

The Greatest Thing In All Mankind

♪ *The greatest thing in all my life is knowing (loving, praising) You (x2). I want to know (love, praise) You more (x2). The greatest thing in all my life is knowing (loving, praising) You.* ♪

What is ‘The Greatest Thing’ that has happened to all of mankind? Scripture gives us the answer when Rabbi Sha’ul stated: *“And if Messiah has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain...And if the Messiah has not been raised, your faith is in vain (your trust is useless), and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Messiah have perished. If we have hoped in Messiah in this life only, we are of all men most to be miserable (pitied)”* (1 Cor. 15:14,17-19). The greatest thing in all mankind is the fact that *Messiah Yeshua* rose from the dead. We have the same promise because: *“For if we have been united with him in a death like His, we will also be united with him in a resurrection like His. We know that our old self was put to death on the execution-stake with Him, so that the entire body of our sinful propensities might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For someone who has died has been cleared from sin. Now since we died with the Messiah, we trust that we will also live with Him”* (Romans 6:5-8). And now we are alive in Him because: *“G-d is so rich in mercy and loves us with such intense love that, even when we were dead because of our acts of disobedience, he brought us to life along with the Messiah - it is by grace that you have been delivered. That is, G-d raised us up with the Messiah Yeshua and seated us with him in heaven”* (Ephesians 2:4-6). So we can confidently say: *“The same Spirit that raised Yeshua from the dead has also quickened us...”*

More Fruit

In 1 Corinthians 15:19, Rabbi Sha’ul states: *“But the fact is that the Messiah has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have died.”* And then again in verse 23 *“But each in his own order: the Messiah is the firstfruits; then those who belong to the Messiah, at the time of his coming.”* Messiah Yeshua is the firstfruits—*bikkurim* of the resurrection. Since it is evident that Yeshua rose again after the conclusion of the weekly Shabbat of the Pesach week on the week that He died, then it is clear that He rose on the Feast of Bikkurim of Leviticus 23:10-11: *“Tell the people of Isra’el, ‘After you enter the land I am giving you and harvest its ripe crops, you are to bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the cohen. He is to wave the sheaf before ADONAI, so that you will be accepted; the cohen is to wave it on the day after the Shabbat.”* A fact that we want to bring up is that firstfruits means there is more fruit coming. The resurrection of the dead continues to this day!

Give Me the Facts

“¹Now after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to look at the grave. ²And behold, a severe earthquake had occurred, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled away the stone and sat upon it. ³And his appearance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. ⁴The guards shook for fear of him and became like dead men. ⁵The angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid; for I know that you are looking for Jesus who has been crucified. ⁶“He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said. Come, see the place where He was lying. ⁷“Go quickly and tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead; and behold, He is going ahead of you into Galilee, there you will see Him; behold, I have told you.” ⁸And they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy and ran to report it to His disciples” (Matthew 28:1-8)

It is a historical fact that *Yeshua* rose from the dead. From any perspective, and especially from the record of testimonies of a myriad of eyewitnesses the resurrection of *Yeshua* is factual and not just a teaching. In Luke 24 we read: *“³⁵Then the two told what had happened on the road and how he had become known to them in the breaking of the matzah. ³⁶They were still talking about it when - there he was, standing among them! ³⁷Startled and terrified, they thought they were seeing a ghost. ³⁸But he said to them, “Why are you so upset? Why are these doubts welling up inside you? ³⁹Look at my hands and my feet - it is I, myself! Touch me and see - a ghost doesn't have flesh and bones, as you can see I do.” ⁴⁰As he said this, he showed them his hands and feet. ⁴¹While they were still unable to believe it for joy and*

stood there dumbfounded, he said to them, "Have you something here to eat?" ⁴²*They gave him a piece of broiled fish,* ⁴³*which he took and ate in their presence.* ⁴⁴*Yeshua said to them, "This is what I meant when I was still with you and told you that everything written about me in the Torah of Moshe, the Prophets and the Psalms had to be fulfilled."* (Luke 24:35-44) All that *Yeshua* had said, here it is fulfilled right now. No longer a teaching, it is a fact. You don't argue with facts. Therefore, the foundation of our faith (c.f., 1 Cor. 15:14) is that He is alive (then and now) and that is Good News. Torah, Prophets and Psalms had been testifying about Messiah and here was the culmination of the entire TNK. Not only is it a historical fact (knowledge), but also it is the source which provided great power.

The fact that He is alive is the greatest proof that life in *Yeshua* is the correct way to worship G-d (i.e., to worship in the Right Way). It is the greatest fulfillment of prophecy, and the greatest truth of all time. It is the greatest manifestation of spiritual power (G-d's Power), and the greatest way to compel man to believe in G-d: "*Blessed be the G-d and Father of our L-rd Messiah Yeshua, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Messiah Yeshua from the dead*" (1 Pet 1:3).

What does it mean to you?

What does it mean to you personally that He rose from the dead? In other words, how does that change me or my situation? It changes things because He is our personal Savior. It states in Romans 4:25: "*Yeshua, who was delivered over to death because of our offences and raised to life in order to make us righteous*" Therefore, He justified us. He brought back forgiveness to man. We have a second chance!

Further, He went to His Father and it is to our advantage that He went to His Father. (See John 14:7). He said that once He went He would send us a Comforter, the Holy Spirit. To have the Holy Spirit live inside of us is only possible after He rose from the dead, not before.

And then "*Yes, I gave it all up in order to know him, that is, to know the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings as I am being conformed to his death*" (Phil. 3:10). We have to know Him and know intimately the power of His resurrection. To be resurrected you have to be dead or almost dead or else you cannot experience a resurrection. How many of us have been in near deadly circumstances? That is when we will know the power of His resurrection, because otherwise, unless you are not dead or near death, you do not need it. We see in 2 Cor. 1:8-9 "*...that we were burdened excessively, beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of life; indeed, we had the sentence of death within ourselves so that we would not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead.*" Even if you have the smell or the aroma of death, G-d allows it so in ourselves we can trust G-d who raises the dead. This power brings you back to life from deadly circumstances you are going through. Remember, in John 11 Lazarus was dead and his sisters said, "he stank."

The 'Disciples Message' is the resurrection—the resurrection that sparked a revolution. We read about it beginning in Acts 2:22 (where Kefa quotes Ps. 16) and it starts after the counting of the 50 days, at Shavuot. What is the bottom line? At the end of the sermon, Kefa said 'Repent!' He said, "*You yourselves know this*" (Vs. 22). In other words, to these facts we are all witnesses. The Hamotzi blessing, which we as Messianic Jews speak, is a 'Bread from the earth blessing.' Thus, it is a resurrection blessing because G-d raised *Yeshua* up from the earth! From that point on, everyone who comes in contact with *Yeshua* will receive a resurrection experience. No wonder it says in Rev. 1:13 "I fell like a dead man...I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive forever more, Amen!"

Share Dr. Crandall's story of how *Yeshua* raised a man in the emergency room from the dead and his eyewitness report. See <http://www.assistnews.net/Stories/2007/s07070094.htm>