



Vicar's Easter Message

God Keeps His Promises

The angel said to the women,
“...He is not here; He has risen, just as He said”
(Matthew 28:5-6)

Seasons like Easter and Christmas remind us that God keeps His promises. In the Old Testament, the prophet, Isaiah, tells us about the coming of the Messiah who God had promised His people: “For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and He is named Wonderful Counselor, Might God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace...(Is. 9:2-4,6-7). God fulfills His promise by sending His Son into the world.

God, again, keeps His promises in terms of Jesus’ death and resurrection. Jesus had spoken time and time again about His imminent crucifixion and resurrection to his disciples. However, it is apparent that although He told them of this on a number of occasions the disciples still had their doubts based on the way they responded before and after His death. For example, in Matthew’s Gospel, the first time that Jesus foretells His death and resurrection in chapter 16, verse 21 (see also Mark 8:31-33; Luke 9:21-22), Peter responds immediately, admonishing Jesus for saying this and he claims that “This must never happen to you [Jesus]” (verse 22). Then we find that after His death and resurrection, the disciples are mourning and weeping and expressing disbelief when Mary Magdalene brought them the news of His resurrection and that she had seen Him (Mark 16: 9-11; cf. Luke 24: 13-27).

According to Matthew’s Gospel, the women who went to the tomb on that first Easter morn, realized that God does keep His promises. The angel who greeted them alerted them to this realization: “...He is not here; he has risen, just as he said.” This causes us to ask ourselves, “Do we believe that God’s words have meaning?” “Do we believe that the words of our Lord can be trusted?” “Do we feel that God’s words are true?” I believe that if we are ever unsure, then look towards the resurrection: “...He is not here; he has risen, just as he said.” Christ rose on the third day, just as He said He would and has promised eternal life to all who believe in Him.

My friends, there are countless promises that God has kept all throughout the Bible. He promised Abraham and Sarah that they will have a son and they did; He promised the Israelites that He will bring them out of Egyptian slavery and He did; God promised His people that He will give them a land which will be theirs and He did. In all that it took for them to acquire the land, Joshua 21:45 records that “not one of all the good promises that the LORD had made to the house of Israel had failed; all came to pass” (cf. Josh. 23:14). The psalmist tells us that God is faithful to all His promises (Ps. 145:13). The New Testament tells us of the faithfulness of God to His promises (Rom. 4: 13ff.; Heb. 10:23; 1 Thess. 5:24). These are only a miniscule of the promises God has made to His people.

There is no doubt that God keeps His promises and the Resurrection of Christ assures us of this. Thus, when we read and hear the words “Do not be afraid” (Luke 12: 32), we should not be fearful; when we read and hear the words “I will be with you always” (Matt. 28: 20), we should believe that

He will be with us at all times; when we hear the words, "Peace be with you" (John 20: 19, 21), we know that we can have peace in our hearts because Jesus gives us that peace.

Easter brings us the joy of knowing that God keeps His promises. Easter brings us the joy of knowing that Christ rose from the dead, just as He said; thus, keeping His promise. Easter brings us the joy of knowing that God promised the gift of eternal life to all who believe in Him. Easter brings us the joy of knowing that Christ promises to return a second time.

Judith and our children join me in wishing you and your families and friends a blessed and holy remainder of the Lenten Season and a joyous Eastertide.

Your Friend and Pastor,

Father Tony