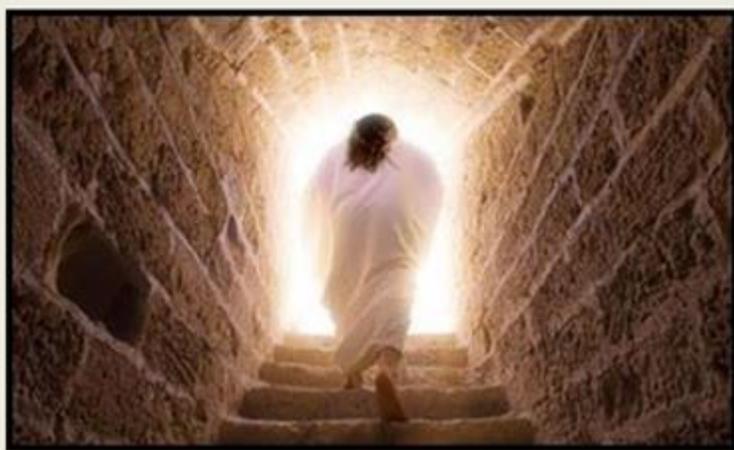


Celebrating the Victorious Transformation of Easter



As I gaze out my window, a huge crane anchored at a nearby construction site catches my eye. I marvel at the strength and the power of this mechanical contraption that moves heavy objects from one place to another. It reminds me of the sacrifice Jesus made for all who would believe. On a hill called Calvary in Golgotha, He who knew no sin took on the sins of the world and removed them far from us. His sacrifice empowered us to live victoriously.

The Easter season is a solemn occasion that, in the midst of an earth renewing springtime, promotes times of deep introspection that lead to a more fulfilling and rewarding lifestyle through Christ Jesus. This transforming season begins with Fat Tuesday, a day of intense partying and gluttonous indulgence that yields to Ash Wednesday, the official start of the consecrated holy season called Lent. During the 40 days of Lent that culminate on Easter Sunday, observers abstain from earthly pleasures as a way of remembering the sacrifice that Jesus made at Calvary. Many give up smoking, alcoholic beverages, television, computer games, profane utterances, or delicious foods like chocolate, an all-time favorite. The abstinence from chocolate has led to the creation of a fictitious character, the Easter bunny, that inspires the giving of brightly colored eggs often filled with chocolate. In its own way, even this capitalistic exercise serendipitously points us back to the solemnity of Easter and the victory therein.

I find the Easter season to be most fulfilling. As I more regularly read and study The Holy Bible, pray, meditate, serve the needy, and sing songs of worship, I am empowered to live out my Christian values. I feel more attuned to the voice of God, and very much like that gigantic crane that moves heavy weights from one place to another, ultimately transforming debris and waste into a beautiful structure of purpose, my life is liberated from earthly debris and transformed into a vessel of God's divine purpose. Consequently for me, the pageantry of Easter Sunday morning shakes off the solemnity of the Lenten season and adorns the whole earth with a celebratory shout of victorious redemption.

On this Easter Sunday morning, may you too celebrate the transforming power of the death, resurrection, and ensuing ascension of Jesus the Christ who always gives us the victory.

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1 Corinthians 15:57

But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.