

Zion Bible-Presbyterian Church

Special Paper No.5



Raising the Dead

By Pastor Quek Swee Hwa

What This Paper is About

From time to time we hear claims that someone has been raised from the dead. But the evidence offered is often hard to verify. This paper examines the claim that a man by the name of Daniel Ekechukwu in Africa was actually raised from the dead by Rev Reinhard Bonnke (see below pp.6-7).

Rev Bonnke (see below pp.7-8). is no stranger to Singapore, having been here on a number of occasions to conduct crusades. Recently he conducted a crusade on March 8 & 9, 2002, at the Singapore Expo. During this crusade a video presentation was made of him raising the dead.

What the Bible Says About Raising the Dead and about Lengthening One's Life

King Hezekiah (2 Kings 20:1-11)

1 In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live.

2 Then he turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the LORD, saying,

3 I beseech thee, O LORD, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done *that which is* good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore.

4 And it came to pass, afore Isaiah was gone out into the middle court, that the word of the LORD came to him, saying,

5 Turn again, and tell Hezekiah the captain of my people, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the LORD.

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6 And I will add unto thy days fifteen years; and I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.

7 And Isaiah said, Take a lump of figs. And they took and laid *it* on the boil, and he recovered.

8 And Hezekiah said unto Isaiah, What *shall be* the sign that the LORD will heal me, and that I shall go up into the house of the LORD the third day?

9 And Isaiah said, This sign shalt thou have of the LORD, that the LORD will do the thing that he hath spoken: shall the shadow go forward ten degrees, or go back ten degrees?

10 And Hezekiah answered, It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees: nay, but let the shadow return backward ten degrees.

11 And Isaiah the prophet cried unto the LORD: and he brought the shadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down in the dial of Ahaz.

Comments

Hezekiah was given 15 more years so that he could witness the greatness of God in delivering the Israelites from the superior might of the Assyrian king. As far as his work was concerned it was complete. But God wanted him to strengthen his faith before he went home to Him.

The Son of the Widow at Nain (Luke 7:11-17)

11 And it came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain; and many of his disciples went with him, and much people.

12 Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her.

13 And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.

14 And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare *him* stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.

15 And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother.

16 And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people.

17 And this rumour of him went forth throughout all Judaea, and throughout all the region round about.

Comments

The dead man was raised from the dead because God wanted to show His glory to the people. Also the man's mother was a widow and needed him to look after her. The Jews

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do not embalm the dead like we do. They merely wrapped them up, inserting aromatic spices in between the folds of the grave clothes.

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Lazarus (John 11:1-45; 12:1-2, 9-11)

1 Now a certain *man* was sick, *named* Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.

2 (It was *that* Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.)

3 Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.

4 When Jesus heard *that*, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.

5 Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.

6 When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was.

7 Then after that saith he to *his* disciples, Let us go into Judaea again.

8 *His* disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again?

9 Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world.

10 But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.

11 These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.

12 Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well.

13 Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep.

14 Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.

15 And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him.

16 Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellow disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.

17 Then when Jesus came, he found that he had *lain* in the grave four days already.

18 Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off:

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19 And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.

20 Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary sat *still* in the house.

21 Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

22 But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give *it* thee.

23 Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again.

24 Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.

25 Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

26 And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

27 She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.

28 And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee.

29 As soon as she heard *that*, she arose quickly, and came unto him.

30 Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him.

31 The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there.

32 Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

33 When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled, {was troubled: Gr. he troubled himself}

34 And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see.

35 Jesus wept.

36 Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him!

37 And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?

38 Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.

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39 Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been *dead* four days.

40 Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?

41 Then they took away the stone *from the place* where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up *his* eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.

42 And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said *it*, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.

43 And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.

44 And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

45 Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him....

John 12:1 Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead.

2 There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him....

9 Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there: and they came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead.

10 But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death;

11 Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.

Comments

Lazarus was actually dead for four days and he was already placed in the family niche. When he became alive again, he had no 'message' to tell the people. The focus was not so much on him and his experience but on Jesus. His resurrection triggered off a reaction among the Jewish leaders which led eventually to Jesus' arrest, crucifixion and death. Lazarus was to have been killed also but God spared him, though He did not spare His own Son, whose death was necessary for our salvation.

Dorcas (Acts 9:36-42)

36 Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did.

37 And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died: whom when they had washed, they laid *her* in an upper chamber.

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38 And forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring *him* that he would not delay to come to them.

39 Then Peter arose and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and shewing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them.

40 But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning *him* to the body said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up.

41 And he gave her *his* hand, and lifted her up, and when he had called the saints and widows, presented her alive.

42 And it was known throughout all Joppa; and many believed in the Lord.

Comments

Dorcas was laid out on her bed. She was not yet prepared for burial. Unlike the manner Paul healed Eutychus (see below) Peter did not touch the body of a dead woman. When he spoke to her, it was with firm faith that God will raise her back to life. Notice that the Scriptures are consistent in presenting the healed person as silent. It does not indulge in speculation and suggest that the healing was meant for the repentance of unbelievers.

Eutychus (Acts 20:9-12)

9 And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep: and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead.

10 And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing *him* said, Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him.

11 When he therefore was come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed.

12 And they brought the young man alive, and were not a little comforted.

Comments

The death fall of Eutychus must be serious. Undoubtedly there would have been broken bones, etc. But healing had taken place. Paul embraced the young man when he healed him.

The Desire To Live On

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Death is a fearful thing for many. Some, however, are unafraid and their reluctance to leave this life is associated more with responsibilities that are not fully discharged toward children, parents and others. Sometimes it is an unfulfilled aspiration in life. There is no fear of death, only a desire that when death comes it may be peaceful, with as minimal pain or discomfort as possible. There is nothing wrong with such feelings.

But what we must avoid is the tendency to tell God what He must do. We must curb the desire to override God's will and insist that we must live on 'forever' on this earth, living a useful, healthy and enjoyable life of course.

Is it wrong to ask for a longer life? Indeed not! God granted Hezekiah his request for more years. He gave Lazarus a new life; also the son of the widow at Nain, Lazarus, Dorcas, and Eutychus. A longer life is for God to give, not for us to insist.

Christians welcome death because they know that beyond death is a life far better the best life on planet earth. They are not afraid of death because God has promised them eternal life and He will keep His promise.

What is claimed concerning the raising of Daniel Ekechukwu

1. He actually died as a result of an auto accident and underwent embalming.
2. His wife received the conviction from God that her husband would be returned alive to her.
3. He was raised back to life at a meeting led by Reinhard Bonnke.
4. He had a prophetic word for unbelievers after his resurrection. On the way to the hospital, he testified that he went to heaven, then to hell and was given a second chance to live again. What God denied the rich man, in the story told by Jesus, was now granted to Daniel E.

Our Answer

**This answer is subject to confirmation when I am able to examine concrete evidence presented, but that must be evidence beyond that presented in the video made by Reinhard Bonnke's organization, CfAN.*

1. For proper verification of what happened, CfAN should have invited a non-partisan party to record its findings. Daniel E's death was documented, but not his resurrection. The testimony of the mortician (embalmer) cannot be accepted as proof of Daniel's resurrection. A full medical examination ought to have been conducted and presented as evidence. The description of life returning to the man when the pastors began praying for him does not tell us much. We are given sparse details and the final picture is vague and uncertain. Video footage is insufficient and cannot be relied on as conclusive evidence. Did Daniel die again? It seemed cruel to bring him back to life only to subject him to another death.
2. I did some investigation and learned that in the embalming process, which lasts about three hours, the fluids in the body are pumped out after the jugular vein has been punctured. In the process certain organs, like the liver, are sometimes punctured and rendered useless. All the spaces are then filled with formaldehyde, a colourless gas used in solution as a preservative and disinfectant. The wound is sewn back and secured without the usual healing process. We need to ascertain what is the condition of Daniel's internal organs. What happened to the formaldehyde that was pumped into this body? What about the blood and fluids that were drained off?
3. What bothers me greatly is the distortion of Scriptures.
 - a. The rich man was an unbeliever. He was denied a second chance on a matter of principle. God said that he had sent prophets and others to proclaim His truth to

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the people and to call them to repentance and belief. Daniel was a believer. It is suggested that God has set aside this principle and uses miraculous happenings like this, rather than (by implication) His revealed Word, to speak to man. This is a favourite theme of the advocates of such practices. We must note that the two cases are VERY DIFFERENT! By no stretch of the imagination can we compare them and draw out truth from them. There will be no other chance given once a person has died. God does not reveal in His Word enduring truth only to contradict it with a vision, or anything else.

- b. Note that Lazarus was never taken to hell. The rich man saw Abraham and Lazarus "from afar". There is a great gulf fixed and no human being can cross from one to the other.
4. I have not seen the video. But the explanation given has given me cause to doubt the truthfulness of the account and Singaporeans are having wool pulled over their eyes. Better than any video, this event, if it really happened can be easily proven. Send Daniel E. around the world and let the truth be known. I would like to insist that the man, if he is still alive, should be presented as the material witness and be interviewed by an independent party. Of course if he is now dead again, there is no way to verify this and this is so, so typical of the way things are exaggerated, twisted, and we are expected to swallow all this nonsense.

So What Shall We Do?

1. Don't be easily deceived by unusual happenings.
2. Mark those who propound such ideas and practice such things.
3. Value the Scriptures. Read, understand them, and go strictly by the Scriptures.
4. Trust God in everything. If He grants you a long, peaceful and healthy life, thank Him for that. If He wants you to return to Him, prepare yourself to meet God.
5. Don't disobey God and break His commandment by trying to take your own life if you are tired of living.

Pastor Quek Swee Hwa (8 March 2002)

RAISED FROM THE DEAD

Read the account of the "Fire Conference" at the Singapore Expo led by Rev Reinhard Bonnke as the Guest Speaker. One of the highlights of the conference was a video presentation of a man raised from the dead. An account of what was claimed is given below.

The dramatic documentary of a modern-day Lazarus has been released by international evangelist Reinhard Bonnke. The German preacher who has led crusades in Africa for 30 years says that the remarkable resurrection of Daniel Ekechukwu is so well-documented that no one can be unaffected by the report. Bonnke's Christ for All Nations (CfAN) ministry has released a 45-minute video of Ekechukwu's testimony, and also reported at its web site how the Nigerian pastor had been certified dead and injected with embalming fluids before reviving three days later at a Bonnke meeting.

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Ekechukwu's wife was so sure that God would bring her husband back to life after he was fatally injured in an auto accident that she persuaded the local mortuary to allow her to take his body to the church where Bonnke was preaching. There pastors lifted Ekechukwu from the coffin in which he had been laid, and were amazed when the man started to breathe again as they prayed for him. The CfAN video includes footage of Ekechukwu beginning to stir, and later returning to the mortuary where his body had been laid out.

The "Raised from the Dead" report, subtitled "A 21st Century Resurrection Story," features interviews with one of the doctors who certified Ekechukwu dead, and the mortician. "It's shocking," one of them tells the video team. "Seeing a dead man, someone that was once dead and is now alive...it is very shocking. To God all glory should go."

Nneka Ekechukwu says that when her husband was pronounced dead after last November's accident, she remembered promises God had given her that she would not suffer any more misfortune. "I said: 'This can't happen. I must do something, to prove God again.'"

On the third day after the accident, Ekechukwu's body was taken in its coffin to a church in Ontisha, where Bonnke was preaching at a service. The body was taken out of its coffin and put on a table in the church's conference center, where several pastors began to pray. Senior pastor Pat Nwachkuw Sr. tells the CfAN documentary makers that when members of the church learned about Ekechukwu's resurrection, a woman who had been on crutches threw them away and started running, and her husband ran to the church altar to ask God to forgive him his sins.

Interviewed by CfAN, Ekechukwu says when he was being taken to the hospital in the ambulance, he was visited by two angels and taken to heaven. There he saw a "multitude" of people dressed in white who were singing and praising God. Then he was taken to hell, he says. The angel told him that he had "another chance" to go back, and that the rich man's request to Lazarus -- to warn those still alive about hell -- had been "granted to this generation." Ekechukwu said that he had been told he could return to the living to give "a last warning to this generation."

In commentary on the video, Bonnke says that the testimony -- which has been reported in Nigerian newspapers -- spoke of "stubborn faith and the miracle power of Jesus." Ekechukwu's story is a "sign from heaven," he says.

Reinhard Bonnke

Reinhard Bonnke was born in Königsberg, in what was then East Prussia, in 1940, the son of a pastor. He gave his life to the Lord Jesus Christ at the age of nine and, before he was a teenager, he had already heard the call to the missionfield in Africa.

Aged 19, he set off for Wales, where he attended the Bible College in Swansea. He was ordained by the German Pentecostal Church in 1964. After serving as a pastor of a Pentecostal church in North Germany for two years, he and his wife and their son Kai-Uwe, set off for Africa in 1967 to begin work as missionaries in the independent mountain state of Lesotho.

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Two more children were born to the family, Gabriele and Susanne. Several years of "ordinary" missionary work went by before his campaigns began to assume greater dimensions.

As the evangelistic services grew in popularity, the evangelist sought to provide the congregation with some form of shelter from harsher aspects of the climate. The first tent accommodated 800 people, then came a "yellow tent" with seating for 10,000.

But soon this also became too small, and Bonnke commissioned the construction of a tent with seating for 34,000 – the largest mobile tent in the world. Attendance at the evangelistic services soon also exceeded the capacity of this tent and open-air campaigns became standard procedure.

In 1974 Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke founded the Christian evangelistic organization Christ for all Nations (CfaN) with offices in Germany, USA, Canada, England and three locations on the continent of Africa.

Reinhard Bonnke and his team currently conduct up to 10 major evangelistic campaigns per year, in Africa and at other venues around the world. In the past 20 years more than 40 million people have attended his services. Crowds have grown to as many as 1.6 million people in a single service (Lagos, Nigeria, November 12, 2000).

Recently during a single period of 12 months, 8 million souls made recorded decisions for Christ and were entered into a local follow-up program.

Raised from the Dead!

A 21st Century Resurrection Miracle Story

You can obtain your very own copy of this full-length video documentary of Daniel Ekechukwu. It contains medical support documentation, eye-witness reports, along with Daniel's own personal testimony. He will tell you what he experienced during the time between his death and resurrection. It is a touching description that will be 100% verified and validated. This video does not sensationalize. It celebrates what the Lord has done before our own eyes. Available in the US only, according to the webpage: <http://www.csc.org.sg/fire/>