

## **Luke 24:36b-48**

Some cynic has said there are two certainties in life. One is death and the other is taxes. Luke, the evangelist and doctor friend of the apostle Paul would add a third and do so with a great deal more certainty. His assertion is that the Christ had to die and rise and that the preaching of repentance and forgiveness must happen in all the world.

And on what authority does he say those things? He says it on the authority of a resurrected man, Jesus of Nazareth.

### **The Authority of Jesus**

Jesus had shown his authority by his teaching, healings, casting out demons, control over nature and even raising people from death, but all those things combined was nothing like the authority in this reading. He had been crucified, dead and buried and now he had been resurrected. He had appeared to the gathering of disciples and stood among them. They were first startled to see him, then frightened and then thought they had seen a spirit.

Jesus addressed their fears and inward questionings. He showed them his hands and feet that would have had the markings of his crucifixion. He then invited them to take hold of hands and feet. He wanted them to be absolutely certain that he was of flesh and bones and was no ephemeral spirit. He then asked them for something to eat and before them ate a piece of broiled fish. This was no ghostly apparition. It was Jesus alive from death in his resurrection body.

## **Luke 24:36b-48**

Nor does Luke allow for any doubt in the reader's mind whether it be Theophilus, the first reader, or we who read over Theophilus' shoulder, that this is the resurrected Jesus he is writing about. At the beginning of his second volume he wrote that Jesus "presented himself alive after his passion by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days, and speaking of the kingdom of God" (Acts 1:3).

And this resurrected Jesus is the common testimony of all the New Testament. Luke's friend, Paul the Apostle, wrote about Jesus saying that (1 Corinthians 15:5-8) he rose on the third day and appeared to Peter, then to the twelve, then to more than five hundred brothers at one time, then to James then to all the apostles and then finally to Paul himself.

So when Jesus says things about the Christ and about the preaching he says them with all the authority of a man resurrected from the dead and alive for evermore. Who can match that? Can there be any greater authority in our world of life and death? The answers are obvious. Well what does he say?

### **What must happen to the Christ?**

The Israel of Jesus' time had great hopes for their Christ. Their general expectation was for a Christ who would raise an army and expel the Romans from their land. There had been such claimants to that expectation. There had been a Theudas and four hundred men had joined him but when he was killed his followers were scattered and his cause came to nothing. Then there had been Judas, a Galilean, who also gathered some followers and when he was killed his followers were dispersed and his undertaking came to nothing. (Acts 5:36-37). These Christs were "worldly Christs" and the type of Christ that the devil had

## **Luke 24:36b-48**

tempted Jesus to be. By contrast Jesus asserted he was the Christ of God and three things would characterise him.

### **Firstly God's Christ must suffer.**

During Jesus' earthly ministry Luke records at least three times when Jesus openly and patiently taught his disciples that he must die. On one occasion he asked his disciples who the crowds were saying he was. After he heard their reports, he then asked them who they thought he was. Peter as spokesman said he was the Christ. Jesus accepted the answer. He then went on to say as Christ, he must suffer many things, must be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes and must be killed (Lk 9:20-22). He again prophesied this death following his transfiguration and then again as he approached Jerusalem with a large following. (Lk 9:44, 18:31-33)

### **Secondly God's Christ must rise.**

Although the greater emphasis of Jesus prophecy was on his death because rejection seemed so unlikely as the crowds and disciples continued to grow as his Galilean ministry and journey to Jerusalem progressed -- a resurrection would also be hard to believe. In fact when the resurrected Jesus was walking with the two dispirited disciples on the way to Emmaus, they told him they had hoped Jesus would have been the one to redeem Israel (Lk 24:21)—and this was said after there had been rumours that he had been raised!

## **Luke 24:36b-48**

### **Thirdly this was according to God's Old Testament plan.**

When Jesus spoke about the necessity of his death and resurrection he spoke about it as a divine necessity. Now that he was risen he explained more clearly why they **must** happen. To the two on the way to Emmaus he began with Moses and all the prophets and interpreted to them how these had to be fulfilled in himself. Similarly, when he spoke to the gathered disciples he reminded them that everything written about him in the law of Moses and the prophets and the Psalms had to be fulfilled in him.

God's Christ had to die and had to rise because God through the law, prophets and psalms had revealed his plan that had just been fulfilled. But that was not the only thing that must happen. We are also told what must happen to the preaching.

### **What must happen to the preaching?**

Because the Christ had died and been raised according to God's Old Testament plan, forgiveness of sins was now available to all nations in the Name of Jesus if people would repent. God through his law, prophets and psalms had also revealed this must happen.

Luke in his second volume, the Acts of the Apostles, tells how this preaching began in Jerusalem, made its way through Judea and Samaria and onto Rome, under the powerful directing of the promised Holy Spirit. Not only Jews but also the nations heard the good news of forgiveness upon repentance and responded.

## **Luke 24:36b-48**

### **What should be our response?**

Today still the gospel goes out and it will continue to go out until Jesus returns. It cannot be stopped because God through the risen Christ said it must happen according to God's plan revealed in scripture.

Two things need to be done. Firstly we must repent and look to the crucified and risen Christ to receive forgiveness, and secondly work with God for the progress of his unstoppable gospel preaching until Christ returns.