

Stepping Into...

**Power that brings
confidence**

Matthew 27:45-54

⁴⁵ Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land. ⁴⁶ And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" ⁴⁷ Some of those who stood there, when they heard *that*, said, "This Man is calling for Elijah!" ⁴⁸ Immediately one of them ran and took a sponge, filled *it* with sour wine and put *it* on a reed, and offered it to Him to drink. ⁴⁹ The rest said, "Let Him alone; let us see if Elijah will come to save Him." ⁵⁰ And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. ⁵¹ Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, ⁵² and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; ⁵³ and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many. ⁵⁴ So when the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, "Truly this was the Son of God!"

The three Spring Feasts

- Passover (Pesach)
- Unleavened Bread (Chag HaMatzot)
- First Fruits (Yom HaBikkurim).



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1 Corinthians 5:7-8

Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. ⁸ Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth.

1 Corinthians 15:20-26

²⁰ But now Christ is risen from the dead, *and* has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹ For since by man *came* death, by Man also *came* the resurrection of the dead. ²² For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. ²³ But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those *who are* Christ's at His coming. ²⁴ Then *comes* the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. ²⁵ For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. ²⁶ The last enemy *that* will be destroyed *is* death.



The Feast of Firstfruits

- On the third day of unleavened bread
- On the morning after the sabbath
- Barley sheaf waved not burnt
- Coincided with a burnt offering – a Lamb without blemish
- And a meal offering – unleavened bread mixed with oil and wine

How was this fulfilled:

- Jesus rose early on the morning after the sabbath (third day -Sunday Morning)
- The burnt offering speaks of total consecration of a victim without sin
- The bread and wine goes right back to the priest king Melchizedek, and it is also the central element of the Passover – and what we call communion today.

Hebrews 10:11-14

¹¹ And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. ¹² But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, ¹³ from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. ¹⁴ For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.

Romans 8:11

'But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.'

Ephesians 3:8-12

⁸To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, ⁹and to make all see what *is* the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; ¹⁰to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly *places*, ¹¹according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹²in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him

Brian's Preaching Notes: Stepping into.....power that brings confidence

Matthew 27:45-54

This is a powerful account of the impact of power of the resurrection on people and the natural and spiritual world.

It includes the unusual account of the people who rose from their graves.
What on earth did people think when they saw these people?
Maybe we don't know the who, but we do know the why.

This week we have just celebrated three biblical feasts that coincide with Easter.

Passover, Unleavened Bread and Firstfruits.

Passover (Pesach) is one day in the week of three feasts which includes:
Unleavened Bread (Chag HaMatzot); and
First Fruits (Yom HaBikkurim).

Passover remembers that the Israelites put the blood of a lamb on the doorposts so that the angel of death would 'passover' their homes in Egypt.
The single most important event in the history of Israel – their freedom from slavery.

As believers in Jesus today we know that Jesus was crucified and died on Passover, He is the fulfilment of that feast – His blood was shed and it covers our life so that we have forgiveness.

Unleavened bread starts the day after Passover when leaven must not be eaten for the whole 7 days.
Symbolic of the ridding of the influence of Egypt from the Israelites and of dealing with sin and living holy.
As believers in Jesus, it represents deliverance from sin and bondage under satan and this world, to complete freedom. Living a sanctified life.

Passover – Redemption
Unleavened Bread – Sanctification

1 Corinthians 5:7-8

The third day of Passover is the Feast of Firstfruits.
The day is significant because it was the day Jesus rose from the dead.
He was the first fruit.

1 Corinthians 15:20-26

The significance of these three feasts for us today:

We all have sin in our lives. And the image is of leaven. Leaven is any substance (like yeast) is used to produce fermentation in dough.

Galatians 5:9 Paul says 'a little leaven leavens the whole lump'.

It only takes a little – sin, hypocrisy, wrong teaching – to affect the whole thing.

Jesus has, by His death, provided forgiveness for our sin, through repentance and living in right relationship with God.

1 John 1:9

9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Provision has been made and nothing more need to be done.

Details of the feast and its links to Matthew 27:

The feast of First Fruits is described in Leviticus 23.

The instruction in vs 9 to 12 is that on that day a sheaf of Barley, the first crop to ripen, was waved before the Lord.

Then a burnt offering of perfect lamb is made

At the same time an offering of unleavened bread with oil and wine is made.

Jesus rose early on the morning after the sabbath at the same time this offering was being made. (third day - Sunday Morning)

The burnt offering speaks of total consecration of a victim without sin

The bread and wine goes right back to the priest king Melchizedek, and it is also the central element of the Passover – and what we call communion today.

Melchizedek was the first person identified as a High Priest, although it implied Adam and others after him fulfilled that role too. In Psalm 110 God says that his Son will be 'a Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek'.

In His death and resurrection Jesus fulfilled the role of the High Priest by offering Himself.

The language in the New Testament is deliberate: In Hebrews 7:27 the writer says about Jesus 'He offered up Himself'

Hebrews 10:11-14

Jesus says that He freely lays down His life for the sheep. His life was not taken from Him, He gave it willingly.

And what was the barley sheaf in His case?

This takes us back to our scripture right at the beginning.

As the High Priest Jesus offered Himself, so He offers His first fruits to God and proof of His perfect sacrifice. The authority of the High Priest had passed from Caiaphus to Jesus a couple of days before.

Those who rose from their graves to everlasting life were a downpayment – a firstfruits of all those who would also eventually rise from the dead.

Daniel 12:2 'And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake,

Those who rose from the dead on that day are proof to us that Jesus completely defeated death and the grave. And that those who are believers in Jesus can have complete assurance that they will be resurrected when Jesus returns and enter into everlasting life.

It means that we live differently – not religiously, not rules, not man made structures, but true liberty and freedom.

In Romans 8, we now live under 'The Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus'. And this Law says we are completely free from sin and death.

He encourages us to walk in Spirit.

A believer in Jesus – is free from sin to live a real, purposeful and fulfilling life.

1 Corinthians 15 – our hope is in the resurrection – a victorious triumph.

And now we should live in the framework of Rom 8:11

We have a new quality of life, participating in His resurrection power.

Dead to sin, but alive to Christ.

The firstfruits offering was public. All would see it. In the same way Jesus died and rose again in public, in particular before principalities and powers.
Ephesians 3:8-12

As far as the spiritual realm is concerned it was a public event. And so those of us who are believers can have confidence.

Hebrews 9:14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

We are free to carry our God's purpose for our lives. All that needed to be done has been done.