

EASTER DAY REFLECTION

OK so ...let's sit with this question.

What does Easter Day look like in this state of shut down?

What does it mean in 2020?

What does it mean right now that Mary saw and believed, that she ran to others and told them excitedly of the empty tomb?

Firstly it always means a lot to me that the first person to declare the Resurrection is a woman. Jesus calls this beloved woman by name. He states his own vulnerability first and trusts her to 'socially distance' herself and then trusts her even more by entrusting the Resurrection story into her care. The very nature of the Divine and the pattern of all creation has been revealed to her. The Christ is here and present to her. God is revealed to us through Jesus all the time. How do we pay attention to this? We encounter this risen Jesus who is the very cornerstone despite being rejected. The question is asked (as it is many times over in the Bible) who do you understand God to be? In one of those lovely, familiar reversals we see that what we held true is actually the opposite.

But hear the joy in the Jeremiah passage ... it speaks to me! See its NRSV title? Feeling like dispersed persons at this time I really hear this and am so excited to think about what it will be like to go about our daily lives, changed for sure, but back in connected routines of some sort. It sounds like a post COVID-19 passage to me!

The Joyful Return of the Exiles

31 At that time, says the LORD, I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people.

² Thus says the LORD:

The people who survived the sword
found grace in the wilderness;

when Israel sought for rest,

³ the LORD appeared to him ^[a] from far away. ^[b]

I have loved you with an everlasting love;

therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you.

⁴ Again I will build you, and you shall be built,

O virgin Israel!

Again you shall take ^[c] your tambourines,

and go forth in the dance of the merrymakers.

⁵ Again you shall plant vineyards

on the mountains of Samaria;

the planters shall plant,

and shall enjoy the fruit.

⁶ For there shall be a day when sentinels will call

in the hill country of Ephraim:
“Come, let us go up to Zion,
to the LORD our God.”

The strong theme for me this year is that despair is not the winner. There is Resurrection!

And then what is our response. Hear it in the Colossians passage from The Message:

Colossians 3:1-4 The Message (MSG)

He Is Your Life

³ ¹⁻² So if you're serious about living this new resurrection life with Christ, *act* like it. Pursue the things over which Christ presides. Don't shuffle along, eyes to the ground, absorbed with the things right in front of you. Look up, and be alert to what is going on around Christ—that's where the action is. See things from *his* perspective.

³⁻⁴ Your old life is dead. Your new life, which is your *real* life—even though invisible to spectators—is with Christ in God. *He* is your life. When Christ (your real life, remember) shows up again on this earth, you'll show up, too—the real you, the glorious you. Meanwhile, be content with obscurity, like Christ.

What does Easter mean this year?

We encounter the Risen Jesus and life is new. Despair and suffering (and there is plenty around) don't have the last word. Don't look down! Look up and listen...Jesus is calling your beloved name, calling you to be life and hope. All you have to do is SHOW UP!