

# A New Creation Has Begun, Indeed!

God will create a New Heavens and a New Earth. The old heavens will be rolled up like a scroll (Isaiah 34:4; Revelation 6:14) and taken away. Jesus had to die on the cross and rise from the dead, before that could begin to take place. His resurrection shows that it has already begun.

When Jesus rose from the dead, His resurrection inaugurated a New Creation. "He is the beginning" (Colossians 1:18) of that New Creation. Jesus' resurrection made Him the first human being to die and then to be "born" into the New Creation. His dead body was like a seed that became something new and different from His previous physical body (1 Corinthians 15:37&38). He was the Creator of this heavens and earth (Colossians 1:16), and He is also the "firstborn" of the New Heavens and the New Earth (Colossians 1:18). That New Creation has not yet fully come into existence. But when it does fully arrive, "in everything" Jesus Christ will "be preeminent" (Colossians 1:18) "On his robe" will be "written, King of Kings and Lord of Lords" (Revelation 19:16).

Perhaps you never thought of Resurrection Sunday as the beginning of the New Heavens and New Earth. Yet, it marks the beginning of a whole New World, where "the wolf and the lion will graze together" (Isaiah 11:6 & 65:25). "Swords" will be "beaten into pruning hooks" (Isaiah 2:4). God, Himself, "will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things [will have] passed away" Revelation 21:4 (ESV). It began with Jesus' resurrection. It will come in its fullness when He returns.

Like Jesus' disciples, you may ask, "Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of [Jesus'] coming and of the end of the age?" (Matt. 24:3 ESV; see also Mark 13:4 and Luke 21:7). Jesus' answer was, "Concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only" (Matt. 24:36 ESV). We would like to know, but we will have to wait. Until it is happening, we cannot know.

In the future, this heaven and earth will pass away (Psalm 102:25-28; Isaiah 24:19-23; Matthew 5:18; 24:35; Mark 13:31; Luke 21:33; 2 Peter 3:7, 10, 12; Revelation 21:1). But until then, the powers of evil are at war in this current creation. The "adversary" known as "the devil prowls around looking for someone to devour" (1 Peter 5:8). At the very beginning of His earthly ministry Jesus entered into battle with the devil. In fact, "Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil" (Matt. 4:1 NAS). This was not a time of Jesus retreating from the devil. The Holy Spirit led Jesus into battle against the devil, to defeat the devil. Three times the devil tried to persuade Jesus to forsake His mission, and surrender. All three times Jesus did not surrender but was victorious, and the devil was the one who was defeated. From that point forward Jesus drove out evil spirits whenever He encountered them, repeatedly showing that He had power to command and defeat them. When the power of the devil held the hearts of political and religious leaders, Jesus repeatedly revealed their foolishness. In the end, they played into Jesus' hand. They thought they could defeat Jesus by killing Him on a cross but He still had a mission to complete.

Hidden deep in God's plan for Jesus' mission to save the world, was a mystery, a truth known to God, but not known to men. God had been providing hints of what He was going to do throughout the centuries before Jesus came.

Long, long before Jesus came to earth, God told Adam and Eve that a descendant of Eve's would crush the head of a descendant of the serpent (Genesis 3:15). That was a pretty mysterious statement! But, in fact, Jesus, a descendant of Eve, was crucified on the cross by those under the devil's influence, descendants of the serpent. On Friday, the devil must have considered himself victorious. Surely, he thought, he had crushed Jesus, once and for all. But on Sunday, Jesus rose from the dead! The devil had not considered that the author of life might not stay dead when He was crucified. It was the serpent's head that was crushed, and only the heel of Jesus was wounded. Jesus arose!

For those of us who believe in Jesus' resurrection, and put our faith in Him as Savior, should consider the words of Paul: "<sup>12</sup>The night is almost gone, and the day is at hand. Let us therefore lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light" (Rom. 13:12-14 NAS). When we die with Christ and rise to new life in Christ (Romans 6:3-4), we must recognize that we are no longer to live a life of sinfulness. We must live as Jesus lived. And as He taught His disciples to live: "Seek first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness" (Matthew 6:33)

Jesus Christ is risen! All who receive Him as Savior will live with Him forever (John 6:51&58; 1 Timothy 6:12; Titus 3:7; 1 John 1:1-3; 1 John 2:25; 1 John 5:11&12).

## Jesus Christ is risen indeed!

crucified cloths Magdalene Jesus first Peter early tale seemed spices hands stood looking two apparel mother day prepared Galilee Lord not seek Joanna when week Son other delivered words ground here here Man told Mary faces rose James perplexed rise third stone women how happened stooping home behold Now ran idle dawn Now returning find still rest away frightened found

Luke 24:1–12 (ESV)

# The Resurrection

**24** But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared. <sup>2</sup> And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, <sup>3</sup> but when they went in they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. <sup>4</sup> While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel. <sup>5</sup> And as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, “Why do you seek the living among the dead? <sup>6</sup> He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, <sup>7</sup> that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise.” <sup>8</sup> And they remembered his words, <sup>9</sup> and returning from the tomb they told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. <sup>10</sup> Now it was Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James and the other women with them who told these things to the apostles, <sup>11</sup> but these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. <sup>12</sup> But Peter rose and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; and he went home marveling at what had happened.

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