

The Essence of Easter Celebration

(Part 1)

¹ When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body. ² Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb ³ and they asked each other, "Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?" ⁴ But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away. ⁵ As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed. ⁶ "Don't be alarmed," he said. "You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. ⁷ But go, tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.'" ⁸ Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid." (Mark 16:1-8)

Jesus died on the cross for our sins to give us eternal life. He was buried on Friday, then on Saturday (Sabbath) according to the Jewish tradition no one should do any work. Therefore *Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise* and that is Sunday *Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body*, that also is part of the Jewish tradition. The women they planned to go to the tomb and anoint Jesus body and sure they will cry and shed tear for His death, that all will go according to the tradition that they belong. But there is something else God had planned that will change the prospect of this day and the way we look at it and the way we live our lives unto God.

The women got disappointed when they did not found Jesus' body, but this is the good news for them, for everyone, and for us today: *'He has risen! He is not here.'* Great is our joy with such news and now we have hope in reaching God and spent eternity with Him. And today as we cherish that day the day that Jesus rose from the dead and we got the hope and the blossom future we need to respond favourably and positively to this day.

1- Jesus resurrection from the death it should not be only one day Celebration: Everyday we should cherish this occasion and what Jesus had done for us. We should always live in hope looking forward that one day we will be in heaven with Jesus forever.

2- Jesus resurrection from the death it should not be celebrated in a traditional way: At that time the women went with spices to anoint His body. Today people they celebrate Easter in different ways, some they cook boiled eggs and colour them, some they worship early Sunday morning cherishing that Jesus rose from the death early Sunday morning the first day of the week. But what the Scripture teach us how to respond to Jesus resurrection? The young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side told the women the following: *'But go, tell his disciples and Peter.'* Jesus wanted the women to go and tell the encouraging good news of His resurrection to His disciples who were disappointed with His death. But what was the initial response of the women to the command of the Lord? *"Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid."* They responded negatively to the news of the resurrection; they did not celebrate that as it should be. They were at the turning point to leave their Jewish

tradition and follow Christ and live their lives according to His Word. The early manuscript of the Gospel Mark was ended by Mark 16:8, but later on Mark 16:9-20 was added. It is not God's will to be introvert and aloof to the good news that we hear about Jesus resurrection, we have to tell others about that.

3- The Essence of Easter celebration is to be transformed and respond to the call of God and to go and tell others about Jesus: *"When Jesus rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had driven seven demons. ¹⁰ She went and told those who had been with him and who were mourning and weeping."* (Mark 16:9-10) Jesus had done great deal to Mary Magdalene; He had delivered her from seven demons, so she needs to be faithful to Him by telling others about the good news. The same for you, Jesus had done great things for you and had delivered you from sin and death and the power of darkness. Therefore you ought to respond to His goodness to you to go and tell those who are mourning and weeping and comfort them.

4- Non responding to the message of the resurrection and the Word of God and the commands of Jesus is a sign of non believe: When the Mary Magdalene told those who were with Jesus about His resurrection, *"When they heard that Jesus was alive and that she had seen him, they did not believe it."* (Mark 16:11) In response to these news events Jesus would not leave His disciples in their non believe, therefore He did the following: *"Afterward Jesus appeared in a different form to two of them while they were walking in the country."* (Mark 16:12) When they saw the Lord they believed. But what was the sign of their believe? They went and told others about Jesus: *"These returned and reported it to the rest; but they did not believe them either."* (Mark 16:13) So what we found here that when we really believe that Jesus rose from the death then the sign of our believe that we go and tell others about Him. We have to do our part; we have to go and tell others about Him, this is our part. If they will not believe then Jesus will go to them and will reveal Himself to them.

5- Faith without deeds is dead: The rest of the disciples who did not believe Jesus did the following to them: *"Later Jesus appeared to the Eleven as they were eating; he rebuked them for their lack of faith and their stubborn refusal to believe those who had seen him after he had risen."* (Mark 16:14) Jesus rebuked them for their non believe and their refusal to carry the good news to others. Jesus would rebuke us also for our non believe to the good news and our refusal to show our faith and translate that into action. If you truly believe that Jesus died for your sins and had done great things for you and had risen from the death. Then your respond to all that is to be changed and transformed and conformed to the likeness that Jesus wants you to be, and to carry the good news to those who needs comfort and to those who did not yet hear about Jesus and His resurrection

My Dear and Beloved: *"Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will."* (Romans 12:2) Our Easter celebration it should not be in a traditional and one day only, but a life transforming process where we are willing to respond to God's call and His word to us by repenting from our sins and dedicating our lives fully to serve God and walk in His ways and go and tell others about Him as we agree to pray.

My prayer: *Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the cross for my sins and rose from the dead on the third day to give me eternal life. Lord I commit myself to be transformed and living Easter celebration everyday of my life by living not in a worldly way, and being transformed and go and tells other about You and Your Word and promises, this all I ask and pray in Jesus name Amen.*