

An Eastertide Message: For a better Zambia.

By Trevor Mwamba



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"The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said." (Matthew 28:5-6)

The angel's statement to the women on the day of resurrection was profound. What did it mean to the women and to generations of believers since then? More significantly what does it mean for us?

In Istanbul, Turkey, is a Church of the Holy Saviour in Chora. This church has had a very interesting history. In the 16th century, the church became a mosque and centuries later in 1958 a museum. The church has beautiful Byzantine mosaic and fresco arts describing the lives of the Virgin Mary and Christ. In a side chapel formerly a mortuary chapel is a fresco of the resurrection. You can see Christ dressed in radiant white and with a powerful grasp pulling Adam and Eve from their stone coffins. At the feet of Jesus, you see Satan and broken locks and shattered doors of hell.

The message of the resurrection is the victory of life over death as Christ is Life; of love over hatred as Christ is Love; of light over darkness as Christ is Light; of truth over lies as Christ is Truth. Or, in the enchanting words of a lady called Brinelle: "The resurrection does not shout; it unsettles. The stone is rolled away not with spectacle, but with quiet resolve. Easter speaks to those who have watched truth be silenced, justice denied, and love crucified. And yet, it insists: what is buried in fear will rise in courage, what is dismissed as weakness will return with strength. The empty tomb is not just a symbol of victory—it is a sign that the world's final word is not always the truest one. In this space of uncertainty and waiting, Easter asks us to trust that what is true will rise, again and again."

Truth will rise again and again this is what the resurrection meant to the women; this is what it has meant to generations of believers since, and ought to mean to us if we believe.

But there is more to the meaning of the resurrection. It's also a glorious mystery, a surprise, a miracle of God, that's always happening in life. It's about the life-giving Spirit of God working in life, in our lives. The life-giving Spirit of Life, of Love, of Light, of Truth, triumphing over all that's evil, false and oppressive in life.

Now the glorious final layer of the meaning of resurrection is the vital truth that we often fail to grasp: that it's our resurrection too together with our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Jesus is risen yes: but so are we! We are risen in Christ.

Jesus Christ did not resurrect alone as we think but with and in us. He is the firstborn from the womb of death who also resurrects Adam and Eve representing humanity, you and I, out of our stone coffins. Humanity shares in the resurrection and victory over evil. In this Resurrection humanity and creation are made anew in the Risen Christ. In Christ we are a new creation. The mystery of Life is that what affects God affects us and what affects us affects God.

So at that first Easter God breathed again His resurrected breath in humanity. So the Almighty God who controls all things is always at work in our lives and world.

Easter reminds us never to lose hope when things go wrong in our lives, nation, and world, when all seems lost and hopeless. It's a reminder that God always surprises us in life. The Easter surprise is not a fairytale but something happening to us now - we are all caught up in it.

Christ as Light dispels darkness, Christ as Love conquers hate, Christ as Peace triumphs over wars, Christ as Life conquers death in the resurrection. So new life emerges, bubbling with joy, laughing and dancing.

St Paul understood this well when he wrote: 'I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ living in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me'. Galatians 2:20.

The resurrection is not a one-off event but a living energy of life happening in the moment. Christ alive challenges us to be channels of God's love, compassion, justice, peace, righteous, and generosity. We are challenged to live out the Christ life by uplifting the vulnerable and poor in life, to make Zambia and our world a better place for all. The Resurrection always addresses the context of the present. Accordingly this Eastertide the Risen Christ is challenging us to protect and preserve what threatens our democratic values and life as a nation.

There are three Easter challenges we wish to highlight that Zambians are faced with:

The first challenge is the proposed Constitutional amendments. As the Constitution belongs to the people of Zambia, it's imperative that its review must follow an inclusive, legitimate, and transparent process as evidenced by previous commissions.

The way forward has been voiced by the three Church mother bodies, the Law Association of Zambia, Civil Society Organizations, Opposition Parties, and all well-meaning citizens, firmly asserting that any constitutional changes should be postponed until after the 2026 general elections. Constitutional reforms must always be undertaken free from political influence and with the full participation of all key stakeholders.

The second Easter challenge Zambians face is the recent enactment of the Cyber Security and Cyber Crimes Act, 2025; which undermines fundamental rights guaranteed in the Bill of Rights and our national values and principles of good governance, democracy and constitutionalism enshrined in the Constitution; for which our founders fought for.

Ironically, President Hakainde Hichilema who has signed the Law into effect as an opposition leader vehemently opposed it. He posted at the time on X, on 26th February, 2021: "The Cyber Security and crime Bill is not about preventing cyber-bullying. It is about clamping freedom of expression and spying on citizens. People who the government despises will be targeted and arrested." He described it as "...a very dark road."

The News Diggers of 22nd March, 2021, reported him saying that as President the Cyber Security Bill would be one of the first laws which he would reverse when in office. This has not been the case.

So this Eastertide Zambia finds herself on "a very dark road", but we need not despair as Christ the Light dispels darkness, and the way forward is to challenge this draconian Act in the Courts and repeal it.

The third Easter challenge Zambians face is the recently enacted Plant Health Act, 2025, allegedly providing a framework for regulating the production, certification, and trade of seeds. However the current legal and regulatory environment is a significant threat to heritage crops, agricultural biodiversity, and traditional cultural practices.

The Act favours certified and commercially bred seeds, and basically excludes traditional and farmer-saved varieties from legal recognition and protection. The result will be loss of agro-biodiversity and neglect of resilient indigenous crops; criminalization of traditional seed systems, including saving, exchanging, and selling heritage seeds.

Significantly, women the primary custodians of seed knowledge will be disempowered. Surely any meaningful Act should focus on supporting women and rural innovators

strengthen programmes that empower women farmers and support their role in seed selection, preservation, and transmission of cultural practices?

So the Act's primary aim should be to protect and promote heritage crops as a matter of agricultural policy. It should preserve biodiversity, empower communities, and safeguard cultural identity. An inclusive seed system is essential for sustainable development, climate resilience, and national food sovereignty. The present Act falls short of this.

The challenges we have highlighted are not in priority as crucial as the challenges of the poverty affecting Zambians. This is the main Easter challenge the leadership should be focused on. It's the economic recovery that is fundamental for Zambians.

Zambians should not be rolling in skyrocketing food prices, crippling power outages, soaring unemployment, a rapidly depreciating national currency, record-high fuel prices, and an overall cost-of-living crisis that is pushing millions into dire hardship. It's to these urgent challenges government must give its energy and undivided focus not tomorrow but today. It's a matter of life and death.

Constitutional amendments or Cyber Security and Cyber Crimes Act or Plant Health Act, are not a matter of life and death and serve no immediate purpose for the ordinary Zambian.

Often we forget that we live in a moral universe. One of my favourite statesmen was the Czech playwright and later President Vaclav Havel. In his Essays entitled Living in Truth he wrote of the defeat of totalitarian oppression by human beings who refuse to 'live within the lie', and choose courageously to 'live in truth'. He wrote that the essential aims of life are present naturally in every person. In everyone there is some longing for humanity's rightful dignity, for moral integrity, for free expression of being and a sense of transcendence over the world of existence.

The desire to be in touch with what is true, and to live by it in all its consequences, is deeply embedded in human beings. We cannot live falsely for long; truth has a radiant power that cannot be quenched. A culture that denies truth for long will find that the desire for truth will break through powerfully because we cannot live for long 'within the lie'.

Havel's life and politics was rooted in morality. He described it as his "presidential program" focusing on moral and cultural intent. He believed that the most dangerous enemies of a good cause today was our own bad qualities. He aspired to "bring into politics a sense of culture, of moral responsibility, of humanity, of humility and respect for the fact that there is something higher above us, that our behaviour is not lost in the black hole of time but is written down and evaluated somewhere, that we have neither the right nor reason to think that we understand everything and have license to do anything we wish."

This is the spirit of Easter and also the vision both of what politics can be and the large arena or moral universe in which we humans do our things, for good or ill: whatever we do or neglect to do is recorded, remembered, and evaluated somewhere; there is something higher above us: God.

So the message of Easter in the context of the resurrection of Christ and specifically in the trauma that Zambia is facing is about truth breaking out in a culture of lies and falsity and corruption to align Zambians to the ennobling Truth which is Christ.

Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is resurrected in our lives so we can be channels of His love, compassion, justice, peace, righteous, truth, and generosity.

Our country needs a moral alignment in every aspect of its social fibre. As children of the resurrection it's our task to do so. We can't just be shouting we are a Christian nation and yet live like devils.

To think peace we must be peace; to think excellence we must be excellent, to think environmentally we must be environmentally minded.

The resurrection teaches us that the power of God's spirit is active in our lives and world. It's the eternal truth that cannot be buried in lies because we live in a moral world. So to truly live is to nurture a deep moral sense and conscience aligned with God.

May the Spirit of the Resurrection living in us manifest Love, Light, and Truth, over all that's evil, false and oppressive in life.

This is the Eastertide message of the angel for us to create a better Zambia.

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