

Sunday April 24th 2011
Resurrection Sunday
No Resurrection

1). Ps 11:3 *If the foundations are destroyed, What can the righteous do?*

a). Our scripture here from Proverbs asks a very pertinent question as we know that our pursuit of the Kingdom must be firmly grounded on the correct foundation and if that foundation is ‘destroyed’, then simply, ‘How would we build and what would this mean for our entrance into the Kingdom?’

b). With this in mind, as we think about the day we celebrate today, the day that marks the resurrection of our Lord, perhaps we could consider the implications of destroying the foundation for this event, the foundation that we find in –
Ge 1:9 ¶ *Then God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear"; and it was so. 10 And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas. And God saw that it was good. 11 Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth"; and it was so. 12 And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. 13 So the evening and the morning were the third day.*

c). What is taught in foundation is that it is only by the power of God, by the Word of God, through the Spirit of God, that the dry land comes from the place of death, and it is only as a result of this joint action that fruit is produced.

d). And of course this is an event that takes place on the 3rd Day, giving us the foundational picture of resurrection from the dead that finds its fulfillment in Christ. Without resurrection, typified in the land coming from beneath the water, there can be no fruit production and without fruit production there is no entrance into the Kingdom.

e). Destroy the foundation and you remove the picture of Christ’s resurrection – and conversely, remove Christ’s resurrection and you destroy the foundational picture.

f). Whichever way you look at this the end result is to call into question the power of God to overcome the power of death. God becomes impotent and His word of no consequence and there is no possibility for us to walk in newness of life, thereby being fruitless and separated from the Kingdom.

2). And so considering all that we have studied in past weeks about false teaching it will come as no surprise that we would find in scripture the record of a denial of the resurrection of Christ which of itself must deny that recorded in foundation. And as with all false teaching it appears within the context of those who are in pursuit of the Kingdom for the purpose of overthrowing their faith so as to prevent their entry into the Kingdom – this is the very situation that we find recorded with respect to the church in Corinth – 1Co 15:1 ¶ *Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, 2 by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you--unless you believed in vain. 3 For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, 5 and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. 6 After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. 7 After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. 8 Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time. 9 For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. 11 Therefore, whether it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.*

a). And what we see here recorded in our scripture at the beginning of Chapter 15 is exactly what we would expect to find – ‘first of all’ Paul preached, *that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, 5 and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve.*

b). Having received and believed the gospel of grace they then were presented with the gospel of the glories of Christ, a gospel that would draw from the OT scriptures and would of necessity include teaching surrounding the 3rd Day in Genesis Chapter 1 - *Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, 2 by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you--unless you believed in vain.*

c). And yet despite this solid foundational teaching we find rising up within the group a false teaching - 1Co 15:12 ¶ *Now if Christ is preached that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?*

d). Now this is not a new idea coming to the forefront at this particular time, but rather an age old lie that was already in place at the Lord’s first advent in order to prepare the way for denying the fact of His resurrection –

Ac 23:8 *For Sadducees say that there is no resurrection*

e). To say that there is no resurrection from the dead would really be the same as asking the question, ‘Where is the promise of His coming?’ – Both are doctrines of demons – placing all our attention on the present world and our present circumstances rather than on the world to come and denying the transforming power of God in our lives through a resurrected life.

3). Our scripture continues - 1Co 15:13 *But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. 14 And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty. 15 Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up--if in fact the dead do not rise. 16 For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. 17 And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! 18 Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. 19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.*

a). Now think about this for a moment - if Christ is not risen then everything that has been preached to you over the last six years has been a lie – which would mean that my preaching and our faith is both empty and futile.

b). Our faith would be empty and futile because our faith is in the hope that is set before us – a hope that is absolutely contingent upon the resurrection of Christ - 1Pe 1:3 ¶ *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

c). Heb 11:1 ¶ *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*

d). And here we have it clearly – we have been born again to a ‘living hope’ – a hope that is alive as it is in the person of Jesus Christ through, or as a result of, His resurrection from the dead.

e). And so, if Christ is not risen there is no living hope and therefore, there is no 7th Day and consequently there is no inheritance. In fact if Christ is not risen then Jesus was not the Christ at all as the OT scriptures clearly teach that the Christ would be raised from the dead on the 3rd Day - Ps 16:8 ¶ *I have set the LORD always before me; Because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved. 9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will rest in hope. 10 For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. 11 You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.*

f). Ge 22:4 *Then on the third day Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off. 5 And Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you."*

g). And if Jesus is not the Christ, then His death and shed blood did not take away our sin so as to provide for our eternal salvation, and nor could we now have a High Priest in the heavens to whom we can boldly go in time of need and we would remain dead in our trespasses and sins even to this day.

h). If there is no resurrection from the dead, then all those who have died, from Adam to Abraham, will not be raised on the 3rd Day – all those who make up the Children of Israel, from Abraham to Christ, will not be raised on the 3rd Day; they will not find themselves at the head of the nations, all the nations of the earth will not therefore be blessed and God will have no wife – we can hear in this once again - 2Pe 3:3 ¶ *knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, 4 and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation."*

4). That individuals, other than Christ, have been raised from the dead is clearly recorded in Scripture - So let's first look at an example involving Elijah – 1Ki 17:17 ¶ *Now it happened after these things that the son of the woman who owned the house became sick. And his sickness was so serious that there was no breath left in him. 18 So she said to Elijah, "What have I to do with you, O man of God? Have you come to me to bring my sin to remembrance, and to kill my son?" 19 And he said to her, "Give me your son." So he took him out of her arms and carried him to the upper room where he was staying, and laid him on his own bed. 20 Then he cried out to the LORD and said, "O LORD my God, have You also brought tragedy on the widow with whom I lodge, by killing her son?" 21 And he stretched himself out on the child three times, and cried out to the LORD and said, "O LORD my God, I pray, let this child's soul come back to him." 22 Then the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came back to him, and he revived. 23 And Elijah took the child and brought him down from the upper room into the house, and gave him to his mother. And Elijah said, "See, your son lives!"*

a). So let's note the details here – the child dies, Elijah intercedes on the child's behalf with God, God returns life to the lifeless body, the boy is then taken by Elijah from the place where he was lying and given back to his mother.

b). What we see here with the widow's son is very similar to that which we find in another example, this time involving Peter in - Ac 9:36 ¶ *At Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, which is translated Dorcas. This woman was full of good works and charitable deeds which she did. 37 But it happened in*

those days that she became sick and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room. 38 And since Lydda was near Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to him, imploring him not to delay in coming to them. 39 Then Peter arose and went with them. When he had come, they brought him to the upper room. And all the widows stood by him weeping, showing the tunics and garments which Dorcas had made while she was with them. 40 But Peter put them all out, and knelt down and prayed. And turning to the body he said, "Tabitha, arise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up. 41 Then he gave her his hand and lifted her up; and when he had called the saints and widows, he presented her alive.

c). As we look at this we see the same sequence of events – Dorcas dies, Peter intercedes for her with God, God returns life to the lifeless body, Dorcas is then taken by Peter from the place where she was lying and given back to the saints and widows.

d). And again with respect to Jesus and the raising of Lazarus –
Joh 11:39 Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days." 40 Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?" 41 Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. 42 "And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me." 43 Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!" 44 And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Loose him, and let him go."

e). Lazarus dies, Jesus intercedes for him, life returns to the lifeless body and Lazarus, still ‘bound hand and foot with grave clothes, and his face wrapped with a cloth’ emerges from his tomb to be united with Martha and Mary – an event that is in itself a type of what yet awaits Israel in the 3rd Day.

f). These three examples of resurrection are strikingly similar in their details and all have three other significant features in common. Although the widow’s son, Dorcas and Lazarus were all resurrected from the dead they were, firstly, resurrected in the same body of flesh, bone and blood that they previously had which means, secondly, they all died again at a later point in time. And, thirdly, none of them were able to raise themselves from the dead.

5). Now if we keep these things in mind and then look at the details of the resurrection of Christ we will see a striking difference, a difference that is Divinely orchestrated to demonstrate the infallibility of its proof.

a). Let's start with the detail of Christ's burial - Joh 19:38 ¶ *After this, Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took the body of Jesus. 39 And Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds. 40 Then they took the body of Jesus, and bound it in strips of linen with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury. 41 Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. 42 So there they laid Jesus, because of the Jews' Preparation Day, for the tomb was nearby.*

b). The detail we need to note here is the mixture of myrrh and aloes that weighed about a hundred pounds that was spread upon the body of Jesus that was then wrapped with strips of linen.

c). I am sure the picture is obvious – Christ's body was encased with the spices and the strips of linen and would have resembled after some fashion an Egyptian mummy.

d). Now it would be impossible to say how long it would have taken for the spices to become hardened, but given the arid conditions even within a short period of time there would have been some degree of solidifying.

e). So keeping this picture in our mind let's now move to the first day of the week following the Lord's crucifixion - Joh 20:1 ¶ *Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. 2 Then she ran and came to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him." 3 Peter therefore went out, and the other disciple, and were going to the tomb. 4 So they both ran together, and the other disciple outran Peter and came to the tomb first. 5 And he, stooping down and looking in, saw the linen cloths lying there; yet he did not go in. 6 Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb; and he saw the linen cloths lying there, 7 and the handkerchief that had been around His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded together in a place by itself. 8 Then the other disciple, who came to the tomb first, went in also; and he saw and believed.*

f). What was it that Peter and John saw in that tomb that caused them to believe that Christ was raised from the dead? In essence, the empty shell of spices and linen strips that had held His body.

g). The linen strips had not been unwrapped, the hundred pounds of spices had not been scraped off, they were in exactly the same shape as the Lord's body, but His body was no longer there. And the napkin that had been around His head was not in the same place in order to reveal the empty shell.

h). Jesus hadn't, like the widow's son, like Dorcas or Lazarus, come to life in the place He was laying, unlike Lazarus He didn't have to have the stone removed to let Him out or need help with His grave clothes. And there was no third party intercession on His behalf – Jesus raised Himself from the dead –

Joh 11:25 *Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life*

And He did this in conjunction with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Please get the picture really clearly – Jesus didn't 'wake up' to find someone praying for Him who would then help Him walk out of the tomb – no, in the minutest particle of time, in the twinkling of an eye, His body, soul and spirit were instantly reunited at a location outside of the tomb. One moment His body was there the next it wasn't. It is that simple.

i). And as for the stone in front of the tomb – that had been taken away to let the disciples in, not to let Jesus out.

j). So how can we know it happened this way? Because of the events later that day - Joh 20:19 ¶ *Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, "Peace be with you."*

k). The doors were shut and yet Jesus stood in their midst. He didn't walk through the wall, He was just instantly there; an event that was repeated again some eight days later when Thomas was present.

l). And how is this possible? Because the risen Christ had the same body of flesh and bone as previously, but now the life giving force within Him was no longer the blood, as His blood was poured out for our sins, but the Holy Spirit. And a spirit animated body, as we see with Jesus, is neither bound by time nor space, nor was He to die a second time - Re 1:18 *"I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.*

m). Let's look at this by calling to mind a scripture we have previously looked at in - 1Pe 3:18 ¶ *For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh [His body of flesh, bone and blood] but made alive by the Spirit, [animated by the Spirit not the blood] 19 by whom also [in His Spirit animated body] He went and preached to the spirits in prison, 20 who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water.*

n). Here, we will remember, we see Jesus appearing in Tartarus in His Spirit animated, resurrected body to declare to the fallen angels who had cohabited with the daughters of men during the days of Noah that not only was the Seed of the Woman now here, but had also proven Himself worthy, through His death and resurrection to redeem that which the first Adam had forfeited.

o). And in order to make this proclamation Jesus didn't have to make the journey to the center of the earth – He was just there.

6). Then if we continue in our scripture from Peter - 1Pe 3:21 ¶ *There is also an antitype which now saves us--baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 22 who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.*

a). Now let's remember what we see here – the antitype of the flood of Noah, baptism, is what saves us. We know that we are not talking about eternal salvation, nor are we talking about a literal immersion in water, but rather the process that brings about the salvation of our soul through keeping our old man in the place of death. Dying to the flesh, pictured in baptism, will give us 'the answer of a good conscience toward God' when we stand at the Judgment Seat. And according to our scripture this is only made possible 'through the resurrection of Jesus Christ'.

b). Ro 6:4 *Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*

c). Now here is an important key for us – if Christ is not risen then we cannot keep our old man in the place of death, because doing so is an action that can only be accomplished in the spirit as a result of the work of the Spirit through the Word. Therefore if Christ is not risen our soul cannot be saved, and if our soul cannot be saved then it doesn't matter how we live.

d). Do you remember what Jesus said in - Joh 16:7 ¶ *"Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. 8 "And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9 "of sin, because they do not believe in Me; 10 "of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; 11 "of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. 12 "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13 "However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. 14 "He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. 15 "All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.*

e). If Christ is not risen then He could not send the Holy Spirit as the sending of the Spirit is dependent upon His 'going away'. If the Spirit is not sent then none of the things detailed in these verses are possible.

f). But right here is where we should jump for joy because our own experience is witness to the fact that the Holy Spirit was sent, is here, and dwells within us to guide us into all truth. He has taken what is Christ's and declared it to us. And in this we can testify to the veracity of God's word. We can with boldness and absolute certainty shout from the rooftops – Christ is risen from the dead.

g). 1Co 15:20 ¶ *But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. 21 For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.*

7). Church, Christ is risen from the dead – our faith is not empty and is not futile – it is the very essence of a resurrected life. Our hope is certain and irrevocable, and the prize still to be won. So if you are in a dark place today it is time to come up out of the grave and burst forth into His glorious light - Eph 5:14 *Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light."*

a). For the 3rd Day is almost upon us when the dead in Christ will rise first and then those who remain to be caught up together with Him. Now is not the time to quit, to turn around, to give up – to fall asleep – now is the time to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God that He might exalt us in due time – now is the time to have the boldness and determination of Caleb and declare before the Lord – ‘Give me that mountain’.

b). Ro 6:5 *For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. 7 For he who has died has been freed from sin. 8 Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, 9 knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. 10 For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. 11 Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. 12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. 13 And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. 14 For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.*

c). The Lord is risen, He is risen indeed – and because of this astounding reality we are able to choose to walk in the power of His resurrection every day of our life as we move inexorably towards His Kingdom. Do not be deceived my beloved brethren.

d). On this Resurrection Sunday let this continue to be our prayer –

Eph 1:17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, 18 the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, 19 and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power 20 which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.