

Sunday April 5th
Resurrection Day 2015
The Purpose of God

1). Re 13:8b..... *the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*

a). As we celebrate the day of our Lord's resurrection it is always good for us to remember that His resurrection is not an arbitrary event but rather is central to the fulfillment of God's plans and purposes for the ages.

b). And as we have come to see in our previous weeks of study both His death and His resurrection have the most profound ramifications for Jews, Gentiles and Christians - Col 1:16 *For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.*

c). And therefore as we look to what this day, some 2000 years ago, means for us we can keep our own personal part of this within the proper perspective of God's purpose for the creation of the human race with respect to the 7th Day; and within an even broader context to see these events as part of the process leading towards God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit residing within a new heaven, on a new earth amongst His fully redeemed and now sinless creation with universal rule in view during the endless ages which will follow the Millennial Kingdom. – Re 21:3 *And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.*

2). We will remember the beginning of scripture - Ge 1:1 ¶ *In beginning God created the heavens and the earth. 2 The earth was [became] without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep.*

a). God's material creation, the earth, administered from the heavens connected to the earth, became ruined by the rebellion of Satan.

b). Eze 28:18a *"You defiled your sanctuaries By the multitude of your iniquities, By the iniquity of your trading;*

c). And at some unspecified point following this, the previously ruined creation's restoration took place over a period of six 24 hour days, followed by a seventh 24 hour day of rest.

d). And on the six day of this restoration God created a being entirely unique within His universe, a being made in His own image and likeness from the very dust of the ground that He had caused to rise above the waters covering the earth – Ge 1:26 ¶ *Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."*

And this newly created being was to rule in Satan's place.

e). Heb 2:6 *But one testified in a certain place, saying: "What is man that You are mindful of him, Or the son of man that You take care of him? 7 You have made him a little lower than the angels; You have crowned him with glory and honor, And set him over the works of Your hands. 8 You have put all things in subjection under his feet." For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we do not yet see all things put under him.*

f). Our scripture here in Hebrews give us commentary on that which we see in Genesis Chapter 1 and there are two things we should note about it – Firstly, Man - Adam – was created a little lower than the angels with respect to rulership and therefore had to be proven worthy to be exalted to a position to replace them. And secondly - from God's perspective this is already set in place, but the realization of it remains yet future at the completion of the present six days, 6000 years of work – 2Pe 3:8 ¶ *But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*

3). Man as a complete being, through the deceitfulness of Satan in the Garden, sinned. And as a result all three parts of Man's being – his spirit, soul and body were affected. His spirit died, his soul became corrupted and his body started to decay.

a). Because of this Man became separated from the purpose for his creation, and this separation is passed on, through Adam, to all subsequent generations - 1Co 15:22a *For as in Adam all die,*
Ge 5:3 *And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth.*

b). Now, as we have already noted, it is God's unalterable plan that Man should be redeemed from this fallen state so as to fulfill the purpose for which he was created, hence the promised seed of the Woman - Ge 3:15 *And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel."*

c). This redemption, through the work of the promised Redeemer, will address all 3 parts of fallen Man as well as all 3 parts of God's division of Mankind, Jew, Gentile and Christian.

4). The foundation that scripture sets in place with regards to redemption in Genesis Chapter 1 shows clearly a definite process - a sovereign act of God on the first day that brings light to where previously there was only darkness, followed by a continuing work of the Holy Spirit over another five days.

a). The sovereign act of God that begins the process of Man's total redemption is pictured in Day 1 where 'light' is brought into his 'darkness', and this process of restoration, involves death and shed blood – thereby making that which was dead alive – Ge 2:7 *And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.*

Ge 3:21 ¶ *Also for Adam and his wife the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.*

b). 1Co 5:7b *For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.*

c). Joh 5:24 *"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.*

d). The continuing work of the Holy Spirit beyond this point for the purpose of man's total redemption, pictured in the remaining 5 days in Genesis Chapter 1, has to do with Man, each of us, choosing to be led by the Spirit – being faithfully obedient to that which God has said - Ro 8:14 *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.*

e). This process brings those who choose faithful obedience to the focal point of the Holy Spirit's work amongst Christians – the 7th Day, the Day of Rest - Heb 4:1 ¶ *Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it.*

5). Just as God began to work through one man, Adam, so He again chose to work through one man, Abraham, in order to fulfill His purpose, foreshadowed in God singling out Shem 9 generations beforehand, and in Abraham we also see the same process towards total redemption.

a). Although the actual point of Abraham's eternal salvation is not recorded in scripture, his action of leaving Ur of the Chaldeas, by faith, is proof positive of his already having passed from death into life – Heb 11:8 *By faith Abraham obeyed*

when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.

And here we can see Abraham being led by the Spirit to a specific location for the purpose of receiving an inheritance.

b). And it is as a result of Abraham's progress toward faithful obedience that he receives the promises of God with regards to his inheritance, which includes both realms of God's Kingdom – the heavens and the earth – Ge 22:17 *"blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. 18 **"In your seed** all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."*

c). We can see here that it is through Abraham's 'seed' that the promises of God will be fulfilled.

d). And this is particularly significant because of God's own commentary on the offering of Isaac, Abraham's 'seed', as a sacrifice on Mount Moriah – Heb 11:17 *By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, 18 of whom it was said, **"In Isaac your seed shall be called,"** 19 concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.*

e). And here we see the direct connection between being raised from the dead and receiving the promises of God.

f). From God's perspective Isaac, the firstborn of the freewoman, died that day on Mount Moriah, only God accepted the death of the ram caught in the thicket in Isaac's place. So Isaac, having died vicariously, is figuratively raised from the dead in order to receive the promises – something that must ultimately also be true for eternally saved Jews, Gentiles and Christians.

6). And we see this same thing again in respect of those who are the 'seed' of Abraham, through Isaac and Jacob – the nation of Israel.

a). Israel's eternal redemption is wrought by a sovereign act of God on the night of the first Passover through the death of a substitute, the Passover lambs, in place of the firstborn - Ex 12:12 *'For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. 13 'Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.*

b). The death of the firstborn related not just to Egypt, but also to individuals within Israel, and specifically to the nation of Israel as a single entity, whom God had adopted as His firstborn son - Ex 4:22 *"Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the LORD: 'Israel is My son, My firstborn.*

c). The adopted firstborn son, Israel, having died vicariously that night, just like Isaac, was then buried in the place of death three days out from Egypt – pictured in passing through the Red Sea – to be raised to newness of life on the eastern shore. They were figuratively resurrected in order to be led by the Spirit to a specific location to receive the inheritance promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob Ex 6:8 *'And I will bring you into the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and I will give it to you as a heritage: I am the LORD.'*

d). Having been raised from the dead, in a figurative sense, it is then, and only then, that God makes conditional promises concerning the land and the inheritance - Ex 19:4 *'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself. 5 'Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. 6 'And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.'*

e). De 26:1 ¶ *"And it shall be, when you come into the land which the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance, and you possess it and dwell in it,*

f). Now the conditional promises we see in our Exodus scripture relate to the earthly portion of the Kingdom. But as we know God's promises to Abraham included the heavens and the earth and it is only the seed of Abraham who could receive these promises.

g). Hence, when the time had fully come we have Christ's earthly ministry, where the One who is the only begotten Son of God, the One appointed heir of all things, the One for Whom all things were made comes to His own things – the throne of David and the scepter of regality, offering the Kingdom of the Heavens to the nation of Israel – if the nation as a whole would repent from their history of disobedience and unfaithfulness, born out of unbelief.

h). Mt 4:17 *From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."*

i). Lu 4:43 *but He said to them, "I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent."*

j). The nation of Israel though, as we have also seen, led by their religious leaders, rejected both the message of the Kingdom of the Heavens and the messenger who brought it - Mt 23:13 ¶ *"But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees,*

hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in.

k). As a result of this the Kingdom of the Heavens was subsequently taken from Israel to be given to a new nation - Mt 21:43 *"Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it.*

l). And it is from this point on that Christ's death and resurrection take center stage - Mt 16:21 ¶ *From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.*

7). Those who would make up this new nation, the church, the one new man, would come predominantly from the Gentile nations - Ac 15:14 *"Simon has declared how God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name.*

a). And for Gentiles to be part of this new nation they would have to be of the seed of Abraham as the promises God made can be received by no one else. For this to be possible the eternally redeemed from both Jews and Gentiles find themselves 'in Christ', who is the 'Seed' of Abraham – Ga 3:29 *And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

b). Now for all those who are born 'dead in trespasses and sins', whether Jew or Gentile, to pass from death into life, so as to be part of the new nation, the one new man 'in Christ', there had first to be a sovereign act of God involving death and shed blood.

c). The sacrificial system of animals, and particularly the Passover lambs, was given to Israel alone and with the death of Christ this system was no longer efficacious.

d). So the death of the Lamb of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, the One to whom the animal sacrifices pointed was preordained to provide the means of eternal redemption for those who would make up the one new man in Christ as well Gentiles who would be saved during the Tribulation and the Jews coming out of the Tribulation.

e). Christ is God's only begotten firstborn Son. And in His death we have the death of the firstborn – the price of redemption.

f). Christ is also the substitute who dies in our place that our first birth may be set aside and our second birth, the birth from above come into view - 1Co 5:7b...*For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.*

g). Ro 6:10 *For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all;*

h). When God looks down on the one who has believed on Christ, just as with Israel in Exodus, He sees the blood of His Son and is satisfied. With regards to eternal redemption there is nothing more to be done. It is Christ's death and shed blood that brings this to pass – and this is the beginning and the end - Joh 19:30 *So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.*

i). There is a finality in the use of the word 'finished' here that makes plain to us that everything necessary for eternal salvation has been completed and nothing more needs ever to be added to it.

8). However, as we have already seen, the fulfillment of God's purpose for Man with regards to inheritance and rulership is inseparably connected with resurrection, not death – although obviously death must precede it.

a). Without Christ's resurrection it would not be possible for us to come from the place of death – it would not be possible for us to be led by the Spirit towards our inheritance – there would be no Millennial Kingdom – and God would be a liar - 1Co 15:13 *But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. 14 And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty. 15 Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up--if in fact the dead do not rise. 16 For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. 17 And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! 18 Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. 19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.*

1Pe 1:3 ¶ *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.....17 And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear; 18 knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. 20 He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you 21 who through Him believe in God, who*

raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

b). So with all this in mind let's be encouraged today - our Lord is risen from the dead and is seated at the right hand of the Father until He makes His enemies His footstool. And if we have become companions of His death by choosing to put to death the deeds of our flesh then we shall also be companions of His resurrection - Ro 6:8 *Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, 9 knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. 10 For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. 11 Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Php 3:10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, 11 if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. 12 Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. 13 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, 14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. 15 ¶ Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you.

c). Because of His resurrection we are able to choose to keep our old man in the place of death, we are able to choose to walk in newness of life, we are able to choose to be led by the Spirit – through faithful obedience – to our inheritance in that heavenly land.

d). And to come back to our beginning point this morning – this is all about God's plans and purposes with respect to His Son and rulership – all made possible by the events of the third day in Jerusalem some 2000 years ago, pointing to the Third Day yet to come – Heb 2:10 ¶ *For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.*

b). It is on the 3rd day in Genesis Chapter 1 that the dry land appears from under the water – the very substance from which Man is made for the purpose of rulership, giving us our foundational picture of resurrection by the power of the Holy Spirit.

c). It is on the 3rd day that Abraham sees the place from afar off –

Joh 8:56 *"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad."*

d). On the 3rd day that Israel passes through the Red Sea foreshadowing that future third day when restored Israel will be led by Christ back to the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

e). On the 3rd day that Lazarus is raised foreshadowing the resurrection of the OT saints and Israel's passing from death to life.

f). And on the 3rd day from the cross, which is also the 7th Day from Adam, that those who will be the Bride will experience the out resurrection from the dead in order to rule and reign with Him in that 7th Day, just as God has always intended.

g). And on that same 3rd day that faithful, eternally saved Gentiles from the Tribulation, will enter into the Kingdom with Christ.

h). Christ is risen indeed and His Kingdom shall reign over all the earth, but what about us? Where will we be on the 3rd Day?

i). Let's remember - Ga 3:9 *So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.*

Only those who are of the faith will be blessed with believing Abraham.

j). And so as we consider how incredible is God's purpose for Man, made certain through the death and resurrection of Christ, let's remember that the enormity of Christ's accomplishment is only valid for us as an individual if we daily walk in the power of His resurrection.

k). The 3rd Day is almost at hand, our upward call is imminent – please be ready.