

The Lord is Risen! He is risen indeed!! Alleluia!!!

Let me first of all wish each one of you a blessed and meaningful Easter. May the risen Lord bless you abundantly and fill you with the power of the resurrection so that you may go out and serve him in his strength and power.

The death of Jesus on Good Friday seemed to be the end of the world for Jesus and his disciples. Satan too, must have had a hearty laugh that he had dealt with a Messiah once and for all. He probably was celebrating his victory as he saw Jesus die. The disciples too thought that it was the end of the road for them. Jesus had taught them several times that he would die but rise again on the third day. However, the gruesome death which they witnessed on the cross shattered their hopes of any resurrection. None of the followers seemed to have understood Jesus' prediction of his resurrection.

On the first day of the week while it was still dark we see Mary Magdalene going to the tomb. She was probably heading there because it was the day after the Sabbath and would have wanted to anoint the body. However, when she reached the tomb she saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance. She came back running to Peter and John telling them that somebody had taken the body of Jesus out of the tomb and that she did not know where they had put him.

Peter and John ran to the tomb and they looked at the strips of linen lying there. Simon Peter went into the tomb and saw that the body wasn't there. John followed Peter inside the tomb. He saw and believed. Mary Magdalene stood outside the tomb weeping and bent over to look into the tomb and saw angels in white who asked her why she was crying. She replied that they had taken her Lord away and she did not know where they had kept him. Jesus appears to her and asks her, "Woman why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?" Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him." Jesus said to her, 'Mary' she turned around and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" Jesus told her to go and tell the disciples of the resurrection of Jesus. So Mary was the first witness to the resurrection.

The resurrection event shows us the mighty power of God. All the forces of darkness put together tried to keep Jesus in the grave. If there was no resurrection then there is no salvation. All hope is gone. Only Satan and death prevail. But the resurrection power shows us the Satan and death are defeated foes. Paul writing to the Colossians says that God has made us alive in Christ. He forgave us all our sins having cancelled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross. So the cross shows us the utter defeat of Satan and all his hosts.

However, we see that Christ in his triumphal procession paraded these powerless 'Powers and Authorities' so that all the world might see the magnitude of the victory. But these spiritual powers have not been annihilated. In the triumphal procession they were still visible and they continue to exist, and try everything possible to lead human beings away from Christ. Nevertheless, they are powerless figures unable to harm the Christian who lives under the Lordship of Christ. The picture is as though these spiritual powers should be counted as of no greater value and significance than a bunch of old rags.

As we celebrate this Easter we are called to make use of this resurrection power that is available to us. Paul writing to the Romans says, "And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who lives in you." The Holy Spirit of God sustains us in everything that we do. As we move into this Easter season may we truly live as the Easter people in the power of the resurrection.