



*[H.I.S.] He is Savior, Acts 4:12

April 1, 2021

HIS Ministries April 2021 Newsletter, covering March 2021

Christmas is the promise; Easter is the proof that God loves you!

This year the Jewish Passover and Christian celebration of Easter fall on the same week. We are often asked if it is proper to call this celebration time “Easter”. This word appears in the *King James Version of the Bible* once, in Acts 12:4. It is actually a mistranslation or a misinterpretation of sorts of the Greek word “*pascha*” which means *Passover, a Jewish feast*, which, according to the Jewish calendar, is celebrated on the first Sunday, following the full moon. *Passover is the basis for our Easter*, but by that name, *Easter*, it was originally a pagan festival honoring “*Eostre*”, a Teutonic goddess of light, spring and fertility, celebrated around the same time as Passover, but *Easter, celebrated by pagans, was focused on spring at the time of vernal equinox* when sun crosses the equator and day and night are equal in length. We, as Christians, do not identify or have anything to do with pagan festivals, but we do need to know this, if we are asked where some of these names come from and why. We also need to remember that we do not celebrate Easter with fertility symbols of eggs and “Easter-bunnies” as unbelievers do – *we celebrate the Resurrection of the Lord that took place at this time of year. Preaching the Gospel*, as we all are commanded to do, is teaching *who Jesus is and that He died for our sins, was buried and rose again on the third day, according to the Scriptures.* (1 Cor. 15:1-4.) His sacrifice brought forgiveness and eternal salvation to all who accept Him as their Savior and Lord. (John 1:12; 8:24; 14:6.)

As we celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus and our salvation through our faith in His finished work, let us not forget that He is coming soon. As His First Coming was foretold in the Scriptures, so is His Second Coming. As Jesus said, “*Search the Scriptures for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me.*” (John 5:39.)

We must not be ignorant or taken by surprise, but we must be ready, expecting Him to come at any time. Before His Second Coming, He comes first “*in the clouds*” to take His Bride, the Church, saved by His grace, to His Father’s House (John 14:1-3). *He meets us “in the air”* (1 Thess. 4:13-18). We will come back with Him in His Second Coming. **Please share the true Gospel of Christ with all who do not yet belong to Him.**

(1 Cor. 15:1-3; John 8:24; 14:6.)

Chapter 12, in the Gospel of John, starts with **Jesus’ final week of ministry** on planet Earth. He came to Bethany on Friday, six days before Passover, eighth of Nisan, to spend the Saturday Sabbath with Lazarus, Martha and Mary at their home near Jerusalem. His *Triumphal Entry* to Jerusalem was on **Palm Sunday**, the 10th of Nisan, when He entered the city (Luke 19:28-44) riding on a donkey (Zech. 9:9) as *the rightful King of Israel*. This “*presentation day*”, which is called **Palm Sunday**, is calculated from March 14th 445 B.C. (Nehemiah 2:1, 5-8, 17-18.) to 6th of April, 32 A.D. and it was exactly **173,880**

days after Artaxerxes Longimanus had given the commandment to “restore and rebuild Jerusalem”. (Dan. 9:25.) **Jesus’ coming to Jerusalem took place on the same day when all the sacrificial lambs were brought to Jerusalem to be presented for a 4-day inspection and approval by the priests in Jerusalem** (according to Exodus 12:3-6) **before they would be killed on Passover, the 14th of Nisan.** **Jesus was coming among them, for He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!** (John 1:29.) When the **Chief priests, Scribes and Pharisees** saw the multitudes **coming to meet Jesus, singing Hosanna** [which means **“save now, we pray”**], they took counsel together to figure out how they might get not only Jesus killed, but also Lazarus, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. **Because of Lazarus many of the Jews believed in Jesus.** (John 12:9-19.) [Many of the chief priests were **Sadducees**, who denied the resurrection, so they wanted to get rid of Lazarus also]. These Jewish leaders were angry and beside themselves as they were plotting their murderous plans to get to Jesus. (Mark 14:1-2.) **“Then Satan entered Judas, who was numbered among the twelve”** (Luke 22:2-6), and he agreed to cooperate with the religious leaders and **betray Jesus for money** and lead them to Him when He was away from the multitudes.

During these 4 days before Passover, Jesus went into the temple and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the moneychangers. He healed the blind and the lame who came to Him. He cursed the fig tree that has leaves but no fruit, symbolizing Israel that had a show of religion, but no fruit. (Matt. 21:12-19.)

When His disciples had pointed out the magnificence of this temple, Jesus said that it will be destroyed and that **“no stone will be left there upon another”.** (Matt. 24:1-2) and He had also said that **He will raise it up again in three days.** They did not understand until after His resurrection that He had meant that His body will be raised from the dead after 3 days.

When the Chief priests and Sadducees had asked Jesus to give them a sign if He indeed was who He had said He is, but Jesus told them, **“No sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah.”** (Matt. 16:4b.) What is the **“sign of Jonah” ? Resurrection!** (See Matt. 12:38-41.)

[For the story of Jonah, go to the Book of Jonah in the OT – it is only 1.5 pages, 4 short chapters. - God had sent His prophet Jonah to go and preach repentance to the city of Nineveh, capitol of Israel’s main enemy, Assyria. Jonah hated Assyrians, and He knew that his God was forgiving and merciful God, and he feared that they would repent and God will forgive and save them. Rather than obeying God, and going about 500 miles East to Nineveh, Jonah took a ship that went to Tarshish, 2000 miles West. A huge storm rose, and Jonah was thrown overboard. God had prepared a great fish that swallowed Jonah, and while still alive in fish’s belly, Jonah prayed and 3 days and 3 nights later, the great fish vomited Jonah alive on a dry land. Now Jonah obeyed God even though reluctantly and preached to Nineveh. The people repented and God saved them and their city. Jesus was saying that after He is put to death, 3 days and 3 nights later He will rise from the dead as was Jonah.]

On Wednesday (13th of Nisan), Jesus sent Peter and John to go and prepare the Passover meal for them that evening. (Matt. 26:17-30.) **John Chapter 13** reveals that during the meal Jesus began once more to prepare His disciples for His coming trial and crucifixion. Reading this chapter carefully, we see that Jesus was concerned for His disciples, and not for His coming sufferings and death. Jesus taught by His example that His followers are to be humble servants of God. The lowest task of a servant in this culture was washing the feet of others. Peter severely objected to Jesus washing his feet, and asked Jesus to wash his hands and head also. When Jesus answered that **they were already clean** (saved) **“but not all of you”** (13:2-11). He was referring to Judas, who had never been saved. [Jesus was teaching that after we have been cleansed (*saved from our sins*), we only need daily cleansing from the pollution of sin, and **that washing must take place daily through the Word of God.** (Eph. 5:26.)) John wrote that when Judas left the room, **“it was night”** (13:30). [It was not yet literally

night, but it is always “night” when we willingly sin and turn away from our Lord.] At that time the Lord instituted the Communion, the Lord’s Supper. He took bread (unleavened bread), and blessed it, broke it and gave it to them saying “this is my body”. Then He took a cup of wine, gave thanks and gave it to them and they all drank from it, and He said, “this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many.” After that He said, “I will no longer drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.” They then sang a hymn and went out to the Mount of Olives. (Mark 14:22-26.)

[Passover is the 14th of Nisan and a Feast of Unleavened Bread begins on the 15th of Nisan. (Lev. 23:4-6.) Leaven/yeast is in the Bible taught to be a symbol of sin that puffs up and corrupts, without adding any substance. All Israel was commanded, before the start of this week of Feasts, to thoroughly clean their homes and remove all leaven (sin) from their lives, and whoever ate leavened bread during this time would be “cut off”, i.e. excluded from the camp of Israel and all privileges that it offered. They could only eat Unleavened bread, that in Communion represents His sinless body, broken for us. A cup of red wine that is taken in Communion, represents His blood shed for many.]

Judas knew that place well, *The Garden of Gethsemane*, for Jesus often went there to pray and also to meet with His disciples. Judas led the Chief priests and Pharisees, and the Roman troops, who came there with *weapons, lanterns and torches*, to arrest Jesus. (John 18:1-3). *They came seeking the Light of the world with lanterns!* Jesus asked them, “Whom are you seeking? They answered Him, *Jesus of Nazareth.*” (John 18:4-6.) When Jesus answered, “*I AM [He] they drew back and they all fell to the ground.*” [“*I AM*” is one of the names of Jehovah in the OT. “*He*” is not in the original text, but was a necessary addition in English.] [They understood what He meant (*that He is God*), and fear fell on them.]

Then they arrested Jesus and bound Him, and took Him to an *all-night trials* [which were illegal], to be first tried in a “*religious trial*” before *Annas, the High Priest* (18:12-14, 19-23) and then (18:24) to *Roman-appointed High Priest, Caiaphas* (son-in-law of the real High Priest, Annas), in order to “*prove*” Jesus guilty of blasphemy and heresy. *Since the Jews were under Roman rule, they had to work through Roman courts to secure the guilty verdict necessary for the death penalty they wanted.* Jesus was then taken to a “*civil trial*” - to be tried before Roman authorities (first to Pilate, then to Herod, and again to Pilate) *to prove that He was an enemy of Caesar, and thus deserved death by crucifixion.* Pilate said to the Jews that he *found no fault in Jesus, but they insisted that He was guilty.* Pilate, even after a long, all-night session of questioning Him, *did not find Him guilty for Jesus did not even try to defend Himself. [He could not, for He was standing there, accused, in our place, and we all are guilty.]* Pilate told the Jews, “*You take Him and crucify Him, for I find no fault in Him.*” (19:6.) Pilate had tried to get Jesus to say that He was the King, and when He did not answer, Pilate angrily said, “*Are you not speaking to me? Do You not know that I have power to crucify You, and power to release You?*” Jesus answered, “*You could have no power at all against Me unless it was given to you from above. Therefore the one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin.*” (19:10-11.) [Who, then, had the greater sin in this matter? Was it *Caiaphas the high priest, or Judas the betrayer, or the Jews and their leaders in general, for Jews had the Scriptures that predicted the coming of Messiah?*] However, they should have known better! Jesus had wept at His *Triumphal Entry* to Jerusalem, saying “*If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make your peace, but now they are hidden from your eyes.*” (Luke 19:41-42.) From that point on, Pilate sought to release Jesus; but the Jews said to him, “If you let this man go, you are not Caesar’s friend. Whosoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar.” (John 18:28-38, 19:1-24.)

Actually Pilate made six attempts to release Jesus during this trial. He said to the Jews, “*You take Him and judge Him according to your law. Therefore the Jews said to him, it is not lawful for us to put*

anyone to death.” (18:31.) He also had said, ***“I find no fault in Him at all.”*** (18:38) He wanted to release Him. (18:39.) He even tried to satisfy ***the Jews by scourging Jesus instead.*** (19:1). ***Pilate even appealed to their pity on Jesus saying, “Behold the man”*** (19:5), and later, ***“Behold your King!”*** (19:14.) But he likely said this because ***he was angry at the Jews for making him condemn Jesus whom he had pronounced innocent.***

Then they led Him to be crucified (John 19:16; Isa. 53:7) - ***it was the 14th of Nisan. And it was Thursday!... But Sunday is coming...”*** ***three days and three nights”*** takes us to Sunday morning.

When Jesus was hung on the Cross, Pilate wrote the title - ***JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS*** to be put on the Cross in the three languages spoken in the area - ***Hebrew, Greek and Latin*** - and placed it above His head in the center of the cross. The Chief priests of the Jews objected and wanted Pilate to change the words to read, ***“He said, I am the King of the Jews.”*** But Pilate refused by saying ***“What I have written, I have written.”*** (19:19-22.) Before Jesus gave up His life, He commended His mother’s care to John, the beloved apostle, indicating that from that moment on John would be her son. (19:25-27.) ***There at the foot of the Cross stood only His beloved John and four women: 1. Mary, the mother of Jesus; 2. Marys’ sister Salome, the mother of John; 3. Mary, the wife of Cleopas, who was a follower and disciple of Jesus,*** (mentioned in Luke 24:18); ***and 4. Mary Magdalene.*** (John 19:25-27.) During the three hours of darkness, from noon till 3:00 PM, Jesus’ suffering for our sins was so horrendous that He cried out with a loud voice, ***“My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”*** (Matt. 27:45-46.) Then, as a final fulfillment of Scriptures, He said, ***“I thirst.”***(John 19:28, Ps. 69:21.) And after receiving the sour wine, He said, ***“It is finished”*** (in Greek: *Tetelestai* = ***“paid in full”***) and ***“He gave up His spirit.”*** (John 19:30.) The moment of His death was the moment of our salvation. (John 1:12; 6:28-29; Eph. 2:8-9; Rom. 10:9-10.) ***We have no capacity to understand why the Creator of the universe - King of Kings and the Lord of Lords - loved the world so much that He became a man, one like us, and by His death paid the penalty of all our sin.*** (John 3:16.) ***“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*** (Rom. 6:23.) **That is amazing - He did all that for you and me!**

“On the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone was taken away from the tomb. Then she ran and came to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and said to them, ‘They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him.’ Peter therefor went out, and the other disciple, and were going to the tomb. So they both ran together, and the other disciple outran Peter and came to the tomb first. And he, stooping down and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying there; yet he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb; and he saw the linen cloths lying there, and the handkerchief that had been around His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded together in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who came to the tomb first, went in also; and he saw and believed. For as yet they did not know the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead.” (John 20:1-9.) [**He had said that “no sign will be given except the sign of the prophet Jonah”, and here it was, the sign of the prophet Jonah! HE IS RISEN! HE IS RISEN INDEED!!**

To review what had taken place before all this, see the Gospel of John, chapter 14, that begins (verses 1-3) by Jesus telling His disciples that ***He is going to go away, but only to prepare a place for His own so that where He is, we can be also.*** It is in this chapter that He, for the first time, tells us to pray in His name (v. 13) and ***He promises to send us the Holy Spirit to teach us and to remind of us what He had said to His disciples, and through them to us.*** Jesus’ prayer (Chapter 17) for Himself and for all of us as believers needs to be part of your reading and even memorizing now. We again

encourage you to read carefully these chapters and verses listed in this letter reminding us what Jesus did for us and what took place during this time of the year about 2000 years ago. We praise the Lord for His love for all of us and that He has forgiven all our sins, and that He is coming soon to take us to His Father's House while the Great Tribulation is ravaging the world. (Matt. 24.)

As we celebrate **God's Gift of Salvation now**, from March 28th through April 4th, let us carefully study at least John's Gospel **chapters 12 through 17**, the most loved of all Scriptures, praising the Lord for the fulfillment of the promises of God found in the Scriptures.

"Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved...For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." (1 Cor. 15:1-4.)

The true saving Gospel is the message that Christ died for our sins, was buried and rose again the third day. We are so thankful that the Lord pulled us from bondage to *another gospel*, "the gospel of Mormonism", to freedom in Him, and to eternal salvation. It scares us even now when we think what we had believed instead of the Truth in the Bible!! Paul warned that even if an angel comes and preaches a different gospel, receiving it and believing it will bring God's curse, not salvation. (Gal. 1:8-9; 2 Cor. 11:4, 13-15.) And it indeed was an angel, even *an angel of light*, who brought the Book of Mormon and "another gospel" to Joseph Smith. The LDS Church's 3rd Article of Faith says that "***all mankind may be saved by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel***". Paul taught that there are ***no laws or ordinances in the Gospel***; and if we believe that "***righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain.***" (Gal. 2:21.) ***We are saved by grace through faith, no works included or needed for salvation. It is the Gift of God.*** You cannot work for it; you cannot buy it – Christ Jesus alone paid for it. He said: Ask and you will receive. If we repent we can have a "Nineveh moment" and be forgiven and saved. ***Now that we are saved, we do the works of God by sharing His gospel because He has saved us and we are loved by Him.*** (Eph. 2:8-10; Rom. 10:9-10; John 6:28-29.) Let us share these "good news" with our friends and relatives that are still believers in the LDS "gospel", and also with all whom we meet in our daily lives. ***Life is short – eternity is endless.***

We are thanking the Lord for your support for our little ministry, and your prayers for us and all who are contacting us in seeking the Truth of God and the Gospel that saves. There are many who have just recently realized that ***there is TRUTH that can be found***, and we are receiving many requests for prayers, and requests for meeting with them. We are blessed when we can share the Lord's Story found in the Bible, and bring joy and hope to their lives they may not even ever had. This "Pandemic" has depressed a lot of people and brought them to the edge of hopelessness. However, when people turn to God of the Bible, they receive joy and hope that only He can give. He knows the future and when we pray and talk to Him, He comforts us for He knows *what is just around the corner!* There is hope!! Faith in God brings optimism to our lives. Winston Churchill had observed, "*Pessimist sees difficulty in every opportunity. The optimist sees opportunity in every difficulty.*" This Pandemic can give us opportunities to tell others about Jesus and why we are safe in His hands regardless of what is going on in the world around us. (Psalm 100.)

Mary, who just about a month ago became our sister in the Lord, is already sharing with others her hope and joy that the Lord has given to her. She had written her request to the Mormon Church to remove her name from their records. She called saying that her name has now been removed! She said that she feels free and happy! She has been reading daily her new NKJV Bible and telling anyone who wants to know why she is so joyous. She called the other day saying that her friend from her

work (also LDS) wants to come and talk to me, and that she also wants a Bible that has not been “tampered with”. We are glad to give her a NKJV. We have some real pretty leather bound Bibles with larger print – and we ordered 6 more. God is good, all the time!

Thank you for praying for Judy, Liz, Marlene, Aira, Mary, Richard, Heber, Al, Sandy, Mark, Virve, Lisa, Scott, Cynthia, Bruce, and James (A new contact, seeking the Lord. He has several health problems too). As you pray using their names, the Lord responds to them according to their needs. He knows every one of them and wants to comfort and heal them and have a relationship with them. We ask that you pray also with us for our friends and relatives who are not yet saved. (1 John 5:14-15.)

I had a huge problem with my computer a week ago. I lost our April newsletter that I had hoped to get mailed a week before Easter to all of you. I had just finished it – all 6 pages, when it just vanished – “went puff”! - I did not have notes to retrieve what I had written. Our grandson had set a back-up file for my newsletters some time ago to save them, but it too vanished, and exactly at the same time. It just could not be found! Dennis had just proof-read it before it disappeared. He said that it was perhaps the best newsletter I have even written! Go figure! Sure - we are in a spiritual war! It makes sense from that viewpoint!– The arch enemy of God and us does that! I have been working “day and night” to re-write it and get this delivered before Easter – maybe just barely.

We will answer letters sent to us with questions on Mormonism next month. I ran out of time and space because of these problems I had. I may need to get a new computer – this one is of 2010...

Happy Resurrection Day!

May our Lord Jesus bless you and yours.

Rauni & Dennis Higley

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A list of few of the prophecies from the Old Testament of what has taken place concerning Jesus’ suffering and death, and their fulfillment reported in the New Testament:

He was innocent but declared guilty – Isaiah 53:9 – Luke 23:3; **He was sold for 30 pieces of silver** – Zech. 11:12 – Matt. 26:13-15; **He was silent before His accusers** – Isa. 53:7 – Matt. 27:12-14; **He was mocked** – Ps. 22:7-8 – Matt.27:31; **He was beaten** – Isa. 52:14 – Matt. 27:26; **He was spat upon** – Isa. 50:6 – Matt. 27:30; **He was crucified among thieves** – Isa. 53:12 – Matt. 27:3; **His hands and feet and side were pierced** – Ps. 22:16 - Matt. 27:3; Zech. 12:10; - John 19:34; **He prayed for His persecutors** - Isa. 53:12 – Luke 23:34; **He was given gall and vinegar to drink** – Ps. 69:21 – Matt. 27:34; Luke 23:36; **They cast lots for His clothes** – Ps. 22:18 – John 19:23-24; **None of His bones were broken** – Ps. 34:20 – John 19:35-37.

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