

THE BUTTON AND THE BOMB

“At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split. The tombs broke open and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. They came out of the tombs, and after Jesus' resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many people.” (Matt 27:51-53)

At 5:29:45 a.m. on July 16, 1945 somebody pushed a button in a remote section of the Alamogordo Air Base in New Mexico. This detonated the first atomic bomb. Pushing a button does not seem significant because most of us push buttons almost every day. This button, however, was different. Thousands of people over years of time had coordinated their efforts. They all followed specific plans to make something spectacular happen when that button was pushed. Their efforts were choreographed by a master plan. No part of this plan was accidental or random. That button detonated a blast equivalent to 15,000 to 20,000 tons of TNT. The light it generated was so bright that a blind woman miles away claimed she saw it. It created a crater 1,200 feet in diameter and sent a mushroom cloud 41,000 feet into the air. So many thousand pounds of dust and gaseous materials were propelled into the sky that two supplementary explosions occurred in the clouds.

Some 2,000 years ago at 3:00 in the afternoon, Jesus Christ died on a cross just outside Jerusalem. At that moment something spectacular happened! At first, someone dying on a cross does not seem significant. Thousands of people have died on crosses. This death, however, was different! The Sovereign of the Universe had choreographed this event from before the foundation of the world. The coordinated efforts of millions of angels and men combined to make it possible. Nothing about the death of Christ was accidental or random. When He died the whole of the universe was convulsed. Angels watched in amazement and demons trembled with fear. The noon day sun didn't shine for three hours and the earth shook so violently that the rocks split. Tombs were opened and the dead were raised to life. The veil of the Temple was rent in two from the top to the bottom. While His body went to a garden tomb His Spirit entered into a holy place not made with hands. Against all earthly wisdom He took a repentant thief with Him. This one death was so significant that it both vindicated God and justified men. This one death forever nailed the Old Covenant to the cross and enabled the New Covenant to blossom into reality.

A few days later a man named Cleophas and his friend were walking to Emmaeus with downcast faces. When the resurrected Christ joined them on their journey He inquired about their conversation. In their ignorance they said: **“Are you only a visitor to Jerusalem and do not know the things that have happened there in these days?” (Luke 24:18).** How interesting! Like millions of others, they didn't have a clue about what had just happened. A cosmic revolution had just taken place and they were totally ignorant of it. They saw the button, but not the bomb.

What Jesus accomplished at Calvary makes Alamogordo New Mexico pale into insignificance. The shock waves of that little bomb were only felt for a few hundred miles, but the shock waves created by Christ shook all the earth, and all the heavens, for all time (Hab. 2:6). That death is the most significant event that has ever taken place in the history of the universe.

One way the Lord commands us to remember His death is by means of the Lord's Supper. When we break the bread we remember His Body. When we drink the cup we remember His blood! To eat and drink without remembering the sacrifice of Christ borders on blasphemy. It is such an insult to God that in Corinth it resulted in spiritual infirmity and death (1 Cor. 11:30). It is more dangerous, as you know, to insult God than to be in the presence of an atomic blast.

The bread of communion seems harmless, but so does the button on a bomb. It is what you understand about both that makes the difference!