

apr 8

the darkest day

"then he took it down, wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a tomb that was hewn out of the rock, where no one had ever lain before." luke 23:53

the scenario

indeed it was the darkest day the world had ever known. it was done. it was over. the light that had come into the world at His revealing, that same light that came into the world at the beginning of creation, was gone; snuffed out with all their hopes and dreams with it. they had hoped, yes even believed He was the Messiah, the Promised One to come and restore all things; the kingdom the romans had stolen from them, the magnificence and the glory of their blessed jerusalem, perhaps even their walks with God in the garden. and they - they were going to rule at His side.

disciples' journey view

although he had told them this all before, their hopes heard a differ meaning from the actual words He had spoken. He was always speaking in metaphors and parables, wasn't he. there surely was something of that in what He said. their simple minds just couldn't comprehend it all. after all, they were just simple men, fishermen, tax collectors, etc.; they worked for a living; not born into luxuriouness or traind in scholarly ways.

as they delved deeper into the confusion and disbelief

each were feeling in their heart, it was only magnified by the one sitting next to them. they had seen it all too, hadn't they? all the mighty miracles, the feeding of the masses. and had they not done many of them also, given His charge to do so? if power had been taken from Him, how could they now wield it? it was just all so mind boggling. the others - they had believed it too. right?

then there was the unbearable pain each was suffering in their hearts. they had not just walked with Him through it all, they had been willing to die with Him if needed. they had not just fellowshipped with Him... they had loved Him; loved Him not just as a rabbi, not just as a relative, they had loved Him as the One who comes to make all things whole again. now they were left cowering in fear and unimaginable grief. if this could be done to such a One as He, what hope was left? what future to be had.

Jesus' journey view

as He had tasted life for everyone, He now must taste death for everyone. (after all, He is all things and in Him all exists.) He would now taste for Himself this decreed judgement and conquer it too. "o death, where is your sting? o hades, where is your victory?"  
1 cor 15:55

He who had created only life (something good and beautiful) had to surrender that life force, allowing death to breathe it's breath upon Him. He would experience what all His creation were doomed to face one day; and, like they, He too must face it alone. it too must lay in the ash heap. yes, He must take this

journey also. After all, there was an attempted usurping of the very Godhead.

and so, He entered the domain of death. I don't think any of us or the theologians fully understand what Peter had in mind in 1 Pet 3:19-20 when he said, "by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly were disobedient." I only know that God is always righteous and just. Those who had not known grace was accessible by faith, they too would be given the opportunity.

I have often asked myself, those not in Abraham's bosom, those in the other place - "what kind of an idiot living in such a place would refuse to jump at the chance to get out of such it?" A place so hot and horrible that Lazarus was found begging to dip his finger in water to cool his tongue. He issued a plea that a message might be sent to his brethren, still alive, to keep them from this place. A plea gone unheeded. Their warning came in their lifetime as your warning must come to you in yours.

and yet, just as in the days of His earthy life, I can almost hear the mocking and ridicule even now. I can hear them saying, "you're here the same as we are. there's no escape from this place and no relief either. we have been here too long and seen too much." You see, they too had to believe in and accept God's gift - new, eternal life for all who would believe in Him alone for redemption. Not in works. Not in our own goodness or worth. Him alone who was all and is all. They had to "believe" Jesus was their escape. Being faced with all they must have been facing, their faith

must have exceeded ours surely. to them, the invisible was now visible. at least that's how i see it.

the still open-ended invitation

softly and tenderly Jesus is calling,  
calling for you and for me;  
see, on the portals He's waiting and watching,  
watching for you and for me.

come home, come home,  
you who are weary, come home;  
earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling,  
calling, o sinner, come home!