

What is Easter all about?

What are we doing at Easter? Gathering at sunrise - because of something that happened 2,000 years ago! Then having breakfast together; before gathering and worshipping another four times on Easter Sunday across the two parishes. Why? Because of something quite incredible that happened all those years ago.

And remember when the angels said, "O Mary, God sends you the good news of a Command of His: His name shall be Messiah, Jesus son of Mary. He will be highly honoured in this world and in the Next World and He will be among those favoured by God. He will speak to the people alike when in the cradle and when grown up, and He will be among the righteous." Hearing this, Mary said, "How, O Lord, shall I have a son, when no man has ever touched me?" "Thus shall it be," was the answer. Not words from the Bible about Jesus' incarnation, but from the Quran (3:43).

About this time there lived Jesus, a wise man, if indeed one ought to call Him a man. For He was one who performed surprising deeds and was a teacher of such people as accept the truth gladly. He won over many Jews and many of the Greeks. He was the Messiah. And when, upon the accusation of the principal men among us, Pilate had condemned Him to a cross, those who had first come to love Him did not cease. He appeared to them spending a third day restored to life, for the prophets of God had foretold these things and a thousand other marvels about Him. And the tribe of the Christians, so called after Him, has still to this day not disappeared.

Again, not words of scripture from the Bible, but an historical account written by a Jewish historian living in Rome, Josephus, about the Jews of Judaea while being governed by the Roman procurator Pontius Pilate (i.e. the period when Jesus was alive).

Christians, who have still "not disappeared", believe this man to be the Son of God. And we come together on Easter Sunday to praise and worship God because of what He did for us in the birth, life, death and then resurrection of his son, Jesus. And God did it - Jesus did it - because He loves us. We will gather to worship this God who still loves us; we will gather to thank Him for what He did in resurrecting (bringing back to life) His son. He did this so that, somehow, we can have an eternal relationship with God. When we die from this physical life, we have been promised this is not the end. As a Christian, that is what I believe; I try to live my life knowing that; and that is why I'll be getting up at 5am on Easter Sunday: to praise and worship God at sunrise. Happy Easter.

Revd David Commander, Rector