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# activated

Vol 26 • Issue 4



## HEAVEN

Our eternal hope

## The Search for Mary Magdalene

She saw the risen  
Savior

## The Chocolate Filling

The promise of  
heaven



## PERSONALLY SPEAKING EASTER BRINGS THE HOPE OF HEAVEN

Christians all over the world will be celebrating Easter this month. Depending on your country and culture, there are a variety of celebrations that range from family gatherings to religious ceremonies. In some countries it is a tradition to join a procession that reenacts the steps toward the crucifixion. In other countries, people attend sunrise service on Easter Sunday to celebrate the resurrection. Recently, many families have made it a practice to gather around their favorite movie about the life of Jesus. Wherever you are from, and whatever your Easter traditions, we recommend taking time apart to read the accounts of Jesus' betrayal, crucifixion, and joyous resurrection found in any one of the Gospels. (See [Matthew 26–28](#); [Mark 14–16](#); [Luke 22–24](#); [John 18–21](#).)

This month's *Activated* magazine will celebrate Easter by celebrating heaven! What makes us think of heaven at Easter? The fact that Christ defeated death through His crucifixion and triumphant resurrection! From the time of the earliest dated book in the Old Testament, the book of Job, people have looked forward to the coming of a Savior and have held onto the hope of heaven. [Job 19:25–27](#). (TLB) reads:

As for me, I know that my Redeemer lives, and that he will stand upon the earth at last.

And I know that after this body has decayed, this body shall see God!

Then he will be on *my* side! Yes, I shall see him, not as a stranger, but as a friend!

What a glorious hope!

Yes, heaven and our reunion with Christ is our glorious hope and future, as Jesus promised His disciples, “Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live” ([John 14:19](#)).

The articles this month will surely nourish your faith and encourage your heart as you read the many promises that point towards eternity—the eternity that begins when we open our hearts to Jesus, as explained in the feature article, “Heaven: Our Eternal Hope,” on pages 4–6.

In this Easter edition we include an article by Ruth Davidson, a beautiful account of the history of Mary Magdalene, who was the first person to see Jesus on the morning of the resurrection. May we all have a blessed Easter as we contemplate the ultimate sacrifice, the cross, and the ultimate victory, the resurrection.

Gabriel and Sally García  
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# The Chocolate Filling

By AMY JOY MIZRANY

**MY FRIEND AND I STOOD AT THE PASTRY STALL, DEBATING OUR CHOICES.**

“I’d really like to get the chocolate croissant, but only if it has the chocolate filling!”

“I think it does,” I said.

We attempted to examine the croissants, but there was no way to tell from the outside whether there was that lovely, gooey chocolate hidden in the pastries’ folds.

“Are you sure it has it?”

“Well, yes. I’ve bought from this store before, and that croissant has always had a chocolate center.”

With that, my friend and I each bought one, and when we bit into them, we were delighted to find the sweet chocolate center there as we had hoped. I believed that the croissant would have its delicious filling because I had tried it before and found it to be true.

To me, heaven can be compared to that hidden chocolate center. Based on what we can *see*, we cannot be *sure* that it’s there. So, how can we know with absolute certainty that heaven is real?

Well, heaven is promised in God’s Word. “Because Jesus was raised from the dead, we’ve been given a brand-new life and have everything to live for, including a future in heaven—and the future starts now! God is keeping careful watch over us and the future. The Day is coming when you’ll have it all—life healed and whole” (1 Peter 1:3–5 MSG).

Heaven is our incorruptible inheritance, a place where there will be no more tears, death, crying or pain (Revelation 21:4). I can’t see heaven yet, but I have seen the fulfillment of many of God’s *other* promises.

His mercies never end, they are new every morning (Lamentations 3:22–23). He gives me hope and a future (Jeremiah 29:11). He’s given me peace (Philippians 4:7). He’s never forsaken me (Hebrews 13:5). Those are some of the promises in God’s Word that I’ve seen Him fulfill, and there are many more.

I believe that I will experience eternal life with Jesus in heaven, a place beyond my wildest imaginations (1 Corinthians 2:9), because I have already experienced the fulfillment of God’s *other* promises. He has proven to be always true to His Word. Every single word that the Lord has promised has been fulfilled (Joshua 23:14).

Heaven is promised to all who believe in and receive Jesus. God has never failed to keep His promises, and we can be sure that He never will.

AMY JOY MIZRANY WAS BORN AND LIVES IN SOUTH AFRICA, WHERE SHE IS A FULL-TIME MISSIONARY WITH HELPING HAND AND A MEMBER OF THE FAMILY INTERNATIONAL. IN HER SPARE TIME, SHE PLAYS THE VIOLIN. ■



# HEAVEN: OUR ETERNAL HOPE

**SOMETIMES THE SORROWS, SETBACKS, AND DISAPPOINTMENTS OF THIS LIFE CAN WEIGH ON OUR HEARTS.** When things don't work out, or when we suffer personal challenges or losses, or we see the human suffering in the world around us, the strain of it all can lead us to wonder if what we do makes a difference. Is it possible to bring about change in a world where there is war, poverty, injustice, evil, greed, and oppression?

When we consider the problems of this world, the outlook may not seem very promising. But at such times, we can find comfort in God's Word and His promises of a better world to come. "Weeping may endure for a night," the Bible says, "but joy comes in the morning" (Psalm 30:5 NKJV). For those who love God, the glorious morning of heaven will come after the shadows and the night of this life.

All the disappointments, broken dreams, and dark experiences of this life will be left behind and overcome

when the glorious dawn of heaven comes. The Bible promises that "the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing to the glory that is to be revealed in us" (Romans 8:18). In the book of Revelation, we read that God "will wipe away every tear from our eyes," and "neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away" (Revelation 21:4). There will be no more tears or suffering, no more death or sorrow.

As Jesus prepared His disciples for His imminent death and departure, He said, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also" (John 14:2-3). According to the description in Revelation chapters 21 and 22, heaven—the home

of Christians of all ages—is breathtakingly beautiful, majestic, and stupendous. The streets of heaven are described as made of gold, and within its shimmering gates of pearl there is no need of a lamp or a sun, because God Himself is the light (Revelation 22:5).

Can you visualize a world with no more death, pain, fear, sorrow, or sickness—a society where everybody works together in harmony, cooperation, and love? Such a marvelous place is almost beyond our capacity to imagine. The Bible says, “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of men the wonders that God has prepared for those who love Him” (1 Corinthians 2:9 NKJV).

One of the most outstanding differences between the earth life and heaven is that heaven is a perfect realm, a place filled with God’s presence. In heaven we will enjoy the beauty and wonders that we have here on earth, but without the sorrow, pain, emptiness, loneliness, and fear that so often grip us, and without the selfishness, greed, hate, and destruction that we see in the world around us.

God’s kingdom will be filled with love, beauty, peace, joy, and compassion. But most of all, it will be enveloped in the love of the one who loves us more than anyone—God Himself. The Bible tells us that God *is* love (1 John 4:8). Therefore His home, the kingdom of heaven, is a home of love, where there will be no more sorrow, rejection, grief, loss, or loneliness (Revelation 21:4).

Contemplating the hope that we have in heaven and visualizing what we have to look forward to helps us to remember that the trials and tribulations of this present life are not worth comparing to the glory that has been promised to us in Christ Jesus. This is one reason why Moses could endure all that he did, because “he was looking [ahead] to the reward. He endured as seeing Him who is invisible” (Hebrews 11:26–27). He could persevere through the difficulties he faced by keeping his eyes fixed on the glorious future promised by God.

All the great men and women of faith of the Old Testament named in Hebrews 11 counted themselves as pilgrims and strangers in this world because they were looking for a city whose builder and designer is God, and a country that would belong to them. They were able to endure all kinds of tribulation and challenges on this earth and even persecution and death because they looked forward to that city (Hebrews 11:10–16).

Many people seem to believe that God’s kingdom will only become a reality when they die, but Jesus said, “The coming of the kingdom of God is not something that can be observed, because the kingdom of God is in your midst. The kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel” (Luke 17:20–21 NIV; Mark 1:15). We don’t have to wait till we die to enter the kingdom of God. In fact, if you have received Jesus as your Savior, His kingdom is within you.

We who know and love God and have His Spirit dwelling in us are already experiencing the kingdom of heaven and are working to bring His kingdom to others. But this is only a foretaste of our inheritance in heaven. God's Word tells us, "When you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in Him, you were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of His glory" (Ephesians 1:13–14).

To enter His spiritual kingdom, Jesus said that we must be born again: "Unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). We cannot save ourselves by our own works, our own goodness, our own attempts to keep His laws and to love Him, or even our own endeavors to find and follow His truth. Salvation is a gift of God performed by a miraculous transformation of our lives when we believe in Christ and His resurrection and receive Him as our Lord and Savior. "To all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:12).

Jesus opened the door to eternal life in His kingdom for each of us through His death on the cross. His love is so far beyond anything that we can understand or see with our eyes here on earth. His love can fill any emptiness and heal any pain or hurt. God's love can bring joy where there was sorrow, laughter where there was pain, and fulfillment where there was a lack of purpose or meaning.

Once we enter God's kingdom, He commissions us to share the good news with others, so that they can also experience His joy and salvation in their lives—both in this life and in the next one. When we invest our time and resources in that which has eternal value—God's kingdom and His righteousness (Matthew 6:33)—we are storing up treasures in heaven that will endure forever. "And where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6:20–21).

”

If you haven't yet received Jesus as your Savior, you can do so by praying this prayer:

*Jesus, I believe that You are the Son of God and that You died for me and rose from the dead. Please forgive me for all my sins. I invite You to come into my heart and life. Please fill me with Your love and Holy Spirit, and grant me Your gift of eternal life. Amen.*

ADAPTED FROM AN ARTICLE IN TREASURES,  
PUBLISHED BY THE FAMILY INTERNATIONAL. ■





WHEN MY YOUNGEST SON WAS 14 YEARS OLD, HE JOINED A CHRISTIAN YOUTH GROUP AND BIBLE STUDY IN PREPARATION FOR BAPTISM.

At the end of the class, the pastor asked the students how they could be sure that they were saved. There was silence. Then my son simply said: “Because the Bible tells me so!”

Later, the pastor told me of his answer and said, “I have taught these classes for many years and very few people have answered that question so correctly!” I felt proud of my son, but at the same time, I felt sad that the subject of the salvation of our souls is misunderstood by so many.

I grew up in a Christian family. I knew the Ten Commandments, some gospel stories, and many traditional prayers by heart, but still no one had told me how

# HOW CAN WE KNOW WE ARE SAVED?

BY ROSANE CORDOBA

I could be forgiven of all my sins and have the assurance that I would go to heaven when I die.

When I was 18 years old, I said a simple prayer to receive Jesus in my heart and saw a big change in my life. I started to feel more peace and joy, I was delivered from a drug vice, and I felt God’s presence much closer than before. But I only connected the dots between this change and my prayer for salvation when someone gave me a New Testament and I read the Gospels.

The Bible says: “If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved” (Romans 10:9). As the children’s song goes: “Jesus loves me! This I know, for the Bible tells me so. Little ones to Him belong; they are weak, but He is strong.” We are indeed too weak to face life, with its ups and downs, all by ourselves, but with Jesus in our hearts, we have wonderful strength and peace from above, and a guiding light for our path.

A friend of mine, after receiving Jesus as his Savior, had a dream where many voices were speaking different opinions and philosophies, but then another voice

started to speak, while the other voices began to fade away. This voice, which he understood was Jesus, said: “From now on, you will serve Me all the days of your life.” After this dream, he dedicated his life to Jesus.

Some people have supernatural experiences like this one, others don’t, but as the Bible says, if you receive Jesus in your heart and accept Him as your Savior, you will have eternal life (John 3:16). Salvation is a gift of God to each one of us.

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A close-up photograph of a person's face, focusing on their right eye which is a striking green color. The person has dark hair and is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of their skin and the intensity of their eye.

# THE HOPE OF HEAVEN IN TIMES OF PAIN

BY G.L. ELLENS

**WHEN I RECEIVED THE EMAIL SAYING MY BROTHER JOHN HAD DIED SUDDENLY OF A HEART ATTACK, I WAS SHOCKED AND DEVASTATED.** John was just 50—too young to leave this earth, I thought, especially since we had recently been talking about reuniting after 15 years apart.

The thought of never seeing John again in this life was overwhelming. My heart ached. Then, I remembered a song John loved to sing:

Heaven is here,  
Is here right now.  
Heaven is here,  
And I'll tell you how:  
Jesus to know,  
Is heaven below.  
Heaven is here,  
Is here right now!

John lived that song. His belief in Jesus sustained him throughout his life. He was devoted to helping others, even serving as a volunteer teacher on an Indian reservation in North Dakota. Unfortunately, that experience led him to a dark place where he became an alcoholic. Yet, John found strength in Jesus and celebrated ten years of sobriety. Then came another challenge: a diagnosis of severe bipolar disorder, requiring anti-psychotic medication.

And now, this—a heart attack at 50! John didn't show up at work one day, and a concerned friend went to check on him, finding him lying on the kitchen floor. He had apparently suffered a massive heart attack that took his life instantly. In my grief, I found comfort in knowing that John was now in heaven with the Lord.

Jesus, who lived as a human on earth, taught His disciples to pray, "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10). Heaven is a



place believers look forward to—a place where there are no tears, no pain, no death (Revelation 21:4). Everything that is wrong with this world will be made right there, as we will be united with Jesus and live in loving union with Him and each other.

Jesus taught us to bring a bit of heaven to earth because the qualities of heaven—peace, love, and justice—are good for us now, not just in eternity. God’s desire is for heaven to begin here and now. Jesus’ words to His disciples were, “The kingdom of heaven has come near.” He instructed them to heal the sick, raise the dead, and drive out demons, reminding them, “Freely you have received; freely give” (Matthew 10:7–8 NIV). This message is still relevant for us today.

Heaven is an eternal reality after we die, but it is also a present reality. This isn’t about pretending the world is perfect or problem-free. It’s about acknowledging the brokenness around us and becoming part of God’s plan to bring healing and hope. We bring heaven to earth by helping people meet Jesus and walk with Him daily. Jesus embodied God’s priorities by loving unconditionally, forgiving generously, and loving the Father with all His heart (Mark 12:30–31). He invites us to do the same.

Thinking about John, Jesus, and heaven brought me comfort and peace. I dried my tears and slept well that night. The next morning, as I stepped into my backyard, I saw something that took my breath away: the two uppermost branches of the largest tree had intertwined, forming the shape of a heart. It reminded me of God’s heart of love. I felt a deep peace overflow my heart, knowing that John is in heaven, wrapped in God’s love.

G.L. ELLENS WAS A MISSIONARY AND SCHOOLTEACHER IN SOUTHEAST ASIA FOR OVER 25 YEARS. ALTHOUGH RETIRED, SHE REMAINS ACTIVE IN VOLUNTEER WORK, AS WELL AS PURSUING HER INTEREST IN WRITING. ■



## THE BEST IS YET TO COME

Some day you will read in the papers that D.L. Moody, of East Northfield, is dead. Don’t you believe a word of it. At that moment I shall be more alive than I am now. I shall have gone up higher, that is all; out of this old clay tenement into a house that is immortal, a body that death cannot touch.—*Dwight L. Moody, American evangelist (1837–1899)*

Heaven in all its glory could be summed up in one word: Christ. He is the light of creation, the joy of all life, and above all, the deepest love of our souls. To embrace Him is to embrace the meaning of life and the eternal power of God.—*Bettie J. Eadie, near-death survivor and author of “Embraced by the Light”*

Leave behind what is simply good in exchange for the eternal.—*Spanish proverb*

Death is no more than passing from one room into another. But there’s a difference for me, you know. Because in that other room I shall be able to see.—*Helen Keller, American author and activist, blind and deaf from infancy (1880–1968)*

The joys of heaven will surely compensate for the sorrows of earth. Death is but a narrow stream, and thou shalt soon have forded it. Time, how short—eternity, how long! Death, how brief—immortality, how endless!—*Charles Spurgeon, English preacher and author (1834–1892)*



# THE SEARCH FOR MARY MAGDALENE

BY RUTH DAVIDSON

FOR CENTURIES, WE'VE HEARD DOZENS OF VARYING STORIES AND INTERPRETATIONS OF MARY MAGDALENE (also called Mary of Magdala), one of the leading female figures in the New Testament. Among the women mentioned in the Bible, she was one of the most controversial.

From my earliest recollections of Mary Magdalene, she was indelibly labeled as the infamous prostitute, delivered of seven devils. However, as I began studying the gospel accounts, I found that neither Matthew nor John mention anything about her having demons or being demoralized and tarnished. They focus instead on her undying loyalty to the Savior.

Mary Magdalene stands apart as one who was present at the foot of the cross when Jesus was crucified. She was also there, sitting opposite the tomb at the burial of Jesus, and was the first to see Him following His resurrection. Mary was then commissioned by Jesus to tell the other disciples about His resurrection.

The life of this Galilean woman of Magdala is without a doubt shrouded in mystery. Little is written about her. In all four of the gospel accounts, Mary is mentioned along with several women who followed Jesus and ministered to Him when He was in Galilee, and they came up with Him to Jerusalem.

From the very first time Mary heard Jesus speak, she was so deeply moved that she sought to hear more of His life-giving words of truth that were different from anything she had ever heard before.

After Mary's conversion, her devotion to Jesus was so great that she dedicated her entire life to serving Him. She was among those who followed Jesus as He carried His cross to Calvary. As they approached Golgotha, there were few who stood close by at the foot of the cross. Those mentioned were Mary, the Lord's mother; John the



## PARADOX

Jesus had no servants,  
yet they called Him Master.  
He had no degree,  
yet they called Him Teacher.  
He had no medicines,  
yet they called Him Healer.  
He had no army,  
yet kings feared Him.  
He won no military battles,  
yet He conquered the world.  
He committed no crime,  
yet they crucified Him.  
He was buried in a tomb,  
yet He lives today.  
—Author unknown

beloved; Mary, the wife of Clopas; and Mary Magdalene. Heartbroken and devastated, she remained until the moment Christ breathed His last breath with the words: “It is finished!” (John 19:25–30).

She watched, wondered, and wept in silence. Her deep sadness was indescribable. Mary had witnessed the brutality of the cross and the horrors of Christ’s suffering, while most of the disciples had fled from the scene and hid in secret. She could not walk away. She was compelled to stay by her Lord and Savior! The devotion of her heart could not be extinguished by danger or even threat of death.

Very early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to Jesus’ tomb and saw that the stone had been rolled away from the entrance. Breathlessly, she ran at once to Simon Peter and John to tell them that they had taken the Master from the tomb, and she didn’t know where they had put Him.

The disciples ran to the tomb and saw that it was empty, then they went back home. But Mary stood outside the tomb weeping. As she wept, she knelt to look into the tomb and saw two angels sitting there. They were dressed in white, one at the head and the other at the

foot of where Jesus’ body had been laid. They said to her, “Woman, why do you weep?”

She responded, “They took my Master, and I don’t know where they put Him.” After she said this, she turned away and saw Jesus standing there. But she didn’t recognize Him.

Jesus spoke to her, “Woman, why do you weep? Who are you looking for?” Thinking He was the gardener, she said, “Mister, if you took Him, tell me where you put Him, so I can care for Him.” Jesus said, “Mary.” Turning to face Him, she said in Aramaic, “Rabboni,” which means Teacher.

He commanded her, “Do not touch Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go to My brothers and tell them, I will ascend to My Father and your Father, My God and your God.” (See John 20:1–17.)

At a time when women were generally not given much acclaim, Jesus reached out first to Mary and sent her to share the glorious news of His resurrection with the disciples.

RUTH DAVIDSON (1939–2023) WAS A MISSIONARY IN THE MIDDLE EAST, INDIA, AND SOUTH AMERICA FOR 25 YEARS, AND WAS AN AUTHOR AND CONTRIBUTOR TO THE WEBSITE [THEBIBLEFORYOU.COM](http://THEBIBLEFORYOU.COM). ■



# WE'RE KEEPING THE DENT

BY MARIE ALVERO

RECENTLY A YOUNG WOMAN WHO IS A FRIEND OF MY DAUGHTER BACKED UP INTO MY CAR, LEAVING A DENT AND SOME SCRATCHES. She offered to pay for the damages, so we got a quote. It would be almost \$3,000 to repair, which we felt was way more than we could ask of someone who needs every cent she can save while she works hard to pay her way through college. We explained to her that we didn't think it was right to ask her to pay that much money. She was incredibly grateful, and we felt like we did the right thing. My car is older and we just need it to last a few more years, even if it's not that pretty, so we kept the dent.

We all need forgiveness for our sins, for the "dents" in our lives. I thought this situation was a good illustration of why we need Jesus' death on the cross. There is no way we can earn God's forgiveness. Jesus chose to pay our debt for us. "If anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 John 2:1–2 NIV).

It's interesting to me how something as ordinary as a dented car can teach me something so profound. Even as I was forgiving someone, I was shown clearly how much forgiveness *I* need to be reconciled to God. Just like what this sweet girl could afford to pay would not be nearly enough, my efforts to redeem myself are simply not enough. The "dent" remains.

No matter how much I forgive others, it will never come close to how much Jesus has forgiven me. A debt I could never pay was wiped out by Jesus' death. I don't believe we think about this as often as we should. We're quick to recognize what we're owed by someone else, but we forget what we have received.—In this case, the gift of forgiveness of all of our sins.

MARIE ALVERO IS A FORMER MISSIONARY TO AFRICA AND MEXICO. SHE CURRENTLY LIVES A HAPPY, BUSY LIFE WITH HER HUSBAND AND CHILDREN IN CENTRAL TEXAS, USA. ■



# OVERCOMING THE PHANTOM ZONE

BY UDAY PAUL

**NOWADAYS, I CAN'T HELP BUT NOTICE WHEN WATCHING MOVIES THAT THE LINES BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL HAVE BECOME INCREASINGLY BLURRED.**

Decades ago, most movies illustrated values, the lines between right and wrong were clearly drawn, and good usually triumphed over evil in the end.

A movie that touched me as a teen was “Supergirl” (1984). In this movie, Kara Zor-El, also called Supergirl, is transported to Earth from Argo City in space. She is in search of an energy source called the Omegahedron. Kara’s nemesis on Earth is a woman named Selena who dabbles in the occult and dark powers. Selena is looking for nothing less than world domination. There is a struggle over the Omegahedron, which would give its owner control over all the Earth. Selena takes possession of the Omegahedron and uses its powers to further her own evil ends. There is a confrontation between her and Kara. Selena overcomes Kara and banishes her to the Phantom Zone, a prison dimension.

There Kara realizes that she has lost her supernatural powers and is a shadow of her former self. Then she meets Zaltar, who had been her mentor in Argo City and who banished himself in this zone. He encourages her to not give up. Eventually Kara rises victoriously from the Phantom Zone with all her powers restored. She returns to Earth, and after a titanic battle with evil Selena, she takes possession of the Omegahedron and returns it to Argo City where it belongs.

I see this as an analogy of the gospel. Jesus came down to Earth to redeem and bring salvation to mankind. He rejected Satan’s offer of power and wealth, and instead chose to do the will of the Father who sent Him (Hebrews 10:7). He was anointed with the power of the Holy Spirit and went about doing good and healing all those who were oppressed physically and spiritually by the devil (Acts 10:38). In the battle against evil, Jesus resisted to the point of shedding His blood on the cross and being banished to the “phantom zone”—“the heart of the earth” (Hebrews 12:4; Matthew 12:40).

However, after three days He rose triumphantly from the grave to be exalted to the right hand of the Father in heaven (Acts 2:32–33). He will one day return to the Earth in great power and authority and will destroy the forces of evil. The Earth will be restored to its rightful ruler and will be governed with fairness and justice for all (Isaiah 9:7). That is a wonderful future to look forward to!



UDAY PAUL IS A FREELANCE WRITER, VOLUNTEER, AND TEACHER BASED IN INDIA. ■

# RESURRECTION POWER

## **JESUS' RESURRECTION WAS FORETOLD IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.**

Psalm 16:10: You will not abandon my soul to Sheol [realm of the dead], or let your holy one see corruption.

## **JESUS' RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD IS A HISTORICAL FACT, ESTABLISHED BY EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS.**

Acts 1:2-3: ...until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.

Acts 10:40-41: God raised him on the third day and made him to appear, not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.

Acts 13:30-31: God raised him from the dead, and for many days he appeared to those who had come up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are now his witnesses to the people.

1 Corinthians 15:3-6: I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive.



2 Peter 1:16: We did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

(See also: Matthew 28:1-9, Luke 24:13-53, John 20:1-17.)

## **JESUS HAS POWER TO GIVE ETERNAL LIFE TO ALL WHO BELIEVE IN HIM.**

John 1:12: To all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

John 3:16: God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

John 5:24: Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.

John 6:40: This is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.



John 11:25: Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live.”

1 Peter 1:3–4: Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you.

1 Corinthians 6:14: God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power.

**OUR PHYSICAL BODIES WILL ONE DAY BE RESURRECTED AND REJOIN OUR SPIRITS.**

Job 19:25–27: I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another.

John 5:28–29: Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.

1 Corinthians 15:51–54: Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.”

**OUR IMMORTAL RESURRECTION BODIES WILL BE EVEN MORE WONDERFUL THAN OUR PRESENT ONES.**

Luke 20:36: They cannot die anymore, because they are equal to angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection.

Philippians 3:21: [Jesus Christ] will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

1 John 3:2: Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. ■

FROM JESUS WITH LOVE

# MY ETERNAL PURPOSE

For so many people in the world, life can seem like a truck racing pell-mell down the highway, without their knowing where it is headed or why it is traveling in a certain direction. They struggle to understand the purpose and destination of their lives. But all who believe in Me have the assurance of a meaningful life and wonderful eternal destination (John 11:25–26).

There is a beautiful purpose and plan for your life, and I have prepared a place for you in heaven so that you can be with Me forever. So when you face the challenges and difficulties of life, don't let your heart be troubled (John 14:1–3). Believe in My Word and trust that the hardships and difficulties you experience are not meaningless—they are building blocks for growth and signposts to your eternal home.

One day you will see how each of life's challenges has been a steppingstone toward the eternal destiny I have for you. Commit every day to Me and learn through everything you experience before your time comes to leave your earth life behind.

Heaven will be filled with beauty and glory, and you will be free from the pain and suffering you experience in your earthly life. Meditate on your eternal reward and the glory that will be revealed in you, and this will give you the faith to face and overcome the trials and challenges of life (Romans 8:18).

