

When Christianity came on the scene it did the same. It took this beautiful spring festival, which the rejoicing, the up-looking, the worshipping heart of man had created in many lands and made it a festival of the Christian Church,—associating it, as was fitting, with its thought of the Resurrection of Christ. It is this large, natural and historic significance that Easter has to us as Unitarians. Thus you see that if Easter does not mean exactly the same to us that it does to some Christians around us, its meaning to us is not smaller, but, we think, larger, not newer but older. And we think it is not less deep, not less true, not less rich in spiritual significance, not less helpful to the religious life.

Let me be a little more specific in pointing out just what its meaning to us is.

First, Easter is our Spring Festival of Joy and Hope,—that joy and hope which comes with the passing away of winter and the renewal of life in the physical world. The sun comes back from his journey to the far away South. The snow and ice are melted. The streams are unlocked and make music once more among the hills. The grass becomes green. The birds return, and begin to sing their mating songs. The flowers peep from the sod. The warm air invites us out into the parks, the grove, the fields, to catch the smile and welcome the growing loveliness of the Spring. Everything is full of the spirit of joy and hope, because it is the *resurrection season in nature*, because it is the season when everywhere buds are swelling and germs are starting and new life is appearing.

How can the human heart be otherwise than glad at such a time? How can it be otherwise than full of hope? And in its hope and joy how can it do otherwise than remember God in songs of gratitude and praise as the kind Power that has wakened the earth from its winter's sleep, and by his touch given new life to all nature?