender

plant without form or comeliness (Isaiah 53:2). A Lamb is not what their pride was hoping for. So, as the time for the yearly Passover feast was nearing, they did not realize that their redemption was just as close.

On this occasion, all the Jews would travel to Jerusalem. As they were preparing for this Passover feast, they were also wondering if Jesus would be there. They “spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple, What think ye, that he will not come to the feast?” (John 11:56).

But while the people were choosing a lamb for the Passover ritual, Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey. When the people saw Him, they exclaimed, “This is the Son of David! He is the Messiah who will deliver us! We want Him to be our King!” As they were saying this, they began to lay their coats on the ground ahead of Him. Some took leaves and laid them before Jesus, making a path for Him to enter into the city. The people had chosen their Lamb. And at the very same time, the Pharisees also were eyeing Jesus, plotting how they could kill Him in just a few days.

The time everyone had been waiting for since the fall of Adam and Eve had finally come. Israel’s Redeemer has arrived. Jesus eats one last supper with His disciples. Just as in the wilderness, the chosen lambs had spent their last few hours with the family before they would be sacrificed. During

His trial, the Lamb of God is tried with cruel accusations, and bitter words, “yet he opened not his mouth” (Isaiah 53:7). Just as Isaac willingly allowed his father to bind him to the altar, so Jesus, is now “brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, he open[s] not his mouth.”

In Exodus 12, the Israelites were commanded to offer the lamb as a sacrifice on the 14th day of the 1st month of the year. So Jesus, after being tried and found guiltless—a Lamb without spot or blemish—is pronounced a death sentence. He is given a heavy wooden cross to carry on His bruised and stinging back. He is the Lamb. HE is the sacrifice, carrying His own wood, just like Isaac on the way to Mount Moriah. But this time, the Father does not have a substitute. This time, Jesus is our substitute. The substitute Lamb with its head stuck in the thorns (John 29:5). He carries the cross to the same place where years ago, Abraham had found a substitute for his sacrifice.

On the morning of the 14th day of the 1st month, a third cross was raised between two others. It was now 3 in the afternoon. The sun would set soon and the Sabbath rest would begin. In the temple people were bringing lambs to be sacrificed while Jesus, the innocent Lamb, was carrying the weight of every sin committed up to that time, and every sin after. He thought of the bitter cup that was His to drink. No one else was



sacrifice has been made. The way into the holiest is laid open. A new and living way is prepared for all.”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 756, 757.

From now on, the sacrifice of lambs is no longer needed. The Lamb of God has come and has taken away the sins of all humanity. We no longer need an earthly mediator, because Jesus has become our High Priest. “By His own blood”

worthy to drink it for Him. But then Jesus thought of me. And He thought of you. Drawing one last breath, He decided it was worth it. And as He breathed out one last time, the words “It Is Finished” rang through the air (John 19:30).

“The lamb representing Christ had been brought to be slain. Clothed in his significant and beautiful dress, the priest stood with lifted knife, as did Abraham when he was about to slay his son. With intense interest the people were looking on. But the earth trembles and quakes; for the Lord Himself draws near. With a rending noise the inner veil of the temple is torn from top to bottom by an unseen hand, throwing open to the gaze of the multitude a place once filled with the presence of God. . . .

“All is terror and confusion. The priest is about to slay the victim; but the knife drops from his nerveless hand, and the lamb escapes. Type has met antitype in the death of God’s Son. The great

He entered “once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us” (Hebrews 9:12).

This is the beautiful picture John the Baptist saw as he looked at Jesus. Yes, he knew Jesus was the “Lion of Judah,” who would reign as a powerful and sovereign King. But above all, Jesus as the humble Lamb, who was willing to suffer in John’s place, was what overwhelmed his heart with admiration. The Lamb God promised He would provide thousands of years ago, was now walking right towards him.

Dear, reader, whenever you feel that your sin is too great, or that no hope is left, remember the Lamb that was provided on Calvary’s cross. Jesus is still the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Not only for Isaac, and not only for the Israelites in Egypt—His sacrifice allows you and me to escape in freedom from the crushing burden of sin and to enter into eternal life. 🕊



GETHSEMANE

BY PAUL M. BALBACH

Prior to going to the cross, Jesus had to go through an experience that was so difficult that it almost killed Him. Yet, it was this experience that strengthened Him to die the death He must die in order to pay the penalty for the whole world. Gethsemane strengthened and prepared Him for the events leading to His crucifixion and for the agony of the cross. The battle that Christ went through at Gethsemane was a physical, mental, and spiritual battle. It was here that in His great agony, Christ actually sweat great drops of blood for you and me.

“As they approached the garden, the disciples had marked the change that came over their Master. Never before had they seen Him so utterly sad and silent. As He proceeded, this strange sadness deepened; yet they dared not question Him as to the cause. His form swayed as if He were about to fall. . . . Every step that He now took was with labored effort. He groaned aloud, as if suffering under the pressure of a terrible burden. Twice His companions supported Him, or He would have fallen to the earth.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 685.

Why was this battle so difficult? In Matthew 26:36–38 it says “Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.” The Bible is telling us that Jesus here went into depression, He became severely depressed. How do we know? If someone comes up to a physician and tells them that they are “exceeding sorrowful” (very sad), even unto death, what diagnosis is that physician going to give? Depression, severe depression. Why was Jesus so depressed now? Why was He sorrowful unto death? Well, not only was He faced with the guilt of the world upon His shoulders, but “Christ felt

His unity with the Father broken up” (Ibid., p. 686). Throughout Christ’s earthly ministry, He had been connected with His Father, but now He could feel the breaking of that connection.

When Jesus went into the garden of Gethsemane, He took some of His closest disciples with Him—Peter, James, and John. Peter had promised that if he had to die with Christ, he would not forsake Him. But how about now? Matthew 26:37 says Jesus “began to be sorrowful and very heavy,” yet none of His disciples asked Him why He felt like this. None of them asked if they could do anything to make Him feel better or to help Him. Jesus then tells Peter, James, and John “tarry ye here, and watch with me. And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed. . . . And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep” (Matthew 26:38–40). Even when Jesus Himself asked His disciples to watch, they fell asleep. If Peter was willing to die with Christ, why couldn’t he watch and comfort Jesus during this time? Jesus had said, “My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death”—yet where was brave Peter now? Fast asleep. How about James and John? They asked to be closest to Him in the kingdom, but now they could not stay awake and comfort Christ in His sorrow. How do you think Jesus felt when He realized He was coming to the point of death, the point where He would die for the world—for

you and me, for His disciples? Would it be worth it? Now in His dark trial, His closest friends did not even seem to care about Him and His sufferings. Would anyone care? Would His great sacrifice be worth it?

At this time, Jesus not only felt forsaken and forgotten by

His closest disciples, He also felt forsaken and forgotten by God. “Now He seemed to be shut out from the light of God’s sustaining presence. Now He was numbered with the transgressors. The guilt of fallen humanity He must bear. Upon Him who knew no sin must be laid the iniquity of us all. So dreadful does sin appear to Him, so great is the weight of guilt which He must bear, that He is tempted to fear it will shut Him out forever from His Father’s love.” (Ibid., p. 685).

Christ then went a little distance from His disciples and prayed, “ ‘O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me.’ Yet even now He adds, ‘Nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt’ . . . If He could only know that His disciples understood and appreciated [the sacrifice Christ was making for mankind], He would be strengthened.” (Ibid., pp. 687, 688). Feeling forsaken and forgotten, “He staggered to the place where He had left His companions. But He ‘findeth them asleep.’ Had He found them praying, He would



have been relieved. Had they been seeking refuge in God, that satanic agencies might not prevail over them, He would have been comforted by their steadfast faith. But they had not heeded the repeated warning, ‘Watch and pray.’ ” (Ibid.).

“Again the Son of God was seized with superhuman agony, and fainting and exhausted, He staggered back to the place of His former struggle. His suffering was even greater than before.” (Ibid., p. 689). Luke 22:44 says “and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.” Is it possible to actually have bloody sweat, to sweat drops of blood? Yes, although this phenomenon is rare, it has been recorded in history and even recently seen in the medical world.

History relates an incident where a person sweat drops of blood. An experience of King Charles IX of France is recorded in *A Treatise on the Physical Cause of the Death of Christ, and its Relation to the Principles*

and Practice of Christianity by William Stroud, M.D., published by Hamilton and Adams in London, 1847. We find on page 113: “ ‘The disease that carried him off—says [historian] Voltaire—is very uncommon; his blood flowed from all his pores. This malady, of which there are some examples, is the result either of excessive fear, furious passion, or of a violent and melancholic temperament.’ ” On the following page of the same treatise, De Mezeray, a French historian, also makes reference to this event which evidently occurred at the castle of Vincennes in May 1574, stating that the king’s “blood gushed from all outlets of his body, even from the pores of his skin, so that on one occasion he was found bathed in a bloody sweat.”

A recent experience of someone sweating drops of blood is told by Dr. Tim Riesenberger on December 20, 2007 as follows.

“There was a woman who was in labor, and a friend of mine was attending the birth, and he shared this story with me. He was a resident, like myself. Now unfortunately, the baby was not progressing forward, it was stuck. Now sadly, if the baby gets stuck, there can be forces that compress certain parts. And if you compress the umbilical cord, what do you think happens? You are cutting off the circulation. And the baby’s heart rate began to drop, lower and lower. The signs of life began to slip away. And the nurses told this

woman, ‘you need to push like you have never pushed before!’ And she just screamed ‘AHHHHHHHH!’ And she pushed and out came the baby. And she’s just trying to recover, and she just wipes her face, and she sees a handful of blood. And she screams, and she’s like ‘What’s going on?’ She turns to the nurses, and they say, ‘it means you pushed really good.’ Because under times of extreme stress, the capillaries, underneath the surface of your skin will actually rupture, and you will sweat blood.”

“Again [Jesus] had felt a longing for companionship, for some words from His disciples which would bring relief, and break the spell of darkness that well-nigh overpowered Him. But their eyes were heavy; ‘neither wist they what to answer Him.’ His presence aroused them. They saw His face marked with the bloody sweat of agony, and they were filled with fear. His anguish of mind they could not understand. . . .

“Turning away, Jesus sought again His retreat, and fell prostrate, overcome by the horror of a great darkness. The humanity of the Son of God, trembled in that trying hour. He prayed not now for His disciples that their faith might not fail, but for His own tempted, agonized soul. The awful moment had come—that moment which was to decide the destiny of the world. The fate of humanity trembled in the balance. Christ might even now refuse to drink the cup apportioned to guilty man.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 690.

Christ prayed three times, “O My Father, if this cup may not pass away from Me, except I drink it, Thy will be done.” Why did Christ go through all that suffering in Gethsemane? The sufferings of Christ in Gethsemane were not only for those who have already sinned, nor were they only for those who are currently sinning. Christ bore the sins and the guilt of those in the past, present, and future.


Why did Christ have to go through all this suffering, depression, and agony? Why was this guilt and agony so strong? Why did it make Jesus “sorrowful, even unto death”? Have you ever felt bad about something that you did, and became extremely guilty, sad, or depressed? Maybe this guilt even brought you to tears. Or your guilt and remorse was on your mind for days or even weeks. Was it committing a sin that you know was wrong? Was it unkind, hurtful words that you spoke to someone? Maybe it was a secret habit or a repeated behavior. Maybe it was a once in a lifetime opportunity that you missed to witness and tell someone about Jesus. Now, imagine feeling all that guilt, plus all the guilt from the rest of the sins you have committed during your life until now, plus all the guilt of the future sins that you will commit. Then add this to all the guilt of all the other sins, ever committed (or that will ever be committed) by anyone who has lived or ever will live on this earth! This includes the guilt



of Hitler, Stalin, Nero. It includes the guilt of Herod, who allowed John the Baptist to be beheaded, the guilt of Pilate and the Jews who crucified Jesus. It includes the guilt of the soldiers who nailed Him to the cross, and even the guilt of Judas. Our finite, human minds cannot even scratch the surface in comprehending this.

“The conflict was terrible. Its measure was the guilt of His nation, of His accusers and betrayer, the guilt of a world lying in wickedness. The sins of men weighed heavily upon Christ, and the sense of God’s wrath against sin was crushing out His life”—*Ibid.*, p. 687.

Christ went through all these feelings of guilt, suffering, agony, even to the point of profusely sweating blood for you. Will you make His effort worthwhile today? Will you give Him your heart? Consecrate your life to Him right now and ask Jesus to come into your heart, mind, and life. 🌿



BY STEPHANIE
HAZELHOFF

Golgotha

It was a typical Sabbath afternoon. Family and close friends were gathered at my grandmother's house. After spending some time with everyone, I decided to take a quick power nap. As I began to drift off, a very strange dream began to play. In my dream, my family was gathered at my grandma's house, very much like that day, when someone ran into the room shouting, "It's done! It's done! The Sunday law has been passed!!" All of a sudden I felt this feeling of complete desperation and hopelessness wash over me, like all had been lost! That feeling

is best described by David, “The pangs of death surrounded me, and the floods of ungodliness made me afraid.” (Psalm 18:4 NKJV). I remember thinking, “All is lost. Jesus is coming and I’m not ready!” But more importantly, I thought, “I am going to die!” I woke up terrified and thoughts kept racing into my mind, “What if death is final? What if Jesus’ death was final? What if God had not sent His Son down to this desolate and sin-filled world to save us? What if Jesus had decided not to die for us after all?”

A well-known Bible verse that is repeated by both young and old is John 3:16, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Have you ever stopped and thought about the words and the message they are trying to convey? I thought I knew what the verse was saying until Brother Adrian Finaru brought out a few key points. The first part of the verse says “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, . . .” God gave us His only Son! God didn’t **LEND** us His Son but rather **GAVE** Him to us, not expecting anything back! Nowadays, whenever you download an app or even music on your phone or computer, there is a “Terms and Conditions” page that requires your attention. In order to continue, you must first “Agree” to the contract (that you

may or may not have read). But with God, there isn’t a “Terms and Conditions” agreement. He didn’t expect anything from us in return. Why would He do this? “But God commendeth [demonstrates] his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8 KJV). God’s love for us is unmeasurable. It is *agape* which means it is the “highest form of love” (<https://www.britannica.com/topic/agape>). Jesus chose to die for you and me because of how **strong** His love is for us, not because He required something from us in return.

Unfortunately, it wasn’t a walk in the park. Jesus had to go through a tremendous amount of physical and mental suffering. The verses in Matthew 27:28-31 describe the mockery and humiliation that Jesus suffered right before His death. The Spirit of Prophecy (*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 734, 735) describes how His abusers afflicted the most intense suffering imaginable. They purposefully tried to make His death as shameful as possible. They mocked Him. They spat on his face. They ripped His clothes from His body. They put a crown of thorns on His head. There was so much agony and pain. Yet, He submitted meekly and humbly. He did not try to struggle against the soldiers but instead, with complete surrender, let his accusers nail Him to the cross. It seems almost impossible to comprehend. Why? Why would

Jesus lay down everything in heaven just to come and be brutally beaten and mocked if He wasn't automatically going to get something from us in return? There is this beautiful quote that I came across that Sis. White wrote. "If sinners can be led to give **one earnest look** at the cross, if they can obtain **a full view of the crucified Saviour**, they will realize the depth of God's compassion and the sinfulness of sin." (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 209). [Emphasis supplied.] God's love or compassion for us is so deep that the only way we will fully understand it is if we could actually see His pierced body upon the cross.

There was a darkness that cloaked Golgotha while this unimaginable scene took place. Although the sun was shining, darkness seemed to settle over the area. This darkness showed that the earth "expressed her sympathy with Christ in His expiring agony" (*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 3, p. 167). More importantly, it represented the obstacle of human transgression that got in the way of God and His Son. Jesus felt the separation

between Himself and His Father. Jesus cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Mark 15:34). Jesus, in His final hours, felt alone. He felt as if His Father had turned His back on Him. Even though God had turned His face away from the horrible scene, God was still suffering right along with His Son. He felt the pain and suffering that His Son was feeling.

Suddenly, the gloom seemed to disappear and a light encircled the cross. Jesus with a loud cry proclaimed "It is finished," and continued by saying "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit" (John 19:30, Luke 23:46). With a face shining "with a glory like the sun," Jesus bowed his head and died. (Read *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 755, 756.) The veil in the temple separating the Holy from the Most Holy place was torn in two from top to bottom by the hand of God. There was lightning! A mighty earthquake shook the earth. Rocks began to break. Graves opened and the Breath of Life filled the bodies of the saints once again! I'm sure it took a moment for the people of Jerusalem to comprehend the chaos that was taking place; once it registered, they became so afraid and began to run for their lives! In awe and fearful realization,

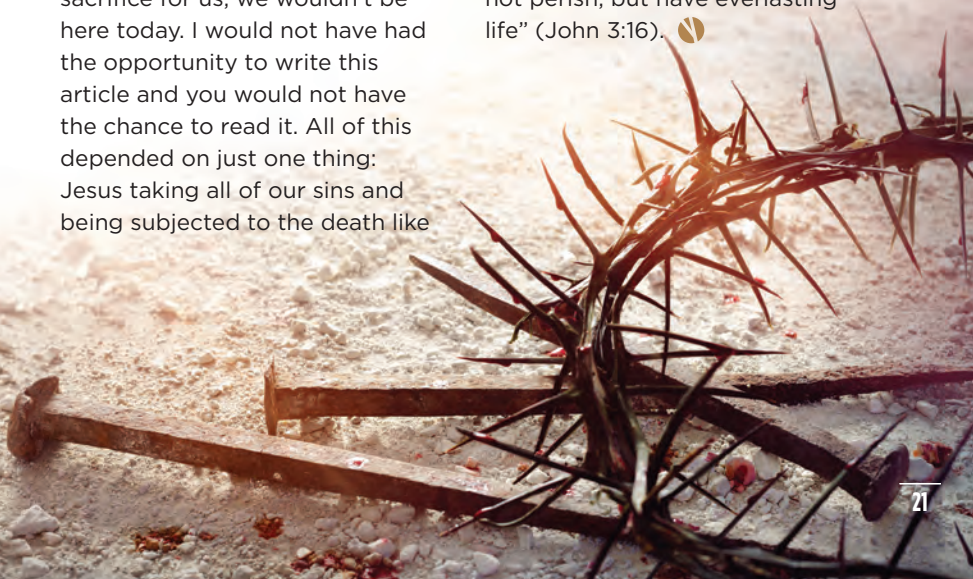


they proclaimed, “Truly this was the Son of God” (Matthew 27:54). They realized that a terrible mistake had taken place, one that could never be undone. They had crucified the Son of God to the cross. They had mocked and taunted Him to prove that He was the Son of God. And now, they were seeing the immediate consequence of their actions. Even in death, Jesus Christ had the victory! All of heaven rejoiced because Satan had been overcome! Jesus had won the controversy between the heavenly and evil forces. There would be no more tears. There would be no more pain. There would be no more eternal death!

When I think back on all the questions that had raced through my mind, the one that stands out the most is, “What if Jesus had decided not to die for me?” The more I thought about this question the more I realized that if Jesus hadn’t made that ultimate sacrifice for us, we wouldn’t be here today. I would not have had the opportunity to write this article and you would not have the chance to read it. All of this depended on just one thing: Jesus taking all of our sins and being subjected to the death like

a hardened criminal. I don’t know about you, but that just makes me love Him all the more!

When Jesus was in Gethsemane praying, He wasn’t praying for Himself or crying about the pain He was about to face. When He was dying on Calvary, He wasn’t thinking about Himself. Do you know what He was thinking about? Jesus was thinking about the soldier that just finished nailing His hands and feet to the cross. He was thinking about the man who cursed Him. He was thinking about the woman who just spat on His face. He was thinking about His mother who was watching all of this with a broken heart. But more importantly, He was thinking about *me*. He was thinking about *YOU*. He was thinking that although it wasn’t required, maybe, just maybe, one day you and I would give our hearts to Him. “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). 🍷



A person wearing a dark sweater is holding a bouquet of white lilies with green leaves. They are also holding a white envelope or card. The background is a warm, out-of-focus indoor setting with light coming from a window.

BY GENNIFER TUDOROIU

AN OLD STORY MADE NEW

I remember sitting in the wooden pew of a small, white chapel, surrounded by sniffles and sobs repeating as a slideshow of pictures played. A family dressed in black stood on the side of the platform, clinging to each other. The stinging reality that their loved one was gone was hard to contain. At the end of the service, everyone was expected to migrate in a line to briefly look at the pale body for the last time, and greet the family as a sign of respect and support. As I leaned over to look in the casket, I saw an empty shell. No sign of life was left. My eyes could not stand looking for longer than a few seconds, so I hurried on to hug the crying family. When it came time for the burial service, I watched the cream box get lowered into the earth. The family's eyes were

swollen from sobbing and their facial expressions looked plastic.

They focused on the day Jesus would come and call their loved one to life again. They did not have any thoughts of him being resurrected before then. In comparison, before Jesus died, the disciples were told that their Master and Friend would resurrect in three days. If you have ever been to a funeral, the experience is very similar to the experience the disciples had after Jesus died on the cross. Ellen G. White, a writer inspired of God, relayed the scene, "With the death of Christ the hopes of His disciples perished. They looked upon His closed eyelids and drooping head, His hair matted with blood, His pierced hands and feet, and their anguish was indescribable." (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 772). The reason

they felt so devastated and disoriented was because “until the last they had not believed that He would die; they could hardly believe that He was really dead. Overwhelmed with sorrow, they did not recall His words foretelling this very scene.” (Ibid.).

Have modern day Christians committed a similar mistake? Instead of remembering what Jesus said, we often forget because we are focused on other things. Or worst yet, we do not even search the Bible to see what Jesus has said versus what He has *not* said. During this time of the year, the Christian world is celebrating Easter.

Yet how many professed followers of Jesus actually look behind tradition and into the Bible to understand all the implications of Jesus’ resurrection? The resurrection of Jesus carries more meaning than just the generic fact that He rose again on the third day.

The resurrection is more than just a historical fact because without this monumental event taking place, the plan of redemption would not have been completed. The inspired apostle assures us,

“My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world” (1 John 2:1, 2). This verse says that we still sin. No surprise there. If the plan only included Jesus taking the place of our punishment and ended at that, people would still love sin and rebel against God. The problem would remain the problem. Jesus had a work to do after the resurrection and He is still doing this work. That is the work of advocating, as the verse in 1 John says. That does not mean He makes excuses for you to sin. It means He is a priest, presenting His own blood as the perfect sacrifice before the Father. It means He asks, prays, pleads, and stands in your behalf before God, as it says in Hebrews 4:14, “Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.” God is so just that He deemed no one else qualified to judge humanity,

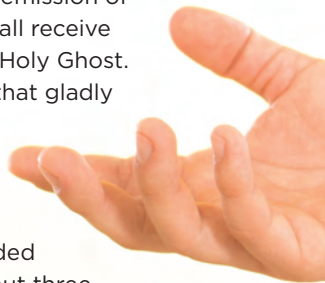


but only the Divine One who took humanity upon Himself, “For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son. . . . And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man” (John 5:22, 27). It is through this time that Jesus is spending in intercession for us that we have opportunity to be transformed into His likeness by His power. Without a fitness for heaven, we cannot inherit the kingdom.

The resurrection was not only the beginning of the next phase in the plan for our redemption, but it was actually an event that triggered thousands to profess Jesus as the Messiah and their Saviour. Jesus literally shook the world. When the chief priests put all their sweat into keeping Jesus in the tomb—yet He still resurrected—the Sadducees who believed in no resurrection were flabbergasted, the Romans heard and marveled, and the women saw angels at the tomb. When Peter and John heard, they both did a sprint to the tomb site to find Jesus’ wrapping cloth folded. When the two disciples in Luke 24:13 were walking the dusty road to Emmaus on the third day after Jesus’ death, they were enthralled in conversation about the weekend’s events. The crucifixion news was carried like the wind. While the two expressed opinions, Jesus appeared and drew near. The Bible text says their hearts burned within them

as He talked with them. Jesus broke the barriers between them and the word of God until they could see the truth for themselves. And the truth was *Christ!* After the resurrection the disciples awaited the promise of the Holy Spirit, Who indeed came upon them. Everywhere they went, the disciples preached the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus with power that touched every person’s life. They proclaimed, “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:36). Being cut in their hearts the people asked, “What shall we do?” The response was, “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. . . . Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls” (Acts 2:38, 41).

The reason why the resurrection is most important for you today is because Christ has paved the way to die to sin and be resurrected a new person. You are not yourself while you are under the enemy’s control. But when you accept Christ’s death and resurrection in your behalf, your true identity is locked in who God



is—because you were created by Him and in His image. So only when you are one with Jesus, do you become the person you truly were created to be. “For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power” (Colossians 2:9, 10).

Do you feel like your life has been a ceaseless chase to find some answer, some satisfaction, some happiness that will make you whole? Are you tired of trying to be a better person? Does your shame dictate who you are? Do you feel like you cannot let sin go and you fear to ask for help? There is hope.

Jesus is alive—He is risen! The question is, will you ask Him to live in you permanently, right now? You are the person He wants to bring into the kingdom. You are the person He would have come for even if you were the only one. You are the one, the target, and the object of His unconditional love. Will you let Him show you the power of His resurrection in your life? I pray you will not pass the opportunity to ask God into your life this very moment. “That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death” (Philippians 3:10). 🌱



The Lamb's

Have you ever wondered what makes the lightning be so powerful and incredible? There is a special science that studies lightning and is called "*Fulminology*." The scientists who have studied the lightning phenomena have been astonished to discover that the strike can be three times hotter than the surface of the sun. Lightning can strike in multiple places and can be even up to 90 miles long! Sadly, that this phenomenon is very dangerous for people: in the USA alone, 50 people are killed by lightning on average every year. In 1987, the Atlas Centaur rocket was struck by lightning only after 49 seconds in the air. The body of the rocket immediately fell into the ocean. As a matter of curiosity, a lightning bolt has about 1 billion volts of electricity, which equals with the energy of nearly 80 million car batteries. What amazing power is packed into this short-lived phenomenon! Once again we can reflect upon God's power controlling the universe.

The Prince of the universe, the Lord Jesus Christ, has told us that one day all around the earth the most impressive event on our visible sky will take place: "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Matthew 24:27).



Return AS KING

BY SEPTIMIU D. MURESAN

COMING WITH POWER AND GLORY

“Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people” (Psalm 50:3, 4).

“The King of kings descends upon the cloud, wrapped in flaming fire. The heavens are rolled together as a scroll, the earth trembles before Him, and every mountain and island is moved out of its place.”—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 641, 642.

ONE GROUP IS HAPPY: “THE KING IS COMING!”

Our Lord is returning with great power and glory! What an amazing day it will be! I cannot comprehend how majestic and solemn that day will be. The most awaited moment of the entire history of our little planet will flash all around the world, and all of us will be filled with reverence and deep respect. For all those that have awaited His appearing, that day will be the most joyful day of their life. “And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation (Isaiah 25:9).

THE OTHER GROUP BEWAILS: “OH, NO!”

“And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other” (Matthew 24:30, 31).

On the other hand, in these lines we can see the contrast. It says that all the tribes of the earth shall mourn; they will feel deep sorrow, regret, and sadness. They are the ones that were not ready for Jesus’ coming. Many of them are also those that persecuted Jesus or His followers. “Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen” (Revelation 1:7). They mocked Him, they despised Him, they killed Him . . . and many others did the same with His disciples and with His followers throughout the ages.

THE WICKED VAINLY TRY TO HIDE FROM JESUS

“And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said

to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?” (Revelation 6:15-17).

Thus, the wicked pray to be buried beneath the rocks of the mountains rather than meet the face of Him whom they have despised and rejected.

“There are those who mocked Christ in His humiliation. With thrilling power come to their minds the Sufferer’s words, when, adjured by the high priest, He solemnly declared: ‘Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven’ (Matthew 26:64). Now they behold Him in His glory, and they are yet to see Him sitting on the right hand of power.

“Those who derided His claim to be the Son of God are speechless now. . . .

“With awful distinctness do priests and rulers recall the events of Calvary. With shuddering horror they remember how, wagging their heads in satanic exultation, they exclaimed: ‘He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He be the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him. He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now, if He will have Him’ (Matthew 27:42, 43). . . .

“In the lives of all who reject truth there are moments when conscience awakens, when

memory presents the torturing recollection of a life of hypocrisy and the soul is harassed with vain regrets. . . . Those who would have destroyed Christ and His faithful people now witness the glory which rests upon them. In the midst of their terror they hear the voices of the saints in joyful strains exclaiming: 'Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us' (Isaiah 25:9).”—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 643, 644.



THE LAMB'S RETURN AS KING

As we have already seen, Jesus is the Lamb on the throne. (Revelation 6:15–17 above.) . . . The same Lamb that was meek, kind, and loving; the same Lamb that is still meek, kind, and loving, is coming back in His glory and majesty! Those who despised Jesus will see in the end that there is glory and victory in being humble, kind, loving, helping



others and even being “of no reputation . . . in the form of a servant” (Philippians 2:7).

The Lamb is the King! What a sweet and blessed assurance! There is no other character that can represent better the sweetness of Jesus than the lamb. The lamb is typically a sacrificial animal, and may also symbolize gentleness, innocence, and purity. When depicted with the lion, the pair can mean a state of paradise. “The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them” (Isaiah 11:6). In addition, the lamb symbolizes sweetness, forgiveness, and meekness. The lamb represents Christ as both suffering and triumphant.


When on the island of Patmos, John, the last apostle—even though isolated from his beloved brethren—received the grace of God. He saw that all the other disciples had passed away, being persecuted and executed. He felt alone, but the Lord revealed to him the future. John treasured in his heart all the beautiful memories that he had with the

Lord Jesus and all the others. He kept vivid in his memory John the Baptist's words: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). Jesus died for the sins of the entire world! All who receive Him, believe in Him, and abide in Him will be redeemed.

Being saved and part of the redeemed ones will be the best thing that can ever happen to anyone. As a group, or Jesus' faithful church, we are considered to be the bride. It symbolizes the innocence and purity that the believers accept and receive by trials, tribulations, and tests of faith. The groom of the bride is none other than Jesus. He paid the price for His bride. John, writing the book of Revelation could confess just this: "And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write: Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God" (Revelation 19:6-9).

Some people are at constant or partial enmity against Jesus and His followers. Actually, during the history of this earth, there have been more unbelievers than believers. These unbelievers not only refuse to accept Jesus as the Lamb of God, but they "shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful" (Revelation 17:14). The Lamb that they were so eager to resist is coming back to receive His faithful ones!

"The living cloud of majesty, and unsurpassed glory, came still nearer, and we could clearly behold the lovely person of Jesus. He did not wear a crown of thorns; but a crown of glory decked His holy brow. Upon His vesture and thigh was a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. His eyes were as a flame of fire, His feet had the appearance of fine brass, and His voice sounded like many musical instruments. His countenance was as bright as the noonday sun."—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 1, p. 207.

I hope and pray that you and I will rejoice when He comes back! I hope and pray that we will be among those that will say: "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation" (Isaiah 25:9). Amen! 

"HE IS NOT HERE"

By: Eunice Braidman

The Sabbath day has come and gone,
The sleepy hills await the dawn.
The night of man, the dark of night
Gives way to morn of hope and light.

Broken is the still night air
As it is taken unaware
By quaking earth and lightning sheets
As Christ the pow'r of death defeats.

No more a pris'ner of the grave—
The fallen race He now can save!
Man enslaved can now be free
For Christ has won the victory!

And then the words the angel speaks,
When Mary for Christ's body seeks:
"He is not here for He has risen,"
The best of tidings ever given.

It is because of words thus spoken
Cursèd sin at last is broken.
Because of this now-empty tomb,
We can escape eternal doom.

It is because the tomb was bare,
It is because He was not there
That you and I, the human race
Are here today—the fruits of grace.

Editor Adrian Finaru, **Layout** Bethany Muresan.

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