

## JESUS' RESURRECTION APPEARANCES-WERE THEY HALLUCINATIONS?

Video Clip Transcript extracted from the talk UNCREATED LIFE

By Rev. Ernest O'Neill

The men and women who gave us the first record of Jesus rising from the dead were actual eyewitnesses. They ate with him, they slept with him, they talked with him, they traveled with him both before and after his death. They knew him. Their eyes and their ears had perceived him. He was a fact that was present to their outward senses. Now you may say, "Yeah, but can you trust them? Are they the kind of people who can be trusted to tell you what they actually saw?"

You know that again and again we have tried to impugn their trust and we have tried to suggest that maybe there are other explanations, but it never really works and probably the most popular today, with our preoccupation with psychology, is hallucinations. Maybe these men, maybe they were honest, good, down to earth fishermen, maybe they were ordinary people like us -- but do you not think they could have had hallucinations and that the 12 or 14 so-called appearances of Jesus during those 40 days could in fact be hallucinations?

And what makes that difficult to believe is that the appearances to the disciples and the friends do not fit the laws that govern hallucinations. Hallucinations, for instance, occur to certain kinds of people and those are people with vivid imaginations who perhaps have a nervous kind of makeup to their character and when you look at big, honest, bluff Peter the fisherman and you look at hard headed James and you look at cynical, skeptical Thomas, you must admit that those were not the kinds of people who were likely to have hallucinations.

Another law that governs hallucinations is that the person wants something to happen. They want something to happen. They want this event to take place and so they project that into their imaginations and then they blur the distinction between their imaginative life and reality and they have a hallucination.

But why did Mary go to the tomb with spices to anoint the dead body if she actually hoped that he would be alive? You remember she went and told the disciples that he was alive and they wouldn't believe it. They said, "No, we don't believe it. You're just imagining it," so that when Jesus actually appeared to them, they said, "He's a ghost" and Jesus had to say to them, "Look, a ghost hasn't flesh and bones as you see that I have. Come, let's have fish for supper. Let's eat together and you'll see that I am not a ghost." Now those were not men and women who were expecting Jesus to appear. Those were men and women that had given up any hope that this man was anything more than a man.

Hallucinations are things that have to appear over a long, long period of time and keep on appearing for years. These appearances of Jesus took place during 40 days and then they stopped and that was it.

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