

42-24-06.wpd --Resurrection of Broken Dreams

Easter, doubt, unbelief, resurrection, dreams, understanding

Luke 24:36-45

Easter tells us that God's plan for us in Christ is not just a dream.

INTRODUCTION: (text as Scripture reading)

--The disciples spent 3 years dreaming. *Messiah* had come. *God's Kingdom* would be established. *Roman oppression* would end. *Truth and justice* would reign. They were to be *leaders in the new order*.

--It's easy to understand the disciples' dismay, after the Cross. Despite the miracles they saw Jesus perform, He didn't escape the death plotted by His enemies. They had watched their dream die.

--It's easy to see how they doubted reports of His Resurrection. [We've had dreams that seemed real, until we awoke. If it was a bad dream, we were glad to wake up. If it was a good one, we wish it could come true.] The disciples spent 3 years in a good dream that seemed real. They spent 3 days getting used to the idea that it wasn't. Now Jesus walked back into their lives. Was it another dream? No, it was resurrection! In the same way, **HOM.idea**.

I. Christ's Resurrection Confirms Real Peace for Humanity

- A. When Jesus appeared, he said, "*Peace be with you.*" Instead of having peace, **v.37**, *They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost.*
- B. Why do *ghosts* trigger fear among humans? [AmHerDict for *ghost*: "The spirit of a dead person, especially one believed to appear in bodily likeness to living persons or to haunt former habitats."] (Why be afraid of ghosts? Without our bodies, that's what we are. would be.)
- C. But our fear is a clue to our hope and dream for immortal human flesh-- 2 Cor 5:4, For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. (It's why we fear death, and why we wish our departed loved ones to "rest in peace", because in human thinking death and peace are enemies.)

TRANS: There is no truce in the war between our bodies and death. But there is a pronouncement of peace on the lips of the One who, by His own death, defeated death. "*Peace be with you.*" It's not just words. It's not imaginary. **God's plan for us in Christ is not just a dream.**

II. Christ's Resurrection Confirms That Our Hopes Are Real

- A. By demonstrating that He was not "*a ghost*," Jesus confirmed not only that their Messianic hopes were real, but that the human hope of resurrection into real physical bodies was not just a dream.
 1. He showed this by allowing them to touch Him-- "Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have." ([God clothes us in skin, a lovely tissue that allows us to communicate with others physically and emotionally by touch.] In saying, "*Touch me*," Jesus was showing that He had real live skin, in common with us. Yes, it was *glorified*, it *could walk through walls*, but it was real, physical human skin.)
 2. When "they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, 'Do you have anything here to eat?'"
 - a. With no real teeth, ghosts can't eat real food. Jesus could eat it, and in His glorified body, digest it more efficiently than before. [In Back to the Future, the time-travel car needed Plutonium to function. In the 2nd movie, the same car had been altered in the future to get the same energy from pieces of garbage from a re-cycle bin. Plus, it now could fly!] Eating in resurrected bodies is going to be "out of this world."
 - b. Also, Christ ate with the disciples to assure them that His resurrection did not removed Him from full identification with humanity. [A meal is often a way to have fellowship.] His eating was a foreshadowing of the future meals He had promised to have with them in His Kingdom-- Mark 14:25, "I tell you the truth, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it anew in the kingdom of God."

TRANS: **God's plan for us in Christ is not just a dream.** Every time we eat at the Lord's Table, we anticipate the day when Christ's own had will give us the bread and cup. It will really happen! It's not a dream.

III. Christ's Resurrection Confirms the Promise of Scripture

- A. Jesus said, in **v.44**, "*Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me...*"
- B. The Hebrew language itself is very concrete in nature, and the whole OT consistently has a very physical view of human life. (In His resurrected appearance, Jesus pointed not to His presence but to His physicalness, because this, and only this, fulfilled OT hope.)
- C. It says, "*he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures.*"
 1. The Church began with a clear understanding of human destiny

as revealed in Scripture, but it got sidetracked, often emphasizing only the *spiritual*, often to the exclusion of the *physical*.

2. What does the Bible say-- 2 Pet 3:13, But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to **a new heaven and a new earth**, the home of righteousness. That alone can be *home* for humans, because we are both *spiritual* and *physical*, and Christ's resurrection in immortal human flesh guarantees that we're going to stay that way!

CONCLUSION:

--Lots of meditation on the Incarnation, I believe, has gotten me back on the right track. Walt Whitman wrote a poem called "*I Sing the Body Electric*" in praise of the human body. His poem is eloquent, but it falls short of *resurrection hope*, so I wrote, "*I Sing the Body Immortal*"

I sing the body immortal,
 inborn longing, reflexive wish, certain vision
 of flesh immune to death's decay and death.
 Ignoring hope falsely borrowed
 from the fate of angels, holy or fallen
 (who never knew pilgrimage with matter,
 were never clothed in Adam's flesh,
 will never indwell these ashes from stars),
 I sing a physical resurrection
 and not some disembodied destiny.

I sing the body immortal,
 the lifting of sin's curse, end of creation's groaning,
 sole specific hope of human souls.

I sing the invitation from the Son of God and Man,
 daring to don the image of Himself
 to live our life and die our death
 to glorify that prototypic form,
 rising in it, ascending in it, returning in it,
 graciously calling us to join His reign
 within and above a seeming infinitude of Space
 strewn with myriad star-crowded galaxies
 waiting to be explored in the endless adventure
 of spirits wrapped immortally in cosmic clay.

I sing the body immortal,
 the new birth of God's originality
 in blowing His own breath into lifeless dust,
 eternal fulfillment of a divine design
 far beyond the wildest dreams imagined

in Earth's long history of sages and prophets.
 I sing a God-like spirit-soul humanity
 forever wed to worlds of molecules
 with wiggling toes and skipping feet
 and kneeling knees and dancing legs,
 with slender trunk and sturdy back,
 with distinguishing pubic shaft or cleft
 and unblemished skin over muscle and limb,
 with masculine breadth in shoulders and chest
 or delicate fullness in feminine breasts
 and sparse hair, or missing, with color returned,
 with hands that can clasp and build and play
 and fingers that write and can sculpt and caress,
 with neck that can turn at the sound of a bird
 and eyes that are dazzled by beauty and form
 and ears that still revel in music and song
 and nose for enchantment with nature's perfumes,
 with mouth that can taste and delight in sweet fare
 and lips that can speak with a voice or a kiss.

I sing body and soul made finally whole,
 the mind and the will incarnate, connected,
 displaying the glory of God's naked image
 clad shamelessly in Jesus' merits alone,
 enjoying, encompassing, expressing
 eternal life in the true bodily resurrection
 promised by the resurrected Son of God and Man.
 Because of Christ Jesus, Firstborn from the dead,
 I sing the body immortal. (DLH, 5/5/2005)

Luke 24:36-45 (NIV) While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." {37} They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. {38} He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? {39} Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have." {40} When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. {41} And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, "Do you have anything here to eat?" {42} They gave him a piece of broiled fish, {43} and he took it and ate it in their presence. {44} He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms." {45} Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures.