

WHAT IS THIS POWER THAT GOD HAS ENTRUSTED TO US?

John & Elaine McLachlan 27 May 2015

Jesus was in the olive grove with His disciples when the soldiers and religious officials came to Him. They came with all the might and authority that they could muster and Jesus stepped forward. The latent power within Him caused them to step back and fall to the ground. (John 18:6) Jesus looked like a weak man because He was meek.

Jesus gave up His Spirit on the Cross after "crying out with a loud voice." (Matthew 27:50) This caused an earthquake which split some rocks and released some "holy people" from their tombs, and also tore in two the curtain in the Temple (which was nearly 11 metres wide and 22 metres high) from top to bottom. The earthquake apparently did no other damage.

Another earthquake shook only the area around the tomb. This is attributed to an angel of the Lord coming from Heaven to roll the stone away. (Matthew 28:2) This angel's appearance bears a startling resemblance to the description of Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration. (Matthew 17:2 & Mark 9:3) The guards who saw Him shook and became like dead men. Was this angel the risen Jesus?

What happened inside the tomb? Jesus had been placed in the tomb, dead. Many people had recognised that He was indeed dead and had hastily prepared His body with the wraps, intending to come and finish the job properly after the Sabbath. Even the authorities were satisfied that He was dead. (Matthew 27:63) Paul makes it plain that God exerted this power when He raised Jesus from the dead. (Ephesians 1:20) What if this power burst open the tomb from the inside and it was Jesus, the Angel of the Lord in the Old Testament. Who was that angel who terrified the guards and spoke to the women? (Matthew 28:5-7) He appeared to Mary as a man but He had not yet returned to the Father. (John 20:17) It would seem that He was able to go back and forward to the Father's presence, but appeared to humans He trusted as first priority. After He had seen the Father He was able to go through locked doors and offered to be touched by Thomas.

Paul prays for those who have been "sealed by the promised Holy Spirit" that they might be enlightened so that they may know the hope (whose hope?) to which He has called us, the riches of His glorious inheritance (invested?) in the saints, and His incomparably great power for and in us who believe. (Ephesians 1:18-19) Paul describes this power as being like the power (strength) He exerted when he raised Jesus from the dead. This, then, is God's power within us.

Why is it not manifest in the church? There is a price to be paid for this kind of power. Primarily we MUST walk in love because this is the only command Jesus gave us. We are His friends if we do what He commands. We cannot give away love if we are not receiving the infilling of it every day. This is the first "gift" of the Holy Spirit. But this power will do everything that Jesus did and He said it would do even more.

Will God's family aspire to fulfil God's hope, God's dream that Jesus' work would continue to the end of the age?

We say, yes, we will allow God to work in and through us to reach those who are still waiting to witness the life and power of God to change us and fulfil our whole purpose in being born.