



Easter 2013 "Restoration & Resurrection" (Selected Scriptures)

Danny Hodges – SE3405

Intro: The 7 Greatest Scientific Achievements of the Last 50 Years (By John Hawkins, 3/1/2011)

We human beings tend to forget how far we've come as a species in a relatively short period of time.

In the 1870's, we had the first house that was lighted with electricity. Cars just started to become available 100 years ago. Charles Lindbergh made the first transatlantic flight in 1927. Televisions didn't become widely available until after WWII. In other words, the advances humankind has made in a relatively short period of time -- thanks to men like Edison, Bell, Tesla, Einstein, Franklin, Salk, and the Wright Brothers -- have been nothing short of extraordinary.

Perhaps just as extraordinary is how we tend to simply adapt to these incredible changes, not realizing how completely our world has been altered in a short amount of time. With that in mind, it seems worth looking back at some of the amazing scientific advances we've made in the last few decades.

7) Cell phones: Phones have been around since the late 1800s, but cell phones only started to become widely available in the seventies. Today, by some estimates, more than 90% of Americans and more than 4.6 billion people worldwide have mobile phones. Anything that useful, that spreads that fast, has to be considered one of the greatest inventions of all time. Of course, it has also made it possible for jerks to talk on the phone in the movie theater, but every leap forward has a price.

6) The Artificial Heart: There is nothing that piques the interest of a human being quite as much as living a longer life. Implanting a person with an artificial heart in 1982 was an extraordinary step towards increasing the human lifespan, even if the initial patient lived for only 112 days. One day, more advanced versions of artificial organs will likely allow us to live much longer, more productive lives. When we get there, we'll owe a lot to Robert Jarvik's artificial heart. It also opens up the possibility that we might be able, for the first time, to provide union bosses across the country with an organ that they've been missing all their lives.

5) The Personal Computer: Today, we take for granted that we have one machine that allows us to access the Internet, do word processing, use a calculator, watch TV, and play games. But, the personal computer only became widely available to consumers in 1974. Things really took off when Microsoft Windows became available in 1985 and it's good that it did; without the prevalence of personal computers, the Internet wouldn't have had nearly as big an impact. We'd also have been denied all those smug Apple commercials, which would be a terrible tragedy for people who absolutely love condescension.

4) The First Communications Satellite: In 1962, the first satellite capable of sending and receiving data was sent into orbit. Today, we use satellites for GPS, TV, radio, weather tracking, military surveillance, space exploration and global communications among other things. It also gives paranoid men one more thing to spend their time worrying about instead of plotting to get revenge on the neighbors down the street for "hiring the people who follow me around all the time."

3) The Moon Landing: The first man landed on the moon in 1969, a feat that was so fantastic that there are still conspiracy theorists who insist it couldn't be possible. Putting a man on the moon is perhaps man's most inspiring accomplishment; it opened the door to future space travel and led to a number of spin-off inventions including flame resistant textiles used by firefighters, invisible braces, improved satellite dishes, and better medical imaging. Sadly, the moon didn't turn out to be made of cheese, which did prevent the Democrats from engaging in the world's most expensive welfare cheese giveaway.

2) The Internet/World Wide Web: The ARPANET (The first Internet) was invented in 1969 and the public only had access to the World Wide Web starting in 1993. Today, less than 20 years later, the web has revolutionized the dissemination of news, has created a new multi-trillion dollar economic phenomenon, has played a role in revolutions, and has interconnected much of the globe. It has also made it possible for spammers all over the planet to reach out and touch someone, but no invention is perfect.

1) The Microchip: The forerunner to the microchip was invented back in 1959, but it didn't really start to take off until the 1980s. Since then, incredible advances in microchips have made it possible for them to be cheaply and efficiently used for calculators, personal computers, pet identification, automatic teller machines, satellites, pacemakers, cell phones, and microwave ovens among many, many other products. As the century goes on, expect microchips to end up in just about anything and everything -- including you, if you live long enough.

Joke – Group of scientists one day got together and decided that man had come a long way and therefore no longer needed God. They picked one scientist to go and tell God of their decision. He walked up to God and said, "God we've decided we no longer need you. We've advance so far that we can even clone people and do all kind of miraculous things." God listened patiently, then had a suggestion. "Since you've come so far, why don't we have one final contest before we part ways. You mentioned cloning. Why don't we have a man making contest?" the scientist went back to his colleagues with God's suggestion, and they all agreed to take God up on his offer. As the contest began, God said, "We're going to do this just like I did back in the old days with Adam." The scientists said, "No problem," and one of them bent down and grabbed a handful of dirt. God looked at him and said, "No, no, no, you go and get your own dirt!"

Gen.2:7 says that God “formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being.”

When God sent Moses to Pharaoh to deliver the children of Israel out of the bondage of Egypt, he allowed Moses to perform miracles. Interestingly, Pharaoh’s magicians also performed miracles. Moses’ brother Aaron threw his staff on the ground and it became a snake, then Pharaoh’s magicians did the same. Aaron held out his staff over the waters of Egypt and they became blood, then Pharaoh’s magicians did the same. But the contest took a decisive turn when Aaron struck the dust of the ground and the dust turned into gnats. The Bible says “when the magicians tried to produce gnats by their secret arts, they could not.” They said to Pharaoh, “This is the finger of God.” You see, only God can create life from death. When God wanted to give the Israelites a sign indicating that only Aaron and his sons were called to the priesthood, he caused Aaron’s staff to bud, blossom, even producing almonds!

ONLY GOD CAN PRODUCE LIFE OUT OF DEATH

Did you know that all of us are born spiritually dead? After God created man from the dust of the ground, breathed into man the breath of life, he then placed man in the Garden of Eden – paradise. You probably know the story, man rebelled against God, sinned, and as a result died spiritually. That spiritual death would one day bring about man’s physical death.

But God had a plan for restoration, and as a result of restoration, one day resurrection. Gen.3:15 is God’s first recorded prophecy of a Savior who would be born of a woman, and who would make all this possible. The Savior is of course Jesus Christ. There is a fascinating prophecy related to the restoration he would make possible in Isaiah 42:1-4. Matthew 12:15-21 records the fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy in the ministry of Jesus.

Reeds grew in the marshy areas in the land of Palestine, and were very fragile. They were easily bruised. One of the most common uses for these reeds was to make musical instruments. But once one was bruised it was no longer useful.

The term "smoking flax" refers to a linen wick that was made from flax and burned brightly when floating on oil in an open lamp. Once the wick burned down far enough, it would no longer produce light, but would simply smolder (smoke, but no flame). At this point the smoldering wick would be discarded, and it would be replaced with a new wick.

Jesus came to do what no one else could do, to restore bruised reeds, to miraculously reignite smoldering wicks. And please notice God’s motive in all this. Jesus warned them not to tell who he was, he did not parade his power like a parade in the streets. He never “tooted his own horn” if you will (Isa.42:2). Now please understand, God deserves all the glory we could ever ascribe to him. But he is not reaching out to a broken and bruised world simply to gain glory for himself. He is reaching out to restore a broken world because he is loving, gracious, merciful and compassionate. He is a God of restoration, of resurrection.

He restores/resurrects bruised reeds, smoldering wicks, “till he leads justice to victory.” Read Isa. 42:1b, 3b, 4a (power point). The justice referred to here is more than legal correctness. The word includes within its scope all of our longings for a better life and a better world. It refers to human society as God originally intended it to be. Now I must pause and note something so we

do not misunderstand. See Matthew 12:15. God's original intention for mankind was no sickness, life abundant, life eternal. In Jesus' first coming, the healings he performed were signs that the kingdom of God had invaded a cursed and broken world (Luke 10:9; Matthew 12:28 on power point). Those healings were not permanent, the people all ended up eventually dying. But again, the miracles, the healings, the casting out of demons, all this was related to God's desire & plan to restore a broken world. His works of restoration will continue "til he leads justice to victory." The day is coming when everything will be restored (See Rom.8:18-23; I Cor.15:26-27a; Heb.2:5-9).

Rev.21:4-5 on Power Point

There is one final point we must make so that the picture is very clear for us. The overall message of the book of Isaiah is a call for the people of Israel to repent of their idolatry and rebellion against God, so that he can put them on a path that leads to justice/victory. And the one Isaiah prophecies who would lead them to this victory is none other than Jesus Christ.

Note Isa.42:16-17. Those who chose to keep on the path of rebellion would never experience the "justice" God desires for them. The bottom line is simply this: We are all bruised and broken spiritually, and it is only Jesus Christ who can restore us to God's original design, Only he can bring about justice for us (See Eph.1:17-2:7). Jesus even said to a very religious man named Nicodemus that he needed to be born again.

We're all bruised and broken, and only Jesus can restore us. Won't you let his resurrection power begin its work in you today?

John 10:10