

## EASTER SUNDAY 2010

*Matthew 28:1-20*

Introduction: The resurrection of Jesus is the inviolable guarantee of our personal resurrection to come. Dr. Paul I. Maier, professor of ancient history at Western Michigan university, concluded that, *"If all the evidence were weighed carefully and fairly, it is indeed justifiable, according to the canons of historical research, to conclude that the tomb in which Jesus was buried was empty on the morning of the first Easter. And no shred of evidence has yet been discovered in literary sources, epigraphy, or archaeology that would disprove this statement."* The apostle Paul imperviously lays out his case in unequivocal terms in *1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:13-17*. The prodigious lynch-pin of Christianity rests and rotates around the resurrection of Jesus, the Christ.

### I. Man's need of a mediator

#### A. Job articulated the plight of man. Job 4:12-19, 9:25-33.

1. Here, Job expresses the frustration and futility of all mankind and depicts the capacious need for a deliverer.
2. No hope!

#### B. The hope of humanity lies in Jesus Christ.

1. In order for man to be freed from his condemned, Adamic nature, there must be an unmitigated miracle transformation. *2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5:17 (Amplified)*. "...if any person is [ingrafted] in Christ (the Messiah) he is a new creation (a new creature altogether); the old [previous moral and spiritual condition] has passed away. Behold, the fresh and new has come!"
2. Humanity and deity must come together. Jesus puzzled the speculators, metaphysicians, and theologians. No other man in history ever produced such startling results in humanity. He changed liars to truth tellers, thieves to honest men, and caused corrupt societies to become clean, wholesome, and safe.
3. This is why the Easter miracle means so much to the believer. God sent a divine seed via the Holy Spirit, who deposited the seed into Mary, who then became the mother of Jesus. This sinless human being became sin for us in order to clear the slate of sin in our life, by paying the debt that we owed. *2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5:21*. The truth of the 17<sup>th</sup> verse of this same chapter is possible because of what Jesus did.
4. Peter's message in *Acts 2:22-33* lays out the plan in detail. This shows the unprecedented substitutional work of Jesus on our behalf.
5. Paul spells out what Jesus did for us in transparent detail in *Colossians 2:15*.
6. Notice that after Jesus was condemned in the spirit on our behalf, (*1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 5:21; Acts 2:27-31*), He then was justified in His Spirit after the work was done. *1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 3:16*.
7. The release needed by man from his bondage could only be accomplished through Jesus the Redeemer. *Hebrews 2:14-15*.

#### C. While the Easter story is the record of a literal event in history, the relevant significance of it involves eternity. This epochal story of life-changing truth never grows old. John 20:1-18, 19-31.

Conclusion: Jesus died as our substitute, the Lamb that takes away the sins of the world. He arose as Lord, master of death, of hell, and of the grave. He says, "I was dead and behold I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of death and Hades." The matchless mighty Christ had gone into the strong room of the dark prince and the ruler of death. Christ has conquered him in combat. He took away from him his authority and his dominion. He restores man from his lost estate and brings him into freedom and salvation.