

# Australia Local Pages

## The Power and Significance of the Resurrection

By Elder James J. Hamula, Pacific Area President

**T**he Resurrection is central to the faith of all Christians. As Paul said to the Corinthians, “If there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen; and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain” (1 Corinthians 15:13–14). Significantly, such Christian faith was not limited to the Old World. In the New World Moroni wrote: “And what is it that ye shall hope for? Behold, I say unto you that ye shall have hope through the atonement of Christ and the power of his resurrection, to be raised unto life eternal, and this because of your faith in him according to the promise” (Moroni 7:41).

To appreciate the scope and power of the Resurrection, one must understand the scope and consequences of the Fall of Adam. Adam’s Fall resulted in the physical and spiritual death of all mankind (see Moses 4:25, 29). Physical death is the separation of man’s eternal spirit from his physical body. Spiritual death is the separation of man from God. These two deaths are the universal consequences of Adam’s transgression. They befall every one of the children of Adam—every man, woman and child who enter into this world.

For all mankind to bear the burden of physical and spiritual death due to the transgression of Adam, however, would not be just. Justice requires that each receives the consequences of his own actions, not those of another (see Alma 41:2–5). To address the injustice of all of us bearing the burden of our first father’s transgression, it was necessary that the price of that transgression be paid in behalf of all of us. It was necessary that the effects of spiritual and physical death that befall all



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mankind be overcome. The Resurrection does just that. “For as death hath passed upon all men, to fulfil the merciful plan of the great Creator,” Jacob taught, “there must needs be a power of resurrection, and the resurrection must needs come unto man by reason of the fall” (2 Nephi 9:6; see also Mormon 9:12–13).

Resurrection reverses the effects of the Fall by the reuniting of the body and the spirit of man, never to be divided again, and the restoring of man to the presence of God. As Amulek taught concerning the Resurrection, “the spirit and the

body shall be reunited again in its perfect form; both limb and joint shall be restored to its proper frame, even as we now are at this time; and we shall be brought to stand before God” (Alma 11:43). Only one had the power in Himself to resurrect Himself—and that one was Jesus Christ. He effectuated the Resurrection for Himself and all others of our Father’s children following His own death, and in so doing became the “first-fruits” of the Resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:23).

That Jesus Christ did resurrect Himself is beyond doubt for those who accept the scriptural records of His life. Following his death and burial, Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene at the sepulcher (see John 20:11–18). He appeared to “the other Mary,” Salome, Joanna, and others, as they returned from the sepulcher (see Matthew 28:1–10). He appeared to Simon Peter alone on the day of the Resurrection (see Luke 24:34; 1 Corinthians 15:5). He appeared to the two disciples (Cleopas and his companion) on the way to Emmaus (see Luke 24:13–35). He appeared to the 10 disciples (Thomas being absent) and others “with them” at Jerusalem (see John 20:19–24). He later appeared to the disciples again (Thomas being present) at Jerusalem (see Mark 16:14–18; Luke 24:33–40; John 20:26–28). He appeared to the disciples when they were fishing at the Sea of Galilee (see John 21:1–23). He appeared to the 11, and above 500 brethren at once, at an appointed place in Galilee (see 1 Corinthians 15:6). He appeared to James, the Lord’s brother (see 1 Corinthians 15:7), and to the Apostles before the Ascension till “a cloud received him out of their sight” (Acts 1:9; see also verses 1–8).

Significantly, His appearances were not limited to Jerusalem. He appeared to the people of Bountiful in the Americas, allowing each one there

to “see with their eyes” and “feel with their hands” and “know of a surety” that He was the resurrected Christ (3 Nephi 11:15). And in our day He appeared with the Father to the Prophet Joseph Smith near Palmyra, New York, in the spring of 1820 (see JS—H 1:17–18).

Significantly, Christ’s Resurrection was not limited to just Him. It unlocked the power to resurrect all the children of God. Because of Christ’s Resurrection, “by the power of God,” all men shall come forth from the grave (see Mormon 9:13). Indeed, Christ’s Resurrection unlocked the power to restore the entire creation of God. Thus saith the Lord:

“And the end shall come, and the heaven and the earth shall be consumed and pass away, and there shall be a new heaven and a new earth.

“For all old things shall pass away, and all things shall become new, even the heaven and the earth, and all the fulness thereof, both men and beasts, the fowls of the air, and the fishes of the sea;

“And not one hair, neither mote, shall be lost, for it is the workmanship of mine hand” (D&C 29:23–25).

Nothing is more absolutely universal than the Resurrection. Truly did Paul write, “As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive” (1 Corinthians 15:22).

As universal in scope as the Resurrection is, its application in the lives of individuals should not be misunderstood. While the Resurrection of Christ overcomes the effects of Adam’s transgression, it does not overcome the effects of our own transgressions. It restores everything, but only to its “proper order” (Alma 41:4). When we come forth from the grave, it must be remembered that we come forth with the same spirit that we had prior to the Resurrection. We are therefore “raised

to good, according to [our] desires of good” or “to evil according to [our] desires of evil” (Alma 41:5). And in this spiritual state the Resurrection returns us all to the presence of God, wherein no unclean thing can dwell (see 3 Nephi 27:19).

This universal fact—that all men from the beginning to the end of time are returned to the presence of God in the same spiritual condition they possessed before the Resurrection—leads Jesus Christ and all of His servants to declare to all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people the conditions upon which men may remain in the presence of God and dwell with Him forever. As Jesus taught the people of Bountiful prior to His departure, “no unclean thing can enter into [God’s] kingdom; therefore nothing entereth into his rest save it be those who have washed their garments in my blood, because of their faith, and the repentance of all their sins, and their faithfulness unto the end.

“Now this is the commandment: Repent, all ye ends of the earth, and come unto me and be baptized in my name, that ye may be sanctified by the reception of the Holy Ghost, that ye may stand spotless before me at the last day.

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, this is my gospel; and ye know the things that ye must do in my church; for the works which ye have seen me do that shall ye also do; for that which ye have seen me do even that shall ye do;

“Therefore, if ye do these things blessed are ye, for ye shall be lifted up at the last day” (3 Nephi 27:19–22).

May we cherish the gift of the Resurrection that raises us all back to the presence of our Heavenly Father, as well as the gift of time to prepare to meet Him in a manner that will allow us to remain with Him forever. ■

## Looking Forward to General Conference

By Terry Pearce

**N**ext month members and guests throughout the Pacific and worldwide will gather in meetinghouses to participate in the April 2012 general conference of the Church.

Proceedings will be available via satellite, the Internet (at [www.lds.org](http://www.lds.org)), iTunes and in the *Ensign* and *Liahona* magazines. Talks will be translated into Samoan, Tongan, Tahitian, French, Fijian, Kiribati, Marshallese, Bislama, Hindi, and many other languages. (Go to [www.ldschurch.org.nz](http://www.ldschurch.org.nz) or [www.lds.org](http://www.lds.org) for details.)

The following Church members from across the Pacific Area recently shared some of the reasons why they were preparing now to take full advantage of general conference.

### **Kalilimoku Hunt:**

During the sessions we take notes and prepare ourselves for discussion of our favourite talks and new ideas that we learn from the Apostles and General Authorities of the Church—but especially from the prophet of the Lord. We are all edified by the prophets and feel recharged and rejuvenated by the Holy Ghost, having received affirmation that the messages that we heard are from the Lord Jesus Christ. This strengthens our resolve to keep all the commandments and to love the Lord with all our heart, mind, might and strength.

### **Motisha Solo:**

General conference reminds me that my Heavenly Father loves me so much as He



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***The First  
Presidency  
prepare for the  
start of general  
conference.***

continues to inspire our living and loving prophet. The messages always answer my prayers and never fail to meet my needs.

**Grace H., age 7:**

It's where you can get more parts of your testimony. Then you'll get one big testimony.

**Lavenia Taufalele:**

General conference is my opportunity to be taught and be given the latest counsel from the Lord through His prophet, seer and revelator.

**Emma D., age 13:**

I can go with my family and hear the prophets speak about important things I need to hear.

**Joshua Shaw:**

I have never come away from conference without a number of very personal reminders of how I need to do better, and without a greater resolve to grasp more firmly to the iron rod. That resolve does not always translate to an immediate change of heart and of habit, and too often come the next conference I am in need of the same reminders. But my hope is that the necessary improvement will come, line upon line and reminder upon reminder.

**Scott Giles:**

For me general conference feels like going to the spiritual "well." I get answers to my personal questions and feel specific revelation for my family and for my calling. Without fail there are always one or two talks that seem to be written specifically for me because they touch my heart deeply. ■

# Spirit of Elijah Led the Work

By Caroline McIlwaine

**T**he Spirit of Elijah is strong amongst Aboriginal people, according to Neva Wilson, who received two prestigious awards during 2011 for her work in making family history information held in South Australian Museum (SAM) collections accessible to Aboriginal people.

“People came into the museum in droves to search the genealogical and photographic collections and find their family connections,” said Sister Wilson.

Sister Wilson is a former SAM Department of Anthropology Aboriginal Family History Research Officer and a member of the Fulham Gardens Ward in Adelaide.

She said researching family histories and reuniting families were rewards enough for her efforts across two decades, yet the awards—the Gladys Elphick International Women’s Day recognition and the South Australian Women’s Honour Roll inclusion—highlighted the value of the genealogical information she had helped compile.

Breaking down the original research recorded in the

collections by anthropologists Norman Tindale and Joseph Birdsell from the 1920s through to 1952 was painstaking work.

“Tindale and Birdsell’s interest was not in preserving family lines but in studying patterns of material culture, ideas and beliefs, and so the records resulting from the joint Harvard-Adelaide universities’ expeditions were very academic,” she explained.

It was a challenge she tackled with enthusiasm, enabling her to discover and detail the genealogical information within the records.

“There are aspects of the collections that are very confronting, as is the knowledge that so many mixed-race Aboriginal children of that era were removed from family and taken to church-run missions or government institutions,” Sister Wilson continued. “My own parents were in their teens when they were taken from their traditional environment to the Lutheran Koonibba Mission by their parents, who believed it was in their best interest. That’s where they met and married, but they left soon after as they felt it was too restrictive.”

That personal Koonibba mission connection meant that Sister Wilson’s family history on both parents’ lines were recorded in the 1928–39 expeditions, allowing her to trace her family tree over several generations.

Field trips to various Aboriginal communities around the country as well as trawling parish records and those of Aboriginal missions and the Department of Aboriginal Affairs provided further valuable family history information and often led to direct links between separate family lines becoming evident.

Sister Wilson, mother of 10, grandmother of 36 and great-grandmother of 21, joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 1964, the same year her husband, Tadeusz Grzybowicz, died. She said the strong Christian upbringing she had from loving parents helped her embrace the restored gospel.

For Sister Wilson, living the gospel meant reaching out to others, and prior to the Family History Project role—from which she retired in 1997—she helped youth arriving in Adelaide for study at Tauondi College to familiarise and adjust to city life. Her first role in public service

was in the area of drug and alcohol abuse awareness and prevention.

Having left school at age 16, her return to studies first led to child-care qualifications. Later she earned an Associate Diploma in Aboriginal Studies from SA College of Advanced Education (now UniSA). She took on the Family History Project research

role in 1984, working with the late Dr. Doreen Kartinyeri.

Sister Wilson had written a first book, *Our Identity Is Our History and Our Future*, and is preparing to publish Part Two, which includes additional information relating to the genealogies of an estimated 200 Aboriginal families—what she calls “the satisfying fruition” of all her efforts.

“Although I knew my roots—I have full-blood Aboriginal grandmothers, my paternal grandfather was Irish, my maternal grandfather English—research has helped me discover more,” she said. “Yet for others whose story is less clear, the genealogies I’ve been able to trace may help them unlock their past.” ■

**Vicki Gilligan, Neva Wilson, Kystyna Grzybowicz, and Katherine Vidulich at the International Women’s Day Awards in Adelaide.**



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# Relief Society Service Is the Gospel in Action

By Catherine Vaughan

**T**his year we are celebrating the 170th anniversary of the Relief Society organisation, which was organized in Nauvoo, Illinois, on March 17, 1842. In the initial meetings of Relief Society, the Prophet Joseph Smith taught that the society “is not only to relieve the poor, but to save souls” (Joseph Smith, *History of the Church*, 5:25).

“To save souls opens the whole field of human activity and development,” Elder John A. Widtsoe later declared. “Relief of poverty, relief of illness; relief of doubt, relief of ignorance—relief of all that hinders the joy and progress of woman. What a magnificent commission!” (*Evidences and Reconciliations* [1987], 308).

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said, “The Relief Society has great significance for every member of the Church. All of us have been blessed through the example and service of its members (“The Relief Society and the Church,” *Ensign*, May 1992, 34).

Andria Lamb has been the beneficiary of Relief Society service many times, both in New Zealand, where she raised her family, and now in Australia, where she currently lives in Perth.

“Being a single parent with a chronic illness has been extremely hard at times”, she said. “I knew that the sisters in Relief Society were always there willing to help. A roster was even written up so on the days that I could not make it to church—which was often in the first few years of my illness—someone would pick up my children for me and take them. If I was unable to get my children to youth activities there was always a sister in my ward who would be there for transport or anything else I might need. My visiting teachers came without fail every month bringing with them a beautiful message, a sincere caring for myself and my children, and the most delicious baking! I feel blessed to be part of such a wonderful group of Christlike women, and have

been on the receiving end of their service many times.”

Karen Dell from Auckland recalled a time when, in the midst of a family crisis, her visiting teachers were a beacon of hope. “My visiting teachers have been a real blessing to me,” she said. “When one of my oldest sons had to have repeated head surgery, one of my visiting teachers not only looked after my younger children during the day, taking them swimming and helping them to not worry, but she took them in overnight and made them feel so welcome and loved. I was able to stay at the hospital and concentrate on my sick son, and at no point did I worry about what was going on at home. Her compassion and understanding of what I needed to do gave me such peace. A great weight was lifted, as I felt she knew exactly what to help with. It is hard to express how grateful I am for her love towards my children in a time of need.”

Opportunities to return that service to others ensure that both the givers and receivers are blessed. Sister Dell goes on to say, “A family in our ward lost their youngest and their oldest daughters in separate

tragic circumstances. In the midst of all the heartache, it was such a blessing to see the Relief Society ‘army’ jump into action and do what Relief Society sisters do best. Meals were prepared, and the Relief Society president sewed some beautiful clothes for the little girl to be buried in. When the family faced their second loss, another sister in the ward donated her white wedding/ temple dress for the older girl to wear as she was laid to rest. It was often difficult to know what to say to help the family in their grief, but we found we didn’t have to say anything. Just hugging them and crying with them was enough. The mother frequently remarked that the unconditional love and service helped so much to ease the heartache, and the family learned the true meaning of Alma’s words when he taught the people who were desirous to come into the fold of God that they should be willing to bear one another’s burdens, that they may be light; they should be willing to mourn with those that mourn, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort” (see Mosiah 18:8–9).

Yvette Barnes from Bachus Marsh just west of Melbourne, and a former Relief Society president has been reflecting on how Relief Society has been such a major part of her life for many years. As an Australian of several generations and someone who has grown up in the church, she said “My experiences and my paradigm would be quite different from others. Part of what makes Relief Society a rich and complex tapestry is that each sister has her own thread; her culture, her age, her talents, her marital status, her difficulties, her triumphs, her family life, her relationships, her spiritual strength.

“There are six stakes in Victoria. Last year I met with Julie B. Beck, the general Relief Society president, and some of the Relief Society presidents from across this region. They ranged from a newlywed young mother in her 20s, to a single sister in her 30s, to an older great-grandmother in her 80s whose secretary is 92 years old, to a middle-aged mother of two young adults. Just as there is no ‘typical’ Relief Society president, there is also no ‘typical’ ward Relief Society.

We range from small branches to large wards; with language wards of one culture, and truly multicultural mixed wards where there are several Pacific island cultures mixed with Filipino, Sudanese, Croatian, South African, British etc.”

She continued, “That meeting provided a snapshot of issues in Victoria. We discussed the natural disasters and how Relief Society can provide the enthusiasm to create real support to the community. That led to our ward joining with Blazeaid in helping the flood victims who were still suffering months after the floods. I know that the bushfire victims were also assisted through Relief Society sisters volunteering hours and hours of work over many weeks. We discussed the opportunities of providing aid during disasters, and the everyday service opportunities of supporting new families moving into growth corridors west and north and east of the city.”

As members of one of the oldest and largest women’s organizations in the world, wherever they may be, Relief Society sisters are united as they strive to live the motto “Charity Never Faileth.” ■