

He is not here, He is Risen

(Gen 3:15, Num 21:9, Deut 18:15, Luke 24:1-35)

Easter Sunday - 12-Apr-20

We'll be looking at the NT passage from Luke 24 and the OT passages from Gen 3:15, Num 21:9 and Deut 18:15

Let's pray and ask for **God's help** in understanding His Word.

INTRO

On **Good Friday** we said the **greatest words ever spoken** were **Jesus'** words on the **Cross** when he said "***It is Finished***" (John 19:30)

And we said **Jesus finished** His job of **saving people lost from God** - and He **died** on a cruel **cross** to **take the punishment** for **sin** - and **offer forgiveness** for **sins** - for those who care to believe in Him.

And we **left** Jesus in a **tomb**.

[PowerPoint 1-Words of Good Friday/Easter Sunday]

Now here we are **3 days later** - and arguably **equally** as **important** are the **words** from **Luke 24:5-6** - when the **angels** at the tomb **said** to the women who have come to anoint Jesus' body

"Why do you look for the living among the dead? **6 He is not here; he has risen!** Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee:

You see when the **women arrived** at the tomb the huge **stone** across the entrance of the tomb had been **rolled away** (v2) - and **Jesus' body** was **not there**

Now **various theories** have been put forward about the **resurrection**

- There's the **wrong tomb theory** - but the **women knew the exact tomb** (Luke 23:55)
- There's the **wishful thinking theory** - that Jesus' followers just wished He was alive - but when we hear of the **surprise of the women** (v4) when **Jesus' body** is **not** in the **tomb** - and when we hear of the **surprise** of the **disciples** when the women told them (v11) - we can dismiss that theory
- Then there's the **theory** that **Jesus wasn't dead** - that he **feigned his death** - but **no one could have survived a Roman crucifixion**, especially after he was **scourged** first. Also, the **Romans had strict procedures** - a **Roman soldier** was given the **death penalty** if a **prisoner** did not die or **escaped**. Also, **Jesus was already dead** before they **broke his legs**. **Blood and water** coming from **Jesus** when His side was **pierced** - show that **Jesus' lungs** had **collapsed** and he had **died** from **asphyxiation**.
- Then there's the **stolen body theory** - which is answered by the **Romans guards** and the huge **stone guarding the entrance** (Matt 27:62-66).

Eye Witnesses to the Risen Jesus

So, we're left with **only one possibility** - that **Jesus' resurrection** is **true**

How do we **know** when any event is **true**?

Eye witnesses?

[PowerPoint 2-Eye Witness]

From **Acts 1** - we have the evidence that the Risen Jesus **appeared** on many occasions for over **40 days**

And from **1 Cor 15** - we read that there were over **500 eye witnesses** of the risen Jesus - plus Jesus appeared to **James**, all the **Apostles** and also to the **Apostle Paul** (v5-8)

There's **no way** all these witnesses could have **colluded** or all **hallucinated**

Why we can believe Jesus is Risen

Should we be surprised by the resurrection?

[PowerPoint 3-Why we can believe]

Not at all - Jesus said so!

On **three occasions** in **Mark's Gospel** - that **He would be killed** and **rise again three days** later.

In **Mark 8:31-38**

³¹ He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again. ³² He spoke plainly about this, and Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him.

Then **Mark 9:30-32**

³⁰ They left that place and passed through Galilee. Jesus did not want anyone to know where they were, ³¹ because he was teaching his disciples. He said to them, "The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men. They will kill him, and after three days he will rise."

³² But they did not understand what he meant and were afraid to ask him about it.

And also, in Mark 10:32-34

³² They were on their way up to Jerusalem, with Jesus leading the way, and the disciples were astonished, while those who followed were afraid. Again, he took the Twelve aside and told them what was going to happen to him. ³³ "We are going up to Jerusalem," he said, "and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will hand him over to the Gentiles, ³⁴ who will mock him and spit on him, flog him and kill him. Three days later he will rise."

We can also believe the resurrection because of what the **risen Jesus** said in our NT passage from **Luke 24** to the **two men** on the road to **Emmaus**

See verses 25-27:

²⁵ He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" ²⁷ And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

You see the **whole Bible points to Jesus' Rescue Mission**

[PowerPoint 4-Scripture]

Right back at the **first book - Genesis**

One of our **OT readings - Gen 3:15 - God spoke to the snake & said:**

And I will put enmity

between you and the woman,

and between your offspring and hers;

he will crush your head,

and you will strike his heel."

When **God spoke** to the **Snake** - other parts of the Bible making it clear that the **snake is Satan** - and that the snake is a **personification of sin and rebellion** against God.

So, God said He would put **enmity (hostility)** between the **Snake and the Woman (Eve)** and between the **Snake's offspring (Satan)** and the **woman's offspring (Jesus)**

And the **woman's offspring (Jesus)** will **crush Satan's head** - and **Satan** will **strike Jesus' heel**

The **heel** is the **part of a human within the snake's reach**. When **Jesus** took on **human form** - He brought Himself near to **Satan's reach** so **Satan** could strike Him

So right back when **sin and death entered the world**

God already forecast a **spiritual war** between **good and evil** - between **Jesus and Satan**

And God made the **promise** right there - that **Jesus would crush Satan's power**.

Yes! - **Satan struck Jesus' heel** - by Jesus being crucified - but that was all part of **God's plan anyway**. But **Jesus crushed Satan's head** - because He defeated the two things Satan brought into this world - **sin and death**. **Jesus defeated the punishment of sin** on the **cross** on Good Friday - and He **defeated the power of death** - by **rising again** on Easter Sunday

As we look at our **other OT readings**

In **Numbers 21:9** - **Moses** made a **bronze snake** and put it on a pole - and when **any of the Israelites** that were **bitten** by the **snake** God sent - because of their rebellion against Him - **looked** at the **bronze snake** on the pole - **they lived**

Jesus identified Himself with that **bronze snake** being **lifted up** in **John 3:14-15** - when He said:

¹⁴Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, ¹⁵that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him."

What we have here is a **picture of the snake as the personification of sin and rebellion** - made of **bronze** - a metal associated with **judgment**, since it is made with **fire**. So, the **lifting up** of a **bronze snake** is the **lifting up** of **sin being judged**, in the form of **Jesus lifted up on the cross**.

So, **anyone looking at Jesus on the cross and believing in Him** - will **live** - just **like the Israelites lived** when they **looked** at the **bronze snake**.

In our other the **OT reading from Deut 18:15** - where God says **he will raise a prophet like Moses** - and the people must listen to Him - again this points to Jesus

And we must listen to Him!

We can listen to Him - by knowing Scripture which helps us to **understand Jesus** - and to **understand His death and resurrection**

A challenge I'd like to **throw out** - we have **plenty of time** at **home** whilst we are **isolated** - we can **find Jesus** in every book in the **Bible**

I **issued** this **challenge** in our **Bible Study** - and I'm **happy** for you to **email me** what you find...

Understanding the Resurrection

You see if we **study Jesus' words** and **study His scriptures** - which are all about Him

[PowerPoint 5-The Resurrection]

We will **understand some things** about **Jesus' resurrection**

- We will **understand** that **Jesus' resurrection** means **Jesus sacrifice** on the cross was **perfect** and **complete** - as we said on **Good Friday** - it is **finished** - means **finished** in the **past**, **finished** in the **present** and **finished** in the **future**. Sin is **paid for once and for all** - and so **Jesus' resurrection means death is defeated**.

- We will also understand that the cross was the payment for sin & death - and the empty tomb is the receipt for that payment - Jesus has bought us back to God - at a price - His life
- We will also understand that death has no hold on anyone who believes in Jesus - so we don't need to worry about dying. Dying is gain - we get to spend eternity with Jesus
- We will also understand that - when God's love and humankind's hate battled at the cross - God's love won!
- And we will also understand that because Jesus was raised from the dead - we can be resurrected too - as John 3:16 - God loved the people of this world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who has faith in him will have eternal life and never really die.(CEV)

Conclusion

To finish up then

[PowerPoint 5-Conclusion]

If we're serious about studying and meditating on God's Word...

Our study of Scripture - in regards to the Resurrection should lead us to John 11 - where Jesus raises His friend Lazarus from the dead - and to where he tells Lazarus' sister, Martha, this:

⁵ ... "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; ²⁶ and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

What a question!

A question for our unbelieving family and friends?

A question that everyone on this planet needs to answer?

And our **study of Scripture** in **regards** to the **Resurrection** should also lead us to **1 Corinthians 15** - Paul says this vv14-19

¹⁴ And if Christ has not been raised, our **preaching is useless** and **so is your faith**. ¹⁵ More than that, we are then found to be **false witnesses** about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised. ¹⁶ For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. ¹⁷ And if Christ has not been raised, your **faith is futile**; you are **still in your sins**. ¹⁸ Then **those** also who have **fallen asleep in Christ are lost**. ¹⁹ If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all **people** most to be **pitied**. Our **faith is futile** and we are **without hope** if Christ hasn't risen

But **Paul says no! Christ has indeed been raised from the dead** (v20)

And because **Christ** has been **raised** - anyone in **Christ** will be **made alive** too (v22)

As 1 John 5:11-12 puts it:

¹¹ And this is the testimony: **God has given us eternal life**, and this life is **in his Son**. ¹² **Whoever has the Son has life**; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

Therefore, **because of Jesus** - we can join the Apostle Paul - **in victory**- and say as in 1 Cor 15:54-55

Death has been swallowed up in victory."

⁵⁵ "Where, O death, is your victory?

Where, O death, is your sting?"

One final challenge - this morning - *if someone was in the middle of the road and a truck was coming towards them - you would make sure they got out of the way of the truck, wouldn't you?*

So, if you know someone who doesn't yet believe in Jesus - and they are going to die without knowing Jesus - are you going to let them miss out on eternal life - and get run over by the truck of sin and death? Or are you going to tell them how they can have the punishment for sin removed and how they can live forever with Jesus?

As our NSW Moderator - Richard Keith reminded us the other day

"The church buildings might be closed this Easter - but the Tomb is open - He is not here, He is risen!"

Let's pray...