

April 24, 2011
"Death's Impossible Dream"
Acts 2:22-24

In a six page poem written about death, John Bunyan, the author of Pilgrim's Progress called "Death" "a King rampant and stout" one who "doth rout" – the strong, the beautiful, the wise, the fool, everyone! Even "the lion-faced" brave man becomes a pussy cat in Death's sight.

Yet, even Death, has an "Impossible Dream" a foe he cannot keep down – Our Lord Jesus Christ!

Why cannot / could not death keep Jesus down?

I. Because God ordained, prophesied He would rise –

1. This is why Peter quotes from Psalm 16 –

²⁵ "For David says concerning Him: 'I foresaw the LORD always before my face, For He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken. ²⁶ Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad; moreover my flesh also will rest in hope. ²⁷ For You will not leave my soul in Hades, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. ²⁸ You have made known to me the ways of life; You will make me full of joy in Your presence.' ²⁹ "Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. ³⁰ "Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, ³¹ "he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. (Act 2:25-31 NKJ)

Peter is saying, in Psalm 16, David is not referring to himself, he argues he cannot be, because David died (his tomb was still there) ... he is saying these verses have to refer to Christ, Who is risen –

"This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. (Acts 2:32 NKJ)

2. These verses therefore speak prophetically of Jesus' faith in regard to His cross and resurrection –

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. (Psa 16:8-11 NKJ)

II. Because Jesus was / is sinless death had no power over Him –

"O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?" ⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. (1 Corinthians 15:55-56 NKJ)

1. An ungodly world things death and sin are unrelated; death is just (according to them) the natural end of life.

2. Yet, Biblically, death is the just consequence of sin –

"but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." (Genesis 2:17 NKJ)

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 6:23 NKJ)

3. Jesus' death was because of our sin –

For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (2 Corinthians 5:21 NKJ)

4. Yet, He Who knew no sin, committed no sin and so death had no claim on Him or power over Him –

Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. ¹⁵ For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. (Hebrews 4:14-15 NKJ)

5. Neither did the Devil, have any power (over Jesus) –

Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, (Hebrews 2:14 NKJ)

6. *This is what Jesus was talking about in John 14:30 –*
"I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me. (John 14:30 NKJ)

What was Jesus talking about in John 14:30?

- A. *The ruler of this world (according to this verse) is Satan, the Devil*
- B. *He (the devil) comes with the power of death – Hebrews 2:14*
- C. *Yet, he (the devil) has "nothing in" Jesus because Jesus is perfectly SINLESS!*

When Satan throws his fiery darts of temptation at us, we often burst in flames because our sin nature is like dry wood and gasoline! Yet, he has "nothing in" Jesus – fiery darts at Him are hitting cold stainless steel. Nor for this same reason does death have any power to keep Him down.

III. *Yet there is a third reason death has no power over our Lord, He is the Prince of Life –*

"For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, (John 5:26 NKJ)

And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. (John 6:35 NKJ)

⁴⁷ **"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life. (John 6:47 NKJ)**

But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. (John 6:68 NKJ)

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. (John 11:25 NKJ)

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. (John 14:6 NKJ)

"But you denied the Holy One and the Just, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you,¹⁵ "and killed the Prince of life, whom God raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses. (Acts 3:14-15 NKJ)

Jesus could not be kept down by death, it was impossible because of WHO / WHAT Jesus is: The Son of God; the Bread of Life; the Resurrection and the Life, the Way, the Truth and the LIFE, the Prince of Life!

IV. *What does this mean for us? We can have LIFE too! Just by trusting in Jesus ---*

"He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." (John 3:36 NKJ)

1. *This is according to His grace and mercy, not our good works -*

And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins,² in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,³ among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.⁴ But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,⁵ even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),⁶ and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,⁷ that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God,⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast.¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:1-10 NKJ)

2. *This is our Resurrection mission from Him –*

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."**

²⁰ **When He had said this, He showed them *His* hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.²¹ So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you."**

²² **And when He had said this, He breathed on *them*, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. (Joh 20:19-22 NKJ)**