



still waters

home church studies

Psalms 118.1-2, 14-24 [Worship]

1 O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his steadfast love endures forever! 2 Let Israel say, "His steadfast love endures forever."

14 The LORD is my strength and my might; he has become my salvation. 15 There are glad songs of victory in the tents of the righteous: "The right hand of the LORD does valiantly; 16 the right hand of the LORD is exalted; the right hand of the LORD does valiantly." 17 I shall not die, but I shall live, and recount the deeds of the LORD.

18 The LORD has punished me severely, but he did not give me over to death. 19 Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter through them and give thanks to the LORD. 20 This is the gate of the LORD; the righteous shall enter through it. 21 I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation. 22 The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. 23 This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. 24 This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Consider:

[Words]

The news of Easter is that in the resurrection of Jesus, God has broken all the vicious cycles of deathliness in which the world finds itself. The lyric of Isaiah 65:17-25 anticipates that weary old heaven, jaded old earth, and conflicted old Jerusalem all will be broken open by the power of God to new, healthy possibility.

What the poetry of Isaiah anticipates the early church confesses. The Easter narrative of John 20 provides an early attestation about the "seeing" and "believing" of the first Easter, first reported by the uncredentialed women and then verified by the credentialed male apostles. The news of this new aliveness is breath-taking; Mary's declaration, "I have seen the Lord," is one of bewilderment and astonishment (John 20:18). Neither she nor her companions could explain what had happened because they had no categories for this exhibit of God's power for life. The narrative portrays a deep, singular event that defies all of our modern categories of explanation.

It is this singular event on which the church stakes its life and its witness. Paul testifies about the defeat of "the last enemy... death" (1 Corinthians 15:26). Peter witnesses to the gift of forgiveness given in Easter (Acts 10:43). Easter invites us to imagine, embrace, and live in a world that is without fear of death or guilt. It is no wonder that the authorities recognized the Easter proclamation to be dangerously subversive of the world organized around death and guilt.

[Scripture]

1 Corinthians 15.19-26

19 If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied. 20 But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died. 21 For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human being; 22 for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ. 23 But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. 24 Then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father, after he has destroyed every ruler and every authority and power. 25 For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

Question: *Where have you seen the Risen Christ?*

In God's new world of resurrection, are you still living in sin guilt? What keeps us alive IN Christ, free from shame, and able to see believe, and walk in Newness of Life—the Resurrection..

Also, read for yourself this week, John 20.1-18