

Isa. 61:1-3; 62:13:64:1-4
Daniel 2:29-35; 1 Cor. 15:20-28
Text Isa. 64:4-5^a

HALLELUJAH, WHAT A SAVIOR.

In public libraries, and in a number of private ones as well, you can find autobiographies of important people, such as statesmen, famous women, preachers, economists, industrialists, evangelists, scientists, discoverers, etc.

These autobiographies often vary widely. Some of them are a critical analyses of their lives and labors, others are highlighting all their good qualities. Some are general and others are detailed. Some are objective, others are subjective. Some bring out the individual's strong points, others their weak points. *They either state, "This is what they accomplish, or failed to a*

But when all and everything has been said, they have all one common denominator. These autobiographies all end with the end of the person's life. Then, there is nothing more to say. It is like saying, "This is it, no more: done and over."

Now, the Gospel writings are a kind of autobiography too, on the life of Jesus. Three writers are more detailed, Mark is more abbreviated. Also, three of them are less theological than John, for example. But they are all objective and positive. No one has anything negative to say. This is of course, because there were only good things to report of the life of Christ.

There is another very important thing about the life of Jesus, which stands out above all and *everyone*. These Gospel writers keep on describing things and events about the Jesus where all secular writers stopped!

Of course, you know why. It is because when Jesus died, He rose again, and lived among them for another 40 days appearing here and there and all over. Peter said it all in his sermon on the day of Pentecost: "It was impossible for death to keep its hold on Him." (Acts 2:24)

And we sing in one of the glorious Easter hymns, "Christ the Lord is risen today"; "Death in vain forbids Him rise"; "Christ has opened paradise." We must conclude that death lost out here.

And even these 40 days after the resurrection were not the end. For thereupon, He gloriously, victoriously, and triumphantly ascended into heaven. *We see that Christ kept on accomplish. things after he died.*

In fact, even this wasn't the end. For 10 days after ascending into heaven, He blessed His disciples and other close followers with the Father's promised Holy Spirit. It was like Him living on in their lives, and in the world. For as He said, "Unto

me has been given all authority, both ...
Go preach, teach, and live out your life in me.

Then, of course, there was the promise made shortly before his crucifixion that His going away was also for the purpose to prepare a place for His own in heaven! So they some day could be where He is.

All of this is how and why the rest of the New Testament came to be written. Also, this is how and why His followers kept on preaching this glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ. And as a result of this, there was the establishment of the church of Jesus Christ, worldwide. And you and I, members of this universal christian church.

It means that the writing of His autobiography is ongoing! The Kingdom of God is unbeatable and unstoppable. Recall the vision related to Nebuchadnezzar and interpreted by Daniel about the rock cut of a mountain, but not by human hand, getting larger and larger, crushing everything in its way and eventually filling the whole earth! *It was prophetic in terms of the K. of God.*

Those in Christ are part of this picture! Imagine! We have *surely* nothing to be pessimistic about.

Yes, Isaiah: "Since ancient times no one had heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who act on behalf of those who wait for Him. *You come to help of those who gladly do right, who remember your ways.*"

Had Jesus not returned to life, these words would have sounded hollow. For then His life story would have ended where all others ended. And spiritually speaking, the same with yours and mine.

The cry from the cross, "It is finished" was in relation to you and me: the finished sacrifice for the sins of the world! This is why at the moment Jesus cried that one word, "Tetelestai", i.e., "Finished", the earth shook, the rocks were split, the tombs broke open and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life, as we read in Matth. 27:51-52.

It meant the work of salvation was complete. It meant John 3:16 was fulfilled: "For God so ...

It meant, "Lifted up was He to die,
It is finished was His cry;
Now in heaven exalted high:
Hallelujah, what a Savior."

After the resurrection, every earthly limitation and dimension was gone. He now was to be worshipped as the LORD OF LIFE. As the little chorus says,

"He is Lord; He is Lord; He is risen from the dead,
and He is Lord. Ev'ry knee shall bow, ev'ry tongue
confess that Jesus Christ is Lord."

And so we further sing:

4.

last years being led by so called "scholars", who go around holding what they call, "Jesus Seminars", trying to deny every thing Jesus ever said or did. *CBC giving them a wide platform to cry out their folly.*

What a disappointed poor souls they some day will be.

Well, there are a lot of good reasons why the N.T. writers were so absolutely sure, so totally convinced that Jesus of Nazareth had risen from the grave. Let me mention some of the reasons:

1. It was because of what He had said concerning Himself before His resurrection. Repeatedly He had spoken not only of His suffering and death, but equally so of His resurrection. *Several times, just on Matthew alone three times in a row!* (16:21; 17:23; 20:19).
2. Because of what the women and disciples saw! -an empty tomb, grave clothes all neatly rolled up and put away; dead people don't do that; angels around and confirming His resurrection; soldiers guarding the tomb head over heel running away from the place, being in shock of what they had witnessed.
3. Around 9-10 times Jesus appeared to various disciples and other followers. One time even to a group of 500 brothers at the same time. Most of whom still being alive at the time of the writing. That is like saying, "Go and ask them if you find it hard to believe us."
4. All 11 disciples witnessed His ascension into heaven and received the mandate to keep on witnessing about Him.
5. Then, 10 days thereafter, He gave evidence that He had been seated at the right hand of the throne of God. It was on the day of P. It was the fulfillment of the Promise of the Father: the arrival of the Helper and Comforter. They were all baptized with the Holy Spirit and empowered for witness. A dead Savior could not keep such a promise.
6. In John 16:7 we read that Jesus said, "It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. (16:7)

"Since ancient times no one had heard, no ear has perceived, no eye had seen any God besides you who acts on behalf of those who wait for Him. *you come to help of those who gladly do right, who remember your ways.*"

Some time ago, on 3-25, '96 to be exact, amidst all the glitter of Hollywood's film stars, referees handed out an Oscar to Susan Sarandon, as best actress for her role in the film entitled, "Dead Man walking."

"Crown Him with many crowns, The Lamb upon the throne;
Hark! how the heavenly athems drowns All music but its own!
Awake, my soul and sing Of Him who died for thee,
And hail Him as thy matchless King Through all eternity.

Crown Him the Lord of life, Who triumphed o'er the grave,
And rose victorious in the strife For those He came to save;
His glories now we sing Who died, and rose on high,
Who died, eternal life to bring, And lives that death may die."

And on in these words:

"Because He lives I can face tomorrow; Because He lives
all fear is gone; Because I know He holds the future,
And life is worth the living just because He lives."

This means, my friend, that death will not be the end for you
and I either! No matter what masses of people may think or
say. You know how some people scornfully remark, "When I die
it will be 6 feet under, and that's it."

Well, it may be 6 feet under all right, but that won't be it!
No way! Such people do not know what they are talking about.
They are the poorest of all the poor, the deafests of all the
deaf, the blindest of all the blind, the dumbest of all the
dumb. And following cremation, throwing the ashes in the
wind isn't final either.

Rather, it is all this way: Jesus' resurrection is a glorious
foreshadowing of every resurrection. The apostle Paul wrote,
" Christ, the first ... (1 Cor. 15:20-23)

And already before His glorious resurrection Jesus had said,
"Do not marvel at (John 5:28-29)

All of this makes us raise the question: What sense would
judgement day make if there was to be no resurrection, as
some people say? I can see that they wished there was no
resurrection. Yes, that I can see. But it still makes me
say, "Oh, people, don't be so foolish. Please, accept Jesus
as your Savior and Lord. You 'll never, ever regret it if
you do accept Him. You only will be everlastingly sorry if
you don't, if you reject Him."

The apostle Paul also wrote, "For we must all appear before
the judgement seat of Christ, so that each one may receive
good or evil, according to what he has done in the body."

And in the Book of Revelation we read, "Then I saw a great
white throne ... (20:11-15)

We come back to this after a while. But right now I would
ask you this question: How could all these N.T. writers be so
absolutely sure, so totally convinced, that Jesus of Nazareth
had risen from the grave? Unbelievers still deny it. The

I have never heard of a lot of actors, fashion designers, herods, & so-called famous people in arts. I do not waste my time here. 5.

Mind you, I had never heard of her before, but that is neither here or there. ^{My} point is that of anyone who want to hear of a real dead man, walking, without any of the money, glitter, and nonsense of Hollywood, read up on **Jesus** walking out of the tomb. No nonsense here. No acting here. No money here. No outward glitter here. This was real "dead man walking", eternally.

Also, we surely can laugh at the actions of the Sanhedrin. Do you remember how they went to Pontius Pilate? Let me read Matth. 27:62-66)

Some security. It did not help much, did it? No, not a thing.

This lifeless, blood-stained, and blood-drained body, was raised. The grave clothes began to stir. And than, it happened! A mysterious, mighty, wonderful and glorious rising took place. It was early in the morning of the 3rd day of His burial.

"Low in the grave He lay ... (298:1-3)
105

All of this makes us exclaim that THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST WAS INVINCIBLE PROOF, UNMISTAKABLE EVIDENCE, JESUS OF NAZARETH WAS ALL HE HAD CLAIMED TO BE. *He foretold his resurrection. He promised his d. to get out of the grave again. and He did*
My friends, if someone makes a promise to you, you like that person to keep ... Right? *O do.*

And when this person does keep the promise, no matter what, and makes another promise, later on, it is easy for you to trust that this promise shall be kept as well.

Perhaps, this is why the Promise Keeper's organization is doing so well.

Promise keeping is part of the nature of Christ. He always did what He said, no matter what. He was always true to His word. You can rely on Him. There is no better friend and no greater Savior. This is what makes Him the King of eternity and the Lord of life.

A good 700 years before the birth of Christ, the prophet Isa. wrote, "Since ancient times no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye had seen any God besides You, who acts on behalf of those who wait for Him. You come to the help of those who gladly do right, who remember your ways."

All of this is fulfilled in Christ, and at the same time applies to those who are "in Christ", as the N.T puts it.

Indeed, in the resurrected, glorified, and exalted Christ, all of this is an eternity removed from the silly Hollywood motion picture of "Dead Man, walking." This is a mighty "Dead